

OF

KATERI TEKAKWITHA,

The Lily of the Mohawks.

1656-1680.

BY

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To my Uncle,  
THE REV. CLARENCE A. WALWORTH,

RECTOR OF ST. MARY'S CHURCH,  
ALBANY, N. Y.,

THIS VOLUME IS MOST AFFECTIONATELY  
DEDICATED.

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## PREFACE.

The life and surroundings of "The Lily of the Mohawks," as an undeveloped theme in literature, was first suggested to me by my uncle, the Rev. Clarence A. Walworth. My interest and enthusiasm were at once aroused. The thought of a mere Indian girl reared in the forest among barbarians, yet winning for herself such titles as "The Lily of the Mohawks" and "The Genevieve of New France," recurred to my mind again and again, until it led me to a fixed determination to explore so tempting a field of romance and archæology. The fact that it lay amongst the hills and valleys of my native State, and was little known except to solitary scholars and laborious historians, incited me still more to the task. I became ambitious to gather from the records of two centuries ago every detail relating in any way to my Indian heroine. While engaged in this work unexpected opportunities opened to gather exact information about her, and more especially concerning the localities connected with her early childhood, and her conversion and baptism in the Mohawk Valley.

If this book, embodying the result of my researches, should fail to interest the reader, it will not be for any lack of enthusiasm on my part, or of kind encouragement and competent assistance from others.

When beginning the work my first call for advice was upon Dr. John Gilmary Shea, so well versed in Indian annals, as also in the general history of this country. I found him full of interest in my subject. Guided by the information received from him, and also by the directions of the Rev. R. S. Dewey, S. J., who has long been familiar with the missionary and Indian traditions of the Mohawk Valley, I went to Montreal and secured from the courteous kindness of Father Turgeon, S. J., rector of the Jesuit College there, the use of all the manuscripts I desired. The Sisters of the Hôtel Dieu furnished me with a room in their hospital, to which the good Rector allowed me to transport the entire CARTON O. This contained all the unprinted materials relating to my subject that belonged to the college library.

There, at the Hôtel Dieu, delightfully located with the sisters of an order whose history is closely bound up with that of Montreal, I copied at my leisure the manuscripts most valuable to me.

In Montreal, also, my good fortune gave me interviews with M. Cuoq, the distinguished philologist of St. Sulpice, whose Indian dictionaries and grammars I had already seen in my uncle's library. Much I owe besides to Soeur St. Henriette, librarian and keeper of the archives at the Villa Maria. It was on the boat which shoots the Lachine Rapids that I met

Mr. Hale of Philadelphia, the learned author of the "Iroquois Book of Rites," and enjoyed a long conversation with him on matters of deep interest to us both and to my work. My first visit to the Iroquois Village at Caughnawaga, P. Q., occurred at this time. Here my uncle and I found hospitable entertainment for several days at the Presbytery of the church, presided over by the Rev. Père Burtin, O. M. I. Besides the valuable information acquired from the library of books and manuscripts in his possession, I gathered much from the acquaintance then established with the Iroquois of the "Sault" and in particular with their grand chief, Joseph Williams.

La Prairie was only nine miles distant, with its scholarly curé, Père Bourgeault, and his valuable collection of ancient maps; and about half way between Caughnawaga and La Prairie lay the grave of Tekakwitha, with its tall cross looking over the rapids of the St. Lawrence. An author with a theme like mine in such localities and with such guides was, indeed, in an enchanted land.

In Albany I received valuable assistance and advice from Mr. Holmes and Mr. Howell, of the State Library, also from Mr. Melius, of the City Clerk's Office, and others.

I have reserved for a most especial and grateful acknowledgment the name of Gen. John S. Clark, of Auburn, N. Y. My work is indebted to him for a treasure of information which he alone could give. In the knowledge of Iroquois localities in New York State, particularly those of two centuries ago, and the trails over which missionaries from Canada travelled so painfully to villages where they labored so hard and yet successfully,—he is the undoubted pioneer. Almost all we know in this branch of archæology is owing to him. It was my privilege in company with my uncle, and with Gen. Clark for pilot, to spend a memorable week in search of Indian localities along the Mohawk, from the mouth of Schoharie Creek to the farthest castle of the wolf clan opposite Fort Plain. We visited and verified, under the General's direction, no less than eleven sites in this one week. An account of the most important of these sites can be found in the contributions of Gen. Clark, as explanatory footnotes, to "Early Chapters of Mohawk History." This work consists of translations into English of selected letters from the *Relations Jesuites*. For these translations we are indebted to the lamented Dr. Hawley, late pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Auburn. Guided by the wise advice of General Clark, I was able afterwards to make other independent journeys, and familiarize myself with Indian trails passing near my native town, above all those followed by Tekakwitha in her escape to the "Sault." I owe to Gen. Clark's kindness the valuable map of Mohawk Castle Sites, to be found in this book and drawn expressly for it by his hand.

Lastly, I recall with pleasure a conversation with the Rev. Felix Martin, S. J., a well known authority in Canadian and Indian archæology. To this venerable author, the editor of the famous "Jesuit Relations," the biographer of Isaac Jogues, of Chomonot and of Tekakwitha, I owe a large debt of gratitude. His biography of her, entitled "Une Vierge Iroquoise," is still in manuscript, never having been published. He was the first to gather and keep together all the manuscripts extant giving contemporary accounts of the Iroquois maiden. He laid a foundation of accumulated facts for others to build upon. I sought him out in Paris in 1885, and found him with some difficulty. The hiding place of this learned old man was in an obscure corner of the city. The schools of his order all broken up, separated from his companions, his books and his manuscripts, and from his old beloved home in the New France, which he would never see again,—how his eyes glistened when I came to him from the western world, a child of the Hudson and Mohawk, to speak to him of Tekakwitha, bringing him even the latest news of archæological discoveries in those valleys! His face beamed with delight at every new

detail. It pleased him much to know that Dr. Shea was, at that very time, translating into English his (Martin's) French Life of Jogues, and to learn that I was writing, and hoped soon to have published a full account of Kateri Tekakwitha for my own countrymen of the United States. He gave his blessing to me and to my work, a blessing which I prize most highly. His hearty approval is especially gratifying, since I have had occasion to use much of the material he had gathered for publication in French under his own name. Alas! scarcely had I recrossed the Atlantic, when the news of his death reached me.

In conclusion, let me say: I am conscious of many defects in this work. Others may yet be found better able than I to do justice to my theme, but not any one, I think, who will come to the task more anxious to make known to all the whole truth of history concerning the rare and beautiful character of this lily of our forest.

ALBANY, N. Y., January 2, 1891.

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TEKAKWITHA'S SPRING.

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## THE LIFE AND TIMES

OF

## KATERI TEKAKWITHA. <sup>[1]</sup>

Pronounced *Kat'-e-ree' Tek-a-quee'-ta*. *Kateri* is the Iroquois form of the Christian name *Katherine*. The meaning of *Tekakwitha* is given in Chapter IV. For various ways of spelling the name, see [Appendix, Note B](#).

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## CHAPTER I.

## TEKAKWITHA'S SPRING.

**I**N the valley of the Mohawk, near the present great highways of the State of New York, is a quiet forest nook, where a clear, cold spring gurgles out from the tangled roots of a tree. Connected with this spring is the story of a short girl-life, pure, vigorous, sorrow-taught. It is written out in authentic documents; while Nature, also, has kept a record of an Indian maiden's lodge beside the spring. There on the banks of the Mohawk River, at Caughnawaga, now called Fonda, in Montgomery County, dwelt the Lily of the Mohawks two centuries ago, when the State had neither shape nor name. She saw her people build a strong, new palisaded village there. She saw, though at rare intervals, the peaceful but adventurous traders of Fort Orange, and the blackgowns of New France pass in and out on friendly errands. Mohegans came there also in her day to lay siege to the village, but only to be met with fierce defiance and to be driven back. Marks of that very Indian fort can still be found at Fonda, where the Johnstown Railway now branches from the New York Central, and turns northward along the margin of the Cayudutta Creek. The smoke of the engine, as it leaves the town of Fonda, mounts to the level of a plateau on which the Mohawk Castle <sup>[2]</sup> stood. The elevated land, or river terrace, at that point is singularly called the "Sand Flats."

A rude fort of palisades, well equipped for defence, was completed about the year 1668 on a narrow tongue of this high terrace, between the Mohawk River and the creek. The approach to it is very steep; but in one place a wagon-road winds up the hill to what is now a field on Veeder's farm. Here unmistakable signs of Indian occupation are to be found. A spring is close at hand in a clump of trees. The castle at that spot was known as "Caughnawaga," meaning "At the Rapids,"—a name still applied to the eastern part of the present town of Fonda. The Mohawk River runs swiftly as it passes this spot, and large stones obstruct its course. The spring at the castle site on the west side of the creek is Tekakwitha's spring; for there beside it she grew to maidenhood, behind the shelter of the palisades, and beneath the shadow of the overarching forest. Tekakwitha was the Lily of the Mohawks, and afterwards known as "La Bonne Catherine."

In the Mohawk Valley, the great artery of our nation's life, the tide of human travel now ebbs and flows with ever-swelling force; here the New York Central Railway levels out its course of four broad tracks; here the great canal bears heavy burdens east and west; here the West Shore Railway skirts the southern terrace; here the Mohawk River winds and ripples, smiling in an old-time, quiet way at these hurrying, crowded highways. They have wellnigh filled the generous roadway, cut through high plateaus and mountain spurs in ages past by this same placid river. That was in its younger, busier days. Now it idles on its way from side to side, among the flats or bottoms, with here and there a rapid, till at last it gathers force at far Cohoes for one great plunge before it joins the Hudson. Then the mingled waters of the two rivers sweep on past the stately Capitol, where once the Indian trading-post, Fort Orange, stood. From Albany, the broad-bosomed Hudson bears floating palaces and long lines of canal-boats strung together like great beads of wampum. Let its current move them southward, while we turn back to the valley whence these strings of wampum came. Let us follow up the windings of the Mohawk River westward. At Schenectady it lingers among islands in pretty, narrow ways, where college boys can take their sweethearts rowing. Right playfully it kisses the feet of the old Dutch town in summer, and in winter its frozen bosom sounds with the merry thud of the skater's steel. Farther west the valley narrows, and on a height near Hoffman's Ferry, Mohawk and Mohegan fought their last fierce battle. Tekakwitha heard their war-whoop at the castle of



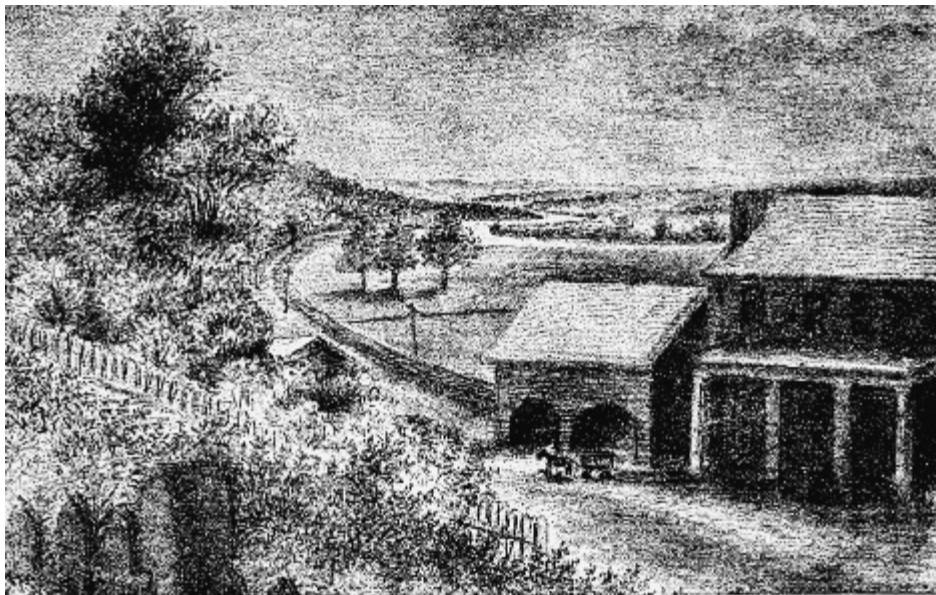
Caughnawaga, just before the final conflict came; but she never saw Fort Johnson, which is higher up the river. Old Fort Johnson is too modern for our story. Amsterdam now looms up an important factor in the valley. Two centuries ago a joyous stream cascading down to meet the Mohawk was its only landmark. Tekakwitha knew the spot, however, and had good reason to remember it, as we shall see. Westward still, and up the valley from Fort Johnson, a broader gleam of water comes in sight. It is where the Schoharie River creeps in from the south between the dripping archways of a bridge, over which canal-boats pass. Here the Mohawk shows its teeth in a ridge of angry rapids; and here we enter what was once the home country of its people, the fierce Mohawks. We are near the spot where brave Father Isaac Jogues, the discoverer of Lake George, was killed, in 1646. In the southwest angle of the Mohawk and Schoharie Rivers, on the upper terrace, higher than the modern hamlet of Auriesville, was the eastern castle of the Mohawks, known to Jogues as Ossernenon. <sup>[3]</sup> Here three times the hero-hearted blackgown came; first, a mangled, tortured captive, dragging out the weary months in slavery until the Dutchmen at Fort Orange ransomed him; next, as an ambassador of peace, bearing presents, making treaties; and lastly, as envoy of the Prince of Peace, and wedded to his "spouse of blood,"—for so Jogues styled his Mohawk mission. Never was a truer bridegroom, never stranger wedding rites. Bits of his flesh were cut off and devoured, while the savage high-priest cried, "Let us see if this white flesh is the flesh of an *otkon* [spirit or devil.]" "I am but a man like yourselves," said Jogues, "though I fear not death nor your tortures." His head was placed on the northern palisade, looking toward the French frontier, and his body thrown into the stream; but his blood and his earnest words sank deep into the land and the hearts of its people. From Jogues' mystic union with the Mohawk nation, trooping from the "Mission of the Martyrs," came the Christian Iroquois. One of these—a bright soul in a dusky setting, and a flower that sprang from martyr's blood—was Tekakwitha. She grew up, says one who knew her, "like a lily among thorns." Ten years after Ondessonk <sup>[4]</sup> had shed the last drop of his blood to make these Mohawks Christians, she was born among the people who had seen the blackgown die, in the Village of the Turtles,—some say in the "cabin at the door of which the tomahawked priest had fallen."

This same stronghold of the Turtles was rebuilt higher up the river during Tekakwitha's lifetime. Near Ossernenon, the earliest known site of the Turtle Castle, there is a great bend or loop in the Mohawk River and Valley. It extends from the mouth of the Schoharie River on the east to the "Nose" near Yost's and Spraker's Basin on the west. The Nose is at a point where river, railways, and canal are crowded in a narrow pass between two overlapping ridges of high land. "Two Mountains approaching," or Tionnontogen, the Indians called it; and there behind the shelter of the hills, they built their largest and best fortified town, the Mohawk capital or Castle of the Wolves. Other villages and their central Castle of the Bears, called Andagoron, they also built and rebuilt within the great bend. At its northern point, where the river now flows between the high-perched Starin residence and the town of Fonda, the next important railway-station west of Amsterdam, are the rapids and the large stones in the water which gave rise to the name of Caughnawaga. From the hills at Fonda one can see for miles both up and down the river.

Here, as has already been said, just west of Fonda, on the north side of the Mohawk is the Indian village site where Tekakwitha lived. Here is the beautiful hill that was once crowned by the palisaded castle of Caughnawaga. It is a spot that any one who lived there must have loved. To-day the plough turns up the rich soil where long Indian cabins stood, and what we see are only darkened patches left to tell us where the hearthfires of the Mohawks burned two hundred years ago. These patches of dark soil still glisten with the



pearly mussel-shells brought up by the Mohawks to their village from the river that still bears their name. The pipe-stems sold to them by the Dutch are strewn in fragments through the field. From graves near by, thrown out on the roadside by the spades of workmen loading their carts with sand, the author has seen Indian bones, more crumbled than the silly beads and rusty scissors buried with them, which they bought so dearly. In a wood near by, on the brow of a ravine, there is a row of hollow corn-pits where the Caughnawaga people stored their charred corn. Low down in the fertile river-flats, southward from the ancient village site, a sunburned farmer, owner of both hill and valley, still works with horses and with iron implements the very corn-fields that the squaws hoed with clumsy bone-tools. This once castled height breaks abruptly on its eastern side to let the Cayudutta Creek wind through. It hurries by on its way to meet the Mohawk, and then lags through the flat, lost to sight just long enough to pass round the skirts of the Ta-berg, or Tea Mountain. This in a grassy cone topped with pines, and so named by Dutch settlers who there in wartimes made a tea from a wild plant. It partly blocks the entrance to the pretty Cayudutta valley, and separates it from the modern town of Fonda; but the farmers' daughters and the village people who now live in sight of Fonda Court House know well the little valley of the Cayudutta. Any one of them can point out its brightest gem, the never failing spring that issues from a set-back in the hill and so regular in shape as to suggest an amphitheatre. This spring wells out from under an old stump hidden in a clump of trees, whose topmost branches are below the level of the castle site. Its waters rest a moment in a little shady pool, a round forest mirror; then brimming over, break away and wander down the steep descent to the creek. The path to the spring leads downward from the higher ground above it, known as the Sand Flats. The field where the castle stood is now often planted thick with grain; but when this has been cut and the ground again ploughed, the Indian relics are readily found. At any season of the year, however, the limpid spring that has not ceased to flow for centuries will serve to indicate the spot.



**THE MOHAWK VALLEY FROM FONDA, N. Y.**  
*(Tekakwitha's Birthplace in the Distance.)*

Standing then, at the brink of this spring in the Mohawk Valley, let the reader cast a look

backward, and over the intervening space of two hundred years, to the days of Tekakwitha. Let it be understood, however, that while the imaginative faculty is thus to be called into play, it is not for the contemplation of an imaginative but of a real character. For whatever side lights may color the narrative, they are used to bring out, not to impair, the picture. Many details of time and place, of manners and customs, of dress and the arts of industry, will be woven into an actual scene, rather than given in a tedious enumeration.

The scene about to be described and others which follow depicting the early life of Tekakwitha are not to be found actually recorded in so many words in the history of her life and times, yet they must have occurred; for they are based on the known facts of her life as related in various official and private documents, together with such inferences only as may fairly and reasonably be drawn from those facts when brought under the strong light of contemporaneous records.

Above the spring at Fonda, on the high plateau where is now the well-tilled farm, stood, two centuries ago, the log-built palisades of ancient Caughnawaga. In tall and close-set ranks they serve to hide from view and shield from ambush the long, low Indian houses, twenty-four in number. "Double stockadoed round, with four ports," as when the traveller Greenhalgh saw the place in 1677, "and a bow-shot from the river," stands the strong Mohawk castle. The blackened stumps that now dot the sunny hillside of the Cayudutta change into the old-time, mighty forest, and present a scene that is full of life; for down a well-worn footpath come the Indian girls to fill their jugs at the spring,—afterwards to be known as Tekakwitha's Spring.

These dusky Caughnawaga maidens have the well-known Indian features strongly marked,—the high cheek bones, the dull red skin, and soft dark eyes; but Tekakwitha shields hers with her blanket from the light. Unlike the rest, there is an air of thoughtfulness about her and a touch of mystery. Excessive shyness in the Lily of the Mohawks is strangely blended with a sympathetic nature; and with a quiet force of character she leads their chatter, half unconsciously, to channels of her own choosing.

"A manuscript of the time," says Shea, "describes the Indian maiden with her well-oiled and neatly parted hair descending in a long plait behind, while a fine chemise was met at the waist by a neat and well-trimmed petticoat reaching to the knee; below this was the rich legging and then the well-fitted moccasin, the glory of an Iroquois belle. The neck was loaded with beads, while the crimson blanket enveloped the whole form."

This, in general, is the costume of the merry group with Tekakwitha at the spring. The upper garment, however, is a kind of tunic or simple overdress; nor can it be said that all are equally neat in their appearance. Some have their dark, straight hair tied loosely back and hanging down, or else with wampum braided in it. A few are clothed in foreign stuff, bought from the Dutch for beaver-skins and worn in shapeless pieces hung about them with savage carelessness. On their dark arms the sunlight flashes back from heavily beaded wrist and arm bands, begged or borrowed from their more industrious companions. Not like theirs is Tekakwitha's costume. It is made of deer and moose skins,—all of native make, and stitched together by a practised hand, as every one of the pretty squaws well knew. Her needle was a small bone from the ankle of the deer, her thread the sinews of the same light-footed animal, whose brain she mixed with moss and used to tan the skins and make the soft brown leather which she shaped so deftly into tunic, moccasins, and leggings. Her own skirt was scarce so richly worked with quills of the porcupine as that of her adopted sister there beside her, though both were made by Tekakwitha's hands.

The Indian girls about her like her for her generous nature and her merry, witty speeches. She makes them laugh right heartily while she stands waiting for her jug to fill up at the trickling spring.

These daughters of the Iroquois are bubbling over with good spirits, and their pottery jugs with water, when all at once they spy a band of hunters coming homeward down the Cayudutta valley from the Sacondaga country. Knowing there is one among them who but waits his chance to lay his wealth of beaver-skins at Tekakwitha's feet and take her for his wife, they turn girl-like to tease her; but the quick and timid orphan, dreading the license of their tongues, has bounded up the hill, and hastens to her uncle's cabin with her jug, leaving her companions to bandy words with the young hunters as they stop beside the little pool for a draught of refreshing water.

Of all the people in the ancient Caughnawaga village, the only story that has been written out in full and handed down in precious manuscript, brown with age, is the story of her who bounded up the hill and left her comrades at the spring. In a double sense she left them. She was far above them. She stands to-day upon a mystic height; and many, both of her race and our own in these our days, do homage to her memory.

May her home at Caughnawaga, high above the stones that lie imbedded in the Mohawk River, and close beside the spring that trickles downward to the Cayudutta,<sup>[5]</sup> soon become familiar ground to all who honor Tekakwitha!

#### FOOTNOTES:

The Indian forts or palisaded villages, called "castles" by the early Dutch settlers of New York State, were stoutly built of logs and bark, and were effectual barriers of defence until the artillery of the white men was brought to bear upon them.

Megapolensis, the Dutch dominie at Fort Orange, who befriended Jogues, the French Jesuit, in his captivity, writes the name of this Mohawk town or castle, Asserue or Asserne. It was just at the spot where a shrine has been recently elected to honor the memory of Isaac Jogues and of his companion René Goupil, both of whom were tomahawked in that vicinity by the Mohawks.

Jogues' Indian name.

[See Appendix, Note A](#), where in a letter dated March 3, 1885, Gen. John S. Clark, of Auburn, N. Y., the well-known archæologist, mentions this spring as marking the site of Gandawague (or Caughnawaga) on the Cayudutta Creek, northwest of Fonda, N. Y. For date of the removal from Auriesville to that site, see his [letter of June 29](#), 1885, also given in Note A, with other proofs as to the location of Mohawk villages at the time of Jogues and Tekakwitha.

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## CHAPTER II.

## THE MOHAWK VALLEY AND THE MOHAWKS AT THE TIME OF TEKAKWITHA'S BIRTH

FATHER Jogues was put to death in the year 1646, on the south side of the Mohawk River, a few miles to the eastward of Fonda, and not far from the mouth of the Schoharie River. Close to the shrine which has been erected at Auriesville in his memory, is the very ravine in which, during his captivity there, he buried his friend and only companion, René Goupil.

Réné, it will be remembered, was cruelly murdered for signing an Indian child with the sign of the cross. The description of the place where this occurred is very explicit in Father Jogues' published letters, and there is no other spot in the whole Mohawk Valley to which it can well be applied. He mentions a certain river which was a quarter of a league distant from the Indian town of Ossernenon, where he was held captive; this was undoubtedly the Schoharie. There in that same vicinity, after he had escaped from captivity and returned to the Mohawks as a missionary, he met his own tragic fate, or rather the glorious reward of his zeal. There, too, or very near there, ten years after his death, Tekakwitha was born. The exact location of her birthplace has not been determined. It was either at the Turtle Castle of Ossernenon described by Jogues, the name of which was afterwards changed, or at a later village site near Auries Creek, to which the people of that castle moved, and to which they gave the name of Gandawague.<sup>[6]</sup> In either case her birthplace was less than a mile from the present hamlet of Auriesville.

There Kateri Tekakwitha was born in the year 1656. Her father was a Mohawk warrior, and her mother a Christian Algonquin captive, who had been brought up and baptized among the French settlers at Three Rivers in Canada. The Iroquois, or People of the Long House, including the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas, were enemies of the Algonquin tribes and hostile to the French.

The Mohawks especially were accustomed to make frequent raids on the settlements in Canada, leaving desolation behind them on the St. Lawrence, and bearing with them to their own valley rich booty, and also captives to be tortured and burned, or else adopted into the Five Nations of Iroquois to swell their numbers. If Frenchmen, these captives were often held as prisoners of war, and haughty terms made for their ransom. It happened on one of these raids into Canada that Tekakwitha's mother, the Algonquin, was thus captured. Tom suddenly from a peaceful home and the French friends who were teaching her "the prayer," she was hurried through the lakes and woods of a strange country, along the great war-trail that leads from the St. Lawrence to the Mohawk through north-eastern New York. Fast following in the path of Jogues, the light canoe that bore her came southward with the braves, and their trophies of war, through Lake Champlain and then Lake George, the newly christened Lake St. Sacrament. Little did the captive dream that ever a child of hers would take that same long journey back again, an exile from the home that she was then approaching, all unconscious of her fate. A home, indeed, awaited her coming in the land of the Mohawks. She was saved from the torture and the fire by a fierce, pagan Mohawk warrior, who took the young Algonquin for his wife. The gentle girl had captured the heart of her conqueror.

Their family consisted of one son and an infant daughter, known later as Kateri Tekakwitha. Père Claude Chauchetière, who wrote in 1695,<sup>[7]</sup> tells us that they dwelt at

"Gandawague, a little village of the Mohawks." There they must have occupied one section of an Iroquois long-house, other kindred families filling up its entire length on both sides of an open space and passage-way through the centre. The occupants of every four sections or alcoves in these houses, two families being on each side of the passage, shared a common hearthfire,<sup>[8]</sup> with a hole above it in the roof to let in the daylight and let out the smoke. There were usually five of these fires and twenty families in a house about a hundred feet in length. These united households gave name and meaning to the Iroquois League of Kanonsionni, or People of the Long House.

There is reason to believe that Tekakwitha's father took an active part in the affairs both of the Mohawk nation and the Iroquois League. We are told, indeed, that after his death her uncle, who seems to have taken her father's place and responsibilities, was one of the chief men of the Turtle Castle, whose deputies ranked higher in council than those of the Bear and Wolf Castles, Andagoron and Tionnontogen. This was because the turtle was created first, according to their genesis of things. These three palisaded strongholds and their outlying hamlets made up the Mohawk (or Canienga) nation. It was likened, in the beautiful figurative language of the Iroquois, to a group of families gathered round a hearth or council fire, and filling up one end of the Long House or Great League of the Five Nations, founded by Hiawatha and his friends. The duty of the Caniengas of the Mohawk Valley was to guard the eastern entrance of the Long House, or the door which looked out on the Hudson. Their privilege was to furnish the great war-chief that should lead the people of the League to battle.

The proud Senecas, whose portion of the house extended from Seneca Lake to Niagara, were the western doorkeepers of this household of nations, waging fierce war on their neighbors near Lake Erie. The wily Onondagas, wise old politicians, in the middle of the Long House, at Onondaga Lake, led in council. Their leading chief, the elected president of this first American republic, lit the central council-fire and sat in state among the fifty oyanders (sachems) who formed the Iroquois senate. Ten of these were always Caniengas (or Mohawks), and fourteen were Onondagas. These two nations and the Senecas were called brothers; while the intermediate Oneidas and Cayugas were always spoken of as nephews, because they were younger and less important nations, with fewer oyanders.

Tekakwitha's father may have been one of the ten Mohawk oyanders, but there is more reason to believe that he belonged to a class of war-chiefs who took part only in councils of war. In 1656 these war-chiefs were very influential, for the Iroquois had set out on a wild career of conquest, the warlike Mohawks as usual taking the lead. The very same year that the little Mohawk-Algonquin was born in their land, they swept like a tornado over Isle Orleans, near Quebec. They carried off to their castles the last remnant of the Huron people, who, far from their own land, had gathered near the French guns for protection. These Hurons from the shores of Lake Huron belonged to the Iroquois stock, as distinguished from the Algonquin races. In very early times they had come down to the settlements on the St. Lawrence to trade with the French, and zealous Jesuit missionaries had accompanied them on their return to their own country. After great hardships these missionaries had succeeded in making them Christians, when, as the final result of an old feud, these Huron-Iroquois, as they are often called, were driven from their homes in the Northwest by the Iroquois of the League, and wiped completely out of existence as a nation. Six of the Jesuits who dwelt among them, and whose strange isolated lives have furnished the theme for Parkman's glowing pages, were massacred, while others were cruelly tortured by the ubiquitous Mohawks during the period of ten short years that elapsed between Jogues' last captivity and Tekakwitha's birth. Could the father of the Mohawk Lily have reddened his hands in their blood? It is more than likely; for though

Ondessonk or Jogues was the only one of these martyrs who had reached the Mohawk Valley, they were all slain by Mohawk braves,—Jogues, Daniel, Brebeuf, Lalemant, Garnier, and Garreau; nor is this a complete list of the victims. To use once more the words of John Gilmary Shea, historian of these and their fellow pioneers,—

"Fain would we pause to follow each in his labors, his trials, and his toils; recount their dangers from the heathen Huron, the skulking Iroquois, the frozen river, hunger, cold, and accident; to show Garnier wrestling with the floating ice, through which he sank on an errand of mercy; Chabanel struggling on for years on a mission from which every fibre of his nature shrunk with loathing; Chaumonot compiling his grammar on the frozen earth; or the heroic Brebeuf, paralyzed by a fall, with his collar-bone broken, creeping on his hands and feet along the road and sleeping unsheltered on the snow when the very trees were splitting with cold," and later, "as a martyr, one of the most glorious in our annals for the variety and atrocity of his torments."

This last-mentioned blackgown, John de Brebeuf, called Echon by the Hurons, was a writer of valuable works on the Indian language and customs. He belonged to a noble family of Normandy; and on account of his great natural courage and soldierly bearing, his agony was prolonged by the savages with fiendish ingenuity, till finally, failing to wring a sigh of pain from his lips, they "clove open his chest, took out his noble heart, and devoured it," as a medicine to make them fearless-hearted.

The fortitude of a brave man under torture was a spectacle as keenly appreciated by the Iroquois as were the gladiator fights and martyrdoms of old by the Romans. The women in this case, however, instead of decreeing death by turning down their own thumbs, were granted the less fatal and less dainty privilege of sawing off the thumb of the victim, as in the case of Jogues at Ossernenon. The human torches of Nero, who had the early Christians wrapped in straw and placed in his garden on the Palatine Hill, then set on fire to illuminate his evening revels, are vividly recalled by the death of Brebeuf's companion, the delicate and gentle Gabriel Lalemant. He was wrapped in pieces of bark which were put in a blaze. His writhing frame and quivering flesh contrasted finely with the stoic endurance of Brebeuf, and the Iroquois kept him alive till morning, leaving his body at last a black and shapeless mass.

These gifted men living and dying in the wilderness were not without devoted followers, as can well be imagined; and many of their converts, the Christian Hurons, a now conquered race, dwelt with their old foes in the Long House. With the capture of those of the Hurons who had taken refuge at Isle Orleans the long struggle ended between two branches of a great Indian family or stock,—the Huron-Iroquois and the Iroquois of the League. Once victorious, it was the policy of the Five Nations of the League to quit all enmity, and to give the vanquished a home in their midst. Though the Hurons lost their national existence when thus adopted into the League, they did not lose their Christian faith. They clung to it in the midst of all the wild superstitions of their conquerors. They explained it to others as well as they could, and they welcomed with glad hearts any blackgown who was brave enough to tread in the footsteps of Jogues.

Such an one was Father Lemoyne, who came and went five times among the Onondagas and the Mohawks between the years 1653 and 1658, even while they were at war with his countrymen on the St. Lawrence. On a hurried visit to Fort Orange, the nearest colony of Europeans, he told the people there of the salt springs which are now a source of wealth

at Syracuse; but the worthy burghers were incredulous and put it down in their records as "a Jesuit lie." These early settlers of our State, in spite of such occasional indications of prejudice, were a kind-hearted and a peace-loving people, always ready to do friendly offices for men who, unlike their rivals the Canadian traders, seemed to value the souls of the Indians more than their beaver-skins. They had already rescued two Jesuits, Jogues and Bressani, from captivity; and they afterwards sent Father Lemoyne a bottle of wine with which to say Mass at Onondaga. This last missionary the Indians now called Ondessonk, in memory of Jogues. He visited the Mohawks in 1656 to console the Huron exiles from Isle Orleans, and at the same time he reproached the Mohawk warriors for their cruelty.

This, of course, was little to the taste of Tekakwitha's pagan father, who took care, no doubt, that the blackgown should have no intercourse with his Algonquin wife, for in his opinion she was already too fond of the French Christians. He did not wish her to have his tiny, new-born daughter signed with the ill-omened cross, and to have the water of baptism poured on her head. So Ondessonk came and went, passing near, but not finding Tekakwitha's mother, who still cherished the Christian faith in her heart. When she knew that he was gone, it must have been with many a sigh and many a thought of her northern home, that she tied her baby to its cradle-board, all carved and curtained after the Indian fashion, and then loaded with the precious burden, went off as usual to her work in the corn-fields. From time to time she would pause for a moment to smile at her little breathing bundle as it swung from the branch of a tree near by, and we may be sure, too, that as she gathered in the harvest for the winter, she whispered many a prayer for peace and for the coming of the blackgown to dwell in the land, that her child might grow up a Christian. Let us hope some distant echo reached her in the Mohawk corn-field from the shores of Onondaga Lake. For there, where the city of Syracuse now sits among the hills, a crowd of Iroquois were gathered at that very time into the rough bark chapel of St. Mary's of Ganentaha, listening to the Christian law of marriage preached then for the first time in their land. Quick to understand the new dignity it gave them, the Onondaga women silently made up their minds to learn "the prayer," by which they meant Christianity. All the while that the blackgown was speaking, the captive Hurons who were in the throng gazed with pent-up joy at the face of their beloved Echon (Chaumonot, the namesake of Brebeuf), whose voice they had often heard at the mission forts in their own country. Soon after Echon's visit other fathers came among the Iroquois nations with a colony of Frenchmen; these last had been cordially invited to Onondaga. The reason for this invitation was that its people, hard pressed by their savage enemies, wanted peace with Onnontio, the French governor, and thought to secure it in this way; the Mohawks, however, took no part in this temporary peace. They were angry with the Onondagas for claiming their captives from the Isle Orleans, and they continued their raids on the French frontier regardless of a treaty made by their brother nation. It must be remembered, though, that these Indians, while warring with the French were then and always at peace with the Dutch of Fort Orange. From them they obtained the fire-arms that were used so effectively in their warfare in Canada.

The wife of the Mohawk warrior at Gandawague may have heard rumors of the treaty made with Onnontio; but she saw the great kettle prepared as usual in the Turtle village for the annual war-dance, and all hope of a peace with the French died out once more from her heart.

It was the custom of the Mohawks to set this kettle to boil in the early winter; and from time to time each warrior dropped something in to keep it going and thus to signify his intention of joining the next expedition. By February all was in readiness for the great



dance of the nation. A war-dance among the Indians is conducted in some such way as this: Stripped of all but the breech-cloth, gay with war-paint and feathers, the dried head of a bear, if that be the totem of his clan, fastened on head or shoulder, and with rattling deer-hoofs strapped to his knees, each warrior springs to his place, and the wild dance begins, accompanied by the beating of a drum. Wilder and wilder grow their antics, and more boastful the words of their chant, as they catch the spirit of the dance, till at last they seem the very incarnation of war. With all the vividness of Indian pantomime, they act out the scenes of battle before the eyes of the crouching women and children gathered in silent awe to witness this great savage drama. At first the warriors seem to be creeping along the forest trail with every faculty alert; and then with fearful whoops they whirl their tomahawks through the air at a senseless post, springing back as if in self-defence, falling again upon the imaginary foe, hacking with violence, and mingling shrieks with their victorious shouts, till in the flickering light of the fire and the weird shadows of surrounding objects, the assembled crowd, completely carried away by the vividness of the pantomime, see human victims falling beneath their strokes.

During the progress of the annual war-dance at Gandawague a group of Indian boys stand gazing with wide-open eyes at the heroes of the Kanienke-ha-ka whose past and future deeds are thus pictured before them. With swelling hearts they listen to the wild refrain, "Wah-hee! Ho-ha!" that comes at intervals. Among the smallest of the group we have in view is Tekakwitha's little brother, and her father is taking part in the dance. His voice, as it leads a louder swell of the war-song, startles her from her baby dreams, and she nestles close in her mother's arms. Later she hears the same voice in the lodge,—a few brief words rolling from the tongue<sup>[9]</sup> of the warrior in the low musical tones of the Mohawk language; and it only lulls her into sounder sleep. The dance is over, and the crowd scattered; but still we linger about to see what will happen next. A death-like silence reigns in the village. There is not one sentinel on watch. It would be well if they were more vigilant, but for the present they are safe. Their foes are far away, and the high palisade keeps off the prowling beasts. The darkness of night has closed over them. It is the hour for dreams, and dreams are the religion of the red-man. They are treasured up and told to the medicine-man or sorcerer, the influential being who is both priest and doctor in the village. When the excitement of the war-dance has subsided and the people are all sleeping soundly, this mysterious personage with stealthy tread may be seen to issue from the silent cluster of houses, and by the light of the moon he gathers his herbs and catches the uncanny creatures of the night with which to weave his spells. He knows that the young warriors will be coming to him for some inkling of their fate on the war-path, and besides he must supply a certain cure for their wounds. When he has found it for them he will gather them all in the public square at Gandawague, and after other exhibitions of his skill will perhaps cut his own lip, and when the blood is flowing freely, will stanch it and cure it in a moment by applying his magic drug. It will be well for his fame if there be not the keen eye of a French Jesuit in the crowd to watch him as he quickly sucks the blood into his mouth. He knows that the warriors are easily duped by his cunning, and will probably buy his mixture. Happy in its possession, they will fear no evil effects from their wounds. Their sweethearts too seek the sorcerer to have their fortunes told, and the old men and women come to him with their ailments. Even the orators are glad of a hint from his fertile brain; and the oyander or matron of rank who is about to nominate a new chief may perhaps consult him. If her choice has been already made, however, it is no easy task to persuade her to change her mind.

With the month of March comes the Dream-Feast, and then the medicine-man is in his glory. For three days the town is in a hubbub, given up to every freak of the imagination.

All the dreams of its people, no matter how foolish and unreasonable, must be fulfilled in some way to the dreamer's satisfaction. The wiser heads among them have to tax their ingenuity to the utmost to prevent the worst excesses of this crazy celebration. The Christian Indians, above all, dreaded its coming for if the sorcerer's interpretation pointed in their direction, they were sure to suffer. During the celebration of the Dream-Feast the Algonquin captive would not fail to hide herself and her children in the darkest corner she could find. She had a better chance to pass unnoticed, however, than the more numerous Huron Christians, who, like herself, had been captured by the Iroquois. Against these there was a growing enmity encouraged no doubt by the sorcerers, who profited least of all by their presence among the people. Some months after the time of the Dream-Feast the gathering storm burst over their heads. On the 3d of August, 1657, the Hurons, who dwelt at Onondaga, were suddenly massacred. The party that had been advocating friendship with the French, and which had taken the lead in establishing the French colony at Onondaga, headed by Garacontié ("The Sun that advances"), were fast losing ground. The situation, even of the French colonists who were there, was becoming critical; and in April, 1658, when Tekakwitha was in her second year, strange things happened in the Long House of the Five Nations.

#### FOOTNOTES:

See [Appendix, Note B](#),—the words "Gandawague" and "Tekakwitha."

Chauchetière's manuscript, "La Vie de la B. Catherine Tegakouita, dite a present La Sainte Sauuagesse," is still extant. It was copied by the author of this volume at Montreal in 1884, and was first printed in 1887: "Manate, De la Presse Cramoisy de Jean-Marie Shea."

See Vol. IV., Contributions to American Ethnology, by Lewis H. Morgan, LL.D., giving description and ground plan of an Iroquois long-house.

"The Mohawk language is on the tongue; the Wyandot is in the throat."  
—SCHOOLCRAFT'S *Red Race*.

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## CHAPTER III.

### A CRADLE-SONG.—CAPTIVES TORTURED.—FLIGHT OF THE FRENCH FROM ONONDAGA.—DEATH IN THE MOHAWK LODGES.

LET the reader, in imagination, look into Tekakwitha's home at Gandawague on the Mohawk, as it appeared in the month of April, 1658, and learn if the news that is spreading from nation to nation has yet reached there. To find the lodge he wishes to enter, he will follow a woman who is passing along the principal street of the village with

an energetic step. The corners of a long blanket, that envelops her head and whole form, flap as if in a breeze from her own quick motion, for the air is quite still. It is early spring-time. There are pools of frozen water here and there; but the dogs of the village have chosen a sunny spot to gnaw at the bones they have found near the cabin of a fortunate hunter, who gave a feast the night before to his more needy neighbors. All shared in his good cheer. So long as there is food in the village, no one is allowed to go hungry. Such is the Indian law of hospitality.

Tegonhatsihongo, who will be better known by and by under the name of Anastasia, gathers her blanket about her, and with the usual greeting, "Sago!" she passes a matron at a neighboring doorway, who withdraws the heavy bear-skin curtain she has placed there for keeping out the cold, in order that she may see where to put away the snow-shoes, now no longer needed. She stores them high above her head among the poles that support the snug bark roof. The keen eye of Tegonhatsihongo notes at a glance what the matron is about; and as she turns her head for a second look, one can see by the lines in her face that she is already on the downward slope of middle age. She passes on through an open space where a scaffold is prepared for the exhibition of any captives the warriors may chance to bring back from their raid on Montreal. Tegonhatsihongo scarcely notices these familiar preparations for the torture, but directs her steps to the lodge of a chief opening on the square. She is about to visit her friend the Algonquin, whose brave is away on the war-path. The quiet ways of this younger woman have attracted her and won her friendship. As she lifts the hanging skin to enter, she pauses a moment. Surprised, perhaps, and well pleased too to find the Algonquin in a merry mood, romping with her baby, now more than a year old, she stands and watches her. Catching the child from the clean-swept earthen floor, the mother holds it laughing and struggling in her lap, while she sings the Algonquin "Song of the Little Owl."<sup>[10]</sup> A pretty picture she makes, seated by the nearest fire of faggots, in the dim, smoky light of the long-house; and these are the words of her cradle-song and their literal translation:—

Ah wa nain?	Who is this?
Ah wa nain?	Who is this?
Wa you was sa	Giving eye-light
Ko pwasod.	On the top of my lodge.

