A PEACE TREATY BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND THE IROQUOIS:

Father Lemoine's Trip as an Ambassador to same people.

Introduction----

The years 1660 and 1661 were exceptionally trying for the early French-Canadians. The greatest effort ever made by the Iroquois to wipe away all French settlements from the St. Lawrence shores were displayed in May 1660. At that mournful date was fought the famous Combat at Long-Sault, on the Ottawa River, in which a handful of young French Volunteers, (sixteen in number) reenforced by a small group of two scores of christian Hurons from Quebec--who afterwards in the most critical hour gave up the fight--sustained the shock of a lenghty battle with an evemy whose fighting force amounted to nearly a thousand men. Our French braves were vanquished of course, but they opposed such a resistance in their defeat as to discourage the victorious enemy in his design of a general invasion combined for the complete annihilation of New France.

The heroic death of this small Elite so precious in the sight of God gave life to the rest of the population. --- The Iroquois however did not for that much allow the war axe any appreciable time of rest, nor had their war spirit suffered a down-fall tantamount to a relaxation: they continued harcelling the French by kirmishes, raids and depredation all over New-France. These ruthless hostile deeds perpetrated by detached war-parties resulted in quite a number of citizens killed and others made prisoners with the awful perspective of a very possible death to be endured at the stake at the hands of their inhuman captors.

In the summer of 1661, the country was held in a state of terrorism, discouragement was pressuring all hearts on account of this continuous and uncheckable guerilla practised by such an implacable enemy,
as to make at the time, life intolerably unsecure for the whole population.--Just them, when things were at worst, a ray of hope, by the

mercy of God, pierced through the gloomy sky, and the paradox is that it came forth from where fear was emanating from those very ones who were causing all the fright.

The Irequois Embassy(in July 1661.)

This hopeful presage came in July 1661--when appeared above Montr treal a cance of Iroquois, carrying a white flag in fuel display; those who mounted it reasonably thought that under that symbol of peace as a warrantee of security, they could make their approach without provoking any hostile manifestation on the part of the inhabitants who, certainly whould have been justified to resort to such, by way of retaliation for the many murders, raids and wanton deeds of cruelty their nation had perpetrated against them. What served to give assurance to the members of his delegation was the presence among them of four French captives for an immediate release into the hands of the Governor, as soon as admitted in his presence to a parlet...

The Chief of this Embassy was an Iroquois of the Cayuga Tribe, a man held in high repute by the French and known as friendly to them. He paused before the Governor as representing his own Nation and that of the Onnondagas who had deputed him with proposition of peace in the name.

The apparition of this envey brought an immense relief to the timorous population of Montreal, kept in a state of terrorism resulting from that savage guerrilla presently prevailing all over the country.

The thought of a possible subsidency or truce in the dismaying whrein state of human strife as they were at the time, was by its very nature apt to fill their hearts with a suppreme relief which can be appreciated to its full but by those who experienced it.

However before abandonning themselves to a complete joy, it was imperious first of all, for the French to test the quality of the Embassy, to make sure that the hand which was holding the olive branch was not secretly armed with the tomahawk or the axe, and if the sign of peace was not a catch to entrap them in some viciously concerted device by the cunning Iroquois to obtain the release of eight of their compatrious detained as war prisoners since a year, in the jail of

Montreal, so that afterward they may be more at ease to execute their evil machination. It was with this reserve of confidence that the Governor admitted the Iroquois Peace-Party to a parley.

The magnificence of the Chief, the most considerable among his people, appeared in a striking evidence from the beginning of the conference; for he presented himself before the Governor, the city council and the people assemble, Loaded with splended presents.

Twenty beautiful wampum-belts were forthwith displayed before the assembly: they were emblems embodying in themselves the whole subject matter of the embassy: These wampums were to be presented to the Governor one by one, each according to Indian fashion, was accompanied with a short talk by the chief deputy himself, which he delivers with a countenance full of dignity, sustained by loftness of thought and modulated into graceful figurative expressions —— talks explanatory of the respective meaning of each present.—(These eloquent talks can be read in the original records, "Relation of the Jesuits, Year 1661 page 78.")

