

1680. Count de Frontenac, in his letter to the king already cited, states that Tonti was pursued and wounded, and Father Gabriel de la Ribourde killed by the Iroquois.¹ He apparently was led to believe so from the first rumors, which almost always exaggerate bad tidings. The truth is, that Tonti, not believing himself in a position to defend his fort against the Iroquois, evacuated it on the 11th of September, 1680,² with five Frenchmen, who constituted his whole garrison, and the two Recollect Fathers whom I have already named, but he was not followed, or at least there was no action between him and the Iroquois.

A Recollect
Father
killed by
the
Kicapous.

After ascending the Illinois River five leagues, he halted to dry his furs, and Father Gabriel having strayed a little into the woods while saying his breviary, was met by some Kicapous, who killed him, apparently, in order to rob him.³ He was a holy religious, highly esteemed in New France for his virtue and moderation, and who had consulted his courage rather than his strength before attaching himself to an expedition, of which his age of seventy-one could not ensure his seeing the close.⁴ This misfortune for some days delayed the march of the Chevalier de Tonti, who went to the bay of Lake Michigan to winter.⁵

Mr. de la Sale could not have been informed of this retreat, and he was greatly surprised when, early in the

¹ Frontenac to the king, Nov. 2, 1681: N. Y. Col. Doc., ix., p. 147; Canada Doc., I, ii., p. 81.

² Membré, in le Clercq, Etablissement de la Foi, ii., p. 191, says the 18th. Tonty's Memoir in Margry, p. 12; L. H. Col., i., p. 57.

³ Membré, in le Clercq, ii., p. 191; Tonty, Memoir in Margry, p. 12; Louisiana H. Col., p. 58.

⁴ Father Gabriel de la Ribourde was the last of a noble Burgundian house. He was born about 1615, and apparently entered the Franciscan order at the age of 30. After holding responsible offices in Europe,

he came to America in 1670, and succeeded Father Allart as commissary and superior of the mission. He died, it would seem, Sept. 19, 1680: Le Clercq, Etablissement de la Foi, ii., p. 194; Hennepin, Description de la Louisiane, p. 308; Découverte d'un Pays, etc., pp. 449-459.

⁵ Le Clercq, Etablissement de la Foi, ii., pp. 192-200. Father Membré was entertained during the winter by the Jesuits at their mission: Ib.; Tonty, Memoir in Margry, p. 13; L. H. Col., i., p. 58; Canada Doc., II, iv., pp., 60, 61.