

to trade with the English and Dutch than with the French, beaver paying no duty in New York, and trade being open to private individuals. There was, consequently, more profit to be made by purchasers, and this enabled them to afford their goods cheaper. Still, as the cantons did not wish to employ open force till extremities, and really dreaded the French more than they cared to show, deputies from the Five Nations arrived in the month of August at Montreal; but they were authorized only to make vague protestations of sincere attachment, and nothing more could be drawn from them.¹

1683.

Many circumstances concurred to throw suspicion on this embassy, and the least clear-sighted were convinced that the cantons simply wished to gain time, in order to throw the general off his guard. In fact, they no longer concealed their design of making war on our allies. It was known, moreover, that one of their parties had approached Fort Cataroouy with the intention of surprising the garrison and intrenching themselves in that post. In fine, the missionaries who were among those Indians, and all who were best acquainted with the character of the nation, warned de la Barre to beware of them; but he disregarded alike the advice of the one and the remonstrance of the other; he received the Iroquois deputies very cordially, showed them much kindness, and sent them back loaded with presents.²

Strange
conduct of
Mr. de la
Barre.

He sank still lower in the estimation of many on his seizing Fort Cataroouy, which belonged to Mr. de la Sale or his creditors, as well as Fort St. Louis, in the Illinois country, to which he sent Mr. de Baugy, lieutenant of his guard, to command in his name.³ To crown his 'misfor-

¹ N. Y. Col. Doc., ix., p. 218. See la Hontan, Voyages, i., p. 69.

² N. Y. Col. Doc., ix., p. 203.

³ N. Y. Col. Doc., ix., pp. 203, 211; la Salle's protest, *ib.*, pp. 214-5; Ponty, Louisiana Hist. Col., i., p. 66.

⁴ See the judgment formed of de la Barre by de Meulles, the intendant: N. Y. Col. Doc., ix., p. 228. The intendant (Belmont, Histoire du Canada, p. 17) says that the war was provoked by the avarice of the traders.