

CHAPTER III.

OF THE CAPTURE OF THE VILLAGES OF THE MISSION OF
ST. IGNACE, IN THE MONTH OF MARCH
OF THE YEAR 1649.

THE progress of the Faith kept increasing from day to day, and the blessings of Heaven were flowing down in abundance upon these peoples, when God chose to derive from them his glory in ways which are adorable, and which belong to the jurisdiction of his divine providence,—although they have been very severe for us, and were not in our expectations.

The 16th day of March in the present year, 1649, marked the beginning of our misfortunes,—if, however, that be a misfortune which no doubt has been the salvation of many of God's elect.

[34] The Iroquois, enemies of the Hurons, to the number of about a thousand men, well furnished with weapons,—and mostly with firearms, which they obtain from the Dutch, their allies,—arrived by night at the frontier of this country, without our having had any knowledge of their approach; although they had started from their country in the Autumn, hunting in the forests throughout the Winter, and had made over the snow nearly two hundred leagues of a very difficult road, in order to come and surprise us. They reconnoitered by night the condition of the first place upon which they had designs,—which was surrounded with a stockade of pine-trees,