Here the young mother looks up, as if she really saw the eyes of the little white owl glaring from among the rustic rafters or through the hole in the roof. The dark eyes of the dark little baby, which follow the direction of hers, are opening wide with wonder at this sudden break from song to pantomime; and now the Algonquin answers her own questions, assuming all at once the tone of the little screech-owl:—

Kob kob kob,	It is I, the little owl,
Nim be e zhau.	Coming, coming.
Kob kob kob,	It is I, the little owl,
Nim be e zhau.	Coming.
Kitche! kitche!	Down! down!

With the last words, meaning "Dodge, baby, dodge!" she springs towards the child, and down goes the little head. This is repeated with the utmost merriment on both sides, till their laughter is interrupted by the entrance of Tegonhatsihongo, who seats herself near her friend, their talk soon taking a serious turn. Now for the first time the Algonquin

notices that others in the same cabin are putting their heads together and talking in low voices. The very air seems full of mystery. The busy ones have dropped their accustomed occupations, and the idle ones have ceased their noisy talk and their games. All are wondering at the strange news from the Indian capital, telling of the unaccountable disappearance of the Frenchmen who formed the little colony at Onondaga. Mohawks who were there on a visit have returned with marvellous tales. The few facts of the history are soon known, but there is no end to the surmises that are afloat among the Iroquois. This is what they are all talking about. This is what happened. The French colonists whom we have already mentioned, fifty-three in number, had given a great feast at their small block fort on the east bank of Onondaga Lake.<sup>[11]</sup> All the Onondagas and their guests from other nations who chanced to be there at the time, were invited. Some of Tegahatsihongo's friends from the Mohawk Valley were present among the rest, and knew all about it. They were completely carried away with admiration for their French hosts, who gave them a right royal feast. When it was over they fell into slumber and dreamed strange dreams. Then, awaking when the sun was high, the bewildered guests went about half dazed. Some of them, straggling near the French enclosure, heard the dogs bark and a cock crow within. As the day wore on, they gathered into groups and wondered why the foreign inmates slept so long. None of them were to be seen going to work; no voices were heard. Could they be at prayer or in secret council? No one answered when they knocked at the door. By afternoon there were strange whisperings and much misgiving among the Onondagas, till at last their curiosity outgrew their dread, and nerved a few to scale the palisade. With cautious step they entered, fearing some treacherous snare. The Frenchmen could not be asleep, they thought, for the noisy barking of the dog would almost wake the dead. Could they have slain one another in the night? No; all was peaceful as they entered,—no signs of a struggle, and the sunlight danced playfully in through utter vacancy. Every corner of the house and fort was searched; no human being, dead or living, was found, yet noisy and more noisy grew the barking of the fastened dog, and frightened chickens fluttered about. The Indians looked at one another, shuddering. What had happened? With guilty consciences they thought of their deep-laid treachery here brought to naught; for as the Algonquin now learned from the talk in the long-house, they had planned to massacre the colony invited to their land from policy. Having subjugated their savage foes of the Cat nation, they were ready to turn their arms once more against the French. They had felt quite sure of their prey; for even if warned, the colonists and missionaries could not have escaped, they thought, as the rivers were still frozen. Besides, it was out of the question to suppose they had gone by water, as no boat was missing. Had they taken to the woods, they would soon have perished in the cold, having no guides, or else they would have fallen again into the hands of their enemies, who could easily track and overtake them in the forest. No trace of them, however, was anywhere to be found. Never were the red men more completely baffled. Tegahatsihongo and the others who talked it all over had two favorite explanations of the mystery,—either the Frenchmen had a magic power of walking on the lakes, or else strange creatures, seen by Onondagas in their dreams, had flown through the air bearing the pale-faces with them.

While Tekakwitha's mother was still wondering at this unaccountable story, the Mohawk braves returned from their raid on Montreal, and the people of the village were soon hurrying out with little iron rods, to take their stand on either side of the path that led up the hill to the principal opening in the palisade. There they were, ready to beat the prisoners as they approached, "running the gauntlet." Then the crowd eagerly watched the progress of the tortures on the scaffold, after which the prisoners were handed over, bound hand and foot, to the tender mercies of the children. These juvenile savages

amused themselves by putting red-hot coals on the naked flesh of the captives, and tormented them in every way their mischief-loving brains could devise. Thus early did the warrior's son begin his education.

But this side of the Indian nature is too horrible to dwell on; let it pass. At times the Iroquois were like incarnate devils; and yet each tale of frightful cruelty that history preserves for us brings with it some redeeming trait, some act of kindness or humanity done in the face of savage enmity. There were always a few among them ready like Pocahontas to avert the threatened blow or to relieve the sufferers whenever it was possible. One of these in days gone by had administered to Jogues; and one of these in days now soon to come will prove to be our Tekakwitha.

There is little more to say about her parents. Her mother may have learned from some of the captives brought to Gandawague from Canada the true ending of the French colony at Onondaga. At all events, the following explanation of their sudden disappearance has been given by Ragueneau, who shared the fate of the adventurous little band. He says in one of his letters:—

"To supply the want of canoes, we had built in secret two batteaux of a novel and excellent structure to pass the rapids; these batteaux drew but very little water and carried considerable freight, fourteen or fifteen men each, amounting to fifteen or sixteen hundred weight. We had moreover four Algonquin and four Iroquois canoes, which were to compose our little fleet of fifty-three Frenchmen. But the difficulty was to embark unperceived by the Iroquois, who constantly beset us. The batteaux, canoes, and all the equipage could not be conveyed without great noise, and yet without secrecy there was nothing to be expected, save a general massacre of all of us the moment it would be discovered that we entertained the least thought of withdrawing.

On that account we invited all the savages in our neighborhood to a solemn feast, at which we employed all our industry, and spared neither the noise of drums nor instruments of music, to deceive them by harmless device. He who presided at this ceremony played his part with so much address and success that all were desirous to contribute to the public joy. Every one vied in uttering the most piercing cries, now of war, anon of rejoicing. The savages, through complaisance, sung and danced after the French fashion, and the French in the Indian style. To encourage them the more in this fine play, presents were distributed among those who acted best their parts and who made the greatest noise to drown that caused by about forty of our people outside who were engaged in removing all our equipage. The embarkation being completed, the feast was concluded at a fixed time; the guests retired, and sleep having soon overwhelmed them, we withdrew from our house by a back door and embarked with very little noise, without bidding adieu to the savages, who were acting cunning parts and were thinking to amuse us to the hour of our massacre with fair appearances and evidences of good will.

"Our little lake,<sup>[12]</sup> on which we silently sailed in the darkness of the night, froze according as we advanced, and caused us to fear being stopt by the ice after having evaded the fires of the Iroquois. God, however, delivered us, and after having advanced all night and all the following day through frightful precipices and waterfalls, we arrived finally in the evening at the great Lake

Ontario, twenty leagues from the place of our departure. This first day was the most dangerous; for had the Iroquois observed our departure, they would have intercepted us, and had they been ten or twelve it would have been easy for them to have thrown us into disorder, the river being very narrow, and terminating after travelling ten leagues in a frightful precipice where we were obliged to land and carry our baggage and canoes during four hours, through unknown roads covered with a thick forest which could have served the enemy for a fort, whence at each step he could have struck and fired on us without being perceived. God's protection visibly accompanied us during the remainder of the road, in which we walked through perils which made us shudder after we escaped them, having at night no other bed except the snow after having passed entire days in the water and amid the ice.

Ten days after our departure we found Lake Ontario, on which we floated, still frozen at its mouth. We were obliged to break the ice, axe in hand, to make an opening, to enter two days afterwards a rapid where our little fleet had well-nigh foundered. For having entered a great *sault* without knowing it, we found ourselves in the midst of breakers which, meeting a quantity of big rocks, threw up mountains of water and cast us on as many precipices as we gave strokes of paddles. Our batteaux, which drew scarcely half a foot, were soon filled with water, and all our people in such confusion that their cries mingled with the roar of the torrent presented to us the spectacle of a dreadful wreck. It became imperative, however, to extricate ourselves, the violence of the current dragging us despite ourselves into the large rapids and through passes in which we had never been. Terror redoubled at the sight of one of our canoes being engulfed in a breaker which barred the entire rapid, and which, notwithstanding, was the course that all the others must keep. Three Frenchmen were drowned there; a fourth fortunately escaped, having held on to the canoe and being saved at the foot of the *sault* when at the point of letting go his hold, his strength being exhausted....

"The 3d of April we landed at Montreal in the beginning of the night."

This escape, so wonderful to the Indian mind and so successful, made a profound impression at Gandawague as among all the Mohawks, and produced most important results in the neighborhood of Tekakwitha's home, interrupting the work of the missionary there.

Ondessonk or Lemoyne, the namesake of Jogues, who made a third visit to the Mohawk Valley in the fall of 1657, was no longer even tolerated by its people. He was held half a hostage, half a prisoner, at Tionnontogen, during the time that the French colony were in peril at Onondaga, and was finally sent back to Canada. He left the Mohawk country for the last time, just after Onondaga was abandoned by the French. He reached his countrymen on the St. Lawrence in May, 1658, to be greeted there with a glad welcome and many inquiries from the newly arrived refugees from Onondaga, concerning his experiences among the Mohawks; they were anxious to hear whether he had fared any better than themselves.

Not one blackgown was now left among the Five Nations of Iroquois. The Algonquin mother at Gandawague had been unable to profit by their brief stay in the land, and her life grew ever sadder towards its close. She was finally laid low by a terrible disease, the small-pox, which spread like wild fire through the Mohawk nation in 1659 and 1660. Her brave, an early victim to this redman's plague, soon lay cold in death, and with aching



heart she too bade good-by to the world, leaving her helpless children alone and struggling with the disease in a desolate lodge in a desolate land.

Chauchetière relates what he learned long afterwards from Anastasia Tegonhatsihongo,—that in leaving her two little children the mother grieved at having to abandon them without baptism; that she was a fervent Christian to the last, and that she met death with a prayer on her lips.

#### FOOTNOTES:

Schoolcraft's Red Race.

The site of this fort is still pointed out between Salina and Liverpool, near the "Jesuit's Spring," or "Well," as it is called. For a plan of the fort made by Judge Geddes in 1797, from remains of it then in existence, see Clark's "Onondaga," p. 147. See also "Relations des Jésuites," and translations of the same in the "Documentary History of New York," vol. i., for a full account of the Onondaga Colony in 1658.

Onondaga Lake.

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## CHAPTER IV.

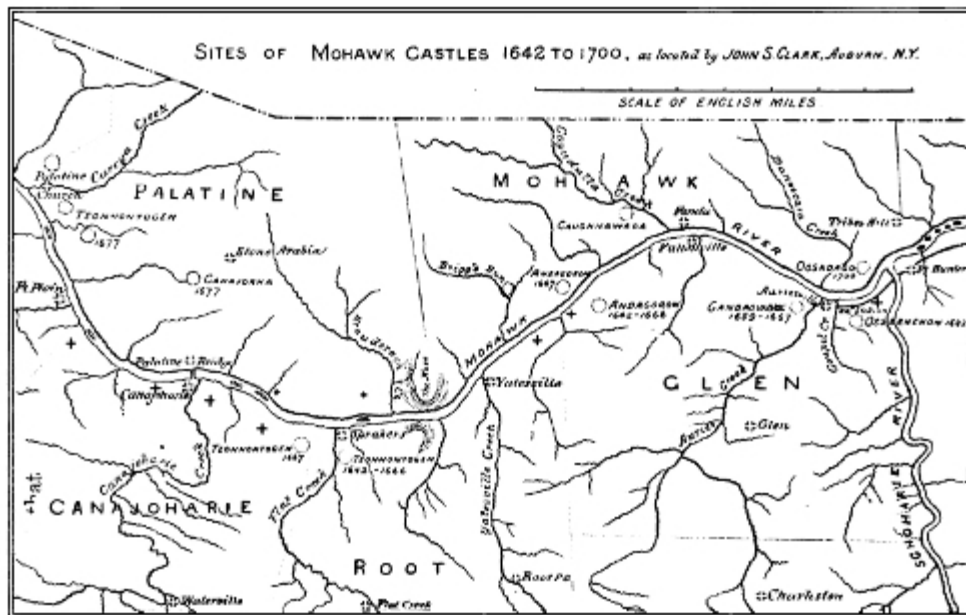
### TEKAKWITHA WITH HER AUNTS AT GANDAWAGUE.

TEKAKWITHA'S brother shared the fate of her parents. All three died within the space of a few days. Overshadowed by death and disease when she was only four years old, the little Indian child alone remained of the family. How she won her name is not known, though Indian names have always a meaning. They are never arbitrarily given. The word "Tekakwitha," as M. Cuoq, the philologist, translates it, means "One who approaches moving something before her." Marcoux, the author of a complete Iroquois dictionary, renders it, "One who puts things in order."<sup>[13]</sup>

It has been suggested in reference to M. Cuoq's interpretation, that the name may have been given to her on account of a peculiar manner of walking caused by her imperfect sight; for it is related that the small-pox so injured her eyes that for a long time she was obliged to shade them from a strong light. It is possible that in groping or feeling her way while a child, she may have held out her hands in a way that suggested the pushing of something in front of her, and thus have received her name. On the other hand, the interpretation of M. Marcoux, as given by Shea, is thoroughly in keeping with her character. She indeed spent a great part of her life, as the record shows, in *putting things in order*.



On the death of Tekakwitha's father, her uncle, according to the Indian laws of descent, would fall heir to the title of chief, after having been chosen by the matron or *stirps* of the family,<sup>[14]</sup> and then duly elected by the men of the Turtle clan. Tekakwitha then became an inmate of her uncle's lodge,—which was quite natural, for indeed she was likely to prove a valuable acquisition to the household. This uncle was impoverished, no doubt, by the plague and also by the custom of making presents. A chief is expected to dispense freely, and is generally poor in spite of his honors. But daughters were always highly prized by the Iroquois; as they grew up they were expected to do a large part of the household work; and later, when wedded to some sturdy hunter, the lodge to which a young woman belonged, claimed and received whatever her husband brought from the chase. So the aunts and the uncle of Tekakwitha acted quite as much from worldly wisdom as from humanity when they decided to give the young orphan a home. Forethought was mixed with their kindness, and perhaps also a bit of selfishness. They had no children of their own, but they adopted another young girl besides Tekakwitha, thus giving to their niece a sister somewhat older than herself. The home of this family, after the small-pox had spent its force and when the distress it caused had forced the Mohawks to make a treaty of peace with the French, was at Gandawague,<sup>[15]</sup> on a high point of land in the angle between Auries Creek and the Mohawk River.



**Sites of Mohawk Castles 1642 TO 1700, as located by John S Clark,  
Auburn NY**

Here on the crest of the hill, in a wheat-field west of the creek, there still are signs of an Indian village, and just outside of the fence in a patch of woods Indian graves and corn-pits are to be seen. Well does the writer remember a bright summer day when that village site where Tekakwitha must have spent her early childhood was visited and examined for traces of Iroquois occupation. Three of us had driven over from the spring and castle-site of Caughnawaga at Fonda to the west side of Auries Creek. Leaving our carriage, we mounted the steep bank of the stream, eager to find the exact site of Gandawague, to which the people of Ossernenon moved before they crossed the river to

Caughnawaga. We stood at last on the hard-won summit, and there lay the landscape in its tranquil beauty,—the Mohawk Valley, the river, a wheat-field against a dark wood, and off in the distance the court-house of Fonda, and dim Caughnawaga, all bathed in a glory of sunshine. Nearer at hand and toward the east, a little white steeple gleamed through the trees, marking the site of the modern village of Auriesville. We stood high above it, on the upper river terrace, where old Gandawague had once been; and though the rude Indian castle at that spot had long ago been trampled out of existence, we seemed to see it rise again from the ashes of its ancient hearthfires. Then, looking off toward the Schoharie, in our mind's eye we plainly saw on the broad, grassy plateau the still older village of Ossernenon, with its high palisade, that once upheld the ghastly head of the martyred Jogues. The scene was before us in all its details. The past had become like the present that day, and what was then present, all blended with sunshine that blotted out the tragic and left the heroic parts of the picture, has since become past. Those glorious hours at the castle-sites near Auriesville, so rich in awakened thought, contagious enthusiasm, and newly acquired information, are only a memory now; and mention is made of them here in the hope that others may feel a stir of interest in their hearts, and be roused to visit the Mohawk Valley, and the places so closely linked to the names of Jogues and Tekakwitha,—Ossernenon, where the shrine is built; Gandawague, on the bank of Auries Creek; and Caughnawaga,<sup>[16]</sup> five miles farther up the river.

Tekakwitha was only a little girl when she lived at Gandawague. It could hardly have been a large castle, on such a small bit of high land. They had little need at this time of a large castle, for many had died of the small-pox. The old Dutch records of the time relate that the Turtles, or people of the lower castle, were building a new palisade, in the latter part of the year 1659,—a task which would necessarily accompany a removal from Ossernenon; and they asked the Dutchmen, their neighbors, to help them. The friendship of these settlers for the Mohawks was put to rather a queer test when they proposed that the Dutch should not only furnish them with horses, but should drive them themselves, and drag the heavy logs up the hill for the palisade.<sup>[17]</sup> They were not used to such work; and it better became the settlers to do it, they thought, than Mohawk warriors!

Some Dutchmen of Fort Orange were at the Turtle Castle on an embassy when this unpleasant proposal was made to them, and they thus shirked it. "Do you not see we are tired?" they said. "We have travelled far through the forest. Our men are few and weary; besides you have no roads. Our horses could never get up there. You must excuse us, our friends, and manage to do it without us. See, as a token of friendship, we have brought you fifty new hatchets." Then, giving the Indians knick-knacks and weapons, they bade them farewell and departed, journeying back in haste to their homes on the Hudson.

Thus the Indians were left to finish their own palisade, or stockade, whichever one may choose to call it; and the uncle of Tekakwitha doubtless worked with the rest. When it was finished, it stood and protected them well for six uneventful years; that is to say, they were uneventful for Indians, though during the whole of that period they were making and breaking treaties of peace with the French, and were warring with other tribes. During this time, while the fighting was all carried on at a distance from the Mohawk castles, Tekakwitha lived in the greatest seclusion. She was cared for and taught by her aunts, in one of the cabins closed in by the palisade. She was learning the arts of the Indians, doing the daily work, and shrinking from all observation. This unsociable habit of hers (for so it must have seemed to her neighbors) was due in part to her own disposition,—modest, shy, and reserved,—but more than all, perhaps, to the fact that the small-pox had injured her eyesight. As she could not endure much light, she remained indoors, and when forced to go out, her eyes were shaded by her blanket. Little by little she grew to

love a life of quiet and silence. Besides, she showed a wonderful aptness for learning to make all the curious bark utensils and wooden things that were used in the village. Much to her aunts' satisfaction, she had an industrious spirit. This they took care to encourage, as it made her very useful. These aunts were exceedingly vain; and a child of less sense than the young Tekakwitha would soon have been spoiled by their foolishness.

Chauchetière has told us quaintly, in old-fashioned French, "what she did during the first years of her age." We cannot do better here than to follow his account, translating it almost word for word:—

"The natural inclination which girls have to appear well, makes them esteem very much whatever adorns the body; and that is why the young savages from seven to eight years of age are silly, and have a great love for *porcelaine* (wampum). The mothers are even more foolish, for they sometimes spend a great deal of time in combing and dressing the hair of their daughters; they take care that their ears shall be pierced, and commence to pierce them from the cradle; they put paint on their faces, and fairly cover them with beads when they have occasion to go to the dance.

"Those into whose hands Tegakoüita fell when her mother died, resolved to have her marry very soon, and with this object they brought her up in all these little vanities; but the little Tegakoüita, who was not yet a Christian, in truth, nor baptized, had a natural indifference for all these things. She was like a tree without flowers and without fruit; but this little wild olive was budding so well into leaf that it promised some day to bear beautiful fruit; or a heaven covered with the darkness of paganism, but a heaven indeed, for she was far removed from the corruption of the savages,—she was sweet, patient, chaste, and innocent. *Sage comme une fille française bien élevée*,—As good as a French girl well brought up,—this is the testimony that has been given by those who knew her from a very young age, and who in using this expression gave in a few words a beautiful panegyric of Catherine Tegakoüita. Anastasia Tegonhatsihongo said of her that 'she had no faults.'

"Her occupation was to carry little bundles of wood with her mother, that is to say, her aunt, the matron of the lodge, to put wood on the fire when the mother told her, to go for water when those in the cabin had need of it; and when they gave her no further commands she amused herself with her little jewels,—I mean she dressed herself up in the fashion of the other young girls of her age, just to pass the time. She would put a necklace about her throat; she would put bracelets of beads on her arms, rings on her fingers, and ear-rings in her ears. She made the ribbons and bands which the savages make with the skins of eels, which they redden, and render suitable for binding up their hair. She wore large and beautiful girdles, which they call wampum belts."

[These decorations not only adorn the person, but they also show the rank of the maiden who wears them. <sup>[18]</sup>]

"There was a sort of child-marriage in vogue among the Iroquois. Certain agreements of theirs were called marriage, which amounted to nothing more than a bond of friendship between the parents, rendered more firm by giving away a child, who was often still in the cradle; thus they married a girl to a little boy. This was done at a time when Tegakoüita was still very small; she

was given to a child. The little girl was only about eight years old; the boy was hardly older than herself. They were both of the same humor, both very good children; and the little boy troubled himself no more about the marriage than did the girl."

It was a mere formality; but it shows how early Tekakwitha's relatives began to think of establishing her in life.

#### FOOTNOTES:

So cited by Shea in his translation of Charlevoix's "History of New France," vol. iv. For different ways of spelling Tekakwitha's name, see [Appendix, Note B](#), where the grammatical explanation of it by M. Cuoq is also given.

Among the Iroquois descent was never reckoned through the male line, the *stirps* being always a woman. A chief, therefore, derived his title from his mother. To her family, not his father's, he belonged; and back to her or to her mother at his death the title was referred, to be transmitted through her to some other descendant.

See [General Clark's map](#) herewith printed.

The castle of Caughnawaga at Fonda was also called Gandawague, long after its removal from Auries Creek. But it prevents confusion to give it always its more distinctive name of Caughnawaga.

See [Appendix, Note A](#), Letter of June 29, 1885.

See Cholenec, who mentions this fact in the "Lettres Édifiantes," translated by Kip in his work entitled "Early Jesuit Missions." What is said concerning child-marriage is from Chauchetière's manuscript.

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## CHAPTER V.

### TEKAKWITHA'S UNCLE AND FORT ORANGE; OR THE BEGINNINGS OF ALBANY.

CHOLENEC, the more concise of the two contemporary biographers of Kateri Tekakwitha, in speaking of her early life says: "She found herself an orphan under the care of her aunts, and *in the power of an uncle who was the leading man in the settlement.*" This brief expression gives us an intimation both of the character and the rank of Tekakwitha's formidable Mohawk uncle. He was stern, unbending, fierce; and like many another chief reared in the Long House, was proudly tenacious of the customs of his race. He was often on the worst of terms with the French blackgowns because they

interfered with the beliefs and manners of his people; but always on the best of terms with the Dutch traders, who, in exchange for the rich furs brought in so plentifully to Fort Orange, supplied the Mohawks of Gandawague (or, as the Dutch wrote it, Kaghnuwage) with muskets, iron tomahawks, pipes, tobacco, copper kettles, scissors, duffels, strouds for blankets, and more than all, the keenly relished, comforting "fire water."

The influx of liquor to the Iroquois castles led to reckless debauches, fast following in the track of the small-pox, which stalked with unchecked violence through the Long House in 1660. During the course of the following year an important transaction took place between the white settlers on the Hudson and the Indians along the Mohawk, or Maquaas Kill. "A certain parcel of land," to use the words of the old deed, "called in Dutch the Groote Vlachte (Great Flatt), lying behind Fort Orange, between the same and the Mohawk country," was sold by Mohawk chiefs—Cantuquo (whose mark was a Bear); Aiadane, a Turtle; Sonareetsie, a Wolf; and Sodachdrasse—to Sieur Arent van Corlaer, July 27, 1661. "A grant under the provincial seal was issued in the following year, but the land was not surveyed or divided until 1664." The Indian name of the Great Flatt was Schonowe, and the new village of white settlers which soon sprang up on the south bank of the Mohawk was called Schenectady by the Dutch and English; though the French, who did not for some time learn of its existence, first knew this little outpost of Fort Orange by the name of Corlaer,<sup>[19]</sup> the earliest settler.

This founding of Schenectady was an event of deep interest to the Mohawks of Gandawague. It brought the dwellings of the white race closer than ever before to their own stronghold, almost in fact to the very door of the Kanonsionni, or People of the Long House. The settlers began at once to rear their wonderful wooden palaces, for such they must have seemed to the simple children of the forest. The wild banks of the Maquaas Kill had hitherto shown no prouder architecture than the long bark houses of the Mohawks, which nevertheless were much in advance of the wigwams or tents of the roving Algonquin tribes. The Indians of Gandawague must have hastened down in their canoes to watch the building of Schenectady, and listened with interest and curiosity to the strange buzz of the newly erected sawmill. These were already familiar sights and sounds, however, to Tekakwitha's uncle, for he had long been in the habit of trading with the Dutch and knew their ways. He often journeyed as far as their trading-house at Fort Orange. Let us follow in the footsteps of this Mohawk chief as he starts once again on the trail that leads eastward from Gandawague with furs he has been hoarding for some new purchase. Let us pass hurriedly on beyond the new abode of his friend Corlaer, and we shall then see the sights that greet him as he approaches the homes of the traders who dwell beside the Hudson,—or Cahotatea, as the chief of the Turtle Castle would call the great North River in his own language. He has other Indians of his nation with him. These Mohawks, says the first Dutch dominie, in the account he gives of them, have good features, with black hair and eyes, and they are well proportioned; they go naked in summer, and in winter they hang loosely about them a deer's, bear's, or panther's skin, or else they sew small skins together into a square piece, or buy two and a half ells of duffels from the Dutchmen. Some of them wear shoes and stockings of deer's skins; others of plaited corn-leaves. Their hair is left growing on one side of the head only, or else worn like a cock's comb or hog's bristles standing up in a streak from forehead to neck; some of them leave queer little locks growing here and there. Their faces are painted red and blue, so that they "look like the devil himself," continues the worthy Megapolensis. They carry a basket of bear's grease with which they smear their heads, and in travelling they take with them a maize-kettle and a wooden spoon and bowl. When it is meal-time they get fire very quickly by rubbing pieces of wood together; and they cook and devour their fish

and venison without the preliminary cleaning and preparing considered necessary among civilized folks. When they feel pain they say, "Ugh! the devil bites," and when they wish to compliment their own nation they say, "Really the Mohawks are very cunning devils." They make no offerings to their good genius or national god, Tharonyawagon; but they worship the demon Otkon or Aireskoi, praying in this way, "Forgive us for not eating our enemies!" and in hot weather, "I thank thee, Devil, I thank thee, Oomke, for the cool breeze." They laugh at the Dutch prayers, the dominie tells us, and also at the sermon. They call the Christians of Fort Orange cloth-makers (*assyreoni*) and iron-workers (*charistooni*).

These uncouth travellers from Gandawague, among whom is the uncle of Tekakwitha, are fast nearing the homes of these same cloth-makers and iron-workers. Let us hasten to overtake them, and find our way with them into the settlement of Rensselaerwyck. You who dwell in New York State and you who travel through it, come with us now to visit old Fort Orange and the little town of Beverwyck! You above all who love to trace your lineage to the staid old Dutchmen of New Netherlands, come! Let us see the homes of these grandsires whose names appear so often in the record and ancient annals of our oldest chartered city. Come, too, you sons of English colonists, and see the flag of England float strangely in the Hudson River breezes while they are still loaded with the cumbrous sounds of the Low Dutch language! We will stay and see the laws of England put an end to queer old wordy wars between the stately Dutch patroon Van Rensselaer and Peter Stuyvesant, the doughty old Director-general, last and greatest of the four Dutch governors,—the one called "Wooden Leg" by Indians, and "Hard-headed Pete" by Dutchmen; though the poets say he had a *silver leg*, and the artists love to paint him with a gallant flourish as he stumped it down the street beside some pretty, quaintly dressed colonial belle. His were the days of knee-breeches and gigantic silver buckles, of ruffles and queues, of broad, short petticoats bedecked with mighty pockets, and of scissors and keys that hung from the belt,—the days of demure tea-parties and hilarious coasting-parties, of negro slaves and of sugar-loaf hats. As for weapons of war, the muskets they carried were strange and clumsy arms, with long, portable rests and "two fathoms of match," which the soldier must needs have with him, besides the heavy armor and the queer tackle for ammunition. No wonder that the wearers of such gear dreaded wars with the nimble savages!

Rip Van Winkle, after sleeping twenty years, awoke to painful changes; he was sadly out of date. It would surely then be cruel, even if we had the power, to wake old Peter Stuyvesant and the people of his day from full two hundred years of slumber in our graveyards just to criticise their dress and talk. Let us rather go to sleep ourselves and dream about them. Take a good strong dose of unassorted, crude, colonial history interspersed with annals, and the necessary drowsiness will surely follow. Have you tried it? Are you sure the spell is not upon you now, having stopped to look at Stuyvesant, and heard the dominie describe the Mohawks? The smoke of pipes and chimneys is at hand, for here we are at old Fort Orange in the times of Tekakwitha. Let us look about, before the power to do it fails us out of very sleepiness. We find ourselves within a wall of stockadoes. The chief and his friends from Kaghnuwage are undoing their packs of furs near the northern gate of the town. We stand in Albany, at the corner of Broadway and State Street,—but no! those names are not yet in vogue. We are in Beverwyck, at the point where the long, rambling Handelaer Street, running parallel with Hudson's River, crosses the broad, short Joncaer Street, which climbs some little distance up the hill. Before us is the old Dutch church. It stands by itself, at the intersection of the two streets, fronting south. It is a low, square, plain stone building, with a four-sided roof rising to a central summit surmounted by a small cupola or belfry containing the famous little bell

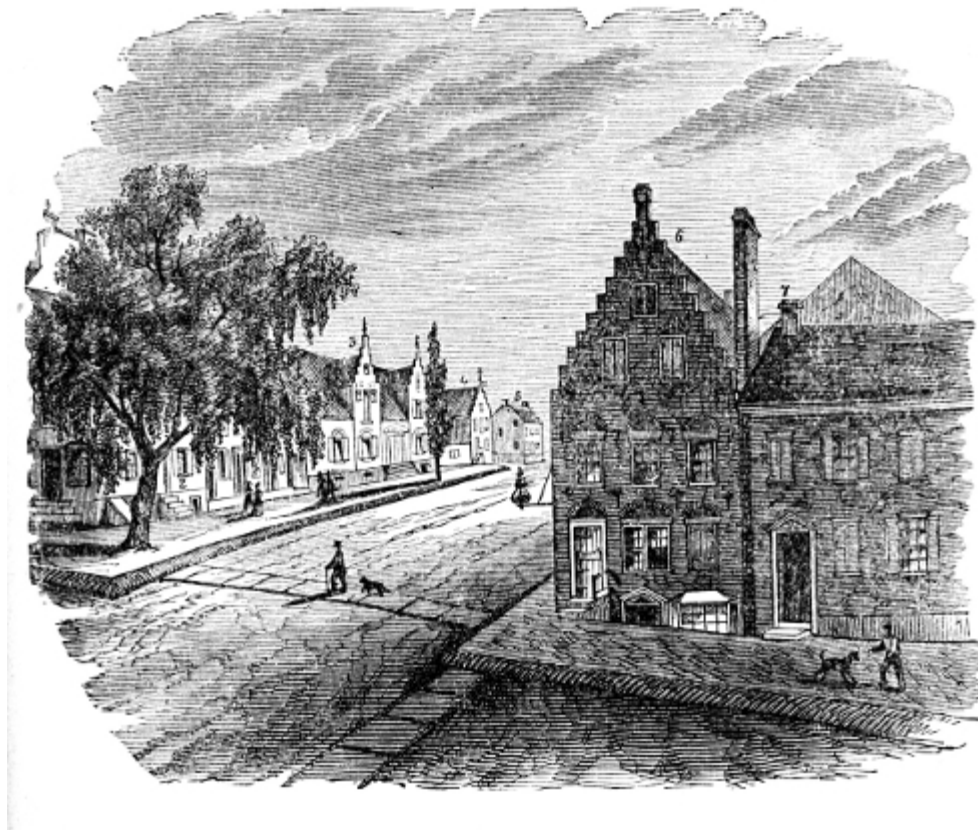


just sent over from Holland by the Dutch West India Company; on this belfry is upreared a saucy little weathercock. The south porch or vestibule is approached by a large stone step before the principal door. If the church were not locked, we might take a look inside at the carved oaken pulpit with its queer little bracket for the dominie's hourglass. The burghers subscribed twenty-five beaver-skins to buy that pulpit, and a splendid one it was. It soon came sailing over the sea in a plump Dutch ship. The patrons of the colony finding the beaver-skins much damaged when the package was opened at Amsterdam had added seventy-five guilders themselves towards the purchase, besides presenting the bell outright. When Dominie Megapolensis first arrived in the colony, "nine benches" were enough to seat the whole congregation; but that was a generation ago. Now it has increased; and the church, which was then a wooden structure near the old fort by the river, has been rebuilt. The Van Rensselaers, the Wendels, the Schuylers and the Van der Blaas have the leading pews; they have already sent to Europe for stained glass windows blazoned with their family arms. Having seen the church, let us walk up Joncaer (State) Street to the dominie's. We pass through the market-place, which is out in the middle of the open, grassy space, on a line with the church. We stop a moment to look at the house of Anneke Janse, the heiress, and then move on to Parrell (Pearl) Street. There, on the northeast corner of Parrell and Joncaer Streets, gable end foremost, stands the comfortable abode of Dominie Schaats, which is the pride and envy of the town. Every part of this, the first brick house in the New World, is said to have been imported from Holland,—bricks, woodwork, tiles, and also the ornamental irons with which it is profusely adorned,—all expressly for the use of the Rev. Gideon Schaets (or Schaats), who came over in 1652. The materials of the house arrived simultaneously with the bell and pulpit in 1657.<sup>[20]</sup>

From Schaats' house we see, instead of a solitary "old elm-tree" on the opposite corner, many trees of different kinds, one in front of each of the straggling houses on either side of Joncaer Street; and by the age of the tree one can tell pretty well the order in which the different settlers arrived and began to domesticate themselves. This was no sooner done than the inevitable shade-tree was planted to overshadow the dwelling, and beneath this tree they bring the cow each evening to be milked. Around every house is a garden with a well; and the stoop at the front door is supplied with wooden seats or benches. There old and young gather in the evening when the day's work is over.

The upper half of the front door remains open all day in summer, while the lower half bars out the stray chickens and dogs. It is opened now and then, however, to let the children in and out, and once in a while a buxom *vrouw* leans out to chat with a passer-by, or perhaps to scold the little ones or to bid them beware of straying near the trading-house for fear of encountering a tipsy Indian. This trading-house is outside the wall of stockadoes, or upright posts, encircling the town. The traders of Beverwyck are all obliged "to ride their stockadoes,"—that is to say, to furnish the pine posts, thirteen feet long and one foot in diameter, for repairing the wooden wall. This duty falls alike on every inhabitant, at the command of the burgomasters and schepens. They are furthermore bound to take turns in drawing firewood to the trading-house for the use of the Indians when they come there from the Maquaas country loaded with packs of furs.





**OLD ALBANY.—DOMINIE SCHAATS' HOUSE.**  
*(Corner of Joncaer and Parrell Streets.)*

Above Dominie Schaats' house and on the same side of Joncaer Street is the Corps de Garde, a small block fort where a few soldiers are stationed. There the progress of our walk is checked by the stout wall of stockadoes. One of the six gates or openings, however, is near at hand, leading out on to the road to Schenectady. We wish to see more of the place, and are at a loss to find our way; so we accept the kindly offered guidance of a little Schuyler lad, named Pieter, who stands talking to one of the soldiers. Already in his boyish days this public-spirited Albanian takes an active interest in the military defence of the place. He knows where all the cannon are placed, and can tell us how they propose to improve the fort and barracks on Joncaer Street. He takes us out by the Parrell Street gate to a road leading southward toward the hamlet of Bethlehem. After the boy has shown us the mills on the Bever Kill (Buttermilk Creek) from which the village of Beverwyck was named, he takes us down to old Fort Orange by the river-side.<sup>[21]</sup> It has been a snug little fort in its day, built of logs with four bastions, each mounted by two guns for throwing stones, while in the enclosure stands a large cannon on wheels close to the old trading-house of the West India Company. Since the new one has been built, this is used as the vice-director's house. It is twenty-six feet long, two stories high, constructed of boards one inch thick, with a roof in the form of a pavilion covered with old shingles. The space on the second floor is one undivided room directly under the roof without a chimney, to which access can be had by a straight ladder through a trap-door.<sup>[22]</sup> Here the magistrates administer justice. This is for the time being the court-house of Beverwyck.

Fort Orange at the time of our visit is falling to decay; Fort Willemstadt, on the contrary, the military post at the head of Joncaer Street, is increasing in importance. Near Fort Orange is the great pasture or common where the cows of the burghers are grazing, and

there, a short distance below the fort, we see the ferry-boat travelling slowly across the river to Greenbosch. We have caught sight of several deer and wild turkeys on the outskirts of the town, and we have passed several patriarchal "negers" (as the magistrates of Fort Orange spell the word): and here comes the special property of Pete Schuyler in the shape of a black boy of his own age, who is followed by a troop of sturdy children, some of whom are the brothers and sisters of our young guide. There, to be sure, are Guysbert, and Gertrude (who is destined to wed Stephanus van Cort) Alida (who will add to her own name of Schuyler the name of Van Rensselaer and afterwards Livingston),<sup>[23]</sup> while toddling after these juvenile belles of Fort Orange come Brant and Arent, their brothers, and still there are others to come. These are the numerous children of Philip Pietersen Schuyler, who came over in 1650, and of his fair *vrouw* Margritta van Slichtenhorst. This good couple were married with great formality before Dominie Schaats arrived, by Antoni de Hooges, the secretary of the colony, whose nose has been immortalized in the Highlands of the Hudson. Their son Pieter, our little guide, is to be the first mayor of the city of Albany; while the distinguished Philip of a later date will carry the name of Schuyler to a height of glory that will linger round the shaft of the Saratoga monument at Schuylerville for ages to come, and make it glow with an added beauty!

But while our thoughts are thus running away with us from Fort Orange, a farmer, Teunis van Vechten, coming from Greenbosch with supplies for the Beverwyck market, offers the children a ride into the town, which they accept with a shout. This rouses us from our reverie, and we follow the merry load as they jog along the country road from Fort Orange to the nearest gate in the stockade (about where the street now called Hudson Avenue crosses Handelaer Street, or Broadway). With a crack of the farmer's whip they drive rapidly down into a sort of ravine, cross the Rутten Kill<sup>[24]</sup> on a bridge, and ascend the opposite slope. The farmer soon passes the door of the Dutch Reformed Church, where our ramble began, and turning into Joncaer Street pulls up his horses at the market-place. The children scamper back across the Rутten Kill to the Schuyler store on Handelaer Street, opposite Beaver Street, and pass on down to the grassy river-side behind it, where a sloop is moored. Their father is there overseeing the men who are loading it with beaver-skins and other goods. The day's work is nearly over. The sunlight is fading from the hill-tops across the river. All will soon go in to supper. If we were not too tired we might in a few moments walk the whole length of Handelaer Street towards the north gate. In that case we would have a peep now and then through the half-open curtains of the scattered houses; for see! they are beginning to light up for the evening meal. In passing along we would probably startle the dogs from their kennels in the gardens, and hasten the farewells of the lovers who linger on the front stoops in the gathering dusk. Then issuing by the north gate (where Steuben Street comes into Broadway), we might go by moonlight to the Patroon's house, between which and Beverwyck are corn-fields where the burghers grow corn for their slaves and also for their horses, pigs, and poultry. We would then be not far from the Patroon's mills, where all the settlers are in duty bound to go, and not elsewhere, to have their sawing and grinding done. These mills are on the Fifth, or Patroon's Kill, counting from the Norman's Kill near Kenwood.

We must not leave the neighborhood of Fort Orange and Beverwyck until we have been to a trading-house just outside of the stockade (Pemberton's was used for such a purpose at one time, and also the Glenn House). There we shall have an opportunity to listen to some such conversation as the following between a Dutch trader and an Indian.<sup>[25]</sup> Let us suppose that the trader on this occasion is one of the enterprising burghers whom we encountered during our walk on Joncaer Street, and the Indian a Mohawk warrior in the

company of Tekakwitha's uncle, who, as we have seen, travelled from Gandawague for the purpose of bartering his furs at Beverwyck.

"*Indian*. Brother, I am come to trade with you; but I forewarn you to be more moderate in your demands than formerly.

"*Trader*. Why, brother, are not my goods of equal value with those you had last year?

"*Indian*. Perhaps they are; but mine are more valuable because more scarce. The Great Spirit, who has withheld from you strength and ability to provide food and clothing for yourselves, has given you cunning and art to make guns and provide scaura (rum), and by speaking smooth words to simple men, when they have swallowed madness, you have by little and little purchased their hunting-grounds and made them corn-lands. Thus the beavers grow more scarce, and deer fly farther back; yet after I have reserved skins for my mantle and the clothing of my wife, I will exchange the rest.

"*Trader*. Be it so, brother; I came not to wrong you, or take your furs against your will. It is true that the beavers are fewer and you go farther for them. Come, brother, let us deal fair first and smoke friendly afterwards. Your last gun cost fifty beaver-skins; you shall have this for forty; and you shall give marten and raccoon skins in the same proportion for powder and shot.

"*Indian*. Well, brother, that is equal. Now, for two silver bracelets, with long pendent ear-rings of the same, such as you sold to Cardarani in the sturgeon month last year,—how much will you demand?

"*Trader*. The skins of two deer for the bracelets and those of two fawns for the ear-rings.

"*Indian*. That is a great deal; but wampum grows scarce, and silver never rusts. Here are the skins.

"*Trader*. Do you buy any more? Here are knives, hatchets, and beads of all colors.

"*Indian*. I will have a knife and a hatchet, but must not take more. The rest of the skins will be little enough to clothe the women and children, and buy wampum. Your beads are of no value; no warrior who has slain a wolf will wear them.<sup>[26]</sup>

"*Trader*. Here are many things good for you which you have not skins to buy; here is a looking-glass, and here is a brass-kettle in which your woman may boil her maize, her beans, and above all her maple sugar. Here are silver brooches, and here are pistols for your youths.

"*Indian*. The skins I can spare will not purchase them.

