

Soon after¹ the Iroquois appeared, to the number of six hundred warriors, in sight of the Illinois settlements, and this irruption having increased the distrust of the Illinois against the French, the Chevalier de Tonti found himself in a strange embarrassment. The course which he adopted was to make himself a mediator between the two Indian nations, and in this negotiation he employed successfully the Recollect Fathers Gabriel de la Ribourde and Zenobius Membré, who had remained with him at Crevecoeur. But the peace was not lasting, and the Iroquois, emboldened by the fear with which they seemed to be regarded, soon renewed their hostilities.²

1680.
New hostilities of the Iroquois against the Illinois.

Mr. de Frontenac, in a letter which he addressed to the king on the 2d of November in the ensuing year, 1681,³ pretends that this war of the Iroquois against the Illinois was fomented by the English and by the enemies of Mr. de la Sale; but he does not explain who were these enemies of Mr. de la Sale. In fact, that explorer had many in the colony, and these had been raised up by his exclusive privilege for trade, and still more by the manner in which he enforced it; but it is scarcely probable that they would expose themselves to ruin in order to ruin him. Passion, I know, sometimes carries men further than they wish to go; but something more than mere conjecture is needed for such accusations, and one of the defects of the Count de Frontenac was his giving too wide a scope to his suspicions.⁴

The English are suspected of exciting the Indians against us and our allies.

ty, kept watch for these deserters, and, surprising them on Lake Ontario, killed some and took others: Tonty, in Margry, p. 8.

¹ Not very soon: for the desertion took place in the middle of March (le Clercq, Etablissement de la Foi, p. 178, and the approach of the Iroquois was announced September 10, 1680 (Ib., p. 184).

² Tonty was stabbed by a Seneca brave; and though he prevented a

battle, the Iroquois did much injury, and the Illinois sent off their women and children and gradually retired, leaving the French alone: le Clercq, Etablissement de la Foi, ii., pp. 184-190; Tonty, Memoir in Margry, p. 9; Louisiana Hist. Col., i., pp. 55-6.

³ N. Y. Col. Doc., ix., p. 148.

⁴ La Salle was overwhelmed with debts, and his creditors began to press him, losing all faith in his projects.