All the chief deputy's utterances were ultimately aiming at showing one thing; the sincerity of purpose with which they were animated in their venture for peace; and to confirm his words by a concrete fact the chief set free the four French prisoners they had with them, and moreover he promised to deliver also the twenty other French captives actually kept in bondage by the "Onnondagas" in exchange for the eight "Cayugas" held in prison at Montreal. Were it that his disposition to peace be strong enough as to incline him to liberty. But the most surprising condition of the projected peace was the request made by this chief of a Black-Robe to accompany his party on their way back to their country, without which there would be no peace, and the life of the twenty French captives and their deliverance depended on that condition.

The governing authority of Montreal (The Sieur de Maisonneuve)
thinking it with justice beyond his province to decide by himself on th
case, referred the whole matter to Quebec, leaving it to the prudence
of the "Governor General to decide in last instances-----

At Quebec, after a serious deliberation with his counsel the Governor agreed on every point, although not without a certain reluctancy which he sensed in his mind, arising from unsatisfactory terms found in the contemplated treaty. The weak point of the treaty was that it failed in giving sufficient guarantee of security and permanency in face of the well known versatility of mind and mobility of character of the other contracting party, besides, the difficulty of being long in peace with one or two Iroquois tribes at the exclusion of the others as the case was in the present contract. However, in spite of all these discouraging reasons, the dire circumstances in which they were, make them take advantage of a like chance offered them, in fear of a still worse fate liably to come from a flat refusal.

The consideration of peril for the father who would be sent in connection with this deputation, without other material security but the present good will of these Iroquois, although not a small affair,—was not considered a sufficient arguement against the adopted decision and the question of finding a man among the Jesuits for the perilous mission presented no difficulty, given the readiness of the mission—aries in those heroic times to expose their life for any motive of God's Glory and the salvation of the souls.

The choice fell this time again on the heroic Father Lemoine.

As he had already seen more than once the murderous axe raised above his head by infuriated Indians in similar missions of peace and Apostolate; his present appointment may give him the good to see again the death instrument raised against him ready for a stroke --- but it will be without making him falter or recoil --- his soul having become brass-clad against fear by dint of times he already had faced danger: In three different circumstances he had lived periods of days with the dreadful war-axe suspended like "Damocles' sword" by a weak thread above his head.

-----Part 2----

Father Lemoine's Journey to the Iroquois.

"The day following our departure from Montreal, (July 21, 1661)"
wrote Father Lemoine in Reptember 1661 from the Onnondagas, "we were
met by a canoe of Mohawk Indians, one of the five Iroquois Nations, who
were laying in wait for us. They wanted to capture on e of our canoes
coming a little way behind. Its occupants seeing themselves pursued,
had the good sense to cry out to us who were a little ahead of them.
We stopped and delayed there until night, trying to extricate ourselves from the evil encounter. Presents were offered by our party to
these troublesome people who accepted them compliently at first, but
afterward brought them back saying that they would raise the wareaxe
only against their old enemies (the Hurons and the Algonquins.)

Three days hence above Lachine Rapids, twenty warriors of the Oneidas (an other of the five Iroquois Tribes) in three canoes, were seen precipitating their course upon us. They had seen us the previous evening; the whole night they had labouted to make their approach, arms and bonds in hands, intending to make us their prisoners. But recognizing soon their error they came to terms. Nevertheless some among them more indisciplinate, "surrounded me" wrote the Father, "armed with axes and knives which they pointed at my throat as if willing to slash it." This obliged the Chief of our party to interpose, which he did by means of presents.

On the great Lake Ontario, we met three other canoes mounted by Oneida Indians going to war against the Nez-Perce (an Indian Tribe of the West.) They imparted us the news that three Iroquois men had been killed in their own field by some Andastague Indians, -- a common enemy to the Five Nations.--

At "Otiatanhague" which was the landing place, we took our night rest in company of eight Onnondaga warriors going in a cance to join another war party of their tribesmen commanded by the chief Orreowatie who had been for some time detained as prisoner at Montreal; he was presently going to the French town to avenge his honor for the insult inflicted him by the French, his detainers.