"*Trader*. Your will determines, brother; but next year you will want nothing but powder and shot, having already purchased your gun and ornaments. If you will purchase from me a blanket to wrap around you, a shirt and blue stroud for under-garments for yourself and your woman, and the same for leggings, this will pass the time, and save you the great trouble of dressing the skins, making the thread, etc., for your clothing, which will give you more

fishing and hunting time in the sturgeon and bear months.

"*Indian*. But the custom of my fathers!

"*Trader*. You will not break the custom of your fathers by being thus clad for a single year. They did not refuse those things which were never offered to them.

"*Indian*. For this year, brother, I will exchange my skins; in the next I shall provide apparel more befitting a warrior. One pack alone I will reserve to dress for a future occasion. The summer must not find a warrior idle.

"The terms being adjusted and the bargain concluded, the trader thus shows his gratitude for liberal dealing.

"*Trader*. Corlaer has forbid bringing scaura to steal away the wisdom of the warrior, but we white men are weak and cold; we bring kegs for ourselves, lest death arise from the swamps. We will not sell scaura; but you shall taste some of ours in return for the venison with which you have feasted us.

"*Indian*. Brother, we will drink moderately.

"A bottle was then given to the warrior by way of a present, which he was advised to keep long, but found it irresistible. He soon returned with the reserved pack of skins, earnestly urging the trader to give him beads, silver brooches, and above all scaura, to their full amount. This, with affected reluctance at parting with the private stock, was at last yielded. The warriors now, after giving loose for a while to frantic mirth, began the war-whoop, and made the woods resound with infuriate howlings.... A long and deep sleep succeeded, from which they awoke in a state of dejection and chagrin such as no Indian had felt under any other circumstances. They felt as Milton describes Adam and Eve to have done after their transgression."

The news of a massacre of white settlers at Esopus (Kingston), by the River Indians or Mohegans, June 7, 1663, when Tekakwitha was seven years old, caused great excitement both at Gandawague and at Beverwyck. Fort Orange was put in a thorough state of defence, the treaty with the Mohawks was renewed, and three pieces of artillery, loaned by Van Rensselaer for the protection of Beverwyck, "were placed on the church." "Nevertheless so great was the alarm that the out-settlers fled for protection to the fort called Cralo, erected on the Patroon's farm at Greenbush, where they held night and day regular watch."

A year later, in 1664, at the time when the juvenile betrothal of Tekakwitha, already mentioned, took place at Gandawague,—that having occurred, as we are told, when she was eight years old,—an entirely new order of things was brought about in the Dutch colony. The new settlement of Arent van Corlaer at Schenectady, the house where her uncle traded at Fort Orange, and the hamlet of Beverwyck, together with the whole of the New Netherlands, passed over into the hands of the English. Henceforth, instead of appealing to their High Mightinesses the Lords States General of Holland for redress of grievances, the settlers of the State of New York were to bow to the decisions of his Majesty King Charles II., who then sat securely on the throne of England, four years having elapsed since the downfall of the Commonwealth.

This change in the colony from Dutch to English rule was accomplished quietly and

peaceably, to the great disgust and indignation of the warlike governor, Peter Stuyvesant, who was ready to buckle on his heavy armor, take up his sword, and fight the "malignant English," were they as ten to one. But the settlers were matter-of-fact farmers and traders, lovers of peace, caring little for glory and not overmuch for their far-away fatherland. So long as their commercial, domestic, and religious rights were respected, they were willing enough to do homage to King Charles. So in 1664, New Amsterdam, into whose harbor, said a boastful inhabitant, as many as fifteen vessels were known to have anchored in the course of one year, became New York, taking its name from the title of the king's brother, afterward James II. Beverwyck, which had grown up under the guns of Fort Orange, was henceforth to be called Albany; and an English governor took the reins of colonial government from the hands of Peter Stuyvesant. The British flag floated gayly over fort and vessel, and before many years had passed it was found necessary to employ an English schoolmaster in Albany, and later to build an English church<sup>[27]</sup> on Joncaer Street.

When young Pieter Schuyler was still learning his lessons in Dutch at Fort Orange, and the little Tekakwitha was stringing her wampum beads at Gandawague,—while her uncle journeyed frequently back and forth from the Mohawk castle to the trading-post on the Hudson, stopping sometimes at Schenectady to see his friend Corlaer, and taking his family with him now and then to fish at the mouth of the Norman's Kill (near the place called Tawasentha<sup>[28]</sup>),—unsuspected preparations for a surprise were going forward in Canada. A war-cloud was gathering in the north, soon to break with terrible effect on the three Mohawk castles, and to startle the Governor of the Province of New York into a protest against the advance of armed troops of King Louis XIV. of France into the colonial dominions of his Majesty Charles II. of England. These dominions had been so recently acquired by the English King that the French at Quebec thought they still belonged to the States General of Holland.

#### FOOTNOTES:

Corlaer, or Van Curler, a brave and worthy man, was the most influential settler at Schenectady, and on excellent terms with the Mohawk Indians. He had visited them in 1642, on purpose to secure, if possible, the ransom of Father Jogues, and had manifested great sympathy for him in his captivity.

See Annals of Albany, vol. i. p. 288. The dominie's house here mentioned has since given place to the shop which is on the north-east corner of Pearl and State Streets. The house used by Megapolensis, who was at Beverwyck from 1642 to 1649, and who concealed Father Jogues from the Indians, was where Shield's tobacco-factory now stands, close to the site of old Fort Orange, and a little south of it. It was built entirely of oak, and was purchased on the arrival of Megapolensis for a hundred and twenty dollars.

The patroon's first dominie wearied of his frontier work at Fort Orange, and went to live at New Amsterdam in 1649. Dominie Schaats was appointed to succeed him in the ministry of the church at Beverwyck, where he officiated from 1652 to 1683.

Fort Orange stood on Broadway, close to the modern steamboat landing of the "People's Line." A bi-centennial tablet, surrounded with iron pickets, marks its northeast bastion. It extended back (across the freight-tracks that now mar its



site) to Church Street.

See O'Callaghan's History of New Netherland, vol. ii.

Alida married Robert Livingston, who was "secretary of Albany" under Pieter Schuyler, the first mayor; she was the great-grandmother of Robert R. Livingston, the first Chancellor of New York State.

This creek, with its ravine, has entirely disappeared in the grading of the modern street.

The dialogue here given is from Mrs. Grant's "Memoirs of American Lady." Mrs. Grant describes a later period of Albany history; but the way of trading with the Indians was about the same her day as at the time of Tekakwitha.

"The Indians have a great contempt, comparatively, for the beads we send them, which they consider as only fit for those plebeians who cannot by their exertions win anything better. They estimate them, compared with their own wampum, as we do pearls compared with paste."

This first English church was not far from the spot where St. Peter's Episcopal Church, on State Street, now uprears its beautiful square tower with projecting gargoyles. The original structure, however, stood out in the centre of the street, while the site of the present church was occupied by the earthworks and buildings of the second fort.

See [Appendix, Note C](#).

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## CHAPTER VI.

### AN ARMY ON SNOW-SHOES.

THE year 1666 was, indeed, an eventful one. It opened with a heavy snow-storm, and others followed until the whole Mohawk Valley was covered with a depth of feathery whiteness. At its eastern end a dark pool lay at the foot of Cohoes Falls, where the frosty spray of the roaring cataract glistened on every tiny bush, and the black cliffs on either side frowned from under their snowy caps at the silent meeting of two frozen rivers; off to the west, at the distant Mohawk castle of Tionnontogen, the "Nose" lay frost-bitten at a sudden turn of the valley, its long, stiff point thrust down into the ice, and fastened there as if held in a vice. Throughout the length of the glittering, smooth depression between these two points, the Mohawk seemed to be fast asleep beneath its thick mantle of snow.

In the whole valley there was only one hamlet of quiet Dutchmen, who had settled themselves at Corlaer (or Schenectady), while in the great bend were nestled the snug bark huts of the Indians with their surrounding palisades. A chain of Mohawk castles lay on the south side of the river, linked together by a single trail,—a narrow footpath through the snow along the lower terrace, which is now occupied by the West Shore

Railway. This trail connected the lodges of the three great Mohawk clans,—the Bears of Andagoron in the centre, with the Turtles of Gandawague and the Wolves of Tionnontogen on either side. Then it extended eastward through dreary solitudes to Schenectady and, on the other hand, far westward through lonely passes to the castles of the Oneidas; thence on to the Onondagas, the Cayugas, and, last of all, to the Senecas. How cold and yet how secure those Iroquois Indians of the Five Nations felt in their fastnesses! For hundreds of miles to the north and to the south of them lay the all-covering snow, unmarked by other human footprints than their own in search of game. The lands of their Algonquin foes, though bordering their own domain, were long journeys off. The Dutch settlers at Schenectady and Albany were right within their grasp, should they choose to distress them; but they had solemnly pledged their friendship to them in the Tawasentha Valley ("At the Place of many Dead"), and they meant to keep their word. The French, however, they delighted to torment. The settlements at Quebec, Three Rivers, and Montreal were separated from the Five Nations by the great pathless Adirondack wilderness of mountains and forest, and yet two ways were open by which they might reach the French. One of their war-paths led from Onondaga Lake along the Oswego River and Lake Ontario; then through the Thousand Islands and down the rapids of the St. Lawrence River. The reverse of this route was taken by the venturesome French colonists who, as we have seen, endeavored to make a settlement in the heart of the Iroquois country about the time of Tekakwitha's birth. Their hairbreadth escape from Onondaga soon after by the same route put an end to all thought of settling what the French considered a part of New France. This was the region now known as Onondaga County, which the Onondaga Indians themselves have claimed from prehistoric times as their birthright, and hold yet under the name of the Onondaga Reservation; and here, now, in the heart of this great State, in spite of the encroachments of two hundred years of civilization, in spite of the teachings of Christianity all about them, in spite of the covetous longings of many a white man, they still keep a foothold, and maintain the practice of their old pagan rites and customs.

The great western route through the Oswego and St. Lawrence rivers to Canada, belonging by first right to these Onondagas, was travelled many times during Tekakwitha's childhood by the Onondaga statesman Garacontié. He frequently restored captives to the French at Quebec, and tried often but in vain to keep peace between them and his own race.

The second and more direct of the two great war-paths to Canada was the route of the Mohawks. No wonder the Caniengas tormented the French settlements on the St. Lawrence. Starting from their castles in the Mohawk Valley, and taking any one of three or more trails that crossed or skirted our present Saratoga County, they had but to strike Lake George, follow the lake to its outlet, traverse the length of Lake Champlain, and thence pass through the Richelieu, Sorel, or Iroquois River (it was known by all these names), and they were ready to destroy the grain, and tomahawk or take captive the wives and children of the Canadian settlers. The French had built three forts on this Richelieu (or Iroquois) River to check their inroads,—Fort Richelieu, Fort St. Louis, and Fort St. Thérèse,—and were now only waiting till spring opened to erect a fourth, to be called Fort St. Anne, on an island at the northern end of Lake Champlain.

Samuel de Champlain, the first Frenchman who set foot on New York soil, was chiefly responsible for the long-continued wars between his countrymen and the Iroquois, he having fired without provocation on a band of Iroquois warriors, probably Mohawks, when he first sailed into the lake which bears his name. By repeated outrages on the Canadian frontier the Mohawks had amply revenged themselves for that first affront; and



by the end of the year 1665 they had goaded the French into a determination to brave unheard of risks and frightful sufferings, that they might punish their savage enemies in a manner that would for once and all humiliate and subdue them. Thus it was that on the 9th of January, 1666, a heroic army composed of three hundred regular French troops of the regiment Carignan-Salières, veterans who had seen service in Turkey in the wars of Louis XIV., together with two hundred *habitans*, or hardy volunteers from the Canadian colony, all under the command of M. de Courselle, Governor of Canada, were fairly started on a march from Quebec to the Mohawk castles. They intended to push on without delay to their destination through snow and ice, over rivers and lakes, by the great Mohawk route. It had been travelled hitherto only by Indians, captives, and a few missionaries, with now and then perhaps a solitary adventurer; rarely, indeed, by any even of these in the depth of winter. This army of De Courselle's was the very first of a great succession of pale-face armies that have come tramping over the same route during the last two centuries. If Burgoyne's march to the Saratoga battle-field was the most famous of all these, De Courselle's march to the Mohawk was certainly the first and the most heroic in its struggle with unparalleled difficulties.

"This march could not but be tedious, every one having snow-shoes on his feet, to the use of which none were accustomed; and all, not excepting the officers or even M. de Courselle himself, being loaded each with from twenty-five to thirty pounds of biscuit, clothing, and other necessaries."<sup>[29]</sup> It did, indeed, require a *French courage* to undertake such an expedition. "Many had, as early as the third day, parts of the body frozen, and were so benumbed by the cold that they had to be carried to the place where they were to pass the night." The 25th of January was especially severe, and many soldiers were obliged to be taken back to the settlements, "of whom some had the legs cut by the ice, and others the hands or the arms or other parts of the body altogether frozen." The ranks were filled up again at Forts St. Louis and St. Thérèse, on the Richelieu River, where the troops assembled on the 30th of the same month; and being still five hundred strong, they pushed bravely on over the snow that lay so level and smooth on the frozen bosom of Lake Champlain. Here the route lay plainly before them, and they were counting on Algonquin guides to show them the way to the Mohawk castles after they got to the southern end of Lake St. Sacrament (Lake George). The snow was "hard frozen, though in most places four foote deep; and besides using Indian snow-shoes, which hath the very form of a Rackett tyed to each foote, whereby the body and feet are kept from sinking into the snow, ... the Governor caused slight sledges to be made in good number, and laying provisions upon them drew them over the snow with mastive doggs."

The shivering troops wrapped their blankets tightly round them as they lay down to sleep on the snow at the foot of Mount Defiance, or threaded the narrow valley leading to Lake George. The awkward soldier striding over the snow fumbles with frost-bitten fingers in his knapsack for the last of his biscuits. As one might have foretold, he has stepped on the snow-shoe of his comrade, and both go plunging head-foremost into the snow. The dogs jogging on beside them, unchecked for a moment, run wildly on, barking aloud and scattering the load of the toboggan to which they are attached. The articles are rescued piecemeal by the soldiers all along the line. There is no time to stop, however,—they must march on or starve; so, giving their fallen comrades momentary help to set them on their feet again, they are left to fall into line as best they may and just in time to bring up the rear.

As the army passes over Lake George, in the shadow of Black Mountain, how eagerly De Courselle looks back at his staggering column of men! Were he in a less serious mood, he might be inclined to smile at the efforts of the gallant troops of the regiment Carignan-

Salières to maintain an orderly march on the unaccustomed snow-shoes; but the anxious commander has other thoughts than these. Where are his Algonquin guides? Have the rascals failed him? Calling the Jesuit chaplain, Father Raffeix, to his side, a consultation ensues. They are already nearing the future site of Fort William Henry, and there the trails divide. They scan the shores of the lake and search the islands, but neither Algonquin friend nor Iroquois foe is in sight. They know that if they march on until they reach the Hudson and follow it down, they will find the Dutch at Fort Orange, but that is not their object. They long for a chance to strike a decisive blow at the Mohawk castles. If they can once convince the Mohawks that they are not secure in their forest homes from the armies of France nor the strong revengeful arm of Onnontio,<sup>[30]</sup> a treaty will afterwards be of some value. The Jesuit Father who talks with De Courselle dreams already of a mission established among them as the result of that future treaty. With ardent enthusiasm he sees in anticipation an army of Jesuits march to a spiritual attack on the citadel of Satan upreared in the Iroquois country. His heart thrills at the thought of reaching the spot where Isaac Jogues was martyred. Father Lemoyne, the second Ondessonk, has died since then. The Onondagas that very year sent presents to Quebec to wipe away the tears shed for his death, thus expressing their sorrow and their admiration for his character. Father Raffeix cheers with zealous words the drooping spirits of the soldiers, then kneels amid the snows of Lake St. Sacrament, and in the true spirit of his order, prays in his heart for a share in the glorious work of continuing Ondessonk's mission.

The army of De Courselle at the southern end of Lake George was uncertain which trail to follow. At the Turtle Castle on the Mohawk the Indians had no knowledge of the march of their enemies, else there would have been great alarm at Gandawague; for all the ablest warriors of the three castles, in company with the Oneidas, were making war on the tribe called Wampum-makers. Only boys and helpless old men were left in the lodges with the women. They knew nothing of De Courselle and his army so near at hand, but, like their Dutch neighbors at Schenectady, were earnestly fighting their nearer and more pitiless foe the bitter winter. All the fuel near their lodges had been burned long ago; and now they are searching the snow-drifts for fagots and branches fallen from the trees. The cold is intense. The wind that whistles through the palisades of the Turtle village is the same sharp blast that is pinching De Courselle's army.

At Gandawague, outside of the palisade is a little girl on snow-shoes, only nine years old, who with imperfect sight is groping her way through the blinding storm. The snow is drifting wildly about. The one whom she calls mother is only an aunt, and the aunt is cold and cross to-day. She sits by the dying embers there in the lodge of the absent chief, and by turns she shivers and scolds. The other women beside her are equally cheerless. The little niece, who has missed the kindly look she knows well how to win from her Mohawk uncle by welcome services when he is there in the lodge, has taken it into her head this comfortless day to surprise her cross old aunts and her adopted sister. So she has quietly tied on her snow-shoes and ventured out. She is in the forest, alone, searching for fagots. On her forehead is a burden-strap, made from filaments of bass-wood bark, the ends twisted into a kind of Indian rope. With it she fastens the fagots together, bearing them on her back. Her hands are tingling with cold; but she plunges them deep into the snow in an effort to break the larger twigs, while she hurries on to increase her load. She is happier now in the howling storm than she was in the pent lodge, and smiles as she thinks of the blazing fire she will make to warm the feet and thaw the heart of her morose old aunt. Ah! Tekakwitha, that grim old squaw is training you, without knowing it, for heroic things. But after all, the aunt is not a neglectful guardian. After a while she misses the child, and questions all in the lodge; then peers out into the storm and shrinks back,

shuddering. Has she indeed allowed Tekakwitha to wander out and perish in the cold? In that case what will she be able to say to the uncle when he returns; what will become of her own plans for the girl? As time goes on, there comes a faint scuffling at the door; the heavy curtain is lifted a little and falls again. No one has entered. Hurrying to the door, the old squaw thrusts the curtain aside, and there she beholds the child staggering under her load of wood, stiff and helpless from the cold. Leaving the fagots at the door, she lifts her gently in her arms and takes her to the fire, which is soon blazing brightly, fed by the new supply of wood quickly thrown upon it. But the glow of the fire, round which they all gather, is not half so cheering to the heart of the frostbitten child as the glow of love she has awakened in the lodge by her sweet unselfish care for their comfort. This once, at least, they give her the warmest seat, and fill her bowl brimful with the freshly made sagamite; then they question her about her walk, and wonder how she escaped being buried in the snow. Tekakwitha smiles with happy content, and answers their questions with a ready wit. She makes them laugh as she tells them a merry story of how the north-wind slapped her in the face and bound her fast to the hickory-tree against which she stumbled in the storm. In her heart she is saying all the time, as she watches the cheery light of the fire, "I will do it again."

But where is De Courselle now and his army on snow-shoes? We left them at the southern end of Lake George. There they took the trail that met the Hudson at its great bend to the southward near Glenn's Falls. Then after crossing the river they followed a straight trail leading a little west of south, and passed between Saratoga Lake and Owl Pond or Lake Lonely. Next they followed up the valleys of Kayaderoseras Creek and the Mourning Kill to Ballston Lake; but there, happily for Tekakwitha's people, they made a mistake.<sup>[31]</sup> Instead of taking the trail that branched off to the west at the northern end of Ballston Lake, and led directly to the Mohawk castles, they followed the straight trail southward; so instead of surprising the Mohawks, they themselves were indeed surprised to find that it brought them to a hamlet, not of Indians, but of Dutchmen,—not subjects of Holland at all, but colonists subject to England. They were greatly bewildered. We are told in an old London document<sup>[32]</sup> at M. de Courselle encamped—

"upon the 9th of February within 2 myles of a small village called Schonectade, lying in the woods beyond fort Albany in ye territoryes of his Royall highness, and 3 dayes march from the first castle of the Mohaukes.

"The French suposed they were then come to their designed place, and the rather because y<sup>t</sup> evening they did rancounter w<sup>th</sup> a party of the Mohaukes who made appearance of retreating from the French, whereupon a party of 60 of their best Fuzileers after them, but that small party drew the French into an ambuscade of neare 200 Mohaukes planted behind trees, (who taking their advantage as it fell into their hands) at one volley slew eleuen French men whereof one was a Lieuten<sup>t</sup> wounded divers others, the french party made an honorable retreat to their body, w<sup>ch</sup> was marching after them close at hand, w<sup>ch</sup> gave the Mohawkes tyme and opportunity to march off w<sup>th</sup> the loss of only 3 slaine upon the plaice and 6 wounded, the report whereof was soone brought to Schonecktade by those Indians, with the heads of 4 of the french to the Commissary of the Village who immediately despatched the newes to Fort Albany, from whence the next day 3 of the principle inhabitants were sent to Monsier Coursell the Governo<sup>r</sup> of Canada to inquire of his intention to bring such a body of armed men into the dominions of his

Ma<sup>tie</sup> of Great Brittain, w<sup>th</sup>out acquainting the Governo<sup>r</sup> of these parts w<sup>th</sup> his designes. The Governo<sup>r</sup> reply<sup>d</sup> that he came to seeke out and destroy his enemyes the Mohaukes without intention of visiting their plantations, or else to molest any of his Ma<sup>ties</sup> subjects, and that [he] had not heard of the reducing those parts to his Ma<sup>ties</sup> obedience, but desired that hee and his soldiers might bee supplied with provisions for their money, and that his wounded men might be sucoured, and taken care for in Albany; To all which the Emissaryes freely consented and made a small but acceptable present of wine and provisions to him, further offering the best accommodations y<sup>e</sup> poore village afforded, w<sup>ch</sup> was civilly refus'd, in regard there was not accommodacón for his soldyers, with whom he had marcht and campt under the blew canopye of the heavens full six weekes, but hee prudently foresaw a greater inconvenience if hee brought his weary and half starv'd people within the smell of a chimney corner, whom hee now could keepe from stragling or running away, not knowing whither to runn for feare of y<sup>e</sup> Indians; The next day Monsieur Corsell sent his men to the village where they were carefully drest and sent to Albany, being seaven in number, the Dutch bores carried to the camp such provisions as they had, and were too well payd for it; Especially peaz and bread, of w<sup>ch</sup> a good quantity was bought; y<sup>e</sup> Mohaukes were all gone to their Castles, with resolution to fight it out against the ffrench, who being refresht and supplied w<sup>th</sup> the aforesaid provisions made a shew of marching towards the Mohaukes Castles, but with faces about and great sylence and dilligence return'd towards Cannada.... Those who observed the words and countenance of Monsieur Coursell, saw him disturbed in minde that the king was Master of these parts of the Country, saying that the king of England did graspe at all America.... Two prisoners taken by the Mohaukes in the retreat tell them y<sup>t</sup> this summer another attempt will be made upon their country, with a greater force and supplyes of men, the truth or success of which I shall not now discourse upon, having given the trew relation of what past from ye 29<sup>th</sup> December to the 12<sup>th</sup> of February."

Another and larger force did attack the Mohawk castles in the year 1666, as hinted at in the lines just quoted, but not until late in the autumn; and at that time Tekakwitha was disturbed and distressed far more than she had been by the misdirected march of the "army on snow-shoes."

#### FOOTNOTES:

See O'Callaghan's "Documentary History of New York," vol. i. for papers relating to this expedition of Governor de Courselle to the Mohawk River.

A name which the Indians gave to the Governor of Canada.

These facts are to be found in a note by Gen. J. S. Clark, given in the [Appendix, Note D](#), "Mohawk Trails."

See O'Callaghan's "Documentary History," vol. i., from which are quoted all

the passages here given referring to De Courselles and De Tracy's expeditions.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### DE TRACY BURNS THE MOHAWK CASTLES.—FALL OF TIONNONTOGEN.

IN the summer following De Courselle's expedition, ten deputies from the nations of the Iroquois League met at Quebec, and signed a treaty of peace. In addition to strange pictures which were the marks of the Indian chiefs, the document bears the signature of Daniel de Courselle, Governor of Canada, and that of "Lord de Tracy, member of his Majesty's councils and Lieutenant-General of his armies both in the Islands and mainland of South and North America." The treaty is also signed by the Jesuits, Le Mercier and Chaumonot, as interpreters of the Iroquois and Huron languages. It states that the orator and chief, called Soenres, announced "the object of the Embassy by ten talks expressed by as many presents," and also that he brought letters from the officers of New Netherland. The substance of his harangue was that the Indians wanted peace, and they asked that blackgowns might be sent to teach them. They promised to listen to their preaching and to adore the God of the French. They also offered to trade with the Canadians by way of Lake St. Sacrament, and assured them of a welcome in their lodges. What more could be desired? But, alas! scarcely were the ambassadors two or three days' journey from Quebec, when news came of the surprisal by the Mohawks of some Frenchmen belonging to Fort St. Anne who had gone to the chase, and of the murder of a captain in the Carignan regiment.

The time for peace had not yet come. The Mohawks had not been fairly represented in the embassy; they were far from being awed by the fruitless march of De Courselle to the Mohawk Valley. The French had yet to strike the decisive blow. M. de Tracy resolved, "despite his advanced age, to lead in person against these Barbarians an army composed of six hundred soldiers drafted from all the companies, and of six hundred *habitans* of the country," to which were added one hundred Huron and Algonquin savages. This was more than twice the number of the original army of De Courselle, who, still bent on victory, determined to accompany this second expedition. The general rendezvous was at Fort St. Anne, newly built, as had been planned, on an island in Lake Champlain. On the 3d of October, 1666, all were ready to start. Three hundred vessels were there to bear them over the placid bosom of the lake, whose wooded shores were now aglow with October coloring. The vessels were light batteaux and bark canoes, which could be carried from lake to lake and from stream to stream. There was great difficulty at the carries, however, with two small cannon which they took with them for the purpose of forcing the Iroquois fortifications. Grown wiser by experience, they also made sure of their guides.

The expedition moved forward as secretly and noiselessly as possible through Lake Champlain and then Lake George; but the quick eye of an Iroquois hunter, high on a mountain, espied the fleet of batteaux on the lake, and bounding through the forest to the

first, or Turtle, castle on the Mohawk, his cry of alarm startled the people of Gandawague, and Tekakwitha among the rest, from their accustomed occupations. Hastily gathering together their treasures, they fled at once to Andagoron, the Castle of the Bears. Thence, after spreading the alarm through the outlying hamlets and holding a hurried consultation, they all retired to Tionnontogen, the third, or Castle of the Wolves, hidden behind the Nose. There they stored an abundant supply of grain, and prepared to defend themselves. This castle of Tionnontogen was the strongest of their fortifications. It had a triple palisade. The spot where it stood can easily be found at the present day. One has but to leave the West Shore Railway at Spraker's Basin,—a small station on the south side of the Mohawk River, just east of Canajoharie and Palatine Bridge,—then follow a road which winds up the hill to a farm a few rods distant, which was owned in 1885 by Mitchell. Like the other village-sites, already described, it is on high ground, or the upper-river terrace. Near the farm-house is a large spring, surrounded by shade-trees, in the centre of a meadow. It is now frequented principally by thirsty cows; but it was once the chief water-supply of the Mohawk castle. Behind the house is a perfectly level plateau; from it the land descends on its northern side by steep terraces to the Mohawk, and to the west it sinks rapidly into a picturesque ravine, where strawberries, wintergreen berries, rare ferns, and little pink flowers grow in abundance. Flat Creek flows through the ravine. On this plateau many iron hatchets and wagon-loads of Indian relics of various kinds have been found.<sup>[33]</sup>

There the castle of Tionnontogen stood at the time of De Tracy's expedition. The view up the river at that point is extensive and beautiful; but in the opposite direction, or down the river, a sharp turn of the valley shuts out from sight the narrow opening or pass between the Nose and the other similar mountain on the south side of the river, which, as one travels round the bend, seems to approach and finally to overlap it. The name of the castle was significant,—Tionnontogen, or "Two Mountains approaching." Where else could it possibly have been in the whole valley but right there by the Nose? Their friends, the Oneidas, lay to the westward of them, and their enemies mostly to the eastward; it was but natural, then, that they should build their principal fort far enough up the river to bring it behind the overlapping mountains. In order to reach Tionnontogen the army of De Tracy had to come through that narrow pass. The people who were lying in wait at the castle, though on high ground, would not therefore be able to see their enemies approaching till they had rounded the Nose, and were close upon them.

After disembarking at the head of the lake, De Tracy led his army, by way of an Indian trail, southeasterly about nine miles to Glenn's Falls,<sup>[34]</sup> where he crossed the Hudson, thence passing south of Moreau Pond and east of Mount McGregor, through Doe's Corners, near Stiles Hill, and then near Glen Mitchell to Saratoga Springs, following substantially the present highway along the base of the ridge of hills south of Mount McGregor. From Saratoga the expedition passed near Ballston, and thence slightly curving seems to have proceeded in a very direct course to the Mohawk castles, which lay off to the westward. One of the trails leading in that direction struck the Mohawk River at Kinaquariones, or Hoffman's Ferry, and another at Amsterdam. From this latter point, a short march up the Mohawk Valley brought De Tracy to Gandawague. One after another, he captured the deserted towns of the Mohawks without striking a single blow. First Gandawague, then Andagoron,—both on the south side of the river,—with possibly one or more smaller towns, fell into his hands; and on he went to Tionnontogen, marching proudly up the valley with his two cannon, brought with such difficulty from Canada, and his Algonquin allies, who had faithfully guided him into the very heart of the Mohawk country, and his brave army of twelve hundred picked men, armed *cap-a-pie* in all the



panoply of civilized warfare. Never before was anything like it seen in that wild region. Only three or four hundred Mohawk warriors, all told, were gathered behind the palisades of Tionnontogen to oppose him. There was no time to summon their allies, the Oneidas, to their assistance. The movements of the French had been too rapid. They had only time to crowd together the women and children into their strongest fortress of defence, and there await the result, whatever it might be.

Could the Mohawks soon forget the ruin that the French soldiers wrought on their way from Gandawague? Even the child Tekakwitha must have been stirred with a feeling of indignation and a cruel sense of wrong, as that foreign army came nearer and nearer to her place of refuge, moving steadily on through her own fair valley, with a march like the march of fate,—destroying all that came in its way, wreaking its vengeance on corn-field and cabin, in baffled fury at finding no foe to slay. With ever increasing horror and anxious bewilderment, she watched and waited with her people in the castle of Tionnontogen. Her uncle and all the Canienga warriors had staked everything they possessed on its defence. They had stored their provisions for the winter carefully away inside of its stout palisade. It was, as already mentioned, a triple palisade, twenty feet in height, and flanked by four bastions; that is to say, there were three distinct rows of upright posts encircling the town. <sup>[35]</sup> The main or central wall of thick-set overlapping palisadoes had an inner and an outer platform, or scaffolding, near the top, running all the way round. These platforms, being nineteen or twenty feet above the ground, extended horizontally from the central to the inner and outer walls of palisadoes. The latter were higher, and not so compact as the central wall. These outside palisadoes, reaching almost to a man's height above the platform, were set short spaces apart, and covered near the top with a solid surface of thick bark. This protected the warriors when they stood high on the outer platform to fire their guns and aim their arrows at the enemy over the top of this bark breastwork. Just behind them, on the inner and adjoining platform, were numerous bark tanks containing an abundant supply of water to be used in extinguishing any fire that might be started at the base of the palisade. This was the form of attack they most dreaded. To make the approach more difficult, they also dug trenches between the walls of palisadoes, and especially on the outer side, heaping up the earth at the base of the fortifications. Then, too, before the enemy could get at the palisade at all, they had to break through a low bark fence which stood some distance outside of the triple wall, built there for the purpose of breaking the force of an attack. If the foe succeeded in starting a fire at the base of the main wall, a flood of water was poured down at once through holes in the high platform by the warriors who were defending the castle. In cases of this kind the women assisted by keeping up the supply of water. Such were the methods of defence in use at Tionnontogen in 1666. They had proved effectual against all the efforts of savage foes. But let us see if they prove equally so against the skilful manœuvres of De Tracy's civilized army, now close at hand? Tekakwitha's uncle may have had his doubts as to this; but nevertheless the bark tanks were well filled, and all was made ready to give the foe a defiant reception. The warriors were in fighting gear, and hourly waiting the attack.

It was just at this time that several Indian captives of other tribes held by these Mohawks were brought out to be tortured and burned with solemn rites in the public square of Tionnontogen; thus they hoped to propitiate their war-god, Aireskoi. Tekakwitha would not on any account show herself during this ceremony, as she never had the cruel spirit which the savage women often showed. Chauchetière tells us that she could not endure to see harm done to any one, and that she thought it a sin to go to see a man burned.

This heathen rite was scarcely over, when the women and children were suddenly

withdrawn from Tionnontogen Castle; a council of war, it seems, had changed the plans of the braves. Those who could not fight were hurried off to the higher hills behind the fortified plateau, and concealed in the woods; the warriors alone remained in the town. As the advancing army of De Tracy came within reach of their bullets and arrows, they kept up a sharp fire from the palisade; but they no sooner saw the French soldiers deliberately pause, plant their cannon, and prepare to attack their wooden castle in regular form, than the utter hopelessness of the contest dawned fully upon them. Without waiting to receive the opening fire of the French cannon, they quickly deserted their primitive fortifications, leaving behind them a few helpless old men who did not wish to move and the half-roasted victims of the demon's sacrifice. De Tracy lost no time in taking possession of this last stronghold of the Canienga nation; without loss of life he and his army entered Tionnontogen Castle in triumph.

The child Tekakwitha, concealed in the forest near at hand, must have heard the solemn swell of the *Te Deum* as it rose with one accord, full, rich, and clear, from the ranks of the conquering army. Never before had she heard that strange, sweet chorus of sound. The Mohawk Valley had often echoed with the war-whoop and the shriek of the tortured captive; it had rung at times with the harvest-song, and had caught up the wailing chant of the League over many a dead chief's body. But the solemn music of the *Te Deum* which now reached her ears was unlike any of these, and the tall cross that the soldiers of France raised over the ashes of Aireskoi's fire in the public square of Tionnontogen cast unfamiliar shadows on the long Mohawk cabins clustered silent and empty within the triple wall. Father Raffeix, the chaplain, said Mass there, thinking perhaps of Isaac Jogues, and praying for the heathen Indians who were hiding in the forest. He did not then know how soon the rustic chapel of St. Mary of the Mohawks would be standing there with open door to welcome them to prayer. While this first Mass was being said at Tionnontogen, the Mohawk warriors, moody and sullen, were gathered near their families. A low and mournful wail from the women called the attention of all to the blazing palisades of Tionnontogen. The crackling fire kindled by their enemies lit up with a lurid glare the now retiring army of De Tracy, for he speedily retraced his steps, and was soon hidden from view behind the mountains at the Nose. As he moved on down the valley whence he came, the armor of his twelve hundred men flashed back again and again the blaze of a ruined Mohawk town; all their castles were burned. At the "Fort of Andaraque,"—to use the words of an old document (probably meaning Gandawague),—De Tracy paused on the 17th of October to take solemn possession of the conquered country in the name of the King of France. In token thereof, he planted another cross, and near it a post, to which he affixed the arms of Louis XIV. Tekakwitha, with her aunts and her mother's friend Tegonhatsihongo, must have seen these emblems at the door of the smoking palisade when they went back to find what was left of their blackened lodges on the bank of Auries Creek.

De Tracy, the gray-haired conqueror, now returned to Canada; and the unhappy Mohawks, in straggling bands, sought out their desolated homes,—secure in life and limb, to be sure, but bereft of all provisions for the winter. No golden ears of corn hung, as usual, from their lodge-poles. They had no furs, no beans, no nut-oil. They were forced to live in temporary huts, and to wait in hunger and cold for the coming of the spring-time. Thus, in sorrow and destitution, Tekakwitha passed a dreary winter among the ruins of Gandawague, doing her best as usual to put things in order. During this time she lived on what roots and berries could be found, and a scant allowance of the game her uncle caught. Spring came at last; and a busy one it was for the houseless Mohawks. With the genial warmth that quickly followed, there came also a strange, new gleam of light to the young Tekakwitha.

## FOOTNOTES:

The most interesting of these are in the collection of Mr. Frey, of Palatine Bridge.

The march of De Tracy as here given was traced out by General Clark from a copy which he has of a map relating to the expeditions of De Tracy and De Courselle. The original map is preserved in the Paris archives.

See [Appendix, Note E](#), "Indian Defensive Works."

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### TEKAKWITHA'S CHRISTIAN GUESTS.—RAWENNIIO.

THE year 1667 found Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas at peace with the Canadian settlers. This blessed peace crowned with success the persevering efforts of Garacontié, and brought the long-deferred answer to the prayer of Tekakwitha's mother. Onnontio was appeased; Frenchmen and Iroquois could now clasp hands, and the lovers of peace on either side—an ever increasing party—came boldly forward, asserting their claim to be heard, and holding all turbulent spirits in check. There was nothing to be lost, and much to be gained on both sides by peace. The French could now increase their trade, and the Iroquois were glad once more to turn their arms against aggressive Indian neighbors. The Mohegans, or Loups, on the Hudson, uniting with those of New England, were growing haughty and insolent to the Mohawk people, making raids on their hunting-grounds, and taking advantage of their temporary distress to settle old scores; this trouble, however, was still a side issue. It caused just uneasiness enough to make the Mohawks anxious for the speedy return of their deputies from Quebec, with full assurance of a permanent peace with the French. All through the spring of 1667, Tekakwitha's people were clearing new corn-fields on the north side of the Mohawk, and choosing new sites for their castles. Tionnontogen, the capital, claiming their first share of attention, was hastily rebuilt higher up the river and still on the south side, being now a quarter of a league from its old site. The populations of Gandawague and Andagoron were divided; some remained at the old half-ruined castles, and others moved across the river as rapidly as they could build cabins for themselves. This they began to do "after the bark would peel;"<sup>[36]</sup> that is, as soon as the season was far enough advanced for them to make use of that all-important material, in the use of which they were so expert. The task of building a palisaded Indian castle was slow and tedious,—the work of many long months, with their primitive methods. While they were in this transition state, the Mohawk deputies, having agreed on the terms of peace, returned from Quebec. They left that city in July, 1667, accompanied by three Jesuit Fathers.

The story of the Jesuit Father and his work crowds the pages of our early history.

Wherever the red man plays an important part, there close at hand is the blackgown with his crucifix and his works on the Indian language,—becoming a linguist that he may make known to the Indian, whatever his tribe, the "good tidings of great joy;" using the artist's brush that he may in some way represent to his neophytes the Christ; even taxing his ingenuity in the invention of games by means of which to hold the attention of the savages and teach them the simplest laws of morality; striving always to lead them step by step to a better understanding of the duties of a Christian life. Such were the men now on their way to the Mohawk from Quebec.

Earnest, zealous, with a firm determination to overcome all the obstacles before them in their spiritual combat with the demons of paganism, came the three Fathers, Fremin, Bruyas, and Pierron, with the Mohawk deputies. They had been chosen by the French authorities from the ever ready ranks of Jesuit volunteers, who never lost an opportunity to gain the ear of the red man. Already they had acquired some knowledge of the language; Father Fremin, of the three, understood it best. Then, too, it was well known by all that the presence of French blackgowns in the Iroquois country, sent by the Governor of Canada, would be in itself a guarantee of peace. They were made the bearers of presents to insure them a welcome in the Mohawk lodges. On their journey to the castles they were delayed for a time by reports that the forest was alive with Mohegan war-parties; but when, in course of time, they did fall in with a band of warriors, it turned out to be a scouting-party of Mohawks, who, alarmed by the long absence of their deputies, began to suspect another French invasion. They were therefore well pleased to see the missionaries, and willingly led them from the vicinity of Lake George to the northern bank of the Mohawk. There they crossed the river in canoes, probably from the place now occupied by the De Graff house. Above them, on the crest of a hill, stood all that was left of Gandawague, the Turtle Castle, where Tekakwitha and her uncle the chief still dwelt. They had not yet moved to the new site "at the Rapids," near Fonda. The three French guests of the nation were conducted up the steep ascent to the town with great formality and many ceremonies of welcome, not with the strokes of iron rods and the bitter taunts with which some of these same old men and women when in their prime had received Father Jogues at their former castle of Ossernenon, a little more than twenty years before. But why were not Fathers Fremin, Bruyas, and Pierron at once conducted up the valley to be welcomed by the Bears, and thence on to the westward to be lodged in state by the Wolves at Tionnontogen, the capital, as had invariably been the custom of the Caniengas in receiving distinguished guests, or even important captives? The answer that history gives is simple enough. The Fathers "happened to arrive at a time when these people are accustomed to plunge into all kinds of debauchery, and found no one, therefore, in a fit state to receive them." A drunken riot of several days' duration was going on within the newly built palisades of Tionnontogen. The Mohawks had chosen to celebrate in that way their returning prosperity.

So the Fathers were detained three days in the lodge of Tekakwitha's uncle at the Turtle Castle. Chauchetière and Cholenec, and all who have written of Tekakwitha find in this seemingly simple incident only one of many mystic links that make up the chain of her Christian life,—a sure effect of a potent cause,—the all-conquering love of the Spirit of God reaching toward its spirit-child, though clothed in the humble form of an Indian girl. Unknown, and therefore as yet unloved by her, the Great Father and Source of our spirit natures saw "His own image and likeness" expanding pure and fair in the untaught soul of Tekakwitha. All-knowing, all-powerful, planning the course of events without effort, He chose the surest way and the aptest time to make Himself known, thus securing at once the answer of love that was destined to lift and shield from all blemish this wondrous opening "Lily." He sent His messengers into the Mohawk Valley when Tekakwitha alone

of her nation was ready and fit to receive them. Hers, then, was the privilege of lodging and entertaining them.

At that time the Iroquois were thorough pagans, and practised a species of devil-worship. They believed in Tharonyawagon, the "Holder of the Heavens," a good genius of the Kanonsionni, who bestowed on them their hunting-grounds and fisheries,—a harmless deity, to whom they were grateful in a vague way for past favors; but they do not seem to have worshipped him with any formality. They reserved their sacrifices and solemn rites for Aireskoi, a demon of war, whom they greatly feared. Hiawatha, the "Wampum-Seeker,"<sup>[37]</sup> though sometimes confused with Tharonyawagon, was undoubtedly a real personage. He was one of the founders of the Iroquois League of Nations, which is called to this day the "Great Peace." He is said to have lived about fifty years, as nearly as can be reckoned, before the earliest white settlers came to America. His aspirations and his teachings prepared the Iroquois to some extent for the reception of Christian ideas, but the original teachings of Hiawatha seem to have been very soon distorted and strangely mingled with myths. The League of Nations which he labored to establish, with the grand idea of eventually uniting all men in a common bond of brotherhood and peace, became on the contrary, in the hands of the Iroquois chiefs who followed him, a great engine of war, crushing all tribes that refused to come under its laws. Just enough of its original spirit remained to cause the Iroquois thoroughly to incorporate and make one with themselves the captives of all those peoples whose separate existence they destroyed. Tharonyawagon, Aireskoi, and Hiawatha were all familiar words in the ears of the Mohawk girl. But Rawenniio, the true God<sup>[38]</sup> was still unknown to her.

