

1704.  
 Policy of  
 the  
 Iroquois.  
 Advice  
 given by  
 the Court  
 upon the  
 subject.

began to appreciate its advantages; but it was seen that the latter made a point of including the English also, and making themselves mediators between us and the latter. De Vaudreuil, who had soon detected their design, informed the court, and received as his answer, that if he was sure of conducting the war successfully, without involving the King in extraordinary expenses, he must reject the propositions of the Iroquois: if not, that he might secure a neutrality for America; but that his Majesty's honor required that his Governor and Lieutenant-General should not make the first advance; especially that it was utterly unbecoming to act solely through the mediation of the Iroquois.

The minister added, that the most seasonable course in his opinion was to direct the missionaries to make the Indians understand that the French did not seek to disturb the tranquillity of the country: that although they were in a position to push the war vigorously, they always preferred the peace of Canada to all the advantages they might reap from the superiority of their arms, and that if the Cantons, convinced of this disposition on our side, induced the English to solicit neutrality for their colonies, Mr. de Vaudreuil might listen to them, but that he should not conclude anything without receiving the King's orders.

It was generally supposed that this negotiation would prove ineffectual, and there was no surprise when its failure was known. But the essential point was to humor the Iroquois mind, by showing them that it was not we who were seeking to break the peace, and here success was aided by the reparation made to the Cantons for the insults received from the Ottawas. The chief<sup>1</sup> of the party who had attacked them near Catarocouy, passed by Detroit on his way back to Michilimackinac with his prisoners, and wished to induce his countrymen settled at that post to declare for him: he was even so insolent as to parade his victory in front of the fort, but the Sieur de Tonti, who

<sup>1</sup> Companise. N. Y. Col. Doc., ix., p. 761.