

1602

The colony  
attacked by  
eight hun-  
dred  
Iroquois.

To crown the difficulties, tidings came in, that a corps of eight hundred Iroquois had been seen within three days' march north of Albany, on their way to attack us. It was subsequently ascertained that these savages had divided in two nearly equal bands, one to descend by Lake Champlain, the other by Lake St. Francis; their design being to unite near Sault St. Louis, intrench themselves there, then, by hollow negotiations, allure as many inhabitants of that Indian town as possible, and butcher all who fell into their hands.

It was at first thought that there was no better plan than to advance to meet these two army corps; but this required more troops than it was possible to send against them; for it would not have been prudent to strip the country of all its forces in the actual uncertainty whether, while they were marching upon the enemy by the two routes they were said to have taken, the Iroquois might not turn off and fall upon quarters where they were not expected. It was accordingly deemed more expedient to hold themselves on their guard at all points.

Precaution  
taken by  
Mr. de  
Callieres.

On their side the Indians of the Sault promised to meet by stratagem the snare intended to be laid for them, and to enable them to sustain a sudden assault, in case of need, a reinforcement of soldiers and munitions was sent to the Marquis de Crisasy, who commanded in their town. Forts Chambly and Sorel were also placed in a state to defy insult; the settlers were again forbidden to go too far from their houses, and all officers ordered to remain at their posts. These precautions, due mainly to the wisdom and vigilance of the Governor of Montreal, were crowned with merited success.

The party, which came by way of Lake St. Francis, appeared in sight of Sault St. Louis; but as they learned that the French expected them, and were so strong as to entertain no fears, they contented themselves with firing several volleys, more like a bravado than a serious attack. They were answered in the same style, and that very even-