

[8] CHAPTER FIRST.

OF THE CAPTURE OF THE VILLAGES OF THE MISSION OF
ST. JOSEPH, IN THE SUMMER OF THE YEAR 1648.

LAST Summer, in the past year, 1648, the Iroquois, enemies of the Hurons, took from them two frontier villages, from which most of the defenders had gone forth,—some for the chase, and others for purposes of war, in which they could meet no success. These two frontier places composed the Mission which we named for St. Joseph;⁹ the principal of these villages contained about 400 families, where the Faith had long sustained itself with luster, and where the Christians were increasing in number, and still more in holiness, through the indefatigable labors of Father Antoine Daniel, one of the earliest Missionaries in these regions.

Hardly had the Father ended Mass, and the Christians—who, according to their custom, had filled the Church after the rising of the [9] Sun—were still continuing their devotions there, when the cry arose, “To arms! and repel the enemy!”—who, having come unexpectedly, had made his approaches by night. Some hasten to the combat, others to flight: there is naught but alarm and terror everywhere. The Father, among the first to rush where he sees the danger greatest, encourages his people to a brave defense; and—as if he had seen Paradise open for the Christians, and Hell on the point of swallowing up all the Infidels—he speaks to them in a tone so