

The Huron nation forms a different body from the four last mentioned; it has, therefore, its own village, separated from the other by a palisade. The Hurons speak a different language from the other nations, so that they can understand one another only through an interpreter. This was formerly the most powerful, the strongest, and also the most populous nation; but the Iroquois destroyed it, and drove it from its lands, so that it is now reduced to a very small number. And it is well for us that this is the case, for they are malicious, intriguing, and evil-intentioned men, capable of great undertakings; but fortunately their sword is too short. Nevertheless, as they cannot play the part of lions, they act like foxes, and spare no effort to embroil matters between us and our allies.

As regards the land, each nation selects its own district, and each family marks out its ground and its fields. It is the women's duty to till and sow the land; and really it is a pleasure to see them, with an implement of hard wood, shaped like a scraper at one end, and flat at the other, subduing the soil with incredible vigor and diligence. Their crops consist of Indian corn, peas, beans, pumpkins, and watermelons.

The great abundance of fish, and the convenience with which they can be obtained, have led the Savages to form a permanent settlement at this place. It is a daily manna which never fails; there is not a family that cannot catch enough fish for its sustenance throughout the year. Moreover, it is impossible to eat better fish, for it swims and is fed in the finest, clearest, and most crystalline waters that were ever seen.

I consider it unnecessary to describe the method of fishing, for every country has its own customs. But what I think I should mention is the pleasure of seeing as many as a hundred whitefish caught in a single haul of a net. This is the most delicate fish of the lakes; and it is as large as shad in France. Quantities of trout are also caught, which weigh as much as 50 pounds; they are certainly excellent food. Finally sturgeon, pike, carp, herring, poisson doré,¹ and a hundred different kinds of fish abound in that part of the lake.

¹A name (meaning "gilded fish") applied by the French to the yellow perch; some writers also give it to the pickerel.—Ed.