

1687. Noble and generous conduct of the Onondagas towards Father de Lamberville.

Mr. de Dénonville had not unreasonably entertained so much uneasiness because he had remained in the hands of the Onondagas, he owed his safety and his liberty to the great esteem and the sincere attachment felt for him in that canton. When the tidings arrived of what had occurred at Catarocouy, the sachems summoned him, and, after stating the fact to him with all the energy that men are capable of in the first impulses of what is deemed well-founded indignation, when he expected to meet the most bitter proofs of the fury which he beheld depicted in every countenance, one of these sachems addressed him in these words, which we heard from his own lips :

“ It cannot be denied that reasons of every kind would justify us in treating thee as an enemy ; but we cannot bring ourselves to it. We know thee too well not to be convinced that thy heart had no share in the treachery thou hast acted towards us ; and we are not so unjust as to punish thee for a crime of which we believe thee innocent, which, beyond a doubt, thou dost detest as much as we do, and of which we are convinced thou art in despair at having been made the instrument. Still it is not safe for thee to remain here ; all, perhaps, will not render thee the justice that we do, and when once our young men have sung the war-song, they will behold in thee only a faithless man who has betrayed our chiefs to a harsh and unworthy slavery, and they will hearken only to their fury, from which it would no longer be in our power to rescue thee.”

They did more : they compelled him to set out at once, giving him guides, who conducted him by by-paths, and did not leave him till he was out of danger.¹ No doubt was entertained that Garakonthié² was the chief author of such noble conduct. This Indian was deeply attached to Father de Lamberville, and the affection which that

¹ There seems no allusion to this elsewhere. it was not Daniel, who died in 1676, but his brother, a far inferior

² If a Garakonthié figured in this, man.