

year, 1668, inspired those who took an interest in Canada with great hopes. Nor is it very easy to understand what dissipated them. It is at least certain that these iron mines, which the piercing eye of Mr. Colbert and the vigilance of Mr. Talon had discovered, after having almost entirely disappeared for more than seventy years, have just been rediscovered by the care of those who now occupy their places, and who resemble them too much not to give grounds to hope that they will enter into their views.¹

1668.

Freedom of
trade pro-
claimed in
Canada.

While these things were passing in the centre of the colony, new missions were formed towards Lake Superior. Very shortly after the tidings of Father Mesnard's death reached Quebec, the same Ottawas with whom that missionary had set out returned laden with furs; and as they still persisted in their design of attracting Frenchmen to their country, in order to save themselves the trouble of making such long journeys, they again asked for a Jesuit, convinced that several Frenchmen would accompany those Fathers.²

New
voyages in
the west
and north.

1665-7.

The sad fate of the two former, Fathers Garreau and Mesnard, who had been given to them; the unworthy manner in which both, and especially the latter, were known to have been treated; the slight hope of producing any result among them; as well as their motive in making the request, should, it would seem, have precluded the Superior-General of the missions from listening to them; but apostolic men are not always guided by the rules of ordinary prudence; and as they are the instruments of Grace, which never tires knocking at the door of hearts the most deaf and rebellious to its voice, they never believe themselves permitted to neglect occasions of corresponding to it; they even hope against all hope, that it will triumph in the end.

¹ Charlevoix, Journal, p. 113. The mine near Three Rivers was worked extensively a few years later. See report, 1750, N. Y. Col. Doc., vi., p. 581.

² They reached Montreal July 20, 1665 (Relation de la N. F., 1665, p. 8), to the number of 400: Le Mercier, Journal, Aug., 1665.