

The general had then apparently received from France all the reinforcements which he had solicited, for, after writing to Mr. de Seignelay, on the 6th of June in the same year, that he could not draw from the colony for this war more than nine hundred men at most, and that with so small a force he was not in a position to undertake any thing, he says, on the 6th of August following, that he expected to be on Lake Ontario before the month of June, 1687, with two thousand Frenchmen and six hundred domiciliated Indians;¹ but the declaration of war² was preceded by a step which it is not surprising that the king ordered, as we have seen³ that this prince had done even in Mr. de la Barre's time, but that Mr. de Dénouville cannot be pardoned for undertaking without having foreseen and represented the pernicious consequences, still less for executing it in a way that could not have been prescribed.

The king's project of filling the banks of his galleys with all the Iroquois prisoners that he could capture, was in no way illegitimate, after the repeated acts of treachery of that fierce nation, as they had almost always kept the French who had the misfortune to fall into their hands in a bondage far more severe than that of our galley-slaves, to say nothing of those whom they put to death in the most fearful torments. To this may be added the right of conquest in the Mohawk canton under Mr. de Tracy, and the acts of taking possession made before the very eyes of the Iroquois, and in some sort with their consent; but they knew little of the Indians, who imagined that they intended to fetter their liberty by this ceremonial: and even had all this entitled us to regard them as subjects of the crown, which I by no means gainsay, it seems to me that nothing

1687.

The
governor-
general
prepares to
march
against the
Iroquois.

¹ The letters of June 6 and August 6 are not in the N. Y. or Canada Collections. As to his preparation, see St. Valier, *Etat Présent de l'Eglise* (reprint), p. 90.

² War was proclaimed at Quebec with extraordinary solemnities: St. Valier, *Etat Présent de l'Eglise*, p. 90.

³ N. Y. Col. Doc., ix., pp. 315, 324.