

support which their predecessors had always afforded. So that they beheld themselves almost reduced to regret those days of storm and calamity, where life and liberty hung by a thread, and when their blood, mingling with their sweat, visibly multiplied Christians.¹

1667.

Relaxation spread to the neophytes, though its progress was at first almost insensible. Several Indian towns maintained their primitive fervor as long as they subsisted; but disease having soon depopulated some, others having scattered without any ascertainable cause, no steps were taken to restore them. Among the French, at the time I speak of, piety had been so well established after the earthquake, some shocks of which were felt in 1665, attended with meteors which always alarm the multitude, however natural they may be, as to excite the admiration of those who arrived from France in the following years.²

It was even remarked that, among the new-comers, the most dissolute could not long resist the virtuous example constantly before their eyes, and that at the end of six months some were no longer recognizable, and did not recognize themselves. The soldiers spoke of the war against the Iroquois only as of a holy war, on the success of which depended the conversion of the heathen. Two ecclesiastics and two Jesuits,³ who accompanied Mr. de Tracy in his expedition, declared, on their return, that many conventual establishments were not either better regulated or more edifying than this little army had been.

¹ The introduction of a body of soldiers, and of colonists taken up at random, together with the hostile attitude of those in authority to the clergy, tended all to weaken the former piety. Greater laxity was introduced, and favored by those in authority. The first ball in Canada took place Feb. 4, 1667. A general relaxation ensued, and crime increased: Faillon, iii., p. 383.

² Relation, 1665, pp. 23-4; Lale-

mant, Journal, Nov., 1664, Avril, 1665; Le Mercier, Journal, Oct. 15, 1666, April 13, 1668; M. Marie de l'Incarnation, Lettre Sept. 1, 1668.

³ The chaplains were the Abbé du Bois, an army chaplain, who came with the troops from France (Le Mercier, Journal, Aug. 19, 1665); Dollier de Casson, of St. Sulpice, author of a History of Montreal; and the Jesuits Albanel and Rafféix: Relation de la Nouvelle France, 1666, p. 9.