

perpetual banishment. The Nipissirinién people, who speak the Algonquin tongue, had quite lately been massacred at their lake,—forty leagues in circumference, which formerly I had seen inhabited in almost the entire length of its coast; but which, now, is nothing but a solitude. One day's journey this side of the lake, we found a fortress, in which the Iroquois had passed the Winter, coming to hunt men; a few leagues thence, we met with still another. All along, we marched over the very steps of our most cruel enemies.

[94] Midway in our journey, we had an alarm that was thrilling enough. A band of about forty Frenchmen, and a few Hurons, who had wintered at Kebec, and who were ascending this great river, noticed the tracks of some of our scouts, which they took to be those of the enemy. At the same time, our vanguard had also noticed the footprints\* of those who had just discovered us. Both having retraced their steps, each side prepared itself for battle; but on drawing near, our fears were soon changed into joy.

These Frenchmen whom we met had effected, but a very few days ago, the capture of some Iroquois, who had intended to surprise them, and who would have dealt a blow as successful as daring, had they withdrawn quickly enough after their first volley. They were but ten Iroquois, who had wintered about sixty leagues above Three Rivers,—where they were living by hunting, and awaiting, in the Spring, some band, of either Frenchmen or Hurons, who might pass that way. These enemies, having descried toward evening [95] the smoke from the fires of our Frenchmen, who had camped about a league's distance from their place of ambush, came by night