Charlevoix, the learned author of the "History of New France," who wrote an account of Kateri Tekakwitha about the year 1732, after mentioning the fact that "as soon as she was able to work she undertook the entire charge of the household," continues thus:—

"The first knowledge she received of Christianity was given her by the Jesuit missionaries who were sent to the Iroquois nations by M. de Tracy. They passed on their way through the town where she lived, and lodged in her cabin. She was charged with their entertainment, of which she acquitted herself in a manner which surprised them. She had herself been struck at the sight of them, and felt in her heart strange sentiments.... The fervor and recollectedness of these Jesuit Fathers at their prayers inspired her with the desire to pray with them; this desire she expressed to them; indeed they quickly divined it from her actions, and instructed her in the great truths of Christianity as well as their short stay in the town permitted, and quitted her with a regret fully reciprocated on her part."

There are those, as we have said, who believe that the prayer of Tekakwitha's dying mother had guided the steps of these missionaries straight to the lodge of her child, and left them there three days to be waited on and cared for by the shy but capable little Mohawk housekeeper, the niece of the chief at Gandawague. His people, as we already know, were away on a debauch at Tionnontogen,—a revel too disgraceful for the admission of guests whom they wished to honor. The Mohawks must have been hard pushed indeed when they handed over the envoys of the Canadian Governor whom they were anxious just then to conciliate, to the care of a mere child, even though she were high in rank; but Tekakwitha's uncle knew she could be trusted to do her part well. How well she did it Cholenec tells us in the following words:—

"She was charged with the task of lodging the missionaries and attending to

their wants. The modesty and sweetness with which she acquitted herself of this duty touched her new guests; while she on her part was struck with their affable manners, their regularity in prayer, and the other exercises into which they divided the day."

Had they remained longer in the village, she would probably have asked for baptism.

As it was, she stole silently out of the lodge in the dusk of evening to bring water for the simple Indian repast she was preparing for her guests, and all the while her thought was alive with God,—the God she had never known, the God of the pale-face and of the Mohawk as well (for this much they had told her in their broken utterance of her own language); he was the God, too, of their Mohegan enemies. Here, indeed, was a new idea to the Mohawk girl. She had heard her people mention the God of the French, no doubt, and had wondered if he were kind like Tharonyawagon or cruel like Aireskoi; but this God whom the blackgowns told her of, was not *their* Lord and "Master of Life" any more than *hers*. He was the God of all men, whether they worshipped him or not,—of pale-face and redskin, of Mohawk and Mohegan. He loved them all with a father's love,—alas! Tekakwitha knew what that meant, if only from observation and from the very lack of it in her own life. This Rawenniio, this true God, was everywhere; he could hear the whispered prayer of the blackgown there in the lodge, and he could speak to her inmost heart even if she were quite alone in the forest. How she was stirred at the thought! "Will he speak to me now?" she said. "Does he know I am thinking of him?" She stopped at the foot of a great tree, poising her jug on her shoulder, and listened with innocent simplicity. "God of the blackgown! God of my mother! Rawenniio!" was the cry of her heart,—"speak to me, here in the forest,—speak to me, if it is true what the blackgown says!" Lifting her hand and her eyes, she looked up through the branches of the giant tree, far beyond what her dim eyes saw, far as her simple thought could reach; and though Tekakwitha heard no audible voice in the forest answering to her new-found cry, there was a dim but rapturous hope in her heart, cheering with happy omen her budding faith and her growing love for something more than the world of Tharonyawagon could give her,—something more than fruitful corn-fields, sunshine on the running water of the Mohawks, a strong, true brave to love her, and the Happy Hunting-Grounds beyond. They could not be much fairer, after all, than were the hunting-grounds of her nation at Saratoga, where Father Jogues had cut a cross deep into the bark of a tree, and had almost perished with hunger because he would not eat the meat that was offered to Aireskoi. Tekakwitha was not long in choosing between Aireskoi and Rawenniio.

While her mind was dwelling on such thoughts as these, she must have sought out the ravine near the Turtle Village where Isaac Jogues had buried his friend René Goupil. This young martyr was killed, as we have said, for making the sign of the cross on an Indian child. She may have knelt to pray on the very spot where Jogues himself was tomahawked at the door of the Bear Chief's deserted lodge. There she could ask Rawenniio most fervently for strength of will to follow the gleam of light that beckoned to her. The Mohawks of Gandawague had not forgotten these places so near at hand, nor how it had all happened. The Fathers Fremin, Bruyas, and Pierron, during their stay in the lodge with Tekakwitha, thought often of Jogues, and must have mentioned his name in her presence, as they afterwards did in their journal;<sup>[39]</sup> then, to be sure, Tegonhatsihongo would know of the murdered blackgown, so Tekakwitha could not fail to learn his story. She probably knew it already, but she thought of it now as she never had done before. Surely that first of the blackgowns who came to their village had something important to tell them. Why else had he laid down his life by coming among them a second and even a third time after his cruel captivity? Why else had he exerted himself to learn their



language? The voice of Ondessonk's blood cried out to her from the ground, and besought her to hear what these others said who came to her now with his name on their lips, and the name of a greater than he,—of the One who was nailed to a cross, whose image they carried. A host of questions rose to her lips when she saw them again, but she had neither time nor courage to utter them. Only three days, and the blackgowns were gone. Tekakwitha was left alone once more with her aunts and her uncle, who had received these guests not from love, but policy.

During their short visit an alarming incident had occurred. A band of Mohegans, dashing down upon the village, had scalped a wretched squaw at the very gates. "Fremin was one of the first to hasten to her, eager to save a soul where life was in so great peril; but she spurned his offers. Four times she turned away in scorn;" but the patient zeal of the missionary won her at last, and she died a Christian.

There was another squaw in the town who had asked for baptism, an Iroquois woman of rank. We are not told whether this was Tegonhatsihongo, or some other, though we know that she did in time become a Christian. To test this woman's sincerity, Father Fremin gave her the thankless, unpopular task of calling to prayer, with a little bell, the Huron and Algonquin captives at Gandawague, who were already Christians. She did not shrink from this ordeal, but still her baptism was deferred till the missionaries should finish their embassy and return again to the town. In the mean time she wearied of their prolonged delay, and followed them to Tionnontogen, gaining from them there the necessary instruction for receiving the sacrament. The young Tekakwitha, on the contrary, either through natural timidity or by the express command of her uncle (we know not which, most likely both), waited with sealed lips for eight long years. During all that time she gave no sign or token, that has ever been recorded, of a wish to become a Christian; and yet the missionaries thenceforth were at work continuously in one or another of the Mohawk villages. Let us, then, follow the hurrying course of events in which the life of Tekakwitha was involved during these eight years of dim but dawning light, not forgetting that the seed which the Fathers had scattered in passing lay hidden yet treasured deep in the innermost heart of the Mohawk maiden.

#### FOOTNOTES:

See [Appendix, Note A](#), Letter of June 29, 1885.

Or "Peace-Maker," as wampum was the emblem and token of peace. For an interesting account of Hiawatha, or Hayenwatha, as founder of the League, and for other rare and valuable information concerning the people of the Five Nations, see Hale's Iroquois Book of Rites.

See M. Cuoq's *Lexique de la Langue Iroquoise*. This word "Rawenniio," also written "Hawennyiu," came into use when Christianity was first preached among the Iroquois. It is still used by them to designate the "Great Spirit," or "Father of all Men." The last part of the word, "niio" or "nyiu" (God), is said to be derived from the French word "Dieu."

See "Early Chapters of Mohawk History," no. xv., by Dr. Hawley, of the Cayuga County Historical Society, printed in the "Auburn Advertiser," and also to be issued in book form. These "Early Chapters" consist chiefly of translations from the Jesuit "Relations," with valuable notes and comments.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### CAUGHNAWAGA ON THE MOHAWK.—FATHERS FREMIN AND PIERRON.

AFTER Tekakwitha had lodged Fathers Fremin, Bruyas, and Pierron for three days at Gandawague, on the bank of Auries Creek, they went to the castle of Tionnontogen, which it must be remembered had been hastily rebuilt some little distance west of its former site near the Nose, though still on the south side of the river. There, when the pagan festival and debauchery was over, a grand public reception of these ambassadors took place. The people of all the Mohawk villages were assembled for the occasion, Tekakwitha probably among them. In due time, after a most ceremonious welcome, Fremin rose to address them. To render his speech to the nation more impressive, he set up in their midst a great pole forty or fifty feet in height, from the top of which a wampum belt was suspended. He then declared, on the part of Onnontio, that in like manner would hang the first Iroquois who should come to kill a Frenchman or any one of their allies. At this all the Mohawks—men, women, and children—bowed their heads in silent awe, not venturing to look at such an extraordinary gift, nor to speak, until the most accomplished of their orators, having recovered his senses, rose and went through all imaginable mimicries to show his astonishment. As if ignorant of its meaning, he gesticulated and declaimed in the liveliest manner, though a man of more than sixty years of age. Then discovering its true significance, he seized his throat "with both hands in a frightful way, grasping it tightly to represent and at the same time impress upon the multitude about him the horror of this kind of death. After he had spoken, and at length, with a surprising eloquence, exhibiting flashes of wit by no means common, he finished," as the leading ambassador-priest tells us, "by delivering up the captives we demanded, and giving us the choice of the place where we would build our chapel, in the erection of which they proposed to go to work with all despatch. They, moreover, delivered up to us a Frenchman whom they had held captive for some time, and promised us the liberty of twelve Algonquins, partly of the nation of the Nez Percés, partly of that of the Outaouacs [Ottawas]."

Thus at Tionnontogen the labors of Father Fremin began. He was left quite alone among the Mohawks for nearly a year, at the mission of St. Mary's as it was henceforth called. He struggled earnestly during that time to maintain peace and establish Christianity. His companion, Bruyas (whose Mohawk dictionary is exceedingly valuable to students of the Indian language), soon went west to the Oneidas, among whom, little by little, he learned the Oneida dialect. Pierron, on the other hand, after a short stay with Fremin, bent his steps eastward to Schenectady. He visited the English and Dutch at Albany to renew the friendly intercourse of former days; and then this messenger of peace in the early part of the year 1668, travelled back over the great Mohawk war-trail, leading northward. He returned to Quebec to report to Governor de Courselle the progress of the embassy.

Fremin, left entirely to his own devices in the Mohawk Valley, gathered together the

captive Christian Hurons, and then went steadily on, preaching, teaching, and baptizing. Once when the young warriors were torturing an Ottawa captive and preparing to burn him, contrary to the articles of peace, the Father by frantic efforts succeeded in saving him; but it was only by dint of rushing through the streets of the village with cries, threats, and entreaties. They could not withstand his zeal. He scattered the assembled crowd. He called down the vengeance of Rawennio and Onnontio upon their castle of Tionnontogen, if they persisted in thus breaking the peace. The older men, roused at last by his words and actions, put a stop to the outrage. The unhappy victim was rescued from a fiery death, but he fell into a lingering fever brought on by the fright and the sufferings he had endured. In course of time he died, but it was not till he had been fully instructed and baptized by the courageous Father, who thus had the gratification of saving both body and soul.

On the 7th of October, 1668, Pierron returned from his journey to Quebec, and again passed through the lower Mohawk villages on his way to the bark chapel of St. Mary's, which had been erected at Tionnontogen during his absence. If Tekakwitha saw her former guest at that time, it was only as one among a group of Mohawk villagers who watched the missionary as he passed through the streets of the Turtle Castle. He was hurrying on to meet and to replace Father Fremin. This spirited and eloquent founder of the mission now went westward beyond Bruyas at Oneida, in order to make a missionary opening among the Senecas, who also desired a blackgown. This left Father Pierron alone in his turn in charge of the Mohawk mission. His graphic letters to his superiors in Canada during the next few years give many a vivid picture of what was transpiring at that time in the valley.

He was something of an artist. Before he succeeded in mastering the language, he spent much of his time in painting. He found that his pictures stimulated the curiosity of the Mohawks. In their efforts to get at the meaning of them and to explain them to one another, they learned, without realizing it, the very things he wanted to teach them; while he, by listening to their explanations, quickly acquired their language. As the blackgown's pictures were much talked about in the Mohawk villages at this time, and must have influenced the minds of Tekakwitha and her relatives, it will be worth while to give Pierron's description of one of his own productions. "Among these representations I have made," he says, "there is one contrasting a good with a miserable death. What led me to make this was that I saw the old men and the old women would stop their ears with their fingers the moment I began to speak to them of God, and would say to me, 'I do not hear.' I have therefore represented on one side of my picture a Christian who dies a saintly death, with the hands joined as of one holding the cross and his rosary; then his soul is carried by an angel to heaven and the blessed spirits appear awaiting it. On the other side, I have put, lower down, a woman broken with age, who is dying, and unwilling to listen to a missionary Father who points her to paradise; she holds both ears closed with her fingers; but a demon from hell seizes her arms and hands, and himself puts his fingers in the ears of the dying woman. Her soul is carried by three demons; and an angel who comes out of a cloud, sword in hand, hurls them into the bottomless pit. This representation," he continues, "has furnished me an occasion to speak of the immortality of our souls, and of the good and the bad of the other life; and when they once catch the import of my picture, no one presumes to say any more, 'I do not hear.'"

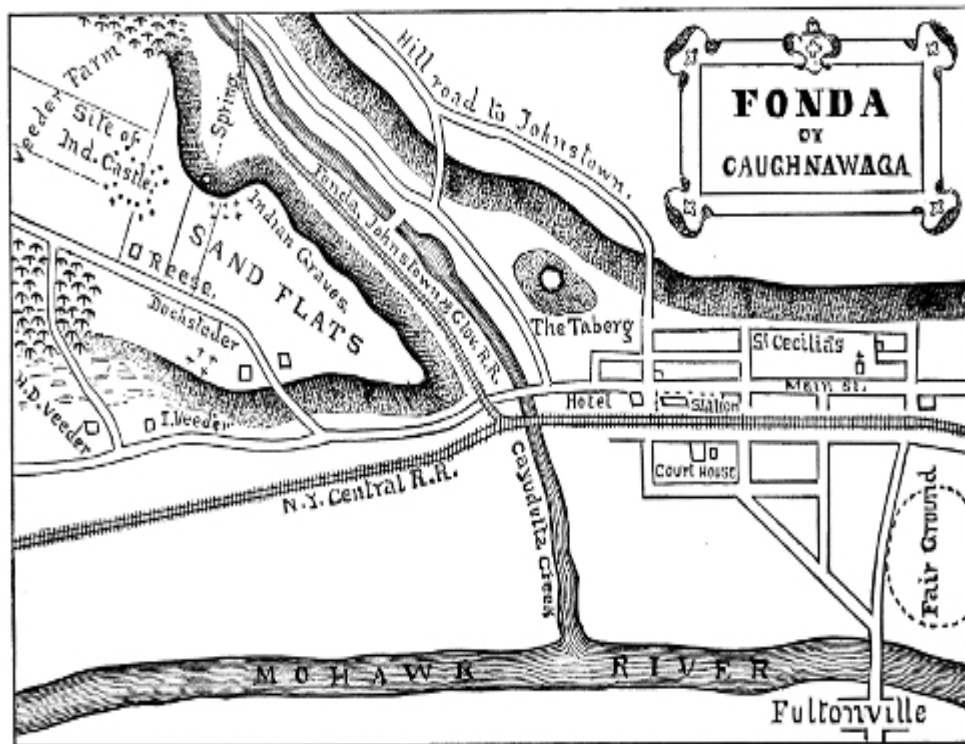
The "Relation" of the same year<sup>[40]</sup> tells us that Father Pierron accompanied this saintly skill with severe labors making regularly each month a visitation of the *seven large villages*, over a space of seven and a half leagues in extent, in order that no infant or adult sick person should die without receiving baptism.

Father Boniface now arrived at Quebec from France, and was immediately selected to go to the Mohawk Valley to second Pierron's zeal. We learn further, from the "Relation," that a bitter strife was then in progress: "The war [between the Iroquois and the nine nations of the Loups] humbles them by the loss of their people; but by preventing their permanent stay in one place, it also multiplies obstacles to the conversion of the warriors, who divide up into numerous bands to go singly against the enemy. The Agniers [Mohawks] and the Loups [Mohegans] have brought the war even close to New Orange; and when taken captive they burn and eat one another." The Mohegans and their allies had certain advantages over the Mohawks. They were more numerous; then, too, they were a roving people, difficult to attack, whereas the Mohawks lived in villages and had permanent homes. These last, in order to defend themselves, took care thoroughly to fortify the castles they were then building on the north side of the Mohawk River. As they seem to have had seven villages at this time, which is an unusual number, it is probable that they either had not entirely abandoned their old sites, or else had recently added several villages of captives.

It was while affairs were still in this unsettled condition that Tekakwitha went to live on the north bank of the Mohawk River, near the Cayudutta Creek at Caughnawaga, or Fonda, a few miles west of her earlier home. The French writers continued for some time after this to call the new castle of the Turtles on the north bank by its old name of Gandawague;<sup>[41]</sup> to prevent confusion, however, we will henceforth call it Caughnawaga, meaning "At the Rapids." That name still clings to a part of the present town of Fonda. The rapids of the Mohawk still ripple there as of old under the sharp-cut hill where, as proved by relics and historic references, the once famous castle stood. The Indians who went forth later from this Caughnawaga in the Mohawk Valley to Canada, carried with them the familiar word. Settling down beside the great rapids of the St. Lawrence River, the sound of rushing water boomed louder than before in their ears, and the name Caughnawaga grew into history there, as well as here. But there it is still a living name, and is passed from mouth to mouth as the well-known home of half the Canienga race; for Caughnawaga in Canada holds to-day that part of the Mohawk nation which in the wranglings of the white men—that is to say, the old French and Indian wars—sided with the French. Brantford, also in Canada, contains the other half of the same nation,—the descendants of Sir William Johnson's Mohawk followers, who were staunch friends of the English. To us Americans, falling heir to their lands, these Mohawks have left no living trace of themselves, though some of their brothers, the Onondagas and Senecas, still dwell in our midst. The Mohawks have gone from us, indeed, leaving us only a memory, all inwrought in a thick array of Indian names. Let us try at least to understand and to preserve these names, in honor of the brave race that once peopled our hills and valleys, our forests and streams.

In the Mohawk Valley, side by side with the name of Fonda, which comes to us from the days of the early white settlers, there lingers the still older name of Caughnawaga, which is dusky with the shadows of two hundred years, and even more. The mere name in partial use there at the present day has served to throw some light on the hill and the spring near the Cayudutta,—enough, at least, to have called to our minds a vision of Mohawk girls with their water-jugs, and to point in a misty way to the almost forgotten home of the Lily of the Mohawks. It is owing, however, to long, careful, critical research, and not to surmise, that the haze of many years has been cleared away at last from the actual site of Caughnawaga Castle. The map of Gen. John S. Clark (page 38) gives its position relative to other Mohawk villages. The plan here given, which was drawn by Rev. C. A. Walworth, shows more especially where this Indian fortress stood in reference

to Fonda, on what are now called the "Sand Flats," west of the Cayudutta Creek. The spring which supplied the Mohawks with water is seen, distinctly marked in its cove, half-way down the hill from the castle, towards the Cayudutta. With this plan before us it is needless here to repeat the details of this locality already given in the chapter entitled "Tekakwitha's Spring." In our opening pages we journeyed all the way up the Mohawk Valley from Albany, with here and there a passing glimpse at the scenery, till we reached the castle site at Fonda, which was then fully described. Since that time we have travelled together through the highways and in the byways of history over about thirteen years of Tekakwitha's life. Here we are again at Caughnawaga; and now that we are following up the course of events in regular order from the birth of Tekakwitha, we find that she also has but recently arrived here, having just come to her new home from Gandawague. She can scarcely be called a child any longer, since she takes upon herself so much of the household care, and yet she is quite young. Her life is a busy one. She has taken an active part with the women of her family and their neighbors in building the new bark house which they occupy within the enclosure of palisades at Caughnawaga. Now, at last, they are quite comfortable.



**SITE OF CAUGHNAWAGA CASTLE.**

*(Also called the "Mission of St. Peter's" of the Mohawks, where Tekakwitha was baptized in 1676.)*

This is the way the Mohawks were accustomed to build their permanent lodges. They first took saplings, and planted two rows of them firmly in the ground. Then they bent the tops of them over across the intervening space, and tied them together. The shape of the house when finished was not unlike the top of an ambulance wagon. These arched ribs were supported and held in place by poles put in horizontally across the house, near the top.

The whole was then neatly covered with square, overlapping pieces of bark, held in place by poles that were tied down over them. The holes in the roof for chimneys and windows were not forgotten, nor the loose pieces of bark to pull over them in case of rain. The Jesuits often found these cabins smoky and dark,—a severe test of their patience when engaged in literary pursuits, or even in reading their breviaries; but for the Mohawks, who had no such tastes, they were good enough.

When the house was finished on which Tekakwitha worked with her aunts and her neighbors, it made a secure shelter for a score of families, all lodged under the same roof and all on one floor. That floor was the bare ground. When the dwelling was fitted up into compartments on either side, with spaces down the centre for fires alternating with spaces for family gatherings at meal-time; when the matrons had assigned to each and every member of the household certain lodge-seats; when mats of rushes had been prepared, and robes of skins were in their places for bed-clothes on bunks along the sides of the house; when plenty of dried corn and smoked meat hung from the ridge-poles of the roof for instant use; when the heavy wooden mortar and pestle were made and stood ready for pounding the corn; when nice little dishes of bark and wooden bowls were at hand, while tucked away in corners were baskets of wampum beads all ready to be strung into belts at the proper time,—when all these things were in order, then at last, after the move from Gandawague on Auries Creek, Tekakwitha felt free to rest and breathe easily. Then she might glance leisurely at the patch of sunlight falling on the floor of the lodge through the doorway at the far end, and decide in her own mind how much time she had before the next meal was to be prepared. Perhaps she would go out to take a look at the strong new palisade that her uncle and the warriors had planned so carefully for defence against the dreaded Mohegans; or she may have preferred to sit quietly by the spring for a while in the beautiful little cove. Being so near the castle, it was comparatively safe from the lurking enemy, who might attack them at any time.

Wentworth Greenhalgh, an Englishman, who went from Albany to Caughnawaga in 1677, thus describes the castle: "Cahaniaga is double stockadoed round; has four forts [ports?] about four foot wide apiece; conteyns about twenty-four houses, and is situated upon the edge of an hill, about a bow shott from the river side." He then gives the situation and size of the other Mohawk towns at that time, and closes his remarks by stating that their corn grew close by the river. The Mohawks chose the flats or river-bottoms for corn-fields because they were fertile, and besides, they were natural openings, with no trees to be cut down and cleared away.

Much of Tekakwitha's time at certain seasons of the year was spent in these corn-fields; and she must have witnessed, if not taken part in, some of the exciting scenes described by Pierron, who was then making his periodical rounds through the Mohawk villages. He frequently gives incidents of Mohawk women who were waylaid and scalped or captured by desultory bands of Mohegans and other tribes with whom they were at war. The constant fear of death that overhung them gave to the minds of these Mohawk squaws a serious turn, and made them more willing than they would otherwise have been to listen to the warning words of the blackgown. More than one of them, haunted perhaps by the remembrance of his pictures and his morality games, which were no less ingenious for gaining their attention, came and asked for baptism. Pierron succeeded also in rousing the chiefs to a sense of the degradation into which the constant purchase of brandy and rum at Albany was sinking them. He reminded them that when once under its influence they were in no condition to repel the attacks either of Satan or the Mohegans. Both he and Fremin had themselves been sufferers during the drunken riots of the Indians. While the two Fathers were together at Tionnontogen, they wrote:—



"It seems sometimes as if the whole village had run mad, so great is the license they take when they give up to drinking. They have hurled firebrands at our heads; they have thrown our papers into the fire; they have broken open our chapel; they have often threatened us with death; and during the three or four days that these debaucheries last, and which recur with frequency, we must suffer a thousand insults without complaint, without food or sleep. In their fury they upset everything that comes in their way, and even butcher one another, not sparing relative, friend, countryman, nor stranger. These things are carried to such excess that the place seems to us no longer tenable; but we shall leave it only with life.... When the storm is over, we are left to go on with our duties quite peaceably."

This state of things continued for some time, as did also the raids of their enemies. It was in the midst of such bristling savage thorns as these that the Lily of the Mohawks grew up from childhood into womanhood. In her new home at Caughnawaga, during these stormy times she lived a sweet, pure life, all uncontaminated. At last the Mohawk chiefs, won by Pierron's reiterated arguments, began to realize that they had among them, in intoxicating drink, "a foreign demon more to be dreaded than those they worship in their dreams." They were induced to take measures against this excess in public council, "and, advised by Father Pierron that the most effectual means would be themselves to make their appeal to the Governor-General of Manhattan, the more prominent among them presented a petition which they had drawn for the purpose." This is the answer which the Governor gave to the request of the Mohawks and the letter of the Father which accompanied it:—

FATHER,—By your last, I am informed of your complaint, which is seconded by that of the Iroquois chiefs, the Sachems, the Indians, as appears more openly by their petition enclosed in yours, respecting the large quantity of liquors that certain ones of Albany have taken the liberty to sell to the Indians; as a consequence, that great excesses are committed by them, and the worst is feared unless we prevent it. In response, know that I have taken, and will continue to take, all possible care, under the severest penalties, to restrain and oppose the furnishing any excess to the Indians. And I am delighted to see such virtuous thoughts proceed from heathens, to the shame of many Christians; but this must be attributed to your pious instructions, for, well versed in strict discipline, you have shown them the way of mortification both by your precepts and practice.

Your very humble and affectionate servant,

FRANCIS LOVELACE.

At FORT JAMES, 18th of Nov. 1668.

Fremin and Pierron, during the two years 1668 and 1669, baptized one hundred and fifty-one Indians, of which more than half were children or aged persons who died shortly after baptism. Says the "Relation":—

"This should be considered a sufficiently abundant harvest in a waste land, and we may hope for much from such beginnings. We owe, under God, the birth of this flourishing church to the death and blood of the Reverend Father Jogues. He shed it at the very region where the new Christian church begins to arise; and it seems as though we are to see verified in our days, in his

person, the beautiful words of Tertullian: 'The blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians.'"

That Pierron was fired with the spirit of Jogues, who founded this Mohawk mission in his blood, is proved by the following words, which he wrote in a moment of discouragement:—

"I have attacked drunkenness and lewdness, which are divinities of the country, so madly are these people devoted to them. I have combated these vices.... I have employed gentleness and vigor, threats and entreaties, labors and tears, to build up this new church and to convert these poor savages. There remains nothing more than to shed my blood for their salvation, that which I long for with all the desires of my heart. But after all, I have not yet observed in them those marked amendments which the Holy Spirit effects in those of the heathen whom he would put in the number of the faithful."

#### FOOTNOTES:

An English translation of this "Relation" is given in the "Early Chapters of Mohawk History," by Dr. Hawley.

See [Appendix, Note B](#).

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE MOHEGANS ATTACK THE NEW CASTLE.—BATTLE OF KINAQUARIONES.—THE FEAST OF THE DEAD.

**I**N the year 1669, in one of the long bark-houses at Caughnawaga on a summer morning before the dawn, Tekakwitha is turning uneasily in her sleep. Suddenly her aunt springs up beside her and speaks in a startled voice. In an instant all in the lodge are on the alert. Sharp, wild cries are heard; bullets pierce the stout palisade, and come whizzing through the bark sides of the new house. The warriors, roused from sleep, seize their nearest weapons, be they guns, war-clubs, tomahawks, or arrows. A hurried word to the women, a loud whoop, a few bounding steps, and they are on the platform of the palisade hurling defiance at an assaulting army of Mohegans. Before them are hundreds of the foe in war-paint and feathers, led by a stout man of middle age,—the wise and gallant Chickatabutt, the great sachem of the Massachusetts. His bearing makes him conspicuous among a score of famous sagamores who are leading the assault. In the motley ranks that follow are Hudson River Indians, mingled with the red-skin neighbors of the Puritans, grim old warriors of the Massachusetts tribe. There are also Narragansett braves and other

New England Indians,—all united in a desperate attempt to crush the Mohawks, and thus break in through the eastern door of the Long House of the Five Nations. The assailants seek, now by open attack and now by strategy, to dislodge the defenders of Caughnawaga from their lofty scaffolds, and to fire the palisade. Four Mohawks drop from their places dead, and two are wounded; but the Mohegans make no perceptible headway against the defensive works of the Castle. The struggle continues with unabated fury. Among those who fall on the side of the enemy are pupils of the English missionary Eliot, who know something of the Bible which he has translated for them. Five of these converts to Puritanism are engaged in this expedition, of whom but one escapes with his life. They too, like the ever increasing neophytes of Pierron, are called "praying Indians." Their chief Chickatabutt—or Josiah, as he is often called—was himself a "praying Indian" once. That was when he lived with his pious uncle Kuchamakin, one of Eliot's favorite pupils. "He kept the Sabbath several years," says Gookin; "but after turned apostate, and for several years last past separated from the praying Indians, and was but a back friend to religion." Indeed the English, who had a good opinion of him in his early days, now thought him "a very vicious person," though all acknowledged he was as brave as brave could be.

The Puritans had tried in vain to dissuade their Indian neighbors from accompanying this chief on his adventurous march to the Mohawk Valley. In spite of every drawback, however, Chickatabutt, whose name means "A-house-afire," had succeeded in bringing his army all the way from the vicinity of Boston to the castle of Caughnawaga. After they were joined by their allies, they numbered six or seven hundred men.<sup>[42]</sup> True, they had spent much of their ammunition on the march,—"shooting away their powder in the air, ... boasting, vapouring, and prating of their valour," at the Indian villages where they had stopped for foraging purposes. It was their consequent lack of ammunition which determined them to carry the Mohawk Castle, if possible, by assault. But the brave Caniengas, or "People of the Flint," though taken by surprise in their sleep, were quick to grapple with the daring Mohegans, and fought like panthers. They were not to be easily overcome, by any roving Indian foe, in defence of their women and their homes. The squaws of Caughnawaga, with the well-known courage of their race, realized their perilous situation at the first alarm, and were "arming themselves with knives and defensive weapons in case a breach should be made." The youths of the village were, many of them, fighting their first important battle on this occasion. The sight of the Mohawk women and young girls, arming themselves as best they could to resist the Mohegan attack, was in itself an irresistible appeal to their tribesmen to exert themselves to the utmost in defending them against the well-known horrors of captivity, which would undoubtedly come upon them if the castle fell into the hands of the enemy. Many a young brave was nerved to desperate feats of valor on that morning and during the days that followed. Beginning with the sudden attack at dawn, the struggle continued for a long time with uncertain issue. News was carried to Tionnontogen that the whole country was lost; that Caughnawaga was besieged by an army of Mohegans; that all the youth had already fallen, and perhaps Gandagaro, the adjacent fort, was in extremity. These reports, though exaggerated, caused the Mohawk warriors of the other castles to gather as fast as possible at Caughnawaga. Even had they been all there at the very first, they would still have been fewer in numbers than the enemy; but before the sun was high, enough of them had assembled to warrant a sally on the foe. Father Pierron was now at the castle, and a witness of the stirring events taking place there. Tekakwitha, too, was taking her part among the young girls, whose fate now hung in the balance. The missionary thus describes what followed:—

"By eight o'clock in the morning our warriors without confusion promptly arrayed themselves with all they have of greatest value, as is their custom in such encounters, and with no other leader than their own courage went out in full force against the enemy. I was with the first to go to see if, amid the carnage about the palisades of the village, where so many unbelieving souls would perish, I might not be able to save some one. On our arrival, we heard only cries of lamentation over the death of the bravest of the village. The enemy had retired after two hours of most obstinate fighting on both sides. There was but a single warrior of the Loups [Mohegans] left on the ground; and I saw that a Barbarian, after cutting off his hands and feet, had flayed him, and was stripping the flesh from the bones for a hateful repast."

This was to honor Aireskoi! Tekakwitha, ever helpful and ready to assist others, would probably be where she was most needed at that time,—with the bereaved women who were seeking their dead, and with those who ministered to the wounded. No heart so quick as hers to turn with loathing from the hideous human sacrifice that was being prepared outside the castle walls. With the good deeds of the blackgown Pierron hourly before her, and the sound of his voice often in her ears,—for this missionary could doctor as well as preach,<sup>[43]</sup>—she must have had constantly in her mind the thought of Rawenniio during this time of peril and anxiety, and would not fail to call in spirit on the God of the Christians for assistance against the foe.

The Mohegan army sat down before the castle, besieging it for some days without effect, though there was much firing back and forth. The provisions they had brought with them were about exhausted and their munition well spent. Some of their people were sick, and they saw the impossibility of getting the stronghold by assault. So they broke up the siege, to the great relief of the imprisoned Mohawks, and retreated twenty miles in the direction of the Dutch settlements. This brought them to Kinaquariones,<sup>[44]</sup> now called Towereune, a steep rocky hill on the north side of the Mohawk River. It is just above Hoffman's Ferry, nine English or three Dutch miles west of Schenectady; there they temporarily entrenched themselves. The Mohawks, who did not know of this camp, though secure for the time being in their castle, felt that in any case no time should be lost in following up the enemy as soon as they could make the necessary preparation. The women of Caughnawaga, having laid aside their weapons, began at once to assist the warriors in making ready the supply of meal which according to custom was to be carried on the war-path. This was soon done, as they had but to add a little maple-sugar or other seasoning to the pounded corn, which they had already twice charred or dried for use on just such expeditions. The warriors of the Mohawk nation were now all assembled to go in pursuit of the Mohegans. Every man was fully armed and equipped, and their deerskin pockets were well filled with the crushed corn. They put themselves under the leadership of the brave warrior Kryn, surnamed the "Great Mohawk." His home was at Caughnawaga, and his valor and good management on this expedition won for him a new title, that of "Conqueror of the Mohegans." He and his fellow tribesmen now hastily bade adieu to their families, who, together with the blackgown Pierron, were to remain at the castle; then they embarked in canoes on the Mohawk, and aided by the force of the current soon disappeared around the great bend of the river in the direction of old Ossernenon on the route to the pale-face settlements. Anxious eyes and thoughts followed them. The bravest of two warlike races were now likely at any moment to meet in a decisive conflict, and who dare foretell the result? Not Tekakwitha, who waited in silence and concern; nor her more voluble companions, whose anxiety took the form of restlessness. Having all done their share in defending the castle, they could now only watch and wait, looking often in the direction

of the vanished braves, and hoping for news of the expedition from chance stragglers. In the mean-time the women were free to go back and forth to the spring, to care for the wounded, and to prepare the bodies of the dead for burial.

The day after the departure of the warriors there were rumors of a desperate battle in progress about twenty miles away; and on the following day at three o'clock in the afternoon, came certain news of victory. It was a great triumph for the Mohawks or Caniengas, bravest of the bold Kanonsionni. Chickatabutt, the sachem of the Massachusetts, was slain. The noblest of the Mohegan warriors fell at his side. Those who escaped fled away to their distant kindred humbled and ashamed, with lamentations and mourning for the loss of most of their chief men. The Mohawks were greatly elated. The gloom that hung over Caughnawaga was changed to glad excitement. All prepared to welcome home the heroes of the battle of Kinauariones. Father Pierron started at once and alone in the direction of the battle-field to visit the wounded. He wished also to manifest to the warriors his interest in their victory. He arrived on the spot before nightfall. The warriors were glad to see him, and eager to relate all the particulars of the fight. This proved to be the last great battle between the Mohawks and the Mohegans. Its deeds of valor were told and retold for many a day at the Turtle Village and in Tekakwitha's hearing with all the usual boastfulness of the Indian. Pierron wrote a full account of all that happened from the time the Mohawk war-party set out from the castle in their canoes till they returned to their homes in triumph. It is here given in his own words:—

"Night overtaking them [the Mohawks] in their pursuit, they sent in advance certain of their number in quest of the enemy, and quietly to discover the place where he was encamped. As the scouts came within sight of the spot, desiring a better view of the situation, they drew still nearer. But notwithstanding their great caution, one of the Loups on guard close by, hearing a noise, gave the customary challenge, *Koue, koue* (this is the 'Who comes there?' of the savages); as there was no response and he saw nothing, he did not deem it necessary to give the alarm.

From the report given by the spies on their return of the condition of the enemy, it was determined not to attack him in his lodging-place, where he appeared too well entrenched, but to prepare an ambush on the route it was believed he would take. In the execution of this plan, the Iroquois made a wide détour to lay their ambuscade in a cragged and most advantageous pass which commanded the only route in the direction of the Hollanders. In the morning the Loups decamped; and as they marched in single file, after the Indian custom, twelve of them fell unexpectedly into the ambuscade. A shower of balls of which they were all at once made aware, immediately put to flight those that the casualty had spared. Frightful cries at once rang through the forest, and the Loups rallied at the same place where they had encamped. The Iroquois pursued them with vigor. On overtaking them, they made a fierce assault. The Loups at first made a stout resistance; but the cowardice of some among them forcing the main body to recede before the fury of the Iroquois, ten of the whole band made a stand within their works to defend themselves unto death. This new entrenchment greatly harassed our *Agniés* [Mohawks] but as they are an indefatigable and brave people, they did not lose courage nor the hope of driving out the enemy; and to succeed in this with the least peril, they made use of an old tree, which they found there, and which they carried in front of them for protection. This they

were able to do, instead of going up one by one to the place where the enemy was fortified. Their skill however did not avail them; for notwithstanding this device, the Loups did not omit to open a heavy fire from all sides, killing and wounding a number of our people; and the fight without doubt would have been still more disastrous if night had not terminated it. Our Indians captured at the outset four women of the twenty-four who accompanied the expedition, and six men subsequently in the heat of the combat.

The next morning as they were ready to renew the attack, they found that the enemy had made their escape during the night, and that they were left masters of the battle-field. The victors, following the custom of the savages, tomahawked and scalped the Loups left on the place, and then took care to bury those of their own people who had been slain in the fight."

The Mohawks declared that nearly a hundred warriors on the side of the enemy had perished, either by the sword in the fray or by water in flight. "This was probably an exaggeration," continues Pierron, "as only nineteen scalps were secured."<sup>[45]</sup> According to the story of the Mohegan captives, they lost fifty men on their side, thirteen falling on the field of battle; while they killed altogether nearly forty of the Mohawks.

Pierron thus describes the triumphal march back to Caughnawaga from the field of action:—

"We left two days after the combat, in company with a large number, both those who had taken part in the fight and those who had come to look on. The victors bore the scalps well painted, at the end of long batons made to support their trophies. The captives, divided into several bands, marched with singing; and as I perceived that one of the women had a sick infant which she carried at the breast, I thought I would do well to baptize it, seeing it was about to die."

The blackgown accordingly took occasion to approach the mother as they were crossing a stream, caught up a handful of water, and saying the short baptismal words, poured it on the little head, which soon drooped in death. He had already instructed some of the captives, and in the course of a few days all of them asked for baptism. On first reaching the castle, the Mohegan prisoners of war were received and tortured in the usual manner. Pierron could do nothing for them while the heat of passion and enmity toward the victims lasted; but watching his chance he saw that they were left alone for a time on the torture scaffold, before being killed, surrounded still by the ghastly scalps of their companions. He at once led them down from the hateful platform, and took them into a cabin near by, to prepare them, if possible, for a Christian death. While he was speaking to them earnestly of their salvation, some of the Iroquois came and stood near, saying to one another, "Do you see how he loves our enemies?" Some among them added, "He ought to leave them to burn in hell,—people who have done us so much evil." Pierron, overhearing this, turned about, and seeing that a crowd of the villagers had assembled, caught up the words of the discontented Mohawks, and taking them for his text, explained so well and so forcibly the teaching of Christ on the Mount, that in a little while the Indians who had gathered about him were all of one mind, and declared that he did well to teach the captives. They no longer interfered with his self-imposed task, but gave him ample time to instruct them. Before the doomed Mohegans were finally put to death, they all received baptism; among them, we are told, was "one of the bravest and most celebrated warriors of that nation, who in the combat had slain with his own hand several



Iroquois." Submitting to Pierron's influence, the fierce Mohawks did not grudge even to this warrior whatever happiness he might be able to secure, through the blackgown's ministrations, in another world. Little by little these Mohawks were veering round in the direction of Christianity, under the firm and steady but gentle guidance of their devoted missionary. Whether or not they were willing to listen, his stirring voice still rang in their ears; and whether or not they realized the fact, it was certainly true that he was treated every day with more and more of respect and trust.

The next important event that took place at Caughnawaga was the Feast of the Dead. Here again, though Tekakwitha was certainly present and must have known all that was going on, her biographers have given no account of it. Pierron, however, has taken care to write out a full description of this great feast; it occurred only once in ten years. He, of course, in his important position as the representative among them both of Christianity and of his French countrymen, deals only with what concerned the whole Mohawk nation. He had little or no time to note the changes that were taking place in the young Tekakwitha; no word had passed between the two since his return from Quebec. If she had aught to say to him, she was forbidden to say it. Likely enough he did not even recognize her when he saw her, though he may have remembered the appearance of a little maiden who some years before had lodged him at Gandawague.

We who have followed the course of her life more closely, can easily single out Tekakwitha from the crowd that has gathered to witness the strange ceremonies that are taking place in the woods not far from the castle. The bones of all the friends and relations of these people who have died within the last ten years have been carefully and reverently cleaned, scraped, and collected together to be deposited in a common pit prepared for their reception. The best and richest of beaver-skins and other furs are freely brought forward, that the pit may be lined with their beautiful warm surfaces. It is at night, amid the wailing chants of the women and the flaming of torches, that the relics of the dead, with many a last caressing touch, are deposited in the great pit; they are encased in separate robes with precious gifts. There are many tragic demonstrations of grief. A weird, pathetic scene it is; and it makes a strange and lasting impression on the minds of the young people who witness it for the first time. After the pit has been filled and covered over, the women are to be seen trudging back and forth to the village with hampers of food, to be deposited on the gigantic grave for the use of their departed friends. It is only after the Feast of the Dead is over that the soul is supposed to take its final journey to the spirit-land. Previous to this celebration they believe that it hovers near the body, which they expose on a bark scaffold, or else put in a sitting posture in a temporary grave covered lightly with bark or twigs.

