

tioned in the beginning of this book, to make a strong settlement on the Gulf of Mexico, de Callieres labored successfully to restore peace to his province. The point was to secure the alliance of all the tribes with whom we could have any cause of rupture, and this required him to prevent anything that could interfere with the establishment of a general good understanding so essential to their preservation and the tranquillity of the French colony.

The treaty to which the General obtained the signatures of the deputies of the Iroquois cantons, and of some of our allies,' was only a preliminary, which might indeed remove the greatest obstacles to the consummation of so great a work; but it was still necessary to convene the chiefs of all the nations interested, and this was no easy task. The wise and well devised steps taken by de Callieres to ensure success to the finest design yet formed by any Governor of New France, had well-nigh been thwarted by one of those accidents, more easily foreseen than prevented, when the Indian disposition is known.

The Iroquois deputies had scarcely returned home, before news came in that some Ottawas had fallen on a party of their hunters, killed some, and taken the most important man in the party prisoner.² It was a fact; but the aggressors were less to blame than was supposed. The Iroquois had gone on the Ottawa lands to hunt, that is to say, in a district where the latter were accustomed to hunt, and had destroyed a number of beaver huts. The Ottawas had taken this for an act of hostility, as it really was, and deemed it their right to do themselves justice.

The Iroquois however complained loudly, and there was little doubt but that they would take up arms again. It needed no more to re-ignite throughout the whole continent the scarce extinguished flames of war. Still, as their delegates had pledged their word to the Governor-General, that, come what would, they would not retaliate, without

1700.

* De Callieres' measures for a general peace.

New collisions between the Iroquois and the Ottawas.

The Iroquois complain to de Callieres.

¹ See N. Y. Col. Doc., ix., p. 715, taken. De la Potherie, iv., p. 177. Sept. 8, 1700. See also pp. 132-3 N. Y. Mss. Eng.

² Tanesthioni, a Seneca chief was xlv., p. 179.