"It is here that I received," ---The father wrote, --- "the first demonstration of amity from the people to whom I was deputed (the Onnondagas) they began to set about me diverse dishes of "sagamite" (Indians national dish made of corn flour boiled in water) for my refection. Then, started, escorted by quite a troop toward the Onnondaga Castle, the chateau-fort of the Nation. Six miles within the limit of the village, a halting place had been managed where Father Lemoine was met and greeted by the great chief of Onnondaga, Garakontie by name,"

This chief had a great personal sympathy for the French and the Missionaries in general. He was by his good will toward the FRench and by his remarkable religious bent, the inspiring genius of this whol diplomatic movement toward peace with the consequent deliverance of all the French captives still detained in the Iroquois Country.

"It was in this capacity as one specially interested in this embassy that he came from two leaguedistance to meet me" wrote Father Lemoine, "accompanied by five others sechems of the tribe"--an honor never rendered to any Ambassador before, since they never want to go farther than a quarter of a league from their village of honor similar personages."

From that place on the trip assumed a peculiar aspect for the Priest Ambassador, taking the form of a triumphal march for the rest of the way. Right there Lemoine began to be an object of great interest and curiosity to those who had came to meet him there and made the new comer the focus of attraction for the eyes of the curious crowd who were staring at him and scanning his person from head to toes. The walk was executed between two imposing rows of people

moving along with him and deliring with joy--never tires of centemplating the strange personage clad in black gown with a large mantle
flowing from his shoulders--rivalling amongst themselves as to
whom would secure the best position to view the singular man with
greater advantage as he was proceeding alongside of them or who shall
cry the louder their joy. These demonstrative people were not satisfied with a single glimse furtively caught of the father in his progressive march, but from behind they ran ahead and took a new position
for a further inspection of him.

Even formal acts of courtesy and civility were added to mere sentimental demonstration, specially by the younger folks in tendering their illustrious Visitor fruits they had just plek for him from the wild, in little runs they were taking in the bush for the purpose, perfectly sure, in their naivete, that he would find them grand and delectable to taste, while some others young ones, willing to be gentle also, offered the Father delicacies of other sort they could think best suitable, to his palate. ---

Thus the himble Jesuit executed his march in all modesty, amid such an escort, and gently smiling at this display of admiration for his person. The father responded at the same time to the acclamation of the crowd with the cestematory ambassador cry, "vivat: vivat:" adding formulas of good cheer of his own inspiration according to circumstance. Thus the imposing cortege wound its way until arrived at a trifle distance within reach of the village when the whole train was made to stop for a ralley before the final term...Before resuming the march the Father, in a few chosen words, expressed his gratification to the people for the kind and obliging welcome tendered himspeaking in their own language which was to them a surprise and a delight to heat hear a stranger speak their own tongue.

Having reached the Onnondaga town, Father Lemoine was led directly by his escort into the largest lodge, the home of the most important family of the place, Chief Garahontie's own lodge, happy and gratified in having such a rare and dignified host lodge under his roof made of

bark and thought fit only for people living the bush life

Now, to quote Lemoine's own words, "One of the first thing the Chief Garakontie thought of on my arrival here was to prepare a place of worship in his own lodge for me to use whenever I wished to call and gather the people for such purpose.....

Let us here read Father Lemoine's own impression on this occasion.

"He (Garakontie) dressed it (the chapel) without stone nor carpentry

work. Our Lord who is well pleased with dwelling under our sacramental

Species disdains not to lodge under barks --- and the trees of the

savage forests are not less precious to him than the cedars of Mount

Libanos, since he makes a paradise of every place wherein He happens

to dwell." "I let you guess what a consolation it was to me and, to \$\phi\$

our French and Christian Huron captives here, to find themselves, poor

dispersed sheep, assembled as in former time in their own country

around their former Pastor and Father, to make their devotion and attent

the most august of our Mysteries in the land of their dire captivity."

"On August 11th, just one month after his departure from Montreal," continued Father Lemoine, "was held at Onnondaga, the general council of the ancient representatives of four Iroquois Nations, who had come committee from their respective villages as though by a special disposition of God's Providence to hear the Word of Salvation that as a Priest I was carrying to them from the part of Heaven."

All the members were convoked by the sound of a handbell into the Father's lodge, the largest of the village, mwhere all those who were present were exhorted by the grand chief himself to lend an attentive ear to the orator. Then a significative cry ran through all the village as a last call, and then all took their place according to rank, dignity and age. The opening was made by a prayer as narrated by the Father himself. He prayed with the French and the Huron captives the only christians in all the assemble.

The Father spoke to the assembly, part in Huron and part in Iroquois. He began thus: "To thee, Onnondaga, am I now addressing these four words of mine",....meaning the four chief points of the peace treaty already agreed upon at Quebec.

Each point afforded a subject matter for a short harangue designed to elucidate an agricle or a clause concerning the treaty in question, and each conclusion was followed by a protestation on the part of the hearers of their resolution to abide by the agreement already reached at Quebec.

Having thus deduced Each point accompanied with the customary presentation of all the presents, the Father had his discourse shifted on an other subject matter, quitting the political ground for the religious. He made bold to discourse before the imposing assemble, as strongly as he could, on Heaven, and of the Son of God and of many other mysteries of our Holy Religion, even in hell. They all listened to with respect and attention. The discourse terminated, the assembly withdrew after the ordinary ceremony and reciprocal compliments that are usually at the issue of such councils.

W intering of Father Lemoine Among the Iroquois.

Father Lemoine's employment during this memorable winter had been mostly about three poor and miserable little flocks of Christians, different as to nationality and language: French, Huron and Iroquois, with a small number of baptized Iroquois respectively scattered in the different villages of the Iroquois Confederation.

The little French flock was composed of captives who were still detained among the Iroquois, waiting for the time of their release promise them as stipulated in the peace agreement.

The Huron captives were constituting the most numerous group of Christians, many had been living under bondage since the time of their capture in the crushing defeat of their nation in 1649, some others brought treacherously from Quebec in 1656 and subjected to same bitter condition as their former brothers in this land of sorrow, and of rough

and rash dealing on the part of their merciless conquerors.

They were most worthy of compassion and of priestly solicitude as they had been keeping with an admirable constancy the flame of the Faith always fully alight in their souls, and within their hearts an undying love for the Christian religion.

The Father was meanwhile active in laying the foundation of an Iroquois Christian Community, preparing with great zeal and devotedness life-material in prevision for that purpose, by baptizing the babies and instructing all those as willing to hear him, without neglecting the sick whom he, most of the time, succeeded in disposing to a worthy reception of Baptism before dying, and thus amorously despatching them to heaven as advertising samples of a future gorgeous vegetation of souls for God's Paradise.---

The Dream Cult Among The Iroquois.

The belief in dreams played an important part in the religion of the Iroquois. --- This specific superstition was deeply rooted in their psychologic being.--- It was partaken as well by the Hurons and most Indian Tribes of North America. The dream was among those people of yore the great power by whose despotic caprice every Indian was liable to be dominated as to his personal conduct in daily life.

No mishief, no crime even were discount ranced in face of a dream which suggests it. No pain, no sacrifices, no material lost were to be considered in any eventuality of a dream to be accomplished.

Here are set down a few instances of pains endured, and misdeeds wrought in connection with dreams to serve for an examplification of the strong hold the demon had on the minds of these people through the dream....They can be read in the original records: (Relation des Jesuit) 1662 p. 8.

In the first instance it is question of a young warrior who before tarting unto a camping, like many af his camarades dited the unevise idea of invoking his semon by way of a dream what was to be his lot at was. and the boy had one dream alrightbut not precisely a happy one - nor indicative of amything good. He dreamed, said father Lemoine, that he was eaught at was, made prisoner and condemned as such - that is to die at the stake stake. On envakening, the following morning, his formost concern was about accomplishement of his Freem, less he should meur personally the misfortune of being made captive by real ennemies, and have to undergo the fate his Fream was involving

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To his best friends gathered around him, whom he had called for the purpose, he spoke in a tone of tenderness and supplication to induce them to have pity on him and not deny him their most needed service on the dire necessity to which is demon had reduced him..... this affair of his was a serious one and of great importance. "So if you are my friends", he said, "show it now in treating me as an enemy taken by you at war and thus made your captive."

As in like occurrences, love was best proved by ignoring friendship and by being cruel...these good friends of his transformed, on a sudden, into fierce enemies must now be prompt through mercy to fulfill their function of torturers. Thereupon precipitating forward, seized their man, stripped him of his best dress, for he had donned his most fashionable costume for the circumstance; after putting him into solid bonds, they dragged him along the foot paths of the village as is usually done with condemned victims, amid jeerings and shoutings from the accompanying crowd until they reached the popular place for final executions. He is hoisted up on a platform sustained by posts. Woodpile disposed in a circle around his standing place had been set afire already. His devoted executioners conscious of their role carry now their love as far as to caress his nude limbs with hands that covered with velvet gloves but armed with firebrands, flaming torches or burning irons and coals. The poor innocent self-made-victim of an

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absurd superstition carried his devotion and cult of fear toward an imaginary demon as far as to prompt him to endure that sweet torture to his life's last limit. He had it stopped only after his flesh had been ravaged to such a gravity that it took him six full months to recover from his burns.

Another one having seen in a dream his cabin on fire and burnt down had no peace with himself less he should see in state of wake his cabin really aflame; thereupon the ancients to whom he referred to for the accomplishment of his dream, after deliberating over the case, proceeded in a body, marching in a solemn procession with torches in hand, and setting fire to the cabin which did an effective work.

How is it that these old pagan adepts of such false and absurd belief were so heroic in enduring such intolerable pains for their unreal divinities, whereas, us Christians are so destitute of endurance and so fretful in suffering the least thing for the service of the true God, to whom we believe and for the possession of whose eternal kingdom we are laboring.

In sickness there was nothing like a good dream, a dream to the point among the Indians of old to help find out the real remedy to cure magically sick persons.

But such is nature, that the Indian dreamers in sickness having sometimes their brain wrought up with delivering fever, their dreams happened also to possess some features of their sickly humor,... fantastic, extravagant, vague etc., which puzzled equivalently the medical skill of their self-made-diviners called upon to guess the sickness of the dreamer and apply the remedy.

One woman, -- the Mistress of the cabin where Father Lemoine was lodging, -- had a dream... a dream in sickness, but not particularly extravagant; for the woman's sickness was not exactly fever, but a swelling on one cheek which was causing her great discomfort and importunity she could not get rid of the sore by any known remedy. In her annoying condition the dream that she had was most welcome as a happy

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happy presage. It proceeded from the illusion of her being treated by some Indians of a certain nation entirely strange to her, with the seeming effect of a perfect cure. What a good fortune for the woman! for these Indians of yore counted a great deal on dreams as to the indication of the right remedy one in sickness needed to work up effectively his cure.

And happily for the woman dreamer, it happened just at the time some Indians of that strange nation were to be found at Onnondaga, her own village, held in captivity as war-prisoners. Thereupon they are on and requested to apply to the sick woman the best remedy ever decocted in their country. The medicine is prepared lenghty and carefully with forceful magical ceremonies. Then the fanciful healers proceeded solemnly with their famous remedy to the door of the cabin. All the curious people anticipating the pleasure of witnessing a wonderful cure that was going to take place in the sick Woman's cabin had alrady gathered therein in a great number.

The first personagessof the curing party to enter were old-aged women, who emerged through the door chanting a song accompanied with the sound of a drum. A little after followed the entry at slow and measured paces of three bears, in disguise, leaping from one foot to another, then again to another, and so on until on a sudden they effected a bear-like bound toward the sick woman as if going to devour her; but nothing of the kind, it was just to administer their marvelous remedy. It consisted in her cheek being stewed by the application of a kind of paultrice composed of hot ashes, supposedly endowed with the required magical healing power. At last, the final scene of the whole comedy was played when men, women and the minors joined with the bears in a dance of the funniest kind which was able to make the least inclined ones to hilarity burst into laughter, but unable to make the poor sick woman feel any better. It amused the crowd more than it did good to the sik woman for whom the whole drollery had been wielded.

The following instance which is the fourth of Father Lemoine's, is as typical as the precedent plus the aggravation of the comic rece-

verging on the tragic.

This present case could not escape the Priest's notice, as he was himself, by the devil's malice, we may surmise, implicated in it in a singular manner. It goes as follows: ... A certain young Iroquois by a queer caprice of his imagination let loose while the rest of himself was in the bonds of sleep, saw himself dressed in Father's robe and in the attitude of a priest. On awakening up to the real world when morning came, he knew for his despair that he could not countton the willingness of the Priest th have his dream accomplished by letting him have his cassock for the purpose, nevertheless he must by all means satisfy to the dictates of hisdemon manifested by his dream. What to do? --- He resolved to prevail on the Father's will by resorting to the empire of fear. Then feigning insanity with rage, he started running through the village, screaming like a damned soul. In his raving about, the little Mission was his intended aim. He reached it; seeing not the presence of the Father, he rammed own the little building and continued in his fury, clamoring: "I want to strip Odesonk, (the Iroquois name offr Father Lemoine). "I must be obeyed! I must be obeyed!" He wanted to obey the demon of hisidream more than many Christians care to obey God. This time alas to his great dispair our casual dreamer remained short for once in his life of an act of deferance toward his demon by the Priest's failure to procure him the necessary article to accomplish it; but he showed good will enough even in his failure, to appease his conscience and secure him against all angry pursuit of the evil genius.

Another instance whereby dream and implety is combined drove a young barbarian to perpetrate an act of the worse savagery indeed. --It was not the priest's robe that the dreamer cared for so much to get but something more sacred--the crucifx of the little Chapel--. To this effect the young man is seen walking toward the sacred little edifice; arriving in front of it, the door being closed, he considered a moment, and without the indice of his evil design, broke through, and in a

state of madness, made for the Sacred Emblem upon the Alter. Before seizing it; the Father was between him and the Alter, in an attitude of resolute antagonism. The demoniac raised his axe. The priest would not retreat, on the contrary the more spirited was his resistance as the fiends menace grew, well determined to meet death rather than deliver the sacred object to impibushhands. The barbarian seized the priest by the arm and brandishing his murderous instrument above his head as if going to deliver the stroke when aroused by the clamour, the most valiant of the village came in a rush to the rescue of the heroic religious man from the hands of his brutal assailant. The fiend giving his dream for an excuse went away as if nothing abnormal had happened.

In a visit to the Mohawks, -- one of the Five Iroquois Nations,
-- an object of particular interest was revealed to his sight which
awoke his attention. It was a crucifix; measuring about two feet in
height. The Mohawk had layed hands on it in a raid committed at Argentenay -- on the Ile DBOrleans, near Quebec. The previous year 1661
they had cobbed the church of that locality or from some Catholic home
near around, this crucifix which they brought to their country as a very
worthy and interesting war spoil, and as such were very proud in showing it visitors.

Now Karakontie although unbaptized still at the time must have acquired already certain obtjectives notions of the things of the Faith in his contact with the French and the Missionaries. This good Indian knowing well the respect and the veneration in which the

Crucifix was held by the French in virtue of their religion, he took forthwith upon himself to rescue this Crucifix from the hands of the pagan Mohawks and have restored to the Christians. It would be a pity, he thought to let an object of such religious meaning exposed to disrespect and profanation and likely to become in the hands of its actual possessors a plaything in the trgies of their idolatrons ceremonies. But they would not easily let such a rare war-trophia depart from them, at least not without certain charge. To secure it, it has to be ranson as a war captive at a high price. But Garakontie being a man of means and of authority with the Iroquoisswas not taken at naught. A splendid present was produced out and handed to the detainer of the sacred object. Now to snatch away his consent, Garakontie under an inspiration of the moment gave utterance, right in the presence of the assistance, to a train of sentences on the dignity and high signification of the Holy Symbol, with an eloquence more to be respected from the lips of a priest in the pulpit than from the mouth of an illiterate Indian from the woods. So moved by the flow of the speech more still than by the value of the present, the Mohawks let the sacred article go into the hands of that worthy Indian. Back to Onnondaga his home, glorious and triumphant as if he had conquered a hundred war trophies he went with the benediction of the priest (Father Lemoine) solemnly to place it on the Alter of the little Chapel, before which the few French and the many Huron captives from all parts of the country kneeleandaprayray.

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