During the progress of this feast quite a dispute arises among the assembled chiefs concerning the treatment received by Pierron. He has been cordially invited to be present, and now stands among the dignitaries of the Mohawk nation in company with Tekakwitha's uncle and other chiefs. The blackgown lets no part of the ceremony escape his notice. Distinguished guests from Oneida and Onondaga have placed themselves in separate groups, according to custom. An Onondaga chief has risen to make a speech. Near enough to see and hear what is going on are the women of Caughnawaga, who so lately took part in the defence of the castle. Tekakwitha's blanket partly conceals her face, but she is quite as richly dressed as the other young squaws. What she does not see or hear directly she can quickly gather from the talk of those about her. When the Onondaga has finished speaking, the Mohawk chiefs recount in turn the leading superstitions and fables of the nation; they are well known already to most of the people, who only half listen to what is being said. Presently there is a stir among the Mohawk

dignitaries, which centres the attention of all within earshot on the group. Pierron, it seems, has ceased to be a silent listener to what passes. He begins in his turn to tell fables, giving them here and there an extremely ridiculous turn. In the midst of it he is abruptly ordered by one of the chiefs to be silent. All are now eager to get at the truth of what has occurred. Some loudly upbraid the chief for his discourtesy; others bitterly accuse Pierron of an untimely interference with their customs. They say that he has been openly ridiculing their beliefs; his mouth must be stopped at once. But Pierron, knowing full well his influence with the people, and judiciously appealing to their love of fair play, boldly addresses the offending chief in these words, now distinctly heard by the listening throng: "Dost thou know, indeed, that thou hast given me the keenest affront I could have received? But who art thou to order me to be silent, and am I here to obey thee? If I had treated thee after this sort at Quebec, wouldst thou not have had cause to complain; but in what have I spoken evil, that my mouth should be closed? And if I speak the truth, why art thou not willing to hear?" The chief replied that it was their custom on these occasions to keep up their fables. Pierron stoutly rejoined: "It is your custom to get intoxicated; honestly, is it a good custom, and ought I to approve it? It is your custom to violate every law of reason, and to live as the beasts; think you it is not my duty to reprove you for all these vices? And yet you impose silence upon me when I would speak to you. Is this reasonable?" As Pierron and the chief could come to no agreement, the blackgown withdrew from among the Mohawks when the singing began, and took his place in the group of Onondaga guests, who received him with marked respect.

The ceremony lasted five hours. When it was over Pierron returned at once to Caughnawaga village, leaving the Mohawks still in the forest on the spot where the solemnity was conducted. A rumor was circulated there to the effect that the blackgown meant to return to Quebec. It was not long before the brusque Mohawk chief who had given offence came to him in the village to offer an apology for his conduct, saying: "My brother, up to this hour we have acted toward each other as the two best friends in the world." Then placing his hand on his heart, he added: "Tell me then, frankly, in what humor is thy soul? They say that thou goest to Quebec, and will no more come to live with us. If this be so, I implore thee not to get us into difficulty with Onnontio; for this would bring trouble upon thyself, if so many, both old and young, who greatly love and honor thee, should for this reason receive ill-treatment. Tell me, then, what is in thy heart, and what are thy sentiments?"

Pierron, in a grave and serious manner seldom assumed by him, replied: "It has been told thee that I have an irritated mind and a heart full of grief. This is true, and thou knowest well that thou art the cause; thou hast treated me with the greatest indignity. Thou hast even presumed to impose silence when I would speak of the faith, which is the thing of all else, as thou art not ignorant, I have most at heart. Did it not confuse thee to see me so well received by the Onondagas, whom I did not know, driven out by those who professed to be our friends?"

After listening patiently till he was through, the chief said with earnestness: "My brother, I see what is at the bottom of this quarrel; it is that we are not yet Christians. But if thou wilt leave this important affair to me, I promise thee success. This is what thou must do: First convoke a council, and then having given three belts to our three families, at each present speak out thy mind. After this, leave me to act, and I trust all will go well."

All did go well, to the great delight of Father Pierron. The old chief, who was high in authority, went to work so energetically, sending his nephews out in every direction, that he soon assembled all the grandees of the Mohawk nation in the cabin of Pierron. The

blackgown did indeed speak out his mind with such decided effect that his words were received with loud cries of applause. He threw down a fathom of wampum, saying: "Agnié, my brother, if it is true that thou art willing to hear me, there is my voice, which warns thee and entreats thee wholly to renounce Agreskoue, and never speak to him, but to adore the true God and follow His law."

He threw down a second fathom of wampum, to oblige the medicine men no more to invoke demons for the cure of diseases, but to use natural remedies. Again and again the speaker was applauded; even the medicine men who were present in the assembly showed their good will on this occasion. The last present to destroy the superstition of the dances was received with no less acclamation than the other two. It was Pierron's moment of triumph, the reward of his unceasing efforts in their behalf! The whole Mohawk nation seemed ready to do his will. The council which met some days after, included the delegation from Onondaga. These distinguished strangers had just returned from the visit they made to the Dutch after taking part in the Feast of the Dead.

Garacontié, the chief of the Onondagas, himself soon to become a Christian, now raised his powerful voice in support of Pierron, saying to the people, "Take his word, for he has sacrificed all for you." The blackgown triumphed at last. The sorcerers of the village cast their turtle-shell rattles into the fire, the women no longer called in the medicine men to cure their diseases, no dances were allowed which were not approved by Pierron, and the oyanders (or nobles) brought their youth in crowds to the chapel to be instructed. What more could the blackgown wish? Alas! he knew the Indians too well; and he adds in the moment of his success, "Their natural inconstancy still divides my heart between fear and joy."

So far as Tekakwitha was concerned, no fear as yet disturbed the calm content of her spirit. The Lily of the Mohawks, quite unnoticed in the retirement of her lodge, was taking note of all these things, and was waxing fairer every day in the sunny light of Rawenniio's presence in the land. The true God, the Great Spirit, they tell her, is now to be worshipped by all the people. She hears them cry out through the village, "Hail to Rawenniio! Down with sorcery! Down with Aireskoi!" These words are like sweet music in the ears of Tekakwitha. She is in a dream of happiness, a day-dream of the spirit. Her busy fingers drop their work, unconscious of this unaccustomed idleness; her thoughts are all of God. Tekakwitha's first and last and only love is Rawenniio. She hears his voice, she feels his presence in the purer air she breathes, for Aireskoi has fallen from his throne. In the quiet and seclusion of the long-house, all alone, she hears the noises of the crowd outside, like distant murmurs; but the name of "the true God" echoes in her ears, and she is happy. Why not leave her so? Let us not disturb her. Why should she be roused to suffer? Must the Lily droop her head and thirst and die, like the rest of Rawenniio's flowers? Alas! it must be so. But let us not forget that this Lily of the Mohawks has a soul, though it is still like a little bird that breathes and just begins to move, but has not tried its strength. In sorrow the wings of the soul are developed. When once they have grown strong, it will be easy for Tekakwitha to fly away through the door of death to Rawenniio.

#### FOOTNOTES:

This is the number given by Gookin, who was an Indian agent and magistrate of the Massachusetts Colony at the time of this expedition. Pierron in his

account mentions only three hundred.

Pierron had ridiculed the practices of the sorcerers and medicine men so effectually that they no longer attempted to use their charms and spells in his presence.

See note of J. S. Clark in "Early Chapters of Mohawk History," by Dr. Hawley (no. xx., as printed in the "Auburn Advertiser").

Gookin says of the Mohegans: "About fifty of their chief men, they confess, were slain in this fight; but I suppose more."

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## CHAPTER XI.

### WILL TEKAKWITHA MARRY?

"IT is time for Tekakwitha to marry," said her aunts. Her uncle was of the same opinion. "She will make a desirable wife," they thought, "a docile and a useful one. It will be easy to find a brave young hunter for her, who will be glad to live in the lodge of the leading chief at Caughnawaga. Then there will always be plenty of game brought to the lodge for food, and a good supply of furs to exchange at Albany for the goods of the *cloth-workers*." Thus the adopted parents of the young girl put their wise old heads together, and soon Tekakwitha's peace of mind was sadly disturbed by their new-laid plans. Until now she had been happy in her own way. Her uncommon skill and natural ingenuity developed and found vent in her daily tasks, though sometimes, to be sure, they must have become wearisome and monotonous. It was she who pounded the Indian corn and made the soup or sagamite, day after day. This sagamite took the place of bread with the Indians. She also distributed the food when prepared to the members of the family, and saw that each person's dish was properly filled at the right time. Like all generous natures, she was accustomed to take more than her share of the burden, and likely enough, less than her share of the sagamite. Chauchetière speaks more than once of her *esprit*, her ready wit, and also of her skill. He says:—

"Judging from the work which I have seen her do, it will be easy for me to affirm that she worked delicately in porcupine and in elk-skin. She made the belts (or burden-straps) with which the Indian women and girls carry wood; she made those which the old men use in conducting the affairs of the nation, which are composed of beads of *porcelaine* (wampum); and one of the occupations of the squaws is also to sew, since they have learned how to do it, either from those who have been slaves among them or from the wives of Christians from Europe. She knew well how to make certain ribbons which the savages make with the skins of eels or strong bark. She prepared these skins or this bark, and she reddened them, applying the color with sturgeon paste, which is used very skilfully among the Iroquois. She knew more than

other Iroquois girls, for she could make nets very well indeed and *quaisse*s (buckets which the savages use to draw water); thus her dexterity furnished her with plenty of occupation. Sometimes she was making a pestle or pounder for crushing Indian corn, sometimes she was forming a mat out of bark, and again she was preparing poles on which to hang the ears of corn."

Although she was the youngest in her uncle's family, and was delicate from the time her mother died, she was always the first one at work and the last to take a holiday. It was quite a trial to her, then, when she found—the first symptom of trouble to come—that she would no longer be allowed to spend her time as best pleased herself. Her aunts now insisted that she should wear her prettiest moccasins and all her ornaments, and that she should go with them to dances and feasts, for which she had a distaste and some features of which were loathsome to her. She was so accustomed, from an inborn sense of duty, to obey those who stood to her in the place of father and mother, that she went as far toward fulfilling their wishes in regard to her costume and her attendance at popular amusements as her extreme timidity and acute sense of modesty would allow. These last-mentioned qualities were among her most marked characteristics. Her aunts, whose natures were of a very different fibre from her own, could have had little or no thought how this compliance on her part out of respect for them distressed her. Although it could scarcely have cast the faintest shadow of a mist across the whiteness of her soul, she was known long afterwards to regret and to grieve bitterly for this indulgence in little vanities.

Her aunts could not and did not try to understand her. They thought she was queer. It seemed strange to them that Tekakwitha took so little pleasure in the festive customs of the Mohawks. They decided that it was due to her Algonquin origin. In other words, she was like her mother. So much the worse for her. It would have pleased them better to have had her resemble her father's family. But after all, the Algonquins were a gentle, yielding race, and they thought they would soon bend her to their will. When they stated plainly the object they had in view in thus bringing her forward,—which was that she should marry,—Tekakwitha's whole nature was roused to resistance at the mere mention of such a thing, and every power of her soul was brought into action to thwart their plan. Though long accustomed to be docile and obey, she showed at this time a sudden development of will, with inherent force to mould its own fate, and a strength of character that had not before asserted itself. This must have proved to her aunts that after all there was something of the Mohawk in her nature. Sure of her own natural and inalienable right to decide for herself in this important question, she was unconquerable. This is clearly shown in the struggle of will against will, in which she was now enlisted and in which the odds were decidedly against her. But though her whole nature was roused at the well-meant, though in this case unwelcome and premature proposition of her aunts, Tekakwitha was too wise and too self-poised to break at once into open rebellion. She did not announce her secret determination to go through fire and water, if necessary, rather than submit to the plan of her relatives. Why she did not wish to marry was perhaps at that time as much a mystery to herself as to others; but the fact remained. She could not and would not think of it for a moment. "When, therefore, they proposed to establish her in life," says Cholenec, "she excused herself under different pretexts, alleging, above all, her extreme youth and the little inclination she had to enter into marriage. The relatives seemed to approve of these reasons;" but the matter was not allowed to rest for any length of time. Charlevoix tells us that she made an energetic resistance to all offers. For the moment it was not insisted upon; but soon they returned to the charge, and to spare themselves the trouble of listening to her remonstrances, engaged her without her knowledge to a young man. As his alliance appeared desirable to the family of the chief,

the proposition was made, according to custom, both to him and to the members of his family; while Tekakwitha alone, the very one to whom it was of the utmost consequence, was kept in entire ignorance of the proceeding. This was easily done, owing to her habitual seclusion and the peculiar custom of the country.

"Whenever marriage is in agitation," to use once more the words of Cholenec, "the business is to be settled by the parents, and the parties most interested are not even permitted to meet. It is sufficient that they are talking of the marriage of a young Indian with a young female to induce them with care to shun seeing and speaking with each other. When the parents on both sides have agreed, the young man comes by night to the wigwam of his future spouse and seats himself near her; which is the same as declaring that he takes her for his wife and she takes him for her husband." The bride then presents the young man with sagamite or corn-cakes and sometimes with wood, in token of what is to be her duty in the lodge. He, on his part, sends presents of beaver-skins to the family of the bride. Thus marriages were made among the Iroquois Indians.

Tekakwitha's relations, not knowing the force of the young girl's will, decided among themselves that the shortest and easiest way to overcome her unaccountable opposition would be to take her by surprise. They did not even allow her to choose the person to whom she was to be united. They desired to entrap her unaware into the simple and silent ceremony of an Iroquois marriage. Thus her fate would be sealed and she forced to submit. Would she be able to thwart this wicked plan? And what effect would it be likely to have on her future conduct? Her aunts acted coldly and harshly in this momentous matter, quite disregarding her rights and her feelings. They felt too confident of success to look beyond the present moment, or else they presumed very far indeed on her well-known sweet temper and kindly disposition.

Chauchetière, who received his information chiefly from Tegonhatsihongo, says of her character and reputation at this time:—

"She was neither vicious, nor a gad-about, nor a great chatterer, nor idle, nor proud, which is a common vice among the young savages. She was not attached to visions nor to dreams, neither had she ever cared much to assist at dances or games; and she had shown on several occasions that she was prudent; but she was naturally timid, not daring to show herself when there was need that she should."

Tekakwitha sat one evening on a low seat by the fire,—her own lodge-seat, which had been assigned to her by the chief matron in her uncle's household. The light of the blazing fagots before her played on her beaded moccasins and showed off to advantage her richly embroidered skirt. In her sitting posture it hung far over and half concealed her pretty leggings. Strings of wampum beads in curious devices were about her neck, and the end of a long rich scarf or girdle which she wore lay on the ground beside her. Her work for the day was done, and she had donned these things in obedience to her aunt's desire. Why, she did not know, and little cared. They often had company; then why not to-night? One of her aunts had given the finishing touch to her costume, and dressed her hair with her own hands. It was not by any means the first time she had done so. The guests, whoever they might prove to be, seemed to have changed their minds and gone elsewhere, for she was now left quite to herself. She was just weary enough to enjoy fully the rest and quiet, and was thinking perhaps of a pattern which she intended to work into a wampum belt for her uncle to be used in making a treaty,—likely enough it would be for the treaty of peace between the Mohawks and Mohegans which was brought about after



the battle of Kinaquariones, by the people of Albany. Or she may have had in mind, as she sat there musing by the fireside, one of the blackgown's pictures which she had lately seen. If she had noticed at all the rich gift of furs that had been brought to the lodge and carefully put away, she never suspected that it was meant for a wedding present from the family of a young man for whom her aunts had expressed great esteem. But now, while her thoughts are far from any such idea, the young man who desires her for his wife, and who has been kept by the laws of Indian decorum from approaching her for some time past or addressing her himself on the subject, enters the wigwam in holiday attire. He is accompanied by some of his relatives, whilst those of Tekakwitha step forward to receive them. The eye of the young Indian kindles with pleasure at sight of his bride so gayly bedecked with all the insignia of her rank. Her apparent unconcern at what is passing he easily attributes either to maiden coyness or Indian stoicism. Besides, all know that she is extremely shy. So, with ready assurance of a welcome, he walks quickly toward her, and seats himself in silence by her side. Tekakwitha, utterly taken by surprise, is for a moment bewildered, disconcerted. Her aunts now bid her present the young man with some sagamite.<sup>[46]</sup> In a moment she realizes what they are doing,—that in spite of herself she is taking part in her own wedding. The hot blood rushes to her face. She blushes, but gives no other sign of what is in her mind. What can she do? For an instant she is in an agony of suspense. Then, with quick determination, she rises abruptly, and all aflame with indignation, passes, quick as thought, out of the long-house. Could her relatives have fancied she had risen to do their bidding? Her aunts knew better. Unflinchingly she had met their scowling looks, and felt the keen, fierce eye of her uncle upon her as she moved toward the door. Had her path been over red-hot coals, it would have made no difference then to Tekakwitha. Her only and overmastering impulse was to escape at all hazards,—no matter how nor where. Once out of the stifling air of the cabin, she hurried on and on, taking an accustomed path, out of mere force of habit, till it brought her to the familiar corn-fields. There, breathless and trembling, she hid herself away, with a prayer to Rawenniio to save her from the young hunter whom she did not want, and also from the angry eyes of her relatives, which like burning irons pierced her heart. Soon they came to seek her, and urged her with threats and with entreaty to go back to the cabin. They had made excuses for her absence; and if she would but return with them now, all would yet be well. Tekakwitha, who was by this time calm and collected, replied quietly but firmly that she would not enter the lodge at all while the young man was there. Finding it impossible to move her, they returned and explained the affair as best they could to the relatives of the now indignant young hunter. He had been no less surprised at her strange conduct than she had been at his unexpected errand to the lodge. There was no course left for him but to withdraw. She then returned to the lodge, and having borne the brunt of angry words with which she was received, retired wearily to rest in the angry silence which followed.

It was many and many a long day to Tekakwitha before the storm which she thus raised about her own head had spent its fury in a series of domestic persecutions, till at last it was lulled to rest by the calm endurance of her firm but gentle spirit. Several times after this her relatives tried to force her into marriage. On one occasion she adroitly hid behind a case of Indian corn. "In everything else," says Chauchetière, "she was good, industrious, peaceable, and agreeable. When she chose to give the word for a laugh, none ever had aught to complain of, and they liked her company. She never resented the raillery which was constantly aimed at her on account of her desire to remain unmarried. Her good-nature exempted her at this time from several difficulties into which she would have fallen if she had not been possessed of natural patience, and if she had not liked better to suffer everything herself rather than to make others suffer." Cholenec further says that

the firmness of Tekakwitha rendered her relatives outrageous, for they felt as though they had received an insult.

"Artifice not having proved successful, they had recourse to violence. They now treated her as a slave, obliging her to do everything which was most painful and repulsive, and malignantly interpreting all her actions, even when most innocent. They reproached her without ceasing for the want of attachment to her relations, her uncouth manners, and her stupidity, for it was thus that they termed the dislike she felt to marriage. They attributed it to a secret hatred of the Iroquois nation, because she was herself of the Algonquin race. In short, they omitted no means of shaking her constancy. The young girl suffered all this ill treatment with unwearied patience, and without ever losing anything of her equanimity of mind or her natural sweetness; she rendered them all the services they required with an attention and docility beyond her years and strength. By degrees her relatives were softened, restored to her their kind feelings, and did not further molest her in regard to the course she had adopted."

A custom of the Indians in which Tekakwitha must have taken part about this time, with the other Mohawk girls of her age, was the Corn-Feast.<sup>[47]</sup> On this supposition a brief description is here given of what was ever one of the merriest of their celebrations. The redmen, with the true poetic spirit of Nature's children, distinguished the various times of the year as the sturgeon month or moon, the beaver-month, the bear-month, and so on, according to the kind of hunting or fishing then in progress; while the different seasons were known as the time when strawberries or chestnuts blossom, or as the time of corn-planting and when it is ripe.

It was when the corn was ripe that the Corn-Feast began. The plentiful crop of Indian maize was gathered together in one place, and the Mohawk girls assembled with laugh and song to celebrate the harvest. The festival took place in a field in the open air. The warriors and old men, not deigning to take part in this woman's frolic, sat at one side, though not far away, and lazily smoked their pipes. They only betrayed now and then, and by the merest twinkle of an eye, that they took any notice of what was going on. The aged squaws hung on the outskirts of the group of girls, urging them on with jests and shrill screams of laughter. The young squaws were busily employed husking the ears of corn, and throwing them together into heaps, after which they braided them into bunches of twenty<sup>[48]</sup> to be hung up and dried. This is preparatory to shelling, pounding, and making the corn into cakes of fine flour for future use. But the part of the whole process which pleases the young squaws best is the husking. They sing together snatches of song, and toss the ears of corn gayly from one to another. All the while they keep a keen eye on each separate ear as the soft husk is torn from it, and the silky tassels fall loosely away from the thick set rows of juicy kernels. But what has happened to Tekakwitha there in the midst of them? How they shout with laughter! Why is she blushing so? In her hand she holds a bright red ear of corn instead of a white one, and a saucy girl calls out the name of a young hunter,—most likely of the one from whom Tekakwitha so recently hid away. A red ear of corn is always the sign of a brave admirer. That is why it is watched for so eagerly. "Here he is," they say to the bashful girl; "see, he has come to woo you again!" She, who is easiest teased of them all on a subject like this, feels like running away once more to escape their jests, or throwing the ear of corn at the saucy girl. But she is brave though shy, and a maker of fun herself; so she does not move, but keeps her eyes well open and awaits her chance. As good fortune would have it, she soon spies her

mischievous companion unsheathing a crooked ear of corn, tapering to a point and quite bent over, like a queer little man. "Wagemin! wagemin!" she calls out to the unlucky girl, "Wagemin! Paimosaid!" Although they have often plagued Tekakwitha in the lodge with being Algonquin rather than Mohawk, she does not hesitate on this occasion to recall the song of her mother's race, "Wagemin! wagemin! Paimosaid!"—which are the words sung in the North and West when a crooked ear of corn is found. Enough of Algonquin tradition, learned from their captives, lingered among the Mohawks for them to understand these words, which mean, "The little old corn-thief,—walker at night!"

The laugh is now on the saucy girl who called attention to Tekakwitha. Then catching at the suggestion conveyed by the word "Wagemin!" they break forth gayly into the cereal chorus of the Algonquin Corn-Song. Playfully and with many gestures words like those which follow are recited by one of the girls, alternating again and again with the chorus.

Schoolcraft's version of the merry Indian Corn-Song is as follows:—

*Cereal Chorus.* Wagemin! wagemin!  
Thief in the blade,  
Blight of the corn-field,  
Paimosaid!

*Recitative.* See you not traces while pulling the leaf,  
Plainly depicting the taker and thief?  
See you not signs by the ring and the spot,  
How the man crouched as he crept in the lot?  
Is it not plain, by this mark on the stalk,  
That he was heavily bent in his walk?  
Old man, be nimble! The old should be good,  
But thou art a cowardly thief of the wood.

*Chorus.* Wagemin! wagemin! etc.

Where, little taker of things not your own,—  
Where is your rattle, your drum, and your bone?  
Surely a walker so nimble of speed,—  
Surely he must be a juggler indeed.  
See how he stoops as he breaks off the ear!  
Nushka! he seems for a moment to fear.  
Walker, be nimble,—oh, walker, be brief!  
Hooh! it is plain the old man is the thief.

*Chorus.* Wagemin! wagemin! etc.

Wabuma! corn-taker, why do you lag?  
None but the stars see you,—fill up your bag.  
Why do you linger to gaze as you pull?  
Tell me, my little man, is it most full?  
A—tia! see, a red spot on the leaf,  
Surely a warrior can't be a thief!  
Ah, little night thief, be dear your pursuit,  
And leave here no print of your dastardly foot.

*Chorus.* Wagemin! wagemin!

Thief in the blade,  
Blight of the corn-field,  
Paimosaid!

#### FOOTNOTES:

For marriage ceremonies see Lafitau,—"*Mœurs des Sauvages*," vol. i. p. 566; "*De la Potherie*," vol. iii. p. 14.

For an account of the Corn-Feast and its attendant merry-making, see Schoolcraft's "*Red Race*."

See Lewis H. Morgan on the Indian Collection in the State Cabinet of Natural History, etc. His Report for 1850 gives many details concerning the domestic customs and industries of the Iroquois. He mentions three varieties of corn,—white, red, and white flint,—and tells how they prepared it for use.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### THE NEW COLONY OF CHRISTIAN INDIANS ON THE ST. LAWRENCE.—THE "GREAT MOHAWK" GOES TO CANADA.

TEKAKWITHA was quite old enough to have decided opinions of her own on whatever concerned her individual life. She had also proved in her recent struggle that she possessed sufficient strength of will to act upon her convictions. Some of these convictions she had never yet mentioned to any one, but she had for some time fully made up her mind to take a decided step. She was only waiting a favorable opportunity to declare her determination to become a Christian. She felt that this would not be an easy thing to do; for besides her strong propensity to shrink as much as possible from all observation, she saw that her uncle was becoming every day more bitter in his opposition to the teachings of the blackgowns.

The Feast of the Dead in 1669 was closely followed by a public renunciation, in the Mohawk country, of Aireskoi, or demon-worship. This was accompanied by the burning of charms, turtle-shell rattles, and other badges used by the medicine-men. Similar ceremonies took place about the same time, among the Onondagas and in other parts of the Long House of the Five Nations. "Paganism had fallen. Aireskoi was disowned, and his name is not even known in our days among the Iroquois. The next step of the missionaries was to implant Christian truth and Christian feeling in their hearts."<sup>[49]</sup> This was another and more difficult task. Though the Iroquois Indians of the Five Nations have not since worshipped any other than the Great Spirit or true God, known in the Mohawk language as Rawenniio; and though the sacrifices to Aireskoi ceased in the Mohawk Valley after the great Feast of the Dead, in 1669,—practically the life of the Mohawks

was still pagan in almost every other respect. Father Pierron, at Tionnontogen, or Saint Mary's, and his assistant Father Boniface, who took charge of a small bark chapel called St. Peter's, which the Indians themselves built at Caughnawaga Castle, both continued their missionary labors with unabated zeal, but for some time they had only partial success. In 1670 eighty-four baptisms were recorded. That same year, in June, the great Onondaga chief, Garacontié, was solemnly baptized at Quebec. It was hoped that other chiefs of the Iroquois would soon follow his example.

Father Bruyas, who on first coming among the People of the Long House had been lodged three days in the cabin of Tekakwitha's uncle, came back from the Oneida country in 1671. He was made superior of the Mohawk mission in place of Pierron. This missionary, the painter of pictures and the inventor of games, received orders to return to Canada to take charge of a new village of Christian Indians which was then being formed on the south bank of the St. Lawrence. As the latter part of Tekakwitha's life was closely connected with the growth and development of this new Christian colony of Indians in Canada, and as we shall have occasion frequently to allude to it, some further account of it will not be out of place here. The site first chosen was at La Prairie de la Madeleine just across a broad swell of the river from Montreal on a tract of land belonging to the Jesuits and hitherto untenanted. The Canadians called this Indian settlement St. François Xavier *des Prés*; and a little later, when that same mission was moved up close to the great Lachine Rapids in the St. Lawrence River, it was known as St. François Xavier *du Sault*, which last is in reality nothing more than the Indian name of Caughnawaga put into French and still meaning "At the Rapids." This Christian settlement was started by the temporary sojourn at La Prairie of several Oneidas and Mohawks, who had been on a visit to Quebec and Montreal. They were attracted to the spot by Father Raffeix, who built a little chapel there. It grew by accessions from among the Five Nations, and was encouraged by the French government, in the hope of thus gaining useful allies. Indians who came first from curiosity or for temporary shelter and hospitality afterwards settled there, with their families and friends. The Jesuit Fathers on their part were much pleased with the growth of this village, and took occasion to make of it a distinct settlement of Christian Indians. It soon became a general rendezvous for their converts from among the different nations and tribes of Indians, many of whom by residing there were quite withdrawn from the contagious pagan influences which surrounded them in their own country. All who went to live at St. François Xavier *du Sault* were obliged to renounce, with solemn promises, these three things,—first, the idolatry of dreams; second, the changing of wives, a practice in vogue at Iroquois feasts; and third, drunkenness. Any one among them known to have relapsed into any of these practices was expelled at once from the settlement by the ruling chiefs. These were chosen by the Indians themselves from among the more fervent Christians. They were generally men who had ranked high in their own country, and who were attracted to the Praying Castle, as it was called, either from motives purely religious or on account of some bereavement or disappointment experienced in their old homes. Several of these Christian chiefs were famous characters in the history of the time. Two of them, Kryn and Hot Ashes, are closely connected with the life of Tekakwitha.

Kryn, the "great Mohawk," has already been mentioned in connection with the battle of Kinauariones. His Christian name was Joseph, and his Indian name Togouiroui. He was also called the conqueror of the Mohegans. He dwelt with his wife at Caughnawaga on the Mohawk, and they had "an only daughter whose bright disposition made all in the town love her." After some difficulty with his wife on account of this child, he deserted her and went off for a long journey. The mother, it seems, had been converted by Father Boniface, and had declared herself a Christian just six months before she was thus

deserted. Soon after the departure of her husband she was severely tried by the death of her daughter. This little girl had been her only consolation and hope after she was forsaken by Kryn. Her friends now blamed her for adopting strange customs, saying it was that which had made her husband leave her and which had caused the death of her child. In spite of all this, Kryn's wife became more devoted than ever to her new faith. She was seen going to the little bark chapel of St. Peter's every night and morning, and often received the sacraments from the hands of Father Boniface. First as assistant to Pierron, and now under Bruyas, he still carried on the mission at Caughnawaga. In course of time he became very successful in winning the Mohawks of that place to Christianity. Thirty adults were baptized within a short time. After the morning and evening prayers at the chapel, a choir of children sang hymns in the Iroquois language; and every Sunday the primitive Christian love-feast, or ceremony of blessed bread, took place in the cabin of a pious Mohawk woman.

At Christmas time the little bark chapel at Caughnawaga was aglow with lights and bedecked with evergreens. All day long the people of the Turtle village, much changed in mind since the torture and murder of Isaac Jogues, stole silently in and out of St. Peter's rustic shrine. The cross, considered uncanny and strange in the days of Goupil, had at last become a familiar sign among the Turtles in the Mohawk Valley. The crowd that gathered at the chapel door on Christmas day looked up at it again and again as they stood out in the snow and the cold December blast, waiting patiently for an opportunity to enter. There in the chapel Father Boniface had placed a fair little statue of the infant Jesus lying in his wretched manger on the straw. This Christmas crib was a strange and wonderful sight to the simple Indians. Those who had become Christians told and retold the Bethlehem story in all its details to the curious people who gathered about the image of the little Christ child to gaze and wonder. Tekakwitha saw and heard all that was going on at the chapel, but said nothing; her aunts were there also, and her adopted sister. Tegonhatsihongo, whose Christian name was Anastasia, would of course be present on such an occasion, and also the family of Kryn. The wife of the "great Mohawk," having chosen her part and received baptism, now maintained her ground with courage. Deserted and childless, she held firmly to her new-found faith, notwithstanding the abuse she received from friends and neighbors. "Soon after this storm," says good Father Boniface, "God rewarded her fidelity; for in place of the little girl whom he had taken from her, He gave her back her husband a Christian."

Kryn, in his wanderings, had by chance strayed into the new village at La Prairie; there he met Father Fremin, who with Pierron and Bruyas had formerly been Tekakwitha's guests. Kryn listened to all that Fremin had to say to him, having known and respected him during his brief stay in the Mohawk country, when the mission was first begun after De Tracy's expedition. The "great Mohawk" resolved to become a Christian; furthermore, he decided that the best way for him to remain a Christian, and to become a good one, would be to join the new Indian settlement in the land of the French.<sup>[50]</sup> He was a natural leader of men, bold and uncompromising; he had a large following among his own people on the Mohawk. His next move, therefore, after becoming a Christian, was to return to his old home to find his forsaken wife, and to announce publicly the views he had embraced during his absence. The people gathered with interest and amazement to hear what their old leader had to say. None dared oppose him when he proclaimed his determination to leave everything that could draw him back to his old manner of life, and offered to lead all who would follow him to La Prairie, on the bank of the St. Lawrence. He gave his friends but brief time to consider his words and to make hurried preparations for a journey; then, at break of day, the wild gathering-cry of the "great Mohawk" resounded



once more, as of old, through the streets of Caughnawaga Castle. All knew it well, for time and time again it had called them out to battle. With a strange thrill and start of alarm they heard it once more; but only those in the village who were baptized, both men and women, or who meant soon to become Christians, rallied about him now; nor even all of these, for in that case Tekakwitha would have been of the number. A band of thirty or forty gathered at his call, and with a sad, hurried farewell to their friends, their homes, and the valley, they turned and followed in the footsteps of Kryn, who thus led them away into exile. Shea well calls these Indians "a noble band of pilgrims for religion's sake."

Tekakwitha's adopted sister probably went either with this band or with those who accompanied Father Boniface to Canada a little later; for soon after this event we learn that she was living at St. François Xavier du Sault with her husband; that they were both Christians, and that Anastasia Tegonhatsihongo also dwelt there and in the same cabin with them. The health of Father Boniface was completely broken down by the hardships he had undergone among the Mohawks; so he too left Caughnawaga. He went to Canada in June, 1673, taking many of his neophytes with him as far as the Sault; he died at Quebec the next year, surrounded by his old comrades and friends.

The people of Albany and Schenectady, at the time of these migrations, had too much to do at home to give more than a sidelong glance at what was occurring at the neighboring Indian castle; otherwise the Dutch and English settlers of the province would probably have shown some inclination to resent on the part of the French their efforts to attract the Mohawks to the vicinity of Montreal, as it was likely to interfere with their influence among the redmen, and above all with their highly prized rights in the fur-trade. Some time before this, the Albanians had succeeded in bringing about a treaty of peace between the Mohegans and the Mohawks. Thereupon these last had begun to indulge very freely in the purchase of liquor at Fort Orange; they even carried kegs of it with them to their fishing-villages. This filled the pockets of the Dutch settlers, but it also brought on a severe form of illness among the Mohawks,—a quick and fatal fever,—which gave much occupation to the blackgowns, especially as the services of the medicine men were at this time often rejected; thus the influence of the missionaries was still further increased. Next, there was a disturbance in the government. The Dutch, taking the English by surprise, in 1673, regained possession of the province; that very year a large band of the Mohawks left for Canada. To make matters worse for the interests of the Albanians, a vessel with supplies for the Indian trade, which they were for a long while expecting from Holland, did not arrive; this caused them to put a higher price on the goods they were accustomed to sell to the Mohawks, many of whom on that account turned to Canada for their purchases.

In 1674, when Tekakwitha was in her eighteenth year, and when Boniface, after having resigned his charge at Caughnawaga, was slowly dying at Quebec, the English came once more into power at Albany, and governed the city thenceforth. During these various changes Tekakwitha's uncle kept up his connection with his Dutch neighbors, invariably trading at Albany. He was angered almost beyond endurance at the departure of Kryn and of Boniface with so many of his townspeople. He joined with those who bitterly accused Bruyas, their only remaining blackgown, of a plan to break up the nation. Bruyas protested that he had had nothing at all to do with the affair, and threw the responsibility of the migration mainly upon their own chief the "great Mohawk," whose example so many had followed. He took occasion at the same time to remind those who remained of their vices, which he said were driving away the noblest of their tribesmen. He succeeded in pacifying them for a time; but soon Assendasé, an aged and important chief at the

capital of the Mohawk country, delighted the heart of the missionary, and at the same time rearoused the hostility of the unbelieving Indians, by becoming a Christian. In 1675 Assendasé died at Tionnontogen, to the great grief of Father Bruyas. About the same time Father James de Lamberville arrived to take charge of St. Peter's chapel and the mission of Boniface; it included both the Turtle Castle of Caughnawaga on the Cayudutta and the adjacent Castle of the Bears called Andagoron. This castle was no longer on the south side of the river, but since De Tracy's expedition had been rebuilt on the north bank opposite to its old site. It was to Father de Lamberville that the niece of the Mohawk chief spoke out the words that had long lain nearest to her heart.

#### FOOTNOTES:

Shea's History of the Catholic Missions, chap. xiv. p. 267.

Kryn became strongly attached to his Canadian friends. He sided with them in the war which broke out some years later between the French and the English colonies. The massacre at Lachine in 1689 roused the old warrior who had conquered the Mohegans (in 1669) to aid in avenging his white allies. On Schenectady, in 1690, fell the bloody act of retribution. Kryn was there. Later that same year, on a war-party near Salmon River, he was killed.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### TEKAKWITHA MEETS DE LAMBERVILLE.—IMPOSING CEREMONY IN THE BARK CHAPEL.

TEKAKWITHA was eighteen years old, and was still classed among the pagan or infidel Indians, as distinguished from the Christians. She had injured her foot severely; she could not now leave the cabin, and sat idle one bright sunny day while the other women were hard at work in the corn-fields down by the river. She was unable to walk as far as the spring in the cove just below the castle, and bring up the daily supply of water for the lodge; nor could she gather fagots enough to prepare the evening meal, though she knew that all would return at dusk hungry and weary from their work. A few women, with some old people burdened with ailments of various kinds, were also in the village. Two or three of these had strayed into the chief's cabin, and were sitting with Tekakwitha when Father de Lamberville, who had been only a short time in the Mohawk country, passed slowly along through the rows of long, low bark-covered houses forming the Turtle Village. Caughnawaga was well-nigh deserted by its people that day, and seemed fast asleep, so still were its streets. The missionary was taking advantage of this occasion to visit the old and the sick who chanced to be in their cabins, that he might instruct them at his leisure. He had no thought of entering the lodge of Tekakwitha. He

knew that the chief who lived there disliked the Frenchmen who came down from Montreal; and besides, he supposed the house would be empty as usual at such times. Its inhabitants were known to be busy and thrifty people; they were doubtless at work in the fields. He passed close to the doorway of the cabin with eyes downcast, intent on his own quiet thoughts. He wore the long black cassock of his order, and carried a crucifix in his girdle like those worn by the three who had lodged with the chief when he lived at Gandawague on Auries Creek. The shadow of De Lamberville falling across the open doorway caused Tekakwitha to look up, and she saw him moving calmly on outside in the sunlight. Darkness brooded over the Mohawk girl where she sat, far back in the depths of the dreary cabin. Her heart was weary with waiting. It may have been that her mother's spirit hovered about just then, and renewed its prayer; or, whatever may have caused it, the blackgown's train of thought was disturbed. He raised his eyes; he stood a moment at the doorway, and "il fut poussé a y entrer," says the old manuscript,—a sudden irresistible impulse caused him to enter. Lo! at the blackgown's approach the petals of this Lily of Caughnawaga opened wider than ever before. Those who were present on that eventful day saw for the first time to the innermost depths of Tekakwitha's soul, far down to its golden centre, enfolded so long in shadowy whiteness that no one suspected its hidden growth of beauty. Chauchetière says:—

"There he found Tekakwitha. Never was an encounter more fortunate on the side of the girl, who wished to speak to the Father, and who dared not go to seek him; on the side of the Father, who found a treasure where he expected to find no one."

Charlevoix tells us that Tekakwitha—

"could not dissemble the joy which this visit caused her, and hastened to open her heart to the Father in the presence even of two or three women who were keeping her company, and to testify to him her earnest desire of embracing Christianity. She added that she would have great obstacles to overcome in order to succeed in her intention, but that nothing should deter her. The ardor with which she spoke, the courage she evinced, and a certain air, at once modest yet resolute, which appeared on her face, proved to the missionary that his new proselyte would be a Christian of no common order; therefore he instructed her in many things of which he did not speak to all whom he was preparing for baptism. God doubtless establishes between hearts, the possession of which he has specially reserved to himself, a sort of spiritual sympathy which forms, even in this life, the sacred bond which is to unite them eternally in glory. Father de Lamberville, whom I well knew," continues Charlevoix, "was one of the holiest missionaries of Canada, or New France, as it was then called, where he died at Sault St. Louis, as it were in the arms of Charity, worn out with toils, sufferings, and penance. He has often told me that from the first interview he had with Tegahkouita, he thought he perceived that God had great designs upon her soul; however, he would not hasten her baptism, but took all those precautions which experience had taught to be so necessary, in order to be certain of the savages before administering to them the sacrament of regeneration."

As soon as Tekakwitha had recovered from the wound in her foot, which had occasioned her encounter with the blackgown, she began to attend the morning and evening prayers at the chapel, in accordance with Father de Lamberville's advice. As often and as regularly as the sun rose and set, she was now to be seen on her way to St. Peter's.

Chauchetière says:—

"At first they did not give her any trouble; they let her go and come to say her prayers like the others; and some have believed that if this cabin was not opposed to prayer when Catherine was in it, it might have come from the good custom which the mother of Catherine, that good Algonquin of whom we have spoken, retained there up to the time of her death, and these infidels were accustomed to see praying."

So far as Tekakwitha was concerned, the winter which followed these events passed quietly away in preparation for her baptism. She performed her usual duties in the cabin, and her aunts did not molest her on the subject of religion. According to one account, they had become Christians themselves, though this is contradicted elsewhere. The young girl was present at the instructions given to catechumens, and learned all the prayers with great facility and a marvellous avidity, in the hope that the Father would hasten her baptism.

"The missionaries before the baptism of adults took care to inform themselves, secretly, of their manners and conduct. Father de Lamberville questioned all who knew Tegahkouita, and was greatly surprised to find that none, even among those who ill-treated her, could say anything to her discredit. This was the more flattering to her, since the savages are much addicted to slander, and naturally inclined to give a malicious turn to the most innocent actions."

The missionary found no one who did not give a high encomium to the young catechumen. He hesitated no longer to grant what she so ardently asked. Easter Sunday, 1676, was appointed for the day of her baptism. The Christians of Caughnawaga Castle were pleased to learn that at last the blackgown had resolved to baptize Tekakwitha. Nearly a year had passed since she first asked to be made a Christian. All knew her worth. When the glad news of Father de Lamberville's decision was made known to Tekakwitha, her countenance became radiant with joy. Her aunts gave their consent to the step their niece was about to take. We are not told what her uncle said or did at the time. Perhaps he was intent on other important affairs just then, or he would probably have put some obstacle in her way. He certainly dreaded, above all things, the possibility of seeing his niece enticed away to Canada in the footsteps of her adopted sister. Perhaps he felt quite sure of keeping Tekakwitha with him, as she showed no desire to join a band of Kryn's followers who set out from the Mohawk Valley shortly before the appointed Easter day arrived. Like those who had gone with the "great Mohawk" on a former occasion, these pilgrims were bound for the Praying Castle on the St. Lawrence River. In the band were many friends and neighbors of Tekakwitha, so that in part at least her heart must have gone with them to Canada. The Praying Castle of St. François Xavier was no longer at La Prairie, as when Kryn first visited it, but had been moved this very year a few miles up the river close to the great Lachine Rapid or Sault St. Louis, and was henceforth called Caughnawaga. The older village of the same name in the Mohawk Valley was astir with expectation when Easter Sunday arrived, in the year 1676.<sup>[51]</sup> The young catechumen whom the blackgown De Lamberville esteemed so highly, the one of whom no word had been said in disparagement, every act of whose life was as clear and fair as the day, was eagerly awaiting the hour of her baptism.

The Indian girls on that Easter morning, ready, as always, for a pageant or ceremonial of any kind, crowded about the door of the rustic chapel, inside and out. Some of them

carried their little brothers or sisters tied to their backs on cradle-boards. Some were gorgeous with bright-colored blankets and beads. Proudly they tossed their heads, these Mohawk girls, sure at least of their share of admiration from the young braves, notwithstanding that the old chief's niece was for the moment attracting more attention in the town than usual. What did her wonderful reputation for virtue amount to, after all? Much hard work, some of them thought, and a scant allowance of fun or excitement. But for once all eyes were centred on the quiet maiden, as she issued from her uncle's lodge, and with two companions, also ready for baptism, neared the door of the chapel. It was easy to see that most of the people of Caughnawaga respected and honored her on account of her virtue. There was a time when the Iroquois had vaunted the chastity of their women, and on that account held their heads higher than any other race of Indians. On this glorious Easter day the Mohawks seemed to realize, at least in a general way, that the maiden Tekakwitha, whom they knew to be as strong in will as their own flint rock and as pure at heart as their crystal spring, had caught up the beautiful crown that was fast falling from them. They felt that she at least, while she lived, could be trusted to hold it securely above the mire into which they were sinking faster and faster.

On the day of Tekakwitha's baptism, the light which the blackgown brought with him to the Mohawk country beamed with unquenchable brightness from her quiet but joyful face, and glimmered in scattered reflections on the faces of the crowd through which she passed. There men and women, warriors, hunters, jugglers, boys and girls of every age,—in a word, all who were in the village had gathered into groups to watch what was taking place at the chapel of St. Peter. The blackgown took care to render the baptism of an adult, and especially of such a noteworthy one as the niece of the chief, as impressive as possible; it was conducted with all due solemnity.

Never before had the Christians of Caughnawaga been more generous with their gifts. They had offered their richest furs<sup>[52]</sup> to adorn the chapel in honor both of Easter day and of Tekakwitha's baptism. The walls were hung with beaver and elk skins. There were bear-skin rugs and buffalo hides, embroidered in many colors, both under foot and on every side. Belts of wampum festooned the rafters. Blossoming branches of shrubs and clusters of frail little wild-flowers that grew in the ravines near by, decorated the altar. The entrance door was embowered in green. The approach to the chapel was through an avenue of budding trees, which had been planted there by the missionaries, to give an air of seclusion and dignity to the sacred portal. In them the birds were building their nests, and kept up a continual fluttering, chirping, and trilling. The blackgown's well-trained choir of Indian boys and girls, already within the chapel, were watching for Tekakwitha to enter. When the three catechumens appeared at the door, Father de Lamberville, in surplice and violet stole, advanced to meet them. Sturdy Mohawk boys who had learned to serve at the altar, attended him. The ceremony began at the chapel door. Katherine was the Christian name to be given to Tekakwitha. Clear and distinct were the words of the priest, as he asked the following questions: "Katherine, what dost thou ask of the Church of God?" Then came the short sweet answer, "Faith." "What doth faith lead thee to?" "Life everlasting," was the response. The blackgown, still using the words of the time-honored ceremonial, continued: "If then thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself." This exhortation sank deep into the soul of Tekakwitha. Fervent and recollected in spirit, she strove to catch the meaning of each word and sign. Father de Lamberville went on with the sacred rite. Breathing on her thrice, as she stood with head bowed down, he exorcised the Evil One, saying: "Go out of her, thou unclean spirit! give place to the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete!" She raised her head

at these words, and he signed her forehead and breast with the cross. Then he blessed the salt, the symbol of wisdom, and laid it on her tongue. Again he bade Satan begone. They now entered the little church. They stood close by the font. He touched her ear with spittle, saying the mystic word of Christ: *Ephpheta*, that is, "Be opened!" Then she renounced the devil with all his works and pomps, and was anointed with the oil of the catechumens. She made her profession of faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed. After that the priest changed his violet stole for a white one, and poured the water of baptism on her head, saying at the same time the brief, essential words of the sacrament: "Katherine, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

The people watched each of these ceremonies with rapt interest. When it was all over, Katherine Tekakwitha turned from the font with a white cloth on her head, which the priest placed there in token of innocence, bidding her carry it unsullied before the judgment-seat of God; and she bore in her hand a lighted taper, the symbol of faith. She seemed quite unconscious of earth, and bright with angelic joy. The Mohawks could almost believe they were looking at a blessed spirit rather than at one of themselves. The choir of Indian children, silently waiting their turn, now filled the chapel with joyous melody, and made it resound with the sweet words of an Iroquois hymn, prepared for them by their missionaries. The birds outside, stirred to blither singing by the sound of voices within, warbled their richest notes. The great forest that sheltered the bark-covered shrine was alive with music, strange and rapturous, like the strains heard by Saint Cecilia in her vision. De Lamberville, entranced, stood at the altar and listened, like one in a dream. Each breath he drew was a fervent prayer for his Indian flock. He was quite alone among them,—the only pale-face at Caughnawaga Castle,—but he felt no isolation. He had given his life to these people, and his heart vibrated in perfect accord with the Iroquois music. If he thought of his home in France and the glorious Easter anthems he had heard at St. Eustache and Notre Dame, it was not with vain regret, but only with the calm assurance that if his friends across the sea could hear these Indians singing in their forest chapel and could see the face of this Mohawk girl lit up with the joy of her baptism, they would not feel that he was throwing away his life and talents among barbarian tribes. The path of his duty lay clearly before him.

"Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." These words were ever ringing in the missionary's ears. It was in fulfilling this command that he had found the Lily of the Mohawks ripe for Christianity. He felt that he had gathered rich fruit with but little effort, and his next thought was how to keep it safe and bring it to its highest perfection for the Master of the Vineyard, whom he served.

From the time of her baptism Katherine Tekakwitha's life resembled in many respects the lives of the early Christians. Chauchetière thus speaks of her baptismal name:—

"Several Indians bore this name before and after her, but not one of them so worthily as the Blessed Catherine Tegakouita. La Prairie de la Magdeleine possesses the precious remains of one named Catherine Ganneaktena, from Oneida, who was the foundation stone of the mission.... Another Catherine died at the Sault at the age of thirteen, having lived innocent as an angel, and died as a victim of virginity. These two Catherines would have served as models for all the Christian Indian women at the mission of the Sault, had not Catherine Tegakouita arisen to shine like a sun among the stars."



## FOOTNOTES:

Chauchetière mentions Easter Sunday, 1675, as the date of Kateri Tekakwitha's baptism. Cholenec and others give the date as above, 1676.

This description of the chapel at the time of Tekakwitha's baptism is taken principally from a manuscript of Rev. Felix Martin, entitled "Une Vierge Iroquoise."

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### PERSECUTIONS.—HEROIC CALMNESS IN A MOMENT OF PERIL. —MALICE OF TEKAKWITHA'S AUNT.

AFTER her baptism, Katherine Tekakwitha was supremely happy. Her deft hands were as busy as before, providing for the general comfort in her uncle's lodge. Besides this she went back and forth twice each day to the chapel, where the blackgown assembled his dusky flock for morning and evening prayers. On Sundays she heard Mass at the same bark-covered shrine of St. Peter, and later on in the day she joined in chanting the prayers of the chaplet with alternate choirs of the Christian Indians. This was a favorite religious exercise at all the Iroquois missions. These people were gifted by nature with sweet voices, and sang well together. If at any time the Mohawk girl was beset with some difficulty or perplexity, she went at once to tell it with all simplicity to Father de Lamberville, who pointed out to her with great care the path which he believed would lead her most directly on to holiness of life. Once sure of her duty, Tekakwitha walked straight forward, with timid, downcast eyes, but joyous spirit, swerving neither to the right nor to the left. The rule of life that the Father prescribed for his other Christians to keep them from the superstitious, impure feasts and drunken debaucheries common among the Indians, was too general and not advanced enough for Tekakwitha. She had always avoided these excesses even in her heathen days, and now her craving for a higher and deeper knowledge of spiritual things was so great that the blackgown soon found himself called on to direct her in the way of special devotional exercises and unusual practices of virtue.

In December, 1676, an event occurred of much interest to the Christian Indians. On the feast of the Immaculate Conception, the blessing of the statue of Notre Dame de Foye took place at Tionnontogen, or the Mission of St. Mary's. This statue was a fac-simile of a highly venerated one of the Blessed Virgin in Belgium. It was made of oak from the place where the first originated, and had been sent out from France to the Indians. Father Bruyas received it at Tionnontogen as a precious gift to his Christian Mohawks. All the neophytes of the neighboring villages assembled to see it unveiled and solemnly blessed. It was placed in the chapel in such a way that a bright ray of light falling through a small opening in the bark wall fell directly upon the Madonna. The Indians had not seen

anything so beautiful and new to them since Boniface showed them on Christmas day at Caughnawaga the little statue of the Christ-child lying in a manger. Father Martin, speaking of the unveiling of this statue of the Madonna, says that Katherine Tekakwitha would not fail to be present at this pious rendezvous. She was baptized, it will be remembered, at Easter time; and the blessing of the statue of Notre Dame de Foye took place on the 8th day of the following December.

Charlevoix says, alluding to Tekakwitha's Christian life:—

"From the first, her virtues gained admiration even from those who were the furthest from imitating them; and those to whom she was subject left her free to follow the promptings of her zeal for a short time. The innocence of her life, and the precautions she took to avoid all occasions of sin, and above all her extreme reserve with regard to all which might in the slightest degree wound modesty, appearing to the young people of the village a tacit reproach to the licentious life which they led, several endeavored to turn her astray, in the hope of tarnishing the splendor of a virtue which dazzled them.

"On the other hand, although she neglected none of her domestic labors and was ever ready to assist others, her relatives murmured greatly at her spending all her free time in prayer; and as she would not work on Sundays and feast-days, when forbidden by the Church, they would deprive her of food the entire day. Seeing that they gained nothing by this means, they had recourse to more violent measures, often ill-treating her in the most shameful manner: when she went to the chapel they would send boys to throw stones at and calumniate her; while drunken men, or those pretending to be such, would pursue her and threaten her life; but fearless of their artifices, she continued her exercises as if in the enjoyment of the most perfect liberty and peace."

She did not hesitate to say, when there was occasion for it, that she would die rather than give up the practice of the Christian religion. Her resolution was put to severe tests, but she never wavered. Chauchetière thus wrote concerning the persecutions she had to endure at this time:—

"There are those who dare not declare themselves when they are the only Christians in their cabin; but Katherine showed an extraordinary firmness of spirit against human respect. When the children pointed their fingers at her, when they called her no longer by her Indian name, but called her by the name of *Christian* in derision, as though they meant *dog*,—which lasted so long that they forgot her name, giving her none other at all but that of the *Christian*, because she was the only one in the cabin who was baptized,—far from afflicting herself on account of this scorn of which she was the object, she was happy to have lost her name.

"She had much to suffer from the mockeries of the sorcerers, of the drunkards, of all the enemies of 'The Prayer,' likewise of her uncle."

He too, as time went on, seems to have taken an active part in persecuting the young girl who was entirely dependent on him for protection from insult. When her own uncle, the chief man of the castle, turned against her, what could she expect from others but ill-treatment of every sort? Her firmness, which nothing could shake, irritated her heathen relatives more and more. They called her a sorceress. Whenever she went to the chapel

they caused her to be followed by showers of stones, so that to avoid those who lay in wait for her, she was often obliged to take the most circuitous routes. Was it not strange that one so shy by nature as Tekakwitha should have had the strength of will to undergo all this without flinching? She seemed to be utterly devoid of fear; though timid as a deer, she had the courage of a panther at bay, and was no less quick to act when the time for action came.

One day when she was employed as usual in her uncle's lodge, a young Indian suddenly rushed in upon her, his features distorted with rage, his eyes flashing fire, his tomahawk raised above his head as if to strike her dead at the least opposition. Tekakwitha did not cry out, or make an appeal for mercy, or promise to abandon the course she was taking in the midst of this ever increasing torrent of threats and abuse. With perfect composure, without the tremor or twitch of a muscle, she simply bowed her head on her breast, and stood before the wild and desperate young savage as immovable as a rock. Words were not needed on either side. With all the eloquent silence of the Indian sign language, her gesture and attitude spoke to the youth and said: "I am here, I am ready. My life you can take; my faith is my own in life or in death. I fear you not!" The rage in the Indian's eye died out, and gave place to wonder, then awe. He gazed as if spellbound. The uplifted tomahawk dropped to his side. Her firmness unnerved him. Admiration, then a strange fear, overmastered the young brave, whose brain perhaps had been somewhat clouded with liquor when he thus undertook to rid the old chief's niece of her Christian whims. Be that as it may, he could not have been more astonished at what he beheld if a spirit had appeared before him and ordered him out of the lodge. Cowed and abashed, he slunk away, as if from a superior being; or rather, in the words of Charlevoix, "he turned and fled with as much precipitation as if pursued by a band of warriors."

Thinking Tekakwitha meant to join the Mohawks on the St. Lawrence, they had sought by threatening her life in this way to prevent her from carrying out her purpose. They now let her live in peace for a time. No stone had been left unturned to weary her out and break her spirit; it had all proved to be of no avail. They might as well have tried to frighten the stars from their accustomed course through the heavens as to turn this quiet Mohawk girl from the path her conscience marked out. Her hold on faith and virtue was stronger than torture or death. These first caprices of her tormentors were followed a little later by a more dangerous persecution, and to one possessed of Tekakwitha's sensibilities, the most cruel of all.

It was the last trial she was called upon to endure in the land of her birth. It was the only one, perhaps, that could have estranged her from her nearest kindred and her beloved Mohawk Valley; for we are told that she was particularly sensitive to the reproach they made to her of having no natural affection for her relations and of hating her nation. Had this been true, she would never have remained in her uncle's lodge as she did, till its inmates hardened their hearts against her to the exclusion even of the commonest sentiments of humanity. This was particularly the case with one of her aunts, who succeeded only too well in making the life of her niece a torture. She was the direct cause of Tekakwitha's last and severest trial in the Mohawk country.

In 1677 the Lily of the Mohawks accompanied her relatives on the usual spring hunt. They went in the direction of the Dutch, we are told, or in other words, towards the settlement at Schenectady. Had their object been to fish, they would most likely have gone on from there to the fishing village at the mouth of the Norman's Kill, near Albany, passing down through the "vale of Tawasentha." As these Indians went to hunt and not to fish, they probably took instead one of the many trails leading through the pine-forest of

Saratoga, any one of which would quickly bring them to a region frequented by deer and game from the Adirondacks. There, at a certain spot known to the Mohawks from time immemorial, a strange medicine-spring bubbled over the top of a round, high rock, and scattered its health-giving waters at random over the ground. Then, and for a hundred years to come, its existence was known only to the Indians. No white man had ever been permitted to lift its pungent water to his lips.

To this place, called "Serachtague" in his report of the colony, Governor Dongan tried in vain to recall the Iroquois Christians of Canada, by promising them English blackgowns,<sup>[53]</sup> and undisturbed possession of their favorite hunting-ground. With this interesting fact of early Saratoga history, however, we are not now concerned. As for the one involving Tekakwitha, here is Chauchetière's account of what occurred at the Mohawk hunting-camp, and of the report that was carried back from there to the village:—

"In the spring or during the time of the chase she had gone with her relations towards the Dutch, with her uncle. The wife of this hunter did not like Catherine, perhaps because the good life of Catherine was a reproach to the contrary life led by this infidel; this woman examined all the actions and all the words of Catherine, that she might discover something with which to find fault. It is a common thing among the Indians to treat an uncle like a father, and to call him by the very name of father. Catherine chanced one day, in speaking of this old man in company with others, to let slip his name without using the name of 'father' or 'my father;' this woman noticed that, and judged rashly of Catherine, and said that Catherine had sinned with her husband. She did not fail to seek out Father Lamberville, and tell him that she whom he esteemed so much had sinned. The Father wished to examine the reasons which this woman had for treating in such a way this good Christian, and having found out that the strongest was that which I have just related, he sharply reprov'd this evil-speaking tongue; but he did not neglect to speak to Catherine and to instruct her on the sin, and the pains of hell that God has prepared for punishing it, and then he questioned Catherine, who replied with firmness and modesty that never had she fallen into this sin either on this occasion or on any other, and that she did not fear to be damned [for it]; but much sooner, for not having courage enough to let them break her head rather than to go to work in the fields on Sunday. She believed she had not done enough by remaining whole days without eating, for when she did not go to work in the fields on Sundays, they would hide everything there was to eat in the cabin, and they left her nothing of what had been prepared for that day. This was in order that hunger might oblige her to go to the fields, where they would have forced her to work."

They declared that Christianity was making her lazy and worthless. Had she been accustomed to idle away as much of her time in amusement as the other young squaws, she would not have been so treated; but her ill-natured aunts, for whom she had worked industriously all her life, now begrudged her the one day of rest out of seven which she took for conscience' sake. Thus Sunday generally proved not a feast, but a fast-day to Tekakwitha. Her life was becoming intolerable. Her cruel and morose aunt, whom Martin rightly calls *un esprit bizarre*, had received from Father de Lamberville a reprimand which covered her with confusion. She visited her chagrin upon the head of her innocent victim. "Well!" she had said to the blackgown, "so Katherine, whom you esteem so

virtuous, is notwithstanding a hypocrite who deceives you." As such her aunt now treated her. This evil-minded old squaw, who looked through the murky cloud of her own sins at the brightness and holiness of the young life so close to hers, disliked its radiance. It caused her to blink uncomfortably, and she refused to believe in its truth. She shrank back into the dark, which suited her better. In her fruitless efforts to hide from her wicked eyes the bright light that shone about the pathway of Tekakwitha, she tried by every means in her power to brand the virtue of her niece as a mere pretence, assumed to cover worse deeds than her own.

There was no longer for the Lily of the Mohawks even a shadow of protection in her home at Caughnawaga Castle. Her uncle had beset her path with drunken men and taunting children; she had been deprived of food, she had been threatened with death, and last of all, her aunt had done what she could to defame her to the blackgown. He, however, was now her only friend; and his advice to her was to leave the country as soon as possible, and take refuge at the Praying Castle. What wonder, then, that Tekakwitha, after having thus spent a year and a half in her home as a Christian, began to look with longing eyes towards the new Caughnawaga on the St. Lawrence, whither her adopted sister and Anastasia Tegonhatsihongo had already gone. She turned to the mission settlement in her thoughts as to a land of promise and peace, an asylum where her religion and her innocence would be respected.

Travelling Indians from the Sault came and went among their tribesmen in the Mohawk Valley. Sometimes they were joined by new recruits, who returned with them to Canada. Tekakwitha now greeted the arrival of each band of these Christian Indians with a hopeful smile; but again and again she saw them depart with a weary sigh, for when they were gone, she felt that her only chance of release from her trials had vanished with them. Thus far none of them had offered to take her to the Praying Castle, and indeed, she knew of no one with whom she would have cared to go had she been asked. She saw no way out of her troubles. Her uncle, grown harsh and unkind to her, was displeased with all that she did in the lodge, and yet he would not consent to her going away. The old chief was moody and sullen at sight of his half-untentanted castle. Who then would dare to tamper with his niece, or assist her in any way to escape? Who would ever be found willing to undertake so dangerous a venture? Tekakwitha sadly realized her position, and felt that she could only gather together the powers of her soul for patient and persistent endurance even unto death. She knew that if her relatives could once force her by long-continued persecution to yield to them, their old kindness would return; they would then be only too glad to choose a husband for her, and to give her a place among the oyanders, or noble matrons of the nation. But the national life of the Mohawks was still thoroughly heathen, and her part was already taken with the Christians. She would not retreat one step, nor entertain for a moment the thought of surrender, though she was cut off almost entirely from communication with those of her own faith. She stood apart from them all, and suffered and made no moan. During this time Tekakwitha was learning the bitterest lesson of life; she was daily sounding the depths and unlocking the secrets of unshared sorrow. In this the heart of the Lily was waxing strong; but alas! her very soul was athirst for the "living water" that was so cruelly denied her. She had scarcely as yet been allowed to taste of its sweetness. She knew that those who lived at the Sault were permitted to drink deep of the precious draught, and revelled in wealth of spiritual food. Thus checked and deprived of instruction, how could she ever hope to obtain the "bread of life" that was given out so freely at the mission village? Was she alone, of all the Iroquois Christians, to hunger and thirst for these things without relief till she died? Was she to be all her life "the only one in the lodge baptized"? And would she be always treated as now? She felt that she could not endure it much longer and live; for the Lily

was left quite alone among thorns, and the thorns were pricking her almost to death.

#### FOOTNOTES:

These promises were of no great account. Kryn, the great Mohawk warrior, said in 1687, "If a priest would settle at Saragtoga, many [Indians] would return; for they had longed and waited a long time for it." Colonial History, vol. iii. p. 436. As this hope failed, and neutrality was not possible, we find Kryn thenceforth in close alliance with the French.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### HOT ASHES PLANS TEKAKWITHA'S ESCAPE.

THE Indian chief Louis Garonhiagué, known to the English as Hot Ashes, and called by the French La Poudre Chaude or La Cendre Chaude, was, as his name implies, a quick-tempered, impulsive, and fiery man. He was an Oneida by birth, and was known to have been one of the executioners of the heroic missionary Brebeuf, who, with his companion Lalemant, was tortured and slain in the Huron country by Iroquois warriors. Since that time Hot Ashes had become a Christian. His career and character are interesting and characteristic of the times. As this impetuous chief, *dogique*, and apostle was bold enough to come forward and assist the Lily of the Mohawks to escape from her uncle's lodge to the Sault St. Louis, some further account of him may well be given.

Hot Ashes had been betrothed to his wife in childhood. They had lived together from the time he was eight years old. The violence of his nature was held in check to a certain extent by the unalterable patience, the gentleness, and the yielding disposition of his worthy squaw. Their union was what Chauchetière calls one of the good marriages that are sometimes made among the savages. Hot Ashes was chief or captain of his village in the Oneida country, and was held in high esteem by his tribesmen. His own quick temper was the cause of his leaving them. At one time the question of moving the village to a new site—an event of frequent occurrence among the Indians—gave rise to a quarrel between the leading chiefs. While still angry on this account, Hot Ashes went off to the hunt. Thereupon a second event occurred, of so irritating a nature that he was enraged beyond all bounds. News came to him that his favorite brother had been killed. The bearer of the news did not tell him who had committed the fatal deed. The furious and excitable chief immediately persuaded himself that it had been done by the French. Without waiting to learn the particulars, he hurried off toward Montreal to wreak his vengeance on the Canadian settlers. On his way, however, he learned that his brother had been killed in an entirely different quarter, and not by these people at all. Hot Ashes was now in a quandary. What should he do next? He was near the Praying Castle on the St.

Lawrence, whose hospitable doors were always open to travellers, and he paused there for a time to consider the situation. The Indians of that place liked him from the first; he soon made friends among them, and his wife was charmed with the quiet, orderly, and peaceful life of the Christian Indians who dwelt there. Hot Ashes thus had ample time to cool down and think matters over. Should he now decide to return to his own country, he would feel bound to avenge his brother's death, according to custom, on the people by whom he had been slain. He knew that this would involve his whole nation in a bloody war. This he disliked to do; for when not in a tempest of anger, Hot Ashes was a generous, good-hearted man. Then, too, the longer he remained at the Sault the more contented and calm he became. Won over by his wife Garhoit, he consented to be instructed and to be baptized with his whole family. The baptism of so important a chief was a great event for the mission. All his own people who were in the vicinity, and many even from the distant Oneida country, assembled at the Praying Castle for the occasion. A number of these remained and became Christians. There were soon so many Oneidas dwelling at the Sault that they needed a ruler of their own nation, and Hot Ashes was chosen to preside over them. He thus became the fourth *dogique*, or captain of the Praying Castle. He soon ranked first of all in importance, notwithstanding the ability of his staunch friend Kryn, the "great Mohawk." Still his unruly temper would break forth at times, as it did on the occasion of his reception as captain. The men of the Sault assembled in due form, lighted the fire for him, gave him the calumet to smoke, and went through all the ceremonies save one, which most unfortunately was forgotten. Hot Ashes, indignant at the oversight, went to Father Fremin, the missionary, and gave vent to his ire. He said that they had mocked him, that they had treated him like a child, that he was a chief without a mat, that he would be obliged to hold his council out of doors. In short, he could not be pacified till the old men reassembled, and the whole ceremony from beginning to end was gone over.

Once duly installed, Hot Ashes ruled the village with ability and vigor up to the time of his death. He outlived Tekakwitha, and was finally killed in battle. Many incidents are told of his courage, piety, and zeal, his devotion to his religion and the good of the settlement, and also of his tenderness to his wife while suffering from grievous ailments which afflicted the later years of her life. He had a natural talent for exhorting and teaching. He won many of his own people to Christianity, and when war was threatened he did what he could to maintain peace between the Oneidas and the French. While thus engaged he was suspected of double dealing; but taking no notice of the evil things that were said of him, Hot Ashes held to his own disinterested course with head erect, confiding in his good wife, who alone remained true to him, till at last he succeeded in living down all suspicion of treachery on either side. He it was, more than all others, who opposed and prevented the introduction of the liquor traffic into the settlement at the Sault. A lively incident is given by Chauchetière to show his love of temperance. Soon after his baptism he chanced to be hunting at the end of the island of Montreal, when he fell in with a band of Oneidas. They were being supplied with liquor by an unscrupulous Canadian trader. They sat around a great bowl of fire water, from which they drank freely, and which was constantly replenished by the crafty Frenchman. Hot Ashes was asked to join them. He did so, through courtesy, and drank with the rest. Finding that he was expected and urged to take more than he ought, an expedient came into his ready brain for preventing further mischief. As there were older men than himself in the band, it would not have been considered proper for him to reprove them openly. This, then, is what he did. He stood up and began to sing like a drunken man, and to dance. Suddenly he pretended to take a false step, and at the same time gave the bowl a great kick with his foot. This scattered its contents over the ground. The Indians, not suspecting his intention, looked upon the accident as a good joke. They began to laugh uproariously and to make



fun of Hot Ashes, who went on with his mimicry. In the mean time night came on, and they thought no more of drinking, but all fell asleep. Hot Ashes then retired, well pleased with having put a stop to the debauch.

Other anecdotes might be given to show the character and spirit of this Indian; but it is enough to know that he was just the one to assist the Lily of the Mohawks in the accomplishment of her now well-defined purpose,—to escape at all hazards, and turn from her uncle's lodge to the Praying Castle.

Tekakwitha's adopted sister, already in Canada, knew well the condition of affairs in the Mohawk country, and above all, in the lodge of the chief, with whom she had formerly lived at Caughnawaga. She was fully aware that Tekakwitha's life there as a Christian would necessarily be a thorny one. She and her husband often spoke of the unhappy condition in which the young Mohawk was placed, and of the desirability of having her with them. When it became known that Hot Ashes was about to visit the Long House of the Five Nations on an errand of zeal, they realized at once that the wished-for opportunity had come. They would now be able to assist Tekakwitha. The Oneida chief intended to speak to his people concerning the faith that was in him, and to persuade as many of them as possible to return with him to the Sault. Tekakwitha's brother-in-law, urged by his wife, resolved to accompany Hot Ashes on his proposed journey, and in order to make sure of carrying out his own immediate purpose,—which was to bring his sister-in-law back with him,—he took into his confidence a good friend of his from Lorette, a mission village of the Hurons, near Quebec. This Indian of Lorette and the brother-in-law of Tekakwitha consulted with Hot Ashes, and the three together planned their journey as best they could beforehand. Then they stepped lightly into a canoe, just large enough to hold them, and soon were speeding southward over Lake Champlain, and thence through Lake George on their way to the Mohawk Valley.

Ah, Tekakwitha, why is your step so weary there in the village street? Why do you pause at the cabin door as though you did not care to enter? Why are you sad and faint? Have they hidden the food away from you again, lest you should find a morsel to eat, and will you be greeted with angry words if you enter your uncle's lodge? Is it no easier for you to bear it now than it was at first? Poor child! you are both hungry and hungry-hearted; human nature is strong within you to-day. The craving for peace and comfort and human love will not be hushed and trampled under by faith, and the hope of a far-away heaven. Has Rawenniio forgotten the Mohawk girl? She seems to be drifting away from the sound of his voice. The strength of her spirit is gone. She is sad unto death. Why not give up the struggle at once, go into the lodge, and consent to do like the rest? For one who has grown too weary to swim, it can scarcely be wrong to drift with the current. Are these your thoughts, Tekakwitha? See! They have startled her out of her weariness! With a sudden return of energy and a quick determination, as if afraid to trust herself in the lodge, she turns and takes the path to the chapel. She will find the blackgown, if it is possible to do so; she will tell him her wicked thoughts, and be guided by what he says. He is wise and good. He can tell her how to chase such thoughts away, and perhaps she can keep them from coming back. At all events, he will speak to her the comforting words of forgiveness and tell her to go in peace. Then she will be sure that Rawenniio loves her and is not angry. She knows the path so well that she quickly comes within sight of the chapel. As it is not her usual hour for prayer, no one is around to waylay or disturb her.

Close at hand is De Lamberville's cabin. Tekakwitha does not find him at once, for the blackgown has guests. They are Christian Indians, who have come from the Sault, and there are three of them. Father de Lamberville is well pleased to have such visitors; he

welcomes the Christians from the Sault who come to the Mohawk as if they were angels come from heaven. He gladly receives them into his cabin, and leaves them free to come and go as they please. "One could see the spirit of Christianity and the mortification of the passions depicted on the faces of these new apostles." The novelty of seeing and hearing them on this occasion has already attracted a crowd of Indians to the spot. One of the blackgown's guests has risen to make a speech.

Tekakwitha finds herself in the midst of the old men and the chiefs of Caughnawaga who are assembled there, and she listens with eager interest to all that is said. Her uncle is away on a visit to the Dutch, which happens well for her. It is no less a personage than Hot Ashes who is addressing the people. In his impetuous, headlong way he tells them that "as they all know, he was formerly captain at Oneida, that he was a warrior, and that he acted like them in those days, but that after all he was only a dog; that he had begun to be a man a few months back and he said many touching things," continues Chauchetière, "but nobody profited by them at all except Catherine. The old men withdrew, one after another, and left the speaker almost entirely alone. Catherine could not separate herself from these new-comers. She declared to the Father that she must indeed go away, even at the cost of her life." She was too unhappy and distrustful of herself and her own powers of endurance to remain longer in the country where she was exposed to so many and such constant trials of her strength and her faith. Father de Lamberville, moved by her earnest words, spoke to Hot Ashes and his companions about her. He asked if it would be possible for them to take her back with them to Canada. "Certainly," they said. It was in the hope of assisting her to escape that they had come to Caughnawaga. Hot Ashes at once offered Tekakwitha his own place in the canoe. He said that he intended to go on to Oneida and to pass through all the Iroquois nations, preaching the faith. Her brother-in-law, therefore, and the Indian from Lorette, could take the canoe and return with Tekakwitha to the Praying Castle. God had provided a means of escape for her most unexpectedly. It was the very best opportunity she could have to go; her uncle was away, and her aunts, either through indifference or ignorance of the plan, put no obstacle in her path.

Tekakwitha was never known to falter when the moment came for prompt decision and instant action. Chauchetière says: "The resolution was no sooner taken than it was carried into execution."

The two companions of Hot Ashes put Tekakwitha secretly into the canoe with them, and immediately took the route leading towards the Dutch;<sup>[54]</sup> that is to say, they embarked on the Mohawk River and followed its course for some distance, before taking any one of the different woodland trails leading to Lake George.

#### FOOTNOTES:

According to Cholenec's account of Tekakwitha's escape, her brother-in-law went on a hurried visit to the Dutch and back again to Caughnawaga, before he started with her at all. This he did in order to mislead her uncle, who would think he had come to that vicinity for no other purpose than to trade in beaver-skins. The minor details of her journey are somewhat confused in the two accounts of Cholenec and Chauchetière, but the main facts are the same in both.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### FROM THE OLD TO THE NEW CAUGHNAWAGA.

AS they left Caughnawaga Castle, and paddled around the sharp bends of the Mohawk River, the two Indians who were conducting this stirring adventure used the utmost caution to prevent an encounter between Tekakwitha and her uncle, who might be at that very time returning from Schenectady. This they dreaded above all things. If the old chief should meet her in company with them, he would suspect their purpose at once, and the lives of the three would be in danger. They followed the course of the river current, however, as it carried them in the general direction of their journey more swiftly than they could otherwise travel. They wished to make the most of their time before the uncle could be warned of their departure from the castle. It was probably not far from the spot where the Chuctanunda Creek at Amsterdam<sup>[55]</sup> comes tumbling down the hill into the Mohawk, or in that vicinity, that she and her two companions left the canoe by the river-side and took to the woods; as in the thickets along the less frequented trail by land, it would be easier for Tekakwitha to conceal herself quickly in case of alarm, than if they were to continue the journey further by way of the river. Had they followed the latter course, they would have been obliged to take a more easterly trail across Saratoga County.<sup>[56]</sup>

As they feared, the uncle was soon on their trail; for shortly after the three mission Indians had disappeared from Caughnawaga Castle Tekakwitha's absence was noticed. It was quickly inferred that she had gone to Canada. She was not in the lodge, not in the chapel, nor with the girls at the spring. Instantly a runner was despatched to the Dutch settlement to warn the Turtle Chief of what had occurred. The news filled him with rage. Leaving his Dutch friends abruptly, he started homeward to learn if it were indeed true that his niece had vanished, and if so, speedily to follow her. On his way to the castle he passed an Indian travelling rapidly in the opposite direction from himself, whom he scarcely noticed and did not recognize. Nevertheless this Indian was no other than Tekakwitha's brother-in-law,—the very man he wanted to capture. The unrecognized relative knew the chief as soon as he saw him, but he was too near to avoid passing him without exciting suspicion. So, feigning an unconcern which he was far from feeling, he kept straight on, and passed the old man safely. He then continued his journey to Schenectady. The chief, on the other hand, was in quite as great a hurry to reach the Mohawk village. Perhaps he had doubts as to the truthfulness of what he had heard. At all events, when he arrived at Caughnawaga he went directly to his own lodge, and found that Tekakwitha was indeed not there, and had not been since the departure of Hot Ashes. Immediately he gathered what information he could at the castle, "loaded his gun with three balls, declaring that he would kill somebody," and started in pursuit of the fugitives. Once thoroughly roused, his unaided sagacity put him on the trail by which he might overtake them before they could reach Lake George.

In the mean time what had become of Tekakwitha? Why was her brother-in-law travelling alone? Ah! she and the good Indian of Lorette were concealed in the bushes, either near

the river-bank at Amsterdam or on the high ground to the northeast of that town. Her brother-in-law had left them there, while he made a brief trip to Schenectady and back in order to buy bread. They had started from Caughnawaga Castle in haste, without provision for the journey. He soon returned to the secluded spot where his companions were waiting for him. Tekakwitha was greatly relieved to see him. When he gave them a graphic account of his narrow escape from discovery, she looked upon it as a certain proof that God was watching over them. She resolved that on reaching the Sault, as she now hoped to do, she would endeavor in every way to show her gratitude to Him. Up to this time she had lived in great seclusion and subjection, and of late had suffered constant persecution and torture of spirit. This sudden freedom, then, from all the bonds that bound her to her lodge and tribe; the intense excitement attending her sudden departure; these days of concealment in the weird and gloomy forest; this unforeseen companionship with strangers, who proved to be as gentle and as solicitous for her safety as if she were indeed a beloved sister; and more than all the wonderful way in which everything seemed to concur in aiding her escape,—could not fail to make a deep and lasting impression on her sensitive soul. Every spiritual and religious tendency of her nature was intensified by this new and strange experience. In leaving her home and undertaking so perilous a journey she had thrown herself without reserve into the arms of Providence, and now resting there, she was carried almost without an effort through hair-breadth escapes from dangers that no earthly consideration would ever have nerved her to face. She felt that she could not henceforth do otherwise than devote her all to Rawenniio,—*the true God*.

Their probable route to Lake George was through what is now the township of Galway in Saratoga County, and thence up the valley of the Kayaderosseras Creek, skirting the eastern side of the long mountain-ridge that carries Lake Desolation high on its back. Through this region one can travel almost in a straight line of open country from Amsterdam on the Mohawk to Jessup's Landing on the Hudson. There the river is fordable, just above Palmer's Falls and below the old scow-ferry. A well-worn trail followed the eastern bank of the river from there to Luzerne, and then turned northeast, through a beautiful valley, to the mountainous shores of Lake George. Somewhere on this direct route across the country, Tekakwitha's uncle overtook one of the two Indians who were escorting her to Canada. Apparently this Indian was engaged in hunting. Just as the chief approached, the hunter took aim as if at a bird and fired his gun. This was a preconcerted signal to his companion, who was some distance in advance, to conceal the Indian girl. It was so understood. In an instant Tekakwitha was hidden in a clump of thick undergrowth. Her ready-witted companion threw himself on the ground near her, took out his pipe, lit it, and lazily watched the curling smoke as he puffed it from his mouth. Tekakwitha's uncle, coming upon the second Indian in this attitude, was completely disconcerted. Where then was his niece? Assuredly not in company with these men. They were fully absorbed in their own affairs, and scarcely noticed his approach. She might be even then at work in the corn-fields down by the Mohawk, or saying her prayers in the woods behind the castle. In either case he would not have found her in the lodge. He had acted foolishly, and followed an idle rumor without sufficient thought. He would not expose his folly further by questioning these men about her. Having reached this determination, he turned without a word as to what was uppermost in his mind, and silently retraced his steps to the Mohawk Valley.

As for Tekakwitha, she felt as sure just then of Rawenniio's direct protection and care, as if she had seen the Great Spirit himself standing in front of her hiding-place and concealing her from the suspicious eyes of her uncle. How else could the wise old chief have been so easily misled by such simple means? With a light heart she resumed her journey. Their worst danger was passed. When they reached the shore of Lake George, a

little search among the bushes brought to light the canoe which her companions had left there on their journey southward with Hot Ashes. Once fairly launched, they felt secure; and as they paddled up the lake, hugging the westward or leeward side, where canoes find the smoothest water, they woke its echoes with the chanting of Iroquois hymns. Thus did the daughter, a voluntary exile from her home in the Mohawk Valley, retrace the path over land and water travelled years before by her captive Algonquin mother. In her ears had sounded not sacred hymns, but only the wild music of the war-song and the plaintive strains of the Indian love-song. In those days of war and bloodshed the Christian hymn of the Iroquois had not yet been sung. The Mohawk mission had been but recently founded. The blood of the martyred Jogues still lay fresh on the ground, and the soul of the Lily had not yet come into existence.

During this long journey the many thoughts of Tekakwitha must have gone back to the dreary lodge on the banks of the Cayudutta, where her usual daily tasks were neglected, and where her baffled, deserted uncle now sat disconsolate by the hearth-fire. If these thoughts brought a pang to her warm heart, she could console herself with the remembrance that the blessing of her dead mother would not fail to follow her on the journey. As the three Christians left behind them "the tail of the lake" (Andiatorocte), and paddled past Ticonderoga, they did not pay the customary tribute to *the little people under the water*. Their heathen tribesmen might, if they chose, cast their tobacco into the lake to gain the good-will of the sprites who were said to prepare the well-shaped arrow-flints with which the shore just there is strewn;<sup>[57]</sup> for when the surface of the lake was rough they thought the little people were angry. But Tekakwitha and her companions had renounced these superstitions of their race. They knew that God alone was ruler of wind and wave. On no account could they be induced to pay homage to any such mischievous sprites of the lake. They asked Rawenniio instead to forgive the people, and to turn their thoughts away from all such foolish worship. "Her journey," says Chauchetière, "was a continual prayer, and the joy that she felt in approaching Montreal could not be expressed. Behold then our young savage, twenty-one years of age, who escapes holy and pure, and who triumphs over the impurity, the infidelity, and the vice which have corrupted all the Iroquois! Behold the Genevieve of Canada, behold the treasure of the Sault, who is at hand, and who has sanctified the path from Montreal to the Mohawk, by which other predestined souls have passed after her!" When she found herself far from her own country, and realized that she had nothing more to fear on the part of her uncle, she gave herself entirely to God, to do in the future whatever would please him best. She arrived in the autumn of the year 1677,<sup>[58]</sup> the desire that she had to get there as soon as possible was the reason for not stopping on the way. On her arrival, she put the letters that Father de Lamberville had written into the hands of the Fathers, who, having read them, were delighted to have acquired a treasure; for these were the words of the letter: "I send you a treasure; guard it well." Her face told more than the letters. Her joy was unspeakable on finding herself in the land of light, freed from the sorrows of spirit which she had endured from not being able to serve God as she wished to serve him, freed too from the persecutions which were inflicted upon her in her country and in her cabin.

She was received at once into the lodge of Anastasia Tegenhatsihongo, her mother's old friend, with whom her sister and her sister's husband already dwelt.

From the time of her arrival at the new Caughnawaga, Chauchetière and Choleneq, the two biographers of Kateri Tekakwitha, were both close and observant witnesses of her life. They were also present at her death. Henceforth, then, we will let them speak often and at length, telling in their own way of the rapid unfolding of spiritual life which took place in this untaught child of Nature. Transplanted from the heart of a heathen

wilderness into a settlement of fervent souls,—for such from all accounts was the mission village at the Sault,—the Lily of the Mohawks caught up with keenest relish the inspiration in the air about her. She was lifted with marvellous rapidity to a height of holiness that drew all eyes in Canada towards her. It was there in the land of her adoption that she won the title of "La Bonne Catherine." Those who have patience to read on to the end of her biography will see how the brief life of this Indian girl was indeed radiant with love of the true God.

The letter which she bore with her from the Mohawk Valley, written by Father de Lamberville, who had baptized her, and which was addressed to Father Cholenec, to whose flock she was henceforth to belong, is given in full by Martin, as follows:—

"Catherine Tegakouita va demeurer au Sault. Veuillez-vous charger, je vous en prie, de sa direction. Vous connaîtrez bientôt le trésor que nous vous donnons. Gardez le donc bien! Qu'entre vos mains il profite à la gloire de Dieu, et au salut d'une âme qui lui est assurément bien chère." [59]

#### FOOTNOTES:

Amsterdam is the point at which the Mohawk so bends its course to the southeast that any further advance by the river would have taken the fugitives away from rather than towards their destination. To have left the river sooner would have carried them over a rough and difficult country.

See "Indian Trails in Saratoga County," [Appendix, Note D](#).

This custom is mentioned in the Jesuit "Relations."

Chauchetière says 1678, but this is evidently a mistake. The date given by Cholenec is 1677.

"Catherine Tegakwita goes to dwell at the Sault. I pray you to take the charge of her direction. You will soon know the treasure that we give you. Guard it, then, well! May it profit in your hands to the glory of God, and to the salvation of a soul that is assuredly very dear to Him."

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## CHAPTER XVII.

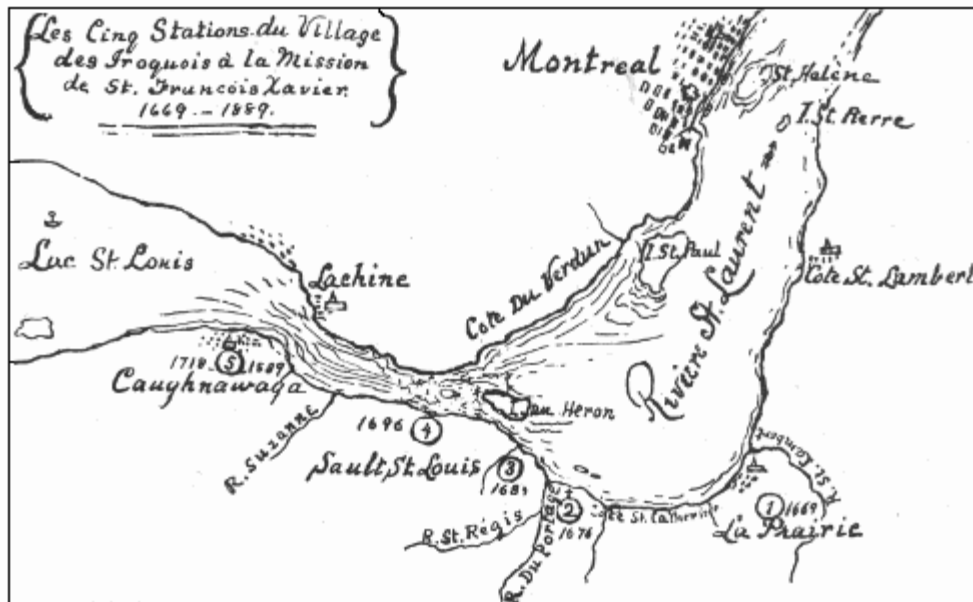
### AT THE SAULT ST. LOUIS.

FROM the time of her arrival in Canada, in the autumn of the year 1677, Tekakwitha was invariably called by her baptismal name of Katherine, or Kateri; and that the reader may better understand her new life at the Sault with its surroundings, we will

endeavor to draw a picture of it, gathering the details from all available sources.

In the cabin of Anastasia Tegonhatsihongo, Kateri already feels at home. It is a hospitable lodge; for there her adopted sister also dwells, busy with the care of her family. The new-comer is quite free to follow her own inclination, and spends day after day at the feet of the zealous and well-instructed Anastasia. This good woman takes great delight in teaching her all she herself knows of the beliefs and ways of the Christians. In the glow of the autumn days Kateri sits and listens with rapt attention to every word that drops from the lips of Anastasia. The hands of both are busily employed on moccasin or skirt, or close-woven mat of rushes; and the minds of both are keenly active in the realm of spiritual and religious thought. When they glance out at the broad St. Lawrence, they see before them the tossing rapids, foaming round the wooded Island of the Herons. They themselves are high above the moving waters, but not far away. The bank at the mission village is steep and grassy. Kateri's sister has need to watch her children closely, for if they play too near the falling ground by the river, a careless lurch might quickly send a dark-skinned little Jean Baptiste or newly christened Joseph rolling down to the water's edge. A slender islet partly breaks the swash of the eddying waters against the mainland. On the bank of the river, overlooking the islet, stands a tall cross which can be seen from every side. Kateri saw its outstretched arms showing above the bark roofs when she first arrived. St. François Xavier du Sault (in 1677) is close to the mouth of the river Portage,<sup>[60]</sup> a small but deep-bedded stream, which protects the village on its western side. This high ground in the angle of the Portage and St. Lawrence rivers was chosen for the people of the mission when they removed from the meadow-lands at La Prairie. A score or more of Indian cabins have been built on the new site; it is in one of these recently erected lodges that Kateri sits listening to the words of Anastasia. This is the very year in which Cholenec, the Jesuit Father, who lives in the priest's house near the chapel, writes to his superior that there are twenty-two of these cabins. Most of them, it must be remembered, are the long-houses of the Iroquois, containing several families. They are more comfortable than the lodges abandoned at La Prairie. The fields they are cultivating this year are not so damp, and the corn grows better here by the Portage. Anastasia tells Kateri that the temporary chapel of wood which they use now will soon give place to a splendid stone church, sixty feet long, as fine as any in that part of Canada. The foundations are already laid, and the work goes steadily on. The French colonists, across the river and beyond the Sault, are also making plans to build a grand parish church at Montreal. So far the only places of worship at Ville Marie are the chapels of the Hôtel Dieu and the fort, and the small stone church of Our Lady of Bon Secours, just erected. Montreal has been in existence for thirty-five years, and has about a thousand inhabitants. At the Sault there are between two and three hundred permanent Indian residents and three Jesuit Fathers; but other missionaries and many travelling Indians are accustomed to stop there in passing. The people at the Sault are famous for their hospitality, and so anxious to make converts to Christianity that they put everything they possess at the disposal of their guests. They have even been known to give up their freshly made corn-fields to new-comers, to induce them to dwell at the Praying Castle. They willingly take upon themselves the work of a second planting to supply their own households. Give the Indian a sufficient motive for hard work, and how completely the charge of idleness against his race falls to the ground!





**Map showing the Migrations of the Mission Village of the Sault**

Father Cholenec writes (1677) that there are four captains or chiefs, two Iroquois and two Huron, who govern the village at the Sault. He has "reason to hope, though," he says, "that they will soon have four Iroquois captains." Of one of these, Hot Ashes, we already know something. This friend of Kateri Tekakwitha is not only a governing chief, but famous also as a dogique, or catechist. The dogique Paul is another of these chiefs, chosen among the very first, and famous for his eloquence. Hot Ashes having separated from Kateri and his two companions at Caughnawaga on the Mohawk, and given her the use of his canoe, has now gone on to preach Christianity among the Oneidas, and has not yet returned. In the mean time Anastasia has many questions to ask Kateri about her recent long journey and about this same great chief. How was he received in the Mohawk villages? What did the old men think of him, and how was this one or that one of her friends or relatives disposed towards the Christians at the Sault? Then, too, she has more personal inquiries to make; for she wishes to find out who have been Kateri's intimate friends, and how she has conducted herself on certain trying occasions. Keenly the shrewd old matron watches the young face to see if she answers her frankly, and to read, if possible, her inmost thoughts and wishes. She has taken a strong interest in the girl. She recognizes in her many a trait and feature of her gentle Algonquin mother; and if at times, as Kateri recalls the scenes of her past life and the indignities she has suffered, a flash of Mohawk spirit gleams in her eye, Tegonhatsihongo loves her none the less for it. "She has her father's courage and endurance; she will make a noble Christian," is the matron's thought; and she spares no pains to give Kateri the benefit of her carefully garnered little store of Christian knowledge. She claims a mother's confidence from the girl, and in return treats her like a daughter. But there is, after all, a sternness, a severity about the Christianity of this Mohawk woman which, though it gives power and efficacy to her exhortations and instructions to the other young people at the Sault, who respect and reverence her, is perhaps in Kateri's case to be regretted. Anastasia is accustomed to dwell so much and at such length on the heinousness of sin and its terrible consequences, here and hereafter, that Kateri from being constantly near her, though more spiritual and pure-hearted already than any of her companions, soon begins to inflict upon herself severe penances to atone for what she considers great wickedness on her part. This

wickedness consists chiefly in having adorned herself in past years with beads, trinkets, and Indian ornaments, which she did oftener to please her aunts than to gratify her own vanity.

One day soon after her arrival, Anastasia noticed that Kateri had wampum beads around her neck and in her hair; and the elder woman questioned her to find out if she really cared for these things. It cost Kateri nothing to lay them aside the moment she thought that it might be pleasing to "the true God" if she did so. Her only motto henceforward was, "Who will teach me what is most pleasing to God, that I may do it?"

It was love for Rawenniio, and a desire to prepare herself as soon as possible for her first communion, that kept Kateri so close to the side of her instructress. Says Chauchetière,—

"She learned more in a week than the others did in several years. She never lost a moment, either in the cabin, in the fields, or in the woods. She was always to be seen, rosary in hand, with her dear instructress, going or coming with her bundle of firewood. She never left Anastasia, because she learned more from her when they two were alone, gathering fagots in the woods, than in any other way. Her actions made Anastasia say of her that she never lost sight of God. Their talk was about the life and doings of good Christians; and as soon as she heard it said that the Christians did such and such things, she tried to put what she heard into practice. She was like a holy bee, seeking to gather honey from all sorts of flowers. She had few companions, even of her own sex, because she wished no other ties than those that would bring her nearer to a perfect life, in which respect her prudence was admirable. She separated herself from a certain person with whom she had associated, because she noticed that she had a false pride; but she accomplished the separation without appearing to despise the person she left."

When Anastasia spoke to Kateri of the necessity of avoiding slander,—a vice to which the squaws were much addicted,—Kateri asked her what that meant. It is not surprising that she did not know what evil speaking was, for she was never known to say a word against any one, not even against those who calumniated her. One day her amiability was put to the proof. A young man passed through the cabin where she sat with Anastasia, and roughly pulled aside her blanket with these words: "They say this one has sore eyes; let's see." Kateri flushed deeply, but made no retort. She gathered her blanket about her, and continued the conversation with her friend.

She learned from Anastasia the order of religious exercises at the Praying Castle, and never failed in regular attendance at the chapel. She became the most fervent spirit in that devout community; indeed the lives of the Indian converts at the Sault seem to have been more like the lives of the early Christians and martyrs, in fervor and heroic devotion, than any that history has elsewhere recorded. At the first dawn of day, after having said their private morning prayers in the cabins, they were accustomed to assemble at the chapel, to visit the Blessed Sacrament. If there happened to be a Mass at that hour, they stayed to hear it, and then returned to their cabins. At sunrise the regular daily Mass of the Indians was said. At this they all assisted, chanting Iroquois hymns and other prayers, including the Creed and the Ten Commandments. These sacred songs were intoned by the dogique, or catechist, and sung by alternate choirs of men and women. The Indians never tired of singing, and the hymns prepared for them in their own language were full of instruction. In this way they learned in a very short time the laws of Christian morality and the mysteries of the Faith.

The missionaries at the Sault were accustomed to hold frequent conferences on religion. Objections to doctrine were raised by one of the audience, and answered either by the priest or dogique. Instead of referring to books, which the Indians could not read or understand, sets of pictures were shown to them, such as had been used successfully in France to instruct the ignorant peasantry of Bas Breton. These proved exceedingly useful among the unlettered Indians, and they soon learned to carry on conferences among themselves in the absence of the missionary. Many converts from paganism were made in this way; and being already well instructed by the dogiques, they had only to be brought to the Fathers to be baptized.

The method of the Jesuit missionaries when devoting themselves to the redmen, was to begin their instruction in religion at once. To use the words of Shea,—

"They did not seek to teach the Indians to read and write as an indispensable prelude to Christianity. That they left for times when greater peace might render it feasible, when long self-control should make the children less averse to the task. The utter failure of their Huron seminary at Quebec, as well as of all the attempts made by others at the instance of the French Court, showed that to wait till the Indians were a reading people would be to postpone their conversion forever; and, in fact, we see Eliot's Indian Bible outlive the pagan tribes for whom it was prepared."

The people of the Sault, though unable to read or write, were well and thoroughly instructed Christians; and on more than one occasion the white men were put to shame by the greater integrity, morality, and piety of these fervent converts. The public sentiment was so strong there in favor of temperance that on one occasion when a drunkard appeared in their village, he was by common consent stabled with the pigs, and the next day was chased out of the settlement.

After the morning Mass, when the men and women went off to work in the fields or cabins, the children were gathered into the chapel and instructed orally.

Many of the Indians objected to having their children taught to read and write, on the ground that it left them no time to become expert at hunting, and to gain other acquirements more useful to them; but it must not be inferred, therefore, that the children had no schooling. On the contrary, their parents were well pleased to have them assembled at regular hours and taught many things by the blackgowns, though without giving up to it the greater part of the day. Besides this, there was a zealous young Indian in the village, named Joseph Rontagorha, who gathered the children about him in the evenings to catechise them and to teach them singing. A pathetic story is told by Father Cholenec of one of Joseph's pupils,—a little child who was dying. He would not be satisfied till they had called together his young friends to sing the Iroquois hymns they had been learning. The dying child joined his voice with theirs, till his strength failed him. He breathed his soul away to Heaven on the solemn strains of his favorite hymn. The sweet voices of the awe-stricken children died away into a silence which was broken only by their sobs, when they realized that the voice of their companion would join with theirs no more.

The Bishop of Quebec, Monseigneur Laval, had journeyed up the St. Lawrence and visited the mission of St. François Xavier shortly before Kateri's arrival, and while the village was still at La Prairie. He had been received at the landing there with rustic pomp, and the dogique Paul made an eloquent address of welcome. The bishop administered confirmation to a hundred of the Indians on that occasion, and made a stay of several

days among them. He was greatly edified by what he saw; and the Indians, on their part, were deeply impressed by ceremonies they then witnessed for the first time.

Again in 1685 they were visited by the newly appointed bishop Monseigneur de Saint-Valier.

While Kateri lived among them, however, no episcopal visitation is recorded; probably none occurred. Though she did not receive confirmation, she had more spiritual advantages than she had hoped for. She was much pleased to find that many of the pagan festivals which were observed each year in the Mohawk country were discontinued by her tribesmen at the Sault. Her superior intellect as well as her love of purity had caused her to avoid taking part in the dissolute and superstitious rites which accompanied many of these Iroquois feasts.

Only two of the old national festivals were retained at the Sault. These were the Planting Festival and the joyous Harvest Festival, at the gathering and husking of the corn. But even these were hallowed and sanctified by the prevailing spirit of religion. The seed was brought to the missionaries to be blessed for sowing, and the first fruits of the harvest were laid upon the altar.

After Kateri's long sojourn among pagans, what a joy it was to her to share in the ideal Christian life of these Iroquois converts!

Three times a day the Angelus sounded from the little belfry; and each time the bead-ers of moccasins and the tillers of corn-fields, the hunter starting out with his weapons or bringing in the trophies of the chase, the children, the warriors, and the wrinkled squaws bowed their heads in prayer. They knew the Angelus by heart, and said it faithfully. Kateri knew this and more. She had already learned the Litanies of the Blessed Mother, and recited them at night. All carried the rosary, wearing it around their necks, or wound about the head like a coronet. Hers was oftenest in her hands. These Indians understood only their own language; but the ordinary prayers were all translated for them from the French or Latin, into Iroquois. Father Cholenec, to whose care Kateri Tekakwitha had been so particularly commended, watched her actions closely during the first few months of her life at the Sault. He was the one to decide how soon she should be permitted to receive communion,—a decision of great importance to the happiness of Kateri. To gain this privilege, she had nerved herself to undergo threats, privations, and persecutions, and had become an exile; now she cared for nothing so much in all the world as to hasten, by every means in her power, the long-looked-for day of her first communion.

After commenting on her attendance at the daily Masses and her morning devotions, Cholenec speaks of her as follows:—

"During the course of the day she from time to time broke off from her work to go and hold communion with Jesus Christ at the foot of the altar. In the evening she returned again to the church, and did not leave it until the night was far advanced. When engaged in her prayers, she seemed entirely unconscious of what was passing about her; and in a short time the Holy Spirit raised her to so sublime a devotion that she often spent many hours in intimate communion with God.

"To this inclination for prayer she joined an almost unceasing application to labor.... She always ended the week by an exact investigation of her faults and imperfections, that she might efface them by the sacrament of penance, which she underwent every Saturday evening. For this she prepared herself

by different mortifications with which she afflicted her body; and when she accused herself of faults, even the most light, it was with such vivid feelings of compunction that she shed tears, and her words were choked by sighs and sobbings. The lofty idea she had of the majesty of God made her regard the least offence with horror; and when any had escaped her, she seemed not able to pardon herself for its commission.

"Virtues so marked did not permit me for a very long time to refuse her the permission which she so earnestly desired, that on the approaching festival of Christmas she should receive her first communion. This is a privilege which is not accorded to those who come to reside among the Iroquois, until after some years of probation and many trials; but the piety of Katherine placed her beyond the ordinary rules. She participated, for the first time in her life, in the Holy Eucharist, with a degree of fervor proportioned to the reverence she had for this grace, and the earnestness with which she had desired to obtain it."

She made her communion on Christmas day. Her fervor did not slacken afterward. Whenever there was a general communion among the Indians at the Sault, the most virtuous neophytes endeavored with emulation to be near her, because, said they, the sight alone of Kateri served them as an excellent preparation for communing worthily. She was allowed to make her second communion at Easter time. Father Fremin, her former guest of the Mohawk Valley, soon admitted her, without the customary delay, into the Confraternity of the Holy Family. This honor was accorded only to well-trying and thoroughly instructed Christians. The meetings of the Confraternity filled up the hours of each Sunday afternoon, and the members of it were expected to reproduce in their own homes, as far as possible, the family life of the three who dwelt together in the Holy House at Nazareth,—Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. Saint Joseph was held up as a model for the men, the Blessed Virgin for the women, and the child Jesus for the children.

Kateri had no sorrows at this time save one, which was that her nearest kindred still rejected and scorned the faith that was dearer to her than life. The ties of blood are strong in a noble heart. Anastasia, her own good friend and instructress, was there at the Sault; the adopted sister was there, a relative in name if nothing more; the "great Mohawk" was there, and he was a host in himself. But after all, what a handful were these compared to the brave men and women of her tribe in the Mohawk Valley,—those who had shared in the defence of Caughnawaga Castle against the Mohegans, and who still dwelt in her native land, and were bound to her by so many ties! Her uncle, her kindred, her nation, were against her in her Christian faith; and the struggle that wrung her own heart foreshadowed a great struggle that was yet to come between the haughty nations of the Iroquois League and their exiled Christian tribesmen,—one that would make martyrs, glorious Iroquois martyrs. At Onondaga, the capital of the League, it was indeed proved, in course of time, that these children of the forest could give up their lives as nobly as the early Christians who were torn to pieces in the Amphitheatre at Rome.

With sympathetic insight, Kateri felt the gathering storm. She foresaw it more or less clearly from the first. And as if in anticipation of what was in store for the Christian Iroquois, her short life at the Sault became, as we shall see, a holocaust of prayer and self-torture. It must be remembered that in her day the laws of hygiene were not made prominent and taught to the young people as they are now; nor were the missionaries in authority over her aware at the time of all her practices, which their wise counsels might have better directed. So Kateri, unchecked, passed her life at the Sault in a ceaseless,

tireless effort to lift her nature high above the lawless passions to which the people of her race were subject. For their sins and for her own she suffered and prayed. Five times a day she knelt in the mission chapel and pleaded with God for the infidel Indians, her friends and her kindred.

What wonder, then, that after her life on earth was ended, and her life with Christ began, the Christian Indians should continue even till now to think of her as interceding with God in their behalf!

#### FOOTNOTES:

[See map](#), Les Cinq Stations du Village, etc. The circle enclosing a figure 2, and surmounted by a cross, marks the site here described.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE HUNTING-CAMP.

**K**ATERI came to Canada when the woods were rich in color, but now the winter had set in. The Christmas ceremonies are over at the Mission of St. François Xavier du Sault, and the village is almost deserted. The Fathers are indeed there,—Fremin, Cholenec, and Chauchetière; but they lead a quiet, studious life in the absence of their spiritual children. The snow lies heavy on the ground, and only a few stray Indians occupy the desolate cabins. What has become of the zealous band of Christian Iroquois that so lately dwelt there, answering every call of the chapel bell, and chanting back and forth at the daily Mass? Have the Fathers lost their dusky flock? Will they ever come back? They have gone far into the heart of the forest, but the blackgowns have no fear. They will all return at Easter time, and the chapel will ring again with the sound of their voices; the men in motley attire will gather on one side of the aisle, and the women shrouded in their blankets on the other.

The Indians of the Sault have no thought as yet of giving up their forest life, nor do the missionaries ask it of them. Food becomes scarce as the snow deepens, so they depart with their women and children to some good hunting-ground and locate a camp for the winter months. They like this sojourn in the forest. The freedom from restraint accords well with their wild tastes and old habits of life. But Kateri would willingly have stayed in the village if her sister had favored such an arrangement. She knows the life of the hunting-camp right well. She has been on these expeditions before with her aunts in the Mohawk country. Among these Christians it must of course be different from the life she led in the camp at Saratoga; and so it is. The dogiques go with the mission Indians to the forest, and during the time of the hunt they retain, as far as possible, the religious

exercises of the Sault. They call the Indians together for morning and evening prayers, and a spirit of sobriety and good order prevails. This is in marked contrast to the excesses indulged in by the pagan Mohawks at their hunting-camps, where they generally take a keg or more of Fort Orange liquor to keep them warm.

The Canadian winter seems bitter cold to Kateri. This band of Indians from the mission are camping northward of the Adirondacks; but most of them are used to the frosty atmosphere, and have made themselves quite cosy and comfortable in their hunting-lodges of bark and close-woven boughs. They have a full supply of furs and skins to wrap about them or to hang over the openings and cracks in their temporary houses. Kateri is poorer than the rest in this respect, for she has no hunter to provide these things for her. Her brother-in-law is willing to do what he can; but he has a large family of his own, and is not as active in the chase as formerly, being past middle age. There are enough young hunters among the relatives and friends of the venerable Anastasia to provide her with all she needs. The elder woman would gladly have made a match between Kateri and one of these young braves, but the least allusion to such a thing annoys Kateri. The girl never complains of the cold, but Anastasia can see that though closely enveloped in her blanket, she is not so warmly clothed as the rest. She has spoken to her several times of the advantages of the married state. On one occasion she pressed the matter so far that Kateri, from a spirit of mischievous fun rather than ill-humor, retorted by telling Anastasia that she had better marry again herself, if she thought so much of marriage. As for her, if they could convince her that marriage was necessary to salvation, she would embrace it, but she doubted much if there were not something more perfect. She did not see the necessity of it in her case, as she could provide for her own wants by the labor of her hands. If this Mohawk maiden had known anything about convent life, she would soon have discovered that she had a vocation for it, and would have become a nun. But thus far no Indian had ever taken the vows, and Anastasia could not understand why Kateri should not marry, as she was now more than twenty years old. There was no denying, however, that she did add very much to the resources of the family, and to the general comfort of the lodge by her industry and dexterity at every kind of Indian handicraft practised by the women. Had she been less generous in giving, and preferred to bargain away what she made, she would soon have grown rich in wampum money on account of her skill, and then she could have bought all the furs she needed. But having no fear of poverty, she worked freely for all, and so was always poor. She kept only what was necessary for her own support. She was never a burden to those with whom she dwelt. On the contrary, she helped to enrich them while denying herself everything but a bare subsistence. She often fasted till evening even when hard at work, and then, if unobserved, would mingle ashes with her food, that it might be devoid of everything that could afford pleasure to the taste.

It may be well to describe the way in which she spends her day at the hunting-camp. The women are supposed to have a very easy time in the forest, whereas the men have hard work. They are gone all day long, tracking animals over the snow and into their burrows. It is when the hunters come in bringing their game, and drop off to sleep from sheer exhaustion, that the task of the women begins, for they have to prepare the flesh of the animals for food, and take care of the skins. But this done, they have plenty of time left for gossip and fancy-work. When they are in the village, they have more of household cares to fill up each day, besides working in the fields and attending daily services at the chapel. If these women all followed the example of Kateri while in the forest, they would have fewer sins to confess when they go back to the village at Easter time.

The quiet retreat which Kateri has chosen for herself is near the pathway leading to the



stream, and made by the women of the hunting-camp in tramping back and forth for water. There, in her rustic oratory, she is accustomed to kneel amid the snow. She does not raise her head except to look at the cross she has cut on the trunk of a tree. Her hands are crossed on her breast, and her blanket hangs loosely down from her head and shoulders in many a careless fold. The rivulet close beside her is crusted with ice, and the bushes are heavy with snow. The water runs freely and swiftly a little beyond her where there is a break in the line of bushes along the brink of the stream. They have been thrust aside, and the snow has fallen from them. Here it is that the women come to dip water for the camp. Kateri was there in the morning, and among the very first. She helped to prepare the breakfast for the hunters. She was present also at the morning prayers which were said in common. It was not until the men were busily engaged in eating a meal that would last them the greater part of the day, and the women, with nothing special to do, were hovering about seeking a chance to join in the good cheer and see the hunters off, that Kateri slipped away, and now is hiding among the trees, as though she were nothing else than a little white rabbit that makes his home in a snow-bank. One would scarcely notice the print of her moccasins where she passed along by the bushes. The snow is tufty and light. The long, low branches of Kateri's tree—the one on which she has marked the cross—are bowed with its weight. They almost touch the ground, and shelter her motionless figure on the side towards the moccasin-trail that leads to the water's edge. Little wavy lines on either side of the interlacing footprints of the women show where their blankets and skirts with shaggy fringe disturbed the even surface of the new-fallen snow as they passed along. Kateri brushed away the freshest of the snowy mass in front of her cross, before she began her prayers. She kneels on the hard-packed snow that is fast frozen to the ground. Her figure is sharply outlined against a little white mound of feathery flakes. Her thoughts are many miles away, though her eyes are fixed on the cross, which is suddenly lit up by a flash from the rising sun. She knows that the moment has come for Mass to begin in the village chapel at the great rapid of the St. Lawrence. In spirit she kneels with the few who are gathered there, and follows the Mass from beginning to end with appropriate prayers. She begs her guardian angel to fly away to the chapel and bring her back the fruits of the sacrifice there being offered.

She will need the good spirit at her side more when the morning meal is over and plenty of fuel has been gathered in to keep the fires burning all day long. Then she will sit among the women, whose tongues are ever on the go, and whose hands are busy embroidering elk-skin belts and making little ornaments of various kinds. Kateri is able to give them many suggestions about their work. They often interrupt her with questions concerning the stitches and colors. The task she has set for herself while at the camp is of a more unusual kind than theirs. She is making wooden pack-pins and two ingenious boxes or chests from the wood of a tree. Her sister greatly admires these boxes, and would like to be able to make them as well herself. Kateri's good angel whispers to her, when the gossip reaches its highest point, and prompts her to ask a maiden beside her who has the sweetest of voices to sing an Iroquois hymn. Soon the tide of the women's talk is turned, and they are telling one another stories from the lives of the saints. These they have learned from the Fathers, or heard at the conferences in the village. Kateri has been gleaned them all along in her talks with Anastasia. As told by the women at the hunting-camp, these edifying stories brought over from old Europe gain rather than lose in picturesqueness of detail. It would puzzle many of these Indians to know just how it comes about, but in some way whenever Kateri sits among them they seem to forget their neighbors' faults, and begin to talk of people who delighted in doing unselfish or heroic deeds. Little by little their thoughts drift off to a better world, and their fingers move all the faster for it. There is more of work going on and less noise of chattering tongues.

When the shadows gather about them, they scatter well pleased with themselves and the work of the day. They assemble again when the hunters are all in and the last meal of the day is over. The evening prayers are recited together. Then they find their mats for the night, and drop off one by one to sleep. But Kateri is again on her knees, and prays for herself and for all in the silent darkness; and thus while the others are dreaming of beaver and marten, of venison and captured game, she is thinking only of how to please God. But one thing is certain: were she to eat more, sleep sounder, and pray less, there would have been a better promise of long life, and less occasion to excite the suspicions of that worthy squaw whose jealous eye is always open. Her well-meaning tongue could give a deeper stab than any Kateri has yet had to endure. Thus far she holds her peace well, has not breathed a word of what is in her mind, but yet would like to know just where the young Mohawk keeps herself at the times when she does not see her among the women. This squaw found her husband sound asleep one morning not far from Kateri's place in the lodge. The hunter came in late, worn out by a long chase after a Canadian elk, and dropped to sleep in the first place he could find, as he crept in among the prostrate, sleeping Indians. He was a good man, and had never had any misunderstanding with his wife till a strange, sudden notion overcame her. She was possessed with the idea that Kateri was making mischief between herself and her husband. A second unfortunate incident which ordinarily would have passed unnoticed served to confirm this woman in her suspicion. As the time approached to return to the village, her husband said one day to the assembled women that he was working on a canoe which would have to be stitched. Then turning naturally enough to Kateri, whose skill with the needle was well known, he asked her if she would not do it for him. She had an obliging disposition, and did not hesitate to say that she would; but "*Voilà qui donna encore à penser!*" says Chauchetière. He continues thus:—

"The one who had these thoughts was wise enough not to speak of them till she got to the village. She went to find the Father, and told him her suspicion and the foundation for her judgment. The Father, who feared much in so delicate an affair, which seemed perhaps possible enough, spoke to Catherine as much to question as to exhort her. Whatever Catherine could say, however, she was not entirely believed; her instructress spoke to her also, either to remedy the evil in case there might be any or to prevent it. Never before did the blessed Catherine suffer so much as on this occasion. What grieved her was that the Father seemed not to believe her, and accused her as if she had been guilty; but God permitted it thus to purify her virtue, for nothing remained to so virtuous a girl, after leaving her country, her relations, and all the comforts she might have found in a good marriage, which she could not have failed to make if she wished,—nothing more remained for her to do than to practise abnegation in her honor, and to retain not a particle of rancor.... She said only what was necessary to make known the truth, and said not the least thing that could make it appear that she was displeased with any one of those who were with her at the chase."

In the end her remarkable patience and her silence helped to vindicate her in this severest trial of her life. Compared to it, the lying tale of her malicious aunt was as nothing, for no one had believed what she said. In this case it was very different; and Kateri, unable to defend herself against the plausible suspicion of this woman, could only live down the calumny as bravely as possible, leaving God to clear her memory of every shadow of a doubt, as he would not fail to do in time. The good man who was accused with her never before or after gave his wife any occasion to complain of him. She became convinced that

her own jealousy had led her into error; when Kateri was dead, she who had done the mischief could never speak of her without weeping to think how needlessly she had wronged and grieved her. But who can ever heal the wound of a reckless tongue? Alas that the Lily of the Mohawks, "the fairest flower that ever bloomed among the redmen," should have been thus accused! One result of this affair was Kateri's resolve never again to exchange the life of the village for that of the hunting-camp, even at the cost of starvation.

Not long after the Indians returned to the mission, the ceremonies of Holy Week began in the chapel at the Sault. Kateri had never witnessed them before. She was deeply impressed and almost overpowered with emotion as the divine tragedy of Calvary unrolled itself before her. It was brought to her mind by degrees with every detail in the daily services, culminating on Good Friday, with mournful chants, the broken, mutilated Mass of the prophecies, and the slow unveiling of the crucifix.

These ceremonies of Holy Week, together with the fervent words of the missionaries who, like the first preachers of Christianity, spoke to the people in their "own tongues the wonderful works of God," made a profound impression on all the Indians of the Praying Castle. As the bells of Holy Saturday rang in the news of the resurrection, their joy broke forth into song. A thrill of emotion stirred the throng. Happy tears were in Kateri's eyes. On Easter Sunday the swell of glad Iroquois voices, singing from their inmost souls, wafted her responsive spirit to the opened gates of Paradise.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### KATERI'S FRIEND,—THÉRÈSE TEGAIAGUENTA.

A joy was in store for Kateri Tekakwitha that would remain until the end of her life. No greater blessing can Heaven send us than a friend whose heart responds to our own in closest sympathy, and to whom we can unfold the hidden places of our soul with no fear of betrayal.

Had Kateri failed to find such a heart-friend before she died, we should never have learned what a wealth of strong human love and a craving for human companionship had been growing up within her through the lonely years she had lived until now.

Never before had she greater need of a friend to sustain her; never before had she been so cruelly mistrusted as on her return from the hunting-camp.

The gift of God was ready. The friend was close at hand; but the knowledge of this was kept from Kateri, until her desolate heart, turned in on itself, could find no refuge except in the bitterest self-condemnation. Knowing the goodness of God and finding herself unsatisfied at heart, she could find no reason for it except by magnifying her slightest faults into a dreadful wickedness for which she needed punishment. This tendency of her mind was encouraged constantly by Anastasia's instructions and exhortations. They were well-intentioned and suitable enough for lawless and passionate natures, but too severe

for the pure and sensitive soul of Kateri. The suffering that comes not from evil doing or thinking, but rather from well-meaning bluntness, can easily be utilized and undone in the far-reaching plans of God. Kateri's cruel self-reproach cannot be looked upon as a useless pain when we see how it pierced another heart, and bounded back to her own richly freighted with new-found friendship and much-needed, noble companionship.

What are Kateri Tekakwitha and Thérèse Tegaiauenta doing there by the new stone chapel? Why do they stand apart in the life-giving sunlight? Why do they not speak to each other? Can it be that they have never before met? Both belong to the Praying Castle; both are Christians, both are Iroquois. Kateri came from the Mohawk country before the snow had fallen. Now it has melted away; the grass is green. Mount Royal, La Prairie, the village, the woods, the waters, are bathed in sunshine. The river is roaring and rushing tumultuously with the added wealth of the spring-time freshets. The mission chapel is nearly completed. The stones are all in place, and the roof has been reared. Kateri compares it, no doubt, with the Dutch church at Fort Orange, the most imposing structure of the kind she has ever had a chance to see. We need not ask her whether she prefers the bright little weather-cock there, or the cross on the belfry here; for we know how she cut the cross in the bark of a forest-tree, and how she carries it day by day buried deep in her heart.

Thérèse sees Kateri, and wonders what she is thinking about. Thérèse has the dress and the look of an Oneida. Her glance is freer and bolder than Kateri's. She is older and not so shy, and has seen the sunshine and shadow of twenty-eight summers. Health and beauty and vigor attend on the young Oneida; but all at once her face grows thoughtful and sad. The chill of a terrible winter comes up from the past, and strikes on her heart as she watches the face of Kateri, so quiet and so collected. It was only an idle curiosity that brought her to look at the building; but now she is led by a strange attraction, and follows the Mohawk girl as she enters the chapel. The floor has recently been laid, and a man is at work on the wainscoting round the wall. No benches or seats are yet to be seen, nor any kind of divisions. Kateri turns to Thérèse, and gives her an Iroquois greeting. She is about to ask a question. The Oneida returns the salutation graciously, and a conversation begins in two slightly different dialects. Though one is using the Mohawk language and one the Oneida, they understand each other perfectly. Kateri asks Thérèse if she knows which portion of the church will be set apart for the women. Thérèse points out to her the place where she thinks they will be, and the conversation continues. It is all about the new building in which they are standing. Their thoughts chime well together; but Kateri, whose mind, as she came from Anastasia's cabin and wandered into the chapel, was dwelling less on what she actually saw before her than on her own internal wretchedness and unworthiness, suddenly exclaims, with a heavy sigh: "Alas! it is not in this building of wood and stone that God most loves to dwell. Our hearts are the lodge that is most pleasing to him. But, miserable creature that I am, how many times have I forced him to leave this heart in which he should reign alone! Do I not deserve that to punish me for my ingratitude, they should forever exclude me from this church, which they are raising to his glory?"

These words, with their spiritual thought and beautiful imagery, came rolling from the tongue of the Mohawk girl with all the eloquence of tone and gesture so natural to her race. They were spoken, too, with an added force that belongs only to the utterance of those who live in habitual silence concerning their inward life. Thérèse could not look upon them as a mere language of the lips, for she saw, as she watched the face of her companion, that the last words came like a sob from her very heart. They echoed strangely in her own soul. Her past life, that terrible winter in the woods, her vow to

Heaven unfulfilled, conscience, remorse, an impulse of love and sympathy for the one who thus wailed out her sorrow in a direct appeal to her,—all this, and more disturbed the soul of Thérèse. She looked at Kateri, and then at the new-laid planks on the chapel floor. Her tongue was silent, but her eyes spoke out in a single glance, and said to the Mohawk girl, "If you only knew—if you only knew how it is with me!" And these were the words that she seemed to be reading along the boards that lay close to her feet: "She is better than I, or she would not speak like that. She can help me. God has sent her here. I will tell her what I have promised and left undone. She thinks she is wicked. I don't believe it; I want her to be my friend." She lifted her eyes again, and in a few quick words opened her heart to Kateri. "Insensibly the conversation led them," says Choleneq, "to disclose to each other their most secret thoughts. To converse with greater ease, they went and sat at the foot of a cross which was erected on the banks of the river." There, where the cross still stands as of old, near the great rapid, Thérèse told Kateri the story of her life; and there their souls were knit together in a friendship that would outlast death and time. Thérèse became a part of Kateri, and Kateri of Thérèse. Henceforth they were two souls leading but one life. The history of one is the history of the other, except that Kateri was necessarily, though often unconsciously, the leading spirit.

But what was the life of Thérèse Tegaiaguenta before she met her guiding spirit, and linked her soul to the soul of the Lily? What were the sins for which she resolved to do penance together with Kateri? What was the story she told, as they sat on the grassy bank at the foot of the tall wooden cross? The gloom of the evening fell about them before they could separate. When at last they turned their faces from the great river, and bent their footsteps toward the cluster of Iroquois lodges near the Portage, Kateri had learned much of what here follows concerning the life of her friend, and many secrets of her heart which have never been recorded.

Thérèse was baptized by Father Bruyas in the Oneida country. When that missionary first arrived among her people, he converted Kateri Ganneaktena, who served as interpreter while he was learning the language, and who afterwards with her husband went to Canada and founded the Praying Castle at La Prairie. Tegaiaguenta, like Ganneaktena, was a young married woman when Bruyas converted and baptized her. She had been united to an Oneida brave after the Iroquois fashion, but unlike Ganneaktena, she did not succeed in converting her husband. On the contrary, she herself was led away by the force of evil example about her, and almost lost her Christian faith.

In the history of the Iroquois missions it is related that a certain brave Christian woman literally fought with tooth and nail to keep some of her infidel tribesmen from pouring fire-water down her throat. If they succeeded in making any of the Christians drunk, they often managed to win them away from the influence of the blackgowns.

Thérèse, less resolute than Ganneaktena and the woman just mentioned, fell a victim to this persistent policy of the infidel Indians. After her baptism they beguiled her into the prevailing sin of intoxication, for which she afterwards shed bitter tears and suffered many self-inflicted torments in company with Kateri.

Before she could be fitted, however, for the friendship of so pure a soul as that of the Mohawk girl, she had to pass a terrible ordeal. When she left the Oneida country and went to live at the Praying Castle with her husband's family, only a partial change was brought about in her lax, easy-going life; for Thérèse Tegaiaguenta, though capable of deep religious convictions, had an impulsive, pleasure-loving nature, very different from the reserved, self-sacrificing spirit of Kateri. The Lily of the Mohawks, from the first moment of her life, had never ceased to be attentive to the lightest whisper of divine

grace. Tegaiaguenta could not be brought to listen to this voice till it spoke to her through the gaunt lips of bereavement and starvation. Then she forgot it again, till suddenly she recognized its echo in the looks and words of Kateri, when she met her at the chapel. The following is a brief account of the strange winter adventure of Thérèse Tegaiaguenta in the woods of Canada, as told by Choleneq:—

"She had gone with her husband and a young nephew to the chase, near the river of the Outaouacks [Ottawas]. On their way some other Indians joined them, and they made a company of eleven persons,—that is, four men and four women, with three young persons. Thérèse was the only Christian. The snow, which this year fell very late, prevented them from having any success in hunting; their provisions were in a short time consumed, and they were reduced to eat some skins, which they had brought with them to make moccasins. At length they ate the moccasins themselves, and finally pressed by hunger, were obliged to sustain their lives principally by herbs and the bark of trees. In the mean time the husband of Thérèse fell dangerously ill, and the hunters were obliged to halt. Two among them, an Agnié [Mohawk] and a Tsonnontouan [Seneca], asked leave of the party to make an excursion to some distance in search of game, promising to return, at the farthest, in ten days. The Agnié, indeed, returned at the time appointed; but he came alone, and reported that the Tsonnontouan had perished by famine and misery. They suspected him of having murdered his companion and then fed upon his flesh; for although he declared that he had not found any game, he was nevertheless in full strength and health. A few days afterwards the husband of Thérèse died, experiencing in his last moments deep regret that he had not received baptism. The remainder of the company then resumed their journey, to attempt to reach the bank of the river and gain the French settlements. After two or three days' march, they became so enfeebled by want of nourishment, that they were not able to advance farther. Desperation then inspired them with a strange resolution, which was to put some of their number to death, that the lives of the rest might be preserved."

When they were eating the flesh of the first victim, who was an old man, they asked Thérèse if it was allowable to kill him, and what the Christian law said upon that point, for she was the only one among them who had been baptized. She dared not reply. They gave her their reasons, which were that the old man had given them the right that he had to his life, saying that he would cause them a great deal of suffering on the journey.<sup>[61]</sup>

The little nephew of Thérèse had already died from hunger and fatigue. When her husband lay at the point of death, she and the boy had remained with him till he breathed his last, and then she had hastened on through the woods, carrying her nephew on her shoulder, till she caught up with the band, who had journeyed on in advance of her. The child died a little later, in spite of her care; and when the man of the party was devoured before her eyes, misery and starvation rendered her speechless. She saw that they were determined to sustain life at the expense of those among them who were unable to resist.

"They, therefore, selected the wife of the Tsonnontouan [Seneca] and her two children, who were thus in succession devoured. This spectacle terrified Thérèse, for she had good reason to fear the same treatment. Then she reflected on the deplorable state in which conscience told her she was; she repented bitterly that she had ever entered the forest without having first purified herself by a full confession; she asked pardon of God for the

disorders of her life, and promised to confess as soon as possible and undergo penance. Her prayer was heard, and after incredible fatigues she reached the village with four others, who alone remained of the company. She did, indeed, fulfil one part of the promise, for she confessed soon after her return; but she was more backward to reform her life and subject herself to the rigors of penance."

This she did not undertake in earnest until she met Kateri. From that time they were inseparable. They went together to the church, to the forest, and to their daily labor. They told each other their pains and dislikes, they disclosed their faults, they encouraged each other in the practice of austere virtues. They agreed that they would never marry. An accident occurred in the early days of their friendship that gave their thoughts at once a serious turn. One day when Kateri was cutting a tree in the woods for fuel, it fell sooner than she expected. She had sufficient time, by drawing back, to shun the body of the tree, which would have crushed her by its fall; but she was not able to escape from one of the branches, which struck her violently on the head, and threw her senseless to the ground. They thought she was dead; but she shortly afterward recovered from her swoon, and those around her heard her softly ejaculating, "I thank thee, O good Jesus, for having saved me in this danger." She rose as soon as she had said these words, and taking her hatchet in her hand would have gone immediately to work again, if they had not stopped her and bade her rest. She told Thérèse that the idea in her mind at the time was that God had only loaned her what still remained to her of life in order that she might do penance; and that therefore it was necessary for her to begin at once to employ her time diligently.

Such words from such a source could not fail to stir the zeal and emulation of her warm-hearted, impetuous friend. Hand in hand, they now hastened to climb the thorny path of penance, guessing eagerly where certain information was denied them as to what might be the perfect Christian life they were seeking so earnestly to lead.

#### FOOTNOTES:

See Chauchetière, livre ii. chapitre 2.

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## CHAPTER XX.

### MONTREAL AND THE ISLE-AUX-HÉRONS, 1678.

**I**T is certain that Kateri Tekakwitha visited the French settlement on the north side of the river; for Cholenec thus writes:—

"While passing some days at Montreal, where for the first time she saw the



nuns, she was so charmed with their modesty and devotion that she informed herself most thoroughly with regard to the manner in which these holy sisters lived, and the virtues which they practised."

Kateri and Thérèse—for the two were inseparable—with other Indians from the Sault, probably laden with goods to barter, must have crossed over to Montreal in canoes. They paddled out into the broad smooth waters of the St. Lawrence below the great rapid, where the river widens out like a lake. They left far behind them their village, with its tall wooden cross on the river-bank, and the wild Isle-aux-Hérons, bearing up its sturdy clump of foliage in the midst of the splashing foam. They passed at a distance the Jesuit chapel at La Prairie, where a few Frenchmen had built houses and formed the nucleus of a settlement, and then moved quietly and rapidly on in their light canoes until they neared the Isle St. Paul. The southern shore of the river swept away in a great curve as they left the Sault, and the prairie lands stretched away towards Lake Champlain, while Mount Royal blocked the northern horizon. Finally, after rounding the Isle St. Paul, they approached near enough to the northern bank to see where the first French fort had been built by the Sieur de Maisonneuve on level land at the mouth of a little stream. The spot is now called Custom-House Square; and the wild Ilot Normandin has been transformed into Island Wharf. This fort had fallen into disuse, and a second one was built on higher ground. The great French guns that were pointed toward the river meant no harm to the Christian Indians, who passed safely by, and landed on vacant ground in the rear of a cluster of fortified buildings fronting on the Rue St. Paul. This was the principal thoroughfare of the infant city of Ville-Marie. Every house on the island of Montreal was strongly built for defence. Each farm in the vicinity was connected with the town by a chain of redoubts. Not only the fort and the governor's mansion, but the mills, the brewery, the Hospital or Hôtel Dieu, and the chief residences had high walls and outlying defences. These buildings were so placed along the Rue St. Paul that a cross-fire from them and from the bastioned fort across the little stream (which has since disappeared in the maze of modern streets) could be maintained in a way to render the position of the colonists impregnable against an Indian assault. This had all been done under the leadership of the first governor. At the time of Kateri's visit, the chivalric De Maisonneuve had been recalled to France, and De Courselles was Governor-General. The Sulpicians, whose seminary was centrally located on the principal street, were lords of the *seigneurie* of Montreal and could give grants of land, though the recently arrived officers of the King disputed their right to dispense justice, and to appoint the governor of Ville-Marie.

Marguerite Bourgeois was still a leading spirit in the colony, and was actively engaged in founding and conducting her schools for the Indian and Canadian children. Her convent of Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame, after much delay and many trials, was at last successfully established opposite the Hôtel Dieu on the Rue St. Paul. Monseigneur de Laval, Bishop of Quebec, on his visit to Ville-Marie in 1676, had formally recognized and approved her new order. There were at this time ten nuns in all associated with her in the work of teaching. They taught day-scholars free of charge, and worked diligently out of school-hours to support themselves. In 1657 the Sieur de Maisonneuve had given Marguerite Bourgeois a tract of land near the Hôtel Dieu, on which was a well-built stable, which she used for her first school-house. The classes were assembled in the lower part of the building, while this indefatigable schoolmistress and her first assistants slept in the loft, to which they ascended by an outside staircase. As her school and community increased, she built a house that would shelter twelve persons. This also had proved insufficient, and she was now established in a fine large stone building, where a number

of girls were safely housed, and taught to read, write, and sew. The King of France allowed her a certain amount each year for the support of her Indian pupils. These were mostly at the school of the newly founded Sulpician mission on the mountain-side. There the number of Indians was daily increasing. M. Belmont, a Sulpician, taught the boys, and two of the Congregation sisters had charge of the girls. Their favorite pupil, Marie Thérèse Gannensagwas (meaning, "She takes the arm"), was in a few years to become herself a successful teacher in the Indian school, and a gentle, lovable nun. At this time she was about eleven years old. When still younger, she had come with her aged grandfather from the Seneca country. He was a Christian, having been baptized in the Huron country by the great missionary Brebeuf. The little Gannensagwas was adopted by Governor de Courcelles, and placed under the care of Marguerite Bourgeois in the convent on the Rue St. Paul. When the school at the Mountain was opened, in 1676, she was sent there. In one or other of these two places she spent the remainder of her life, as pupil, novice, and then schoolmistress. Her memory has sometimes been confused with that of Kateri Tekakwitha, though she was ten years younger than the Mohawk, and led a very different sort of life. Gannensagwas grew up, lived and died in a convent, and was the first real Indian nun. A tablet to her memory is preserved in one of the towers of the old fort at the mission on Mount Royal. This stone tower stands in the same enclosure with the costly modern buildings of the Sulpicians in a beautiful part of the present city of Montreal. At the time of Kateri's visit, however, this same tower and fort was in the woods; for the buildings of the old town extended no farther from the river than the Rue St. Jacques. From there to the Indian schools of the Mountain was a lonely road leading past a solitary fortified farm belonging to the Sulpicians,—La ferme St. Gabriel. It was there that a priest, M. Le Maistre, had been tomahawked, in August 1661. He was on guard while the laborers gathered in the harvest. His tragic death warned them to withdraw at once from the fields, and defend themselves within the farm-house. Such incidents as this were then fresh in the minds of the people, and gave pathetic interest to many a spot near Ville-Marie.

In 1678 Rue Notre Dame was a new street, not yet built up, and the foundations of the parish church were uncompleted; but already the Hôtel Dieu had a long history. Just five years had passed since Mademoiselle Manse, the former friend of Marguerite Bourgeois, and the one who founded the Hôtel Dieu and brought the hospital nuns from France to conduct it, had been laid to rest. She died in 1673. Her last request was that her body might be buried at the Hôtel Dieu, and her heart be placed under the sanctuary lamp in the new church of the parish.<sup>[62]</sup> It was but right that this should be done, for she had given her whole life to founding not only the hospital but the city and colony at Mount Royal. Till the new church of Notre Dame should be finished, the heart of the brave lady, encased in a metal vase, was hung in the chapel of the Hôtel Dieu. It was there for many years; but the building of the church was delayed so long that the transfer of the precious deposit never took place. The relic was lost at the time of a fire that destroyed the old chapel and hospital in 1695. Kateri may have seen the metal vase in the chapel of the hospital, but could scarcely have had time to learn its significance. Mademoiselle Manse had fulfilled a twofold task. She had distributed guns and ammunition to the colonists, and had nursed the wounded soldiers and Indians. Her life was often in danger. At times she was quite alone in the hospital. Her courage, enthusiasm, and womanly care for the sick and suffering were a mainstay of the colony, all through what has well been called its heroic age. Founded in a spirit of religious zeal for the conversion of the savages, its struggle for existence in a wild country of warring races fills up a strange and interesting chapter in early American history. Quebec, Three Rivers, and Montreal were for a long time the only settlements of any consequence in Canada. Quebec was the great

stronghold and starting-point of French trade and colonization. There too the Jesuit missionaries had their headquarters, and sent their reports, which were combined into the famous "Relations," so valuable now as history. Three Rivers, the next important trading-post, was a long stride up the St. Lawrence and into the wilderness. There, as elsewhere, the French sought to share their faith with the Indians. Kateri's Algonquin mother, it will be remembered, had been baptized at Three Rivers before her capture by the Iroquois. Beyond that point no permanent settlers had ventured until Montreal, the strange, solitary island city, was established for no other purpose than to convert the redmen to Christianity. The whole plan was made in France by a company of devout and wealthy persons. Two of the leading spirits, not yet mentioned, were M. Olier, an ecclesiastic, and M. de la Dauversière, a pious layman. The site for the city was chosen, and the island bought, by men who had no practical knowledge of the country. It was far inland, and dependent entirely on its own resources when the Indians were at war. The people of Quebec did not always know whether Montreal existed or not, so beset were its inhabitants at times by the unconverted, warlike kindred of Kateri. The raids of the Mohawks were checked by De Tracy, in 1666; but after all, they were only one of five unfriendly nations who were liable to brandish the tomahawk at any time against the French. In 1678 there was a general peace along the whole line, except for local and religious persecutions, such as Kateri had endured before coming to the Sault.

The worst days for Montreal had been about twenty years before, when their allies the Hurons were annihilated as a nation by the terrible Iroquois. At that time the French lived in a whirlwind of war and havoc. The remnant of Hurons that remained with them after the war, were gathered together in the mission village of Lorette near Quebec. Sillery, in the same vicinity, was a settlement of the Christian Algonquins. In Kateri's time these two missions nestled under the protecting guns of Quebec; just as the Indians of the Praying Castle where Kateri lived, and the Iroquois of the Sulpician mission on the slope of Mount Royal, felt bound to maintain a close friendship for defence, as well as through inclination, with their French neighbors at Montreal. The people of the Sault and the people of the Mountain were always welcomed and graciously received by the colonists of Ville-Marie. There were many things for them to see and learn there; but if the Hôtel Dieu and the convent were at one end of the town, the brewery and the fort were at the other, and on the whole the Jesuit Fathers at the Sault liked it better when their Indians stayed at the mission. The trader of Montreal was much the same sort of man as the trader of Fort Orange. The early colonial town of the Frenchman, however, differed in many respects from the town of the Dutchman. It will be interesting, therefore, to follow Kateri as she leaves her canoe on the pebbly shore, and wander with her through the strange, new streets of the Canadian town, just as we followed her uncle long ago on his journey to Albany on the shore of the Hudson. His pack of beaver-skins was examined and handled by the well-to-do traders of Handelaer Street. So do the companions of Kateri dispose of their Indian wares with equal ease in the long and important Rue St. Paul. Like the Dutch thoroughfare, it runs parallel with the river; all the dwellings on one side have their backs turned to the water, but their gardens do not extend all the way to the water's edge, as at Albany; there are vacant building lots in the rear on the river-bank.

"The houses built of wood, *pièce sur pièce*, or of rounded pebbles stuck together with cement, are all in the same style,—a rectangle covered with a steep roof slightly overtopped by the stone chimney; two skylights to admit light into the garret on the long sides; a door set between two windows, and the walls pierced with loop-holes for defence against the Iroquois. The interior is not less simple,—one large hall where all the family live, as in

Bretagne; a bed or lounge, a sort of long coffer or chest with a cover that is opened out in the evening, into which a mattress is spread, and where the children sleep; some chairs or small benches; the extra clothing and the gun, hung up on the wall."<sup>[63]</sup>

This extra clothing was as unpretentious in style as the dwelling. A plain woollen garment, with capot, girdle, and *tuque*, was the uniform of the Canadian colonist. Even the first governor, Sieur de Maisonneuve, wore it the greater part of the year, except on state occasions. Of course, in the hottest weather this warm outer garment was exchanged for a cooler shirt and a broad-brimmed hat; then the woollen coats with snow-shoes and other winter belongings of the settler were hung on pegs against the wall.

The home-trained garrison of Montreal felt proud to hear the Viceroy de Tracy call them his "capots bleus," for they knew right well he could scarcely have triumphed over the Mohawks without their assistance. His veterans, scarred in the Turkish wars, were indeed a sorry sight to behold on the expedition of 1666, when they stumbled about in the snow, and lost their way in the forest of northern New York. Kateri remembered these soldiers well. She saw them in her childhood, when they were enemies and invaders of her home, and so she did not care to see them again. A glance at the fort and the fortified houses, the mills, the governor's house, and the *seminaire* was enough for her. Already she stood at the corner of the Rue St. Paul and the Rue St. Joseph. If she chose to follow up the latter street, it would take her to the great square where the foundations of the new church of Notre Dame had been laid. But the chapel of the Hôtel Dieu was right before her, and she entered there. The hospital Sisters were chanting their office behind a wooden grating. Why were they out of sight? What did it all mean? She questioned her comrades, and they told her what little they themselves knew about the nuns. Not content with visiting the chapel, they gained permission to enter the hospital. What Kateri saw at the entrance on the Rue St. Paul was a great, heavy wooden door, opening into a small building. Behind this was a large enclosure or yard surrounded by a high stockade wall for defence, and containing several buildings, mostly of wood and somewhat out of repair. The hospital Sisters, though chiefly of noble rank, were poorly lodged and suffered many privations. The hospital was endowed by a lady of fortune in Paris, but it had been built and equipped under the eyes of Mademoiselle Manse, who cared for the sick herself till the Sisters came from France. After that she had dwelt close by them, and continued in charge of their financial affairs until her death. The nuns possessed some cows and other domestic animals. There was also a little bakery in one part of the enclosure. In another place Sœur de Brésoles had a garden marked off, where she cultivated medicinal drugs. It was all very simple and primitive, but strange and marvellous to the eyes of Kateri. She saw how good the Sisters were to the sick, and how simply and poorly they lived themselves. Their own beds were in a rough attic above the wards for the sick. Their linen was spotless, but the observant Kateri could not fail to see that their dresses were patched in many places. Though each of these ladies brought a *dot* with her to the convent when she entered the order in France, they were often left with no resources save what their own industry brought them in the wilds of Canada, and even the hospital fund was lost to them through bad management over the sea; but no misfortune could daunt them in their work of curing and converting the Indians, and caring for the disabled colonists. They refused every overture to return to Europe, and shared in all the vicissitudes of the struggling colony, rich at least in the good-will of its people.

In the convent across the street from the Hôtel Dieu, Kateri and her friend were warmly welcomed by Marguerite Bourgeois and the Sisters of the Congregation. It is probable that the two young Indian girls stayed over night at the convent, for Sœur Bourgeois

delighted in entertaining just such guests, to shield them from all harm while in the city, and to win them to the practice of virtue and piety. There is every reason to believe that Kateri was much influenced and stimulated in her spiritual aspirations by what she saw there, and above all by coming in contact with the strong and saintly character of the woman who had founded so useful an order. Marguerite Bourgeois and her companions were successful in doing good from the very first; and to-day the great Villa-Maria, which is the outgrowth of her humble but earnest efforts, is set like a queenly diadem on the brow of Mount Royal. There the young girls of America are still attracted, sheltered, taught, and incited by the nuns of her order to a life of virtue and good deeds, in much the same spirit that the early colonial belles and Indian maidens were gathered together long ago by Marguerite Bourgeois herself, the very first schoolmistress of the town. She was accustomed to wear a plain black dress, with a deep pointed linen collar, almost a little cape; besides this, something that might be called either a short veil worn like a hood or a large black kerchief was drawn over her head and knotted loosely under her chin. In her later days the edges of a white cap which she wore under this sombre head-dress, showed about her face. Her nuns still wear a costume which she prescribed for them. There is nothing peculiar about their black dress or the usual nun's veil which falls in loose folds from the head and shoulders, but they wear an odd linen head-dress with three points, which is drawn together under the chin and projects downward in a stiff fold. Some of the sweetest of faces may be seen framed in this ungainly gear. The hooded kerchief of Marguerite Bourgeois was more pleasing, but she did not choose that it should be very comfortable. A sister of hers discovered one day that the cap she wore under this kerchief was all bristling with bent pins. She was, perhaps, allowing them to prick her into a remembrance of her sins at the very time she received Kateri and her friend with a gracious smile and led them into the convent. Several of the nuns were teaching their classes. Most of the children at the school were Canadians, but there were also Indian girls under her care, younger than Kateri, who could read and write and spin. Several of these were boarding pupils, supported by pensions from the King, Louis XIV. These became, under the care of the Sisters, like demure little convent girls, scarcely to be distinguished from the Canadian children, except by their Indian features. The studious and modest little Gannensagwas, though now sent to the new school at the Mountain for a time, felt more at home in the Rue St. Paul, where she had spent four or five years. An Onondaga girl, Attontinon, called Mary Barbara at her baptism, was nearer Kateri's age. She also aspired to join the sisterhood, but was as yet too recently converted from heathenism to be admitted.

Kateri felt shy and out of place, no doubt, among the little scholars whom she saw at Ville-Marie, even though some of them were Indians. She felt, perhaps, as a wild deer of the forest might who chanced to stray into a park where petted fawns looked knowingly up at the half-frightened intruder, as they quietly nibbled grass from the hands of the keepers. If the young Mohawk girl did not turn suddenly about and take the nearest path to the woods and thickets, it was only because her timidity was held in check by a great eagerness to learn all she could about the life of those beautiful, quiet nuns. She knew they had come far away from their own country to teach the Iroquois and the Algonquins as well as the Canadian children to live like Christians. Kateri did not ask all the questions that came into her mind; but this much she certainly learned,—that the sisters lived unmarried, apart from the rest of the people, and spent much time in prayer. She had an opportunity also to observe some of their daily exercises and little practices of piety. It is more than likely that she went with them on a visit of devotion to the stone chapel of Bon Secours, a little way out of the town. It was just finished at that time; and a small statue of Our Lady, brought from France by Sœur Bourgeois, had been placed there. The officials

of the town secured the garret of the church for a temporary arsenal to store their ammunition. There was no other place as yet in Ville-Marie that was fireproof. The Church of Bon Secours has always been a favorite shrine. Kateri's devotion to the Blessed Virgin would naturally lead her there before she left the city. She was both interested and attracted during her stay in Montreal by everything she saw at the Convent of Notre Dame and at the Hôtel Dieu. But she gave no intimation of a wish to remain with the nuns at either of these establishments. Her whole life had been the life of an untamed Indian. She had accepted Christianity in the only way in which under the circumstances it could possibly have been offered to her,—that is to say, Christianity pure and simple, with few of the trappings of European civilization. She was a living proof that an Indian could be thoroughly Christianized without being civilized at all in the ordinary sense of the word. She was still a child of the woods, and out of her element elsewhere. It was with scarce a regret, then, that she returned with her friend to the Sault, and resumed her usual life there. But her visit to Montreal had given her an intimation of something well known to the Christians of Europe, which had not been taught at the mission. The married state was frequently praised there, and always recommended to the Indians. The blackgowns did not venture to give the counsel of Saint Paul concerning virginity, to a people that were but just learning to walk in the way of the commandments. But Kateri had been struck by the example of the Jesuit Fathers themselves, and her penetrating mind had already guessed that something was withheld from her on this point; after her visit to the nuns at Montreal she was confirmed more than ever in her resolve to remain unmarried.

Kateri and Thérèse talked the matter over when she returned to the Sault; and together they formed a plan for carrying out their idea of living a perfect life. It was a romantic rather than a practical project, but so quaint and beautiful that it is well worth telling. In the first place Thérèse was discreet enough to recommend that they should have an older woman with them who would know all about the affair from the first. She said she knew just the right sort of a person,—a good Christian, advanced in years, who had lived for some time at Quebec and also at Lorette, the older Huron mission which was conducted on the same plan as the Iroquois mission at the Sault. The name of this woman was Marie Skarichions. Kateri agreed to what her friend suggested, and on a certain day they all three assembled at the foot of the tall cross on the river-bank, that they might consult together without interruption. It was a quiet, dreamy spot, and always the favorite resort of Kateri for prayer and meditation, or confidential interviews with her friend. No sooner were they seated there, than the old woman began to talk, and to tell them that she also would gladly live as they wished to live; that she had been taken care of once by the Sisters at Quebec when she was sick; that she knew just how they lived, for she had noticed them particularly. She went on to say that she and Thérèse and Kateri must never separate, that they must all dress just alike, and live together in one lodge. Kateri listened eagerly to all this talk, hoping to gather some profit from it, and begging the woman not to conceal from her anything she knew that would make her soul more pleasing to God. As their imaginations grew more and more excited in picturing to one another the ideal life they would lead in their little community, shut off from everything that might distract them from prayer and holy thoughts, their eyes fell naturally enough upon the solitary unfrequented Isle-aux-Hérons which lay off in the midst of the rapids. "There!" they said, with sudden enthusiasm, as they pointed to the island,— "there is the place for our lodge of prayer!" and they began to portion it off in their thoughts, and to plan an oratory with a cross under the trees; they also tried to make out a rule of life for themselves. But all at once they remembered Father Fremin, the head of the mission, and wondered what he would think of their project. Kateri had great respect for authority, and a true spirit of obedience. They agreed to do nothing without the consent of the blackgown. One of them

went at once to find him and told him why they were assembled, asking him at the same time if he did not approve of their plan. But alas! the unfortunate messenger came back to the other two covered with confusion. The blackgown, she said, had only laughed heartily at all their beautiful projects, and made light of them, saying that they were too young in the faith to think of such a thing as founding a convent. It was too much out of the ordinary way, and quite unsuitable. The Isle-aux-Hérons was altogether too far from the village. The young men going back and forth from Montreal would be always in their cabin. Upon further consideration, they concluded that, after all, what the Father said was reasonable, and *they thought no more of their convent of the "Isle-aux-Hérons."*

But Kateri, for her part, was determined to see the Father herself a little later, and get from him, if possible, some further information about the life she wished to lead. Unforeseen circumstances obliged her much sooner than she expected to seek the counsel and advice of Father Cholenec on this very subject, for the adopted sister of Kateri was even then forming plans of her own for the disposal of her young relative.

#### FOOTNOTES:

The parish church of Notre Dame, with its two square towers, is often called by mistake the Cathedral. This title belongs to St. Peter's,—a more modern structure, with a great dome shaped like that of St. Peter's at Rome.

Histoire et Vie de M. Paul de Chomedey, Sieur de Maisonneuve, 1640-1672, par P. Rousseau.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### "I AM NOT ANY LONGER MY OWN."

**K**ATERI Tekakwitha had already refused to be united to a heathen brave. "But a Christian marriage," said her sister to Anastasia, "is a very different affair." The matchmakers were again lying in wait for her. It is Father Cholenec who gives us the best account of this final contest with Tekakwitha on the matrimonial question. He was her spiritual director at the time, and was consulted by the parties on both sides. While Fremin was absent in France, he had charge of the Mission, with Chauchetière as assistant. The following version of what occurred to disturb Kateri in the fall of 1678 is taken entire from Cholenec's letter (dated the 27th of August, 1715):—

"Interested views inspired her sister with the design of marrying her. She supposed there was not a young man in the Mission du Sault who would not be ambitious of the honor of being united to so virtuous a female; and that



thus having the whole village from which to make her choice, she would be able to select for her brother-in-law some able hunter who would bring abundance to the cabin. She expected indeed to meet with difficulties on the part of Catherine, for she was not ignorant of the persecutions this generous girl had already suffered, and the constancy with which she had sustained them, but she persuaded herself that the force of reason would finally vanquish her opposition. She selected, therefore, a particular day, and after having shown Catherine even more affection than ordinary, she addressed her with that eloquence which is so natural to these Indians when they are engaged in anything which concerns their interests.

'I must confess, my dear sister,' said she, with a manner full of sweetness and affability, 'you are under great obligations to the Lord for having brought you, as well as ourselves, from our unhappy country, and for having conducted you to the Mission du Sault, where everything is favorable to your piety. If you are rejoiced to be here, I have no less satisfaction at having you with me. You, every day, indeed, increase our pleasure by the wisdom of your conduct, which draws upon you general esteem and approbation. There only remains one thing for you to do to complete our happiness, which is to think seriously of establishing yourself by a good and judicious marriage. All the young girls among us take this course; you are of an age to act as they do, and you are bound to do so even more particularly than others, either to shun the occasions of sin, or to supply the necessities of life. It is true that it is a source of great pleasure to us, both to your brother-in-law and myself, to furnish these things for you, but you know that he is in the decline of life, and that we are charged with the care of a large family. If you were to be deprived of us, to whom could you have recourse? Think of these things, Catherine; provide for yourself a refuge from the evils which accompany poverty; and determine as soon as possible to prepare to avoid them, while you can do it so easily, and in a way so advantageous both to yourself and to our family.'

There was nothing which Catherine less expected than a proposition of this kind; but the kindness and respect she felt for her sister induced her to conceal her pain, and she contented herself with merely answering that she thanked her for this advice, but the step was of great consequence, and she would think of it seriously. It was thus that she warded off the first attack. She immediately came to seek me, to complain bitterly of these importunate solicitations of her sister. As I did not appear to accede entirely to her reasoning, and for the purpose of proving her, dwelt on those considerations which ought to incline her to marriage, 'Ah, my Father,' said she, '*I am not any longer my own*. I have given myself entirely to Jesus Christ, and it is not possible for me to change masters. The poverty with which I am threatened gives me no uneasiness. So little is requisite to supply the necessities of this wretched life, that my labor can furnish this, and I can always find something to cover me.' I sent her away, saying that she should think well on the subject, for it was one which merited the most serious attention.

Scarcely had she returned to the cabin, when her sister, impatient to bring her over to her views, pressed her anew to end her wavering by forming an advantageous settlement. But finding from the reply of Catherine, that it was useless to attempt to change her mind, she determined to enlist Anastasia in

her interests, since they both regarded her as their mother. In this she was successful. Anastasia was readily induced to believe that Catherine had too hastily formed her resolution, and therefore employed all that influence which age and virtue gave her over the mind of the young girl, to persuade her that marriage was the only part she ought to take.

This measure, however, had no greater success than the other; and Anastasia, who had always until that time found so much docility in Catherine, was extremely surprised at the little deference she paid to her counsels. She even bitterly reproached her, and threatened to bring her complaints to me. Catherine anticipated her in this, and after having related the pains they forced her to suffer to induce her to adopt a course so little to her taste,<sup>[64]</sup> she prayed me to aid her in consummating the sacrifice she wished to make of herself to Jesus Christ, and to provide her a refuge from the opposition she had to undergo from Anastasia and her sister. I praised her design, but at the same time advised her to take yet three days to deliberate on an affair of such importance, and during that time to offer up extraordinary prayers that she might be better taught the will of God; after which, if she still persisted in her resolution, I promised her to put an end to the importunities of her relatives. She at first acquiesced in what I proposed, but in less than a quarter of an hour, came back to seek me. 'It is settled,' said she, as she came near me; 'it is not a question for deliberation; my part has long since been taken. No, my father, I can have no other spouse but Jesus Christ.' I thought that it would be wrong for me any longer to oppose a resolution which seemed to me inspired by the Holy Spirit, and therefore exhorted her to perseverance, assuring her that I would undertake her defence against those who wished henceforth to disturb her on that subject. This answer restored her former tranquillity of mind, and re-established in her soul that inward peace which she preserved even to the end of her life.

Scarcely had she gone, when Anastasia came to complain, in her turn, that Catherine would not listen to any advice, but followed only her own whims. She was running on in this strain, when I interrupted her by saying that I was acquainted with the cause of her dissatisfaction, but was astonished that a Christian as old as she was could disapprove of an action which merited the highest praise, and that if she had faith, she ought to know the value of a state so sublime as that of celibacy, which rendered feeble men like to the angels themselves. At these words Anastasia seemed to be in a perfect dream; and as she possessed a deeply seated devotion of spirit, she almost immediately began to turn the blame upon herself; she admired the courage of this virtuous girl, and at length became the foremost to fortify her in the holy resolution she had taken.... [As for Catherine], feeble as she was, she redoubled her diligence in labor, her watchings, fastings, and other austerities. It was then the end of autumn, when the Indians are accustomed to form their parties to go out to hunt during the winter in the forests. The sojourn which Catherine had already made there, and the pain she had suffered at being deprived of the religious privileges she possessed in the village, had induced her to form the resolution, as I have already mentioned, that she would never during her life return there. I thought, however, that the change of air and the diet, which is so much better in the forest, would be able to restore her health, which was now very much impaired. It was for this

reason that I advised her to follow the family and others, who went to the hunting-grounds.<sup>[65]</sup>

"She remained, therefore, during the winter in the village, where she lived only on Indian corn, and was subjected indeed to much suffering. But not content with allowing her body only this insipid food, which could scarcely sustain it, she subjected it also to austerities and excessive penances, without taking counsel of any one, persuading herself that while the object was self-mortification, she was right in giving herself up to everything which could increase her fervor. She was incited to these holy exercises by the noble examples of self-mortification which she always had before her eyes. The spirit of penance reigned among the Christians at the Sault. Fastings, discipline carried even unto blood, belts lined with points of iron,—these were their most common austerities. And some of them, by these voluntary macerations, prepared themselves when the time came, to suffer the most fearful torments.... One in particular among them, named Etienne, signalized his constancy and faith. When environed by the burning flames [at Onondaga], he did not cease to encourage his wife, who was suffering the same torture, to invoke with him the holy name of Jesus. Being on the point of expiring, he rallied all his strength, and in imitation of his Master, prayed the Lord with a loud voice for the conversion of those who had treated him with such inhumanity. Many of the savages, touched by a spectacle so new to them, abandoned their country and came to the Mission du Sault, to ask for baptism, and live there in accordance with the laws of the Gospel.

"The women were not behind their husbands in the ardor they showed for a life of penance. They even went to such extremes that when it came to our knowledge we were obliged to moderate their zeal. Besides the ordinary instruments of mortification which they employed, they had a thousand new inventions to inflict suffering upon themselves. Some placed themselves in the snow when the cold was most severe; others stripped themselves to the waist in retired places, and remained a long time exposed to the rigor of the season, on the banks of a frozen river, and where the wind was blowing with violence. There were even those who, after having broken the ice in the ponds, plunged themselves in up to the neck, and remained there as long as it was necessary for them to recite many times the ten beads of their rosary. One of them did this three nights in succession, and it was the cause of so violent a fever that it was thought she would have died of it. Another one surprised me extremely by her simplicity. I learned that, not content with having herself used this mortification, she had also plunged her daughter, but three years old, into the frozen river, from which she drew her out half dead. When I sharply reproached her indiscretion, she answered me with a surprising naiveté, that she did not think she was doing anything wrong, but that knowing her daughter would one day certainly offend the Lord, she had wished to impose on her in advance the pain which her sin merited.

"Although those who inflicted these mortifications on themselves were particular to conceal them from the knowledge of the public, yet Catherine, who had a mind quick and penetrating, did not fail from various appearances to conjecture that which they held so secret; and as she studied every means to testify more and more her love to Jesus Christ, she applied herself to examine everything that was done pleasing to the Lord, that she might herself

immediately put it in practice."

Chauchetière, alluding to the events of this same fall and winter (1678 and 1679), gives some details of her life not mentioned by Cholenec. He says:—

"As soon as she learned from Father Fremin that God left every Christian free to marry or not to marry, she lost no time in choosing a state of life for herself, and furthermore, if the fear that she had of appearing virtuous had not restrained her, she would have cut off her hair; she contented herself with dressing like those who were the most modest in the village. Father Fremin gave her some rules of life more special than those he gave to the others; he directed her to keep herself in retirement, above all during the summer time, when the canoes of the Ottawas came down, to remain in her cabin, and not go to the water's edge to see them arrive, like the rest. She also regarded what he said about not going to Montreal. In a word, it was only necessary to tell her a thing once, and she put it in practice. It was a common saying in the village that Catherine was never elsewhere than in her cabin or in the church; that she knew but two paths,—one to her field, and the other to her cabin. But to come in particular to the rules that she prescribed for herself, here are a few of them.

"Being a young Indian, twenty-two or twenty-three years old, she must naturally have liked to be well and properly dressed like the others, which consists in having the hair well oiled, well tied, and well parted, in having a long braid [queue] behind, and in adorning the neck with wampum. They like to have beautiful blankets and beautiful chemises, to have the leggings or mittens well made, and above all to have just the right kind of a moccasin; in a word, vanity possesses them.

"Catherine thought she could do away with all that, without eccentricity. But one could see by her dress what her thought was. She was not looking for a husband; she gave up all bright red blankets and all the ornaments that the Indian girls wear. She had a blue blanket, new and simple, for the days when she went to communion; but more than that, she had an interior, very perfect, which was known only to God; but which she could not hide so well but that her companion knew of it at the times of their greatest fervor.... Marie Thérèse Tegaiguenta once told Catherine of certain movements of indignation that she had against herself and her sins; and that when she was going one day into the woods feeling herself oppressed with grief at the thought of her sins, she had taken a handful of switches and had given herself heavy strokes with them on her hands; and that another time having climbed a tall tree to get birch-bark for a piece of work, when she was at the top she was seized with fear. Casting her eyes to the foot of the tree where there were many stones, she believed with reason, that if she fell she would break her head. But a good thought came to her then, which confirmed her more than ever in all the good resolutions she had already made to serve God; for reflecting on her fear, she blamed herself for fearing to die and not fearing even more than that to fall into hell. Tears came into her eyes as she descended; and when she reached the ground, she sat down at the foot of the tree, throwing her bark aside, and giving way to the good feeling that had taken possession of her."

Kateri did not forget what her companion told her about the switches, and resolved to make a daily practice for herself which she could keep up during the time of the chase.

While her sister with her family were off at the hunting-camp, Kateri had as much time as she could wish to satisfy her devotion at the village chapel. She remained there so many hours on her knees in the coldest winter weather, that more than once some one or other of the blackgowns, moved with compassion at sight of her half-frozen condition, obliged her to leave the chapel and go warm herself. Kateri had at last learned, by repeated inquiries, all she wanted to know about the nuns whom she had seen at Montreal. She was now aware that they were Christian virgins consecrated to God by a vow of perpetual continence.

Cholenec says:—

"She gave me no peace till I had granted her permission to make the same sacrifice of herself, not by a simple resolution to guard her virginity, such as she had already made, but by an irrevocable engagement which obliged her to belong to God without any recall. I would not, however, give my consent to this step until I had well proved her, and been anew convinced that it was the Spirit of God acting in this excellent girl, which had thus inspired her with a design of which there had never been an example among the Indians."

#### FOOTNOTES:

In another account of this interview given by Cholenec in his manuscript life of Kateri, which has never been published, but is still preserved by the Jesuits at Montreal, are the following words: "Ah, mon père, me répondit-elle sur le champ, et sans hésiter, 'Je ne l'aurois m'y rendre. Je haïs les hommes, j'ai la dernière aversion pour le mariage,—la chose m'est impossible!'"

Cholenec, in an older manuscript, gives further particulars concerning the life of this "Première Vierge Iroquoise." In that account of the interview, after giving the above recommendation to Kateri about her health, her director goes on to describe the way in which his advice was received. "At these words she only laughed, and a moment after, taking that air so devout which was usual with her when she came to speak to me of her spiritual affairs, she made this beautiful reply, worthy of Catherine Tegakouita: 'Ah, my father, it is true that the body has good cheer in the woods, but the soul languishes there and dies of hunger; whereas in the village, if the body suffers a little from not being so well nourished, the soul finds its full satisfaction, being nearer to Our Lord. Therefore I abandon this miserable body to hunger, and to all that might happen to it afterwards, in order that my soul may be content, and may have its ordinary nourishment."

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## CHAPTER XXII.

## KATERI'S VOW ON LADY DAY, AND THE SUMMER OF 1679.

**K**ATERI'S soul was indeed of rarest and costliest mould. Of this Father Cholenec was now fully aware. He also knew her quiet determination of spirit, and he no longer resisted her pleadings to be allowed to consecrate herself to God by a vow of perpetual virginity. This she did, with all due solemnity, on the Feast of the Blessed Virgin, the 25th of March, 1679.

However others might look upon her act, this solemn engagement with God gave her a feeling of freedom rather than of thralldom. At last she had an acknowledged right to live her own life in her own way. She was Rawennio's bride. The blackgown had approved of her vow, and no relative of hers at the Sault ventured afterwards to question or disturb her. "From that time," says Cholenec, "she aspired continually to heaven, where she had fixed all her desires; ... but her body was not sufficiently strong to sustain the weight of her austerities and the constant effort of her spirit to maintain itself in the presence of God." She tested her powers of endurance to the utmost. Her constant companion, Thérèse, afterwards told of her that on one occasion, as they were coming from the field into the village, carrying each of them a heavy load of wood, Kateri slipped on the frozen ground and fell, causing the points of an iron belt which she was accustomed to wear to penetrate far into her flesh. When Thérèse advised her on account of this accident to leave her bundle of wood until another time, Kateri only laughed, and lifting it quickly, carried it to the cabin, where she made no mention of her hurt. When summer came and the others laid aside their blankets for a time, she continued to wear hers over her head even in the hottest weather. Anastasia said that she did this, not so much to shield her eyes from the light, as from modesty and a spirit of mortification.

Kateri and Thérèse found a deserted cabin near the village, where they were now in the habit of going every Saturday afternoon to prepare themselves in a suitable manner, as they supposed, for receiving the sacrament of penance.

Chauchetière relates how this custom of theirs originated, and how they employed themselves while in this retreat. It was only by questioning Thérèse after the death of Kateri that the full extent of their austerities became known, for they were careful to conceal them from the knowledge of all. Father Fremin was away at this time, having gone on a voyage to France, and Father Cholenec had full charge of the mission during his absence. As his time was filled with new cares and responsibilities, he had but little opportunity to notice or discover that Kateri Tekakwitha, the treasure confided to his keeping by Father de Lamberville, was in all simplicity and earnestness wrecking her health and strength by undergoing fearful penances. Suggested to her either by the remorseful and penitent mind of Thérèse, or the stern instructions of Anastasia, they were carried out with the utmost severity by Kateri on her frail and innocent self, as though she bore on her own shoulders the sins of the whole Iroquois nation.

It may be well to give a full account of how she was accustomed to make her preparation for confession, and where the plan originated. One Saturday afternoon while waiting for the bell to ring for Benediction, she sat in the cabin of Thérèse, talking confidentially with her friend on matters of conscience. Thérèse happened to mention the bundle of switches with which she had scourged herself on a certain occasion; and Kateri, quick to put a pious thought into practice, hastened at once to the cemetery, which was near at hand, and returned with a handful of stinging little rods. These she hid adroitly under the mat on which she was sitting, and waited eagerly for the first stroke of the bell. Then hurrying the

people of the cabin as fast as possible to the church, the two were no sooner alone than they fastened the lodge securely on the inside, and gave full vent to their devotion. Kateri was the first to fall upon her knees, and handing her companion the switches, begged her not to spare her in the least. When she had been well scourged, she in turn took the switches, and Thérèse knelt down to receive the blows. With bleeding shoulders, they said a short prayer together, and then hastened to the chapel, joyous and happy at heart. Never before had the prayers seemed shorter or sweeter to them than on that evening. Their next thought was to choose a place where they might continue this exercise. The unfrequented cabin already mentioned seemed to them a most favorable spot. It belonged to a French trader, who only came at long intervals to the village. It stood always open, and had become gradually surrounded by graves, so that it was now within the cemetery. There the two friends went every Saturday. After making an act of contrition, they proceeded as follows: They recited the Act of Faith, which they were accustomed to say at the church; then Kateri, who wished always to be the first in penitence, would kneel and receive the scourging, begging her companion all the while to strike harder, even though blood appeared at the third stroke. When they came to a pause, they recited the chaplet of the Holy Family, which they divided into several parts, at each of which a stroke was given with the switches. But towards the end of the exercise, their devotion knew no bounds. It was then that Kateri laid bare the sentiments of her heart in such words as these: "My Jesus, I must risk everything with you. I love you, but I have offended you. It is to satisfy your justice that I am here. Discharge upon me, O my God, discharge upon me your wrath." Sometimes tears and sobs choked her voice so she could not finish what she was saying. At these times she would speak of the three nails which fastened our Saviour to the cross as a figure of her sins. When Kateri was thus touched, she did not fail to move her companion, who with equal fervor underwent the same voluntary punishment.

Thérèse assures us that the worst fault that Kateri could ever find to accuse herself of on these occasions when she opened her heart most freely, was the carelessness in which she had lived after her baptism. This consisted in not having resisted those who had forced her to go to work in the fields on Sundays and feast days; that is, in not having rather suffered martyrdom at their hands. She reproached herself with having feared death more than sin. That this saintly girl suffered everything short of absolute martyrdom in her efforts to keep holy the Lord's Day, we already know from the record of her life in the Mohawk Valley. It must be remembered, too, that at that time she had not made her first communion or been fully instructed.

It would be a long and harrowing task to give a full account of all the austere fasts and penances that Kateri Tekakwitha underwent during the course of the year 1679. Many of them belong to the age and the place in which she lived, and were in common practice then and there. Others go to prove the rude, Spartan spirit of her race, which gloried in exhibitions of fortitude under torture. But the tortures that her people knew how to endure so well through pride, Kateri endured in a spirit of penance and atonement. Her greatest excesses of self-inflicted pain came like sparks of fire from her intense love of the crucified Redeemer. She wished to prove herself the slave of His love. She had seen the Iroquois warriors brand their slaves with coals of fire; so she could not resist the impulse which came to her one night to seize a red-hot brand from the hearthfire, and to place it between her toes. She held it there while she recited an Ave Maria. When the prayer was over, she was indeed branded. Such inflictions as these, by their incessant expenditure of energy, soon wore out her frail body, and brought of their own accord a speedy answer to her never-flagging prayer,—that Rawenniio, the beautiful God of the Christians, whom she had learned to love so well, would take her to His lodge!



"Kateri had great and special devotion both for the Passion of our Saviour and for the Holy Eucharist. These two mysteries of the love of the same God, concealed under the veil of the Eucharist and His dying on the cross, ceaselessly occupied her spirit, and kindled in her heart the purest flames of love. One day, after having received the Holy Communion, she made a perpetual oblation or solemn offering of her body to Jesus attached to the cross, and of her soul to Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar."<sup>[66]</sup>

As Kateri knew but two paths while she lived at the Sault,—one leading from her cabin to the field where she worked, and the other to the chapel where she prayed,—her friends could easily find her. There, at the church day after day, and many times a day, any one who chanced to stray in might see a muffled figure kneeling near the altar-rail, facing the tabernacle. At such times she saw nothing, heard nothing, of what was taking place around her or behind her. In front of her was the sacred Presence she could not leave unless for some urgent call of duty or charity.

A touch on the shoulder, a whispered word, "You are wanted, Kateri," and no hand or heart was more willing than hers to assist or relieve, as the case might be. Often she did not wait for this. A sudden inspiration, an impulse of sympathy, carried her where she was needed. When the good deed was done, the love within her heart drew her again to the foot of the tabernacle. "When she entered the church in taking the blessed water she recalled her baptism, and renewed the resolution she had taken to live as a good Christian; when she knelt down in some corner near the balustrade for fear of being distracted by those who passed in and out, she would cover her face with her blanket, and make an act of faith concerning the real presence in the Blessed Sacrament. She made also several other interior acts of contrition, of resignation, or of humility, according to the inspiration which moved her, asking of God light and strength to practise virtue well. In the fourth place," continues Chauchetière, "she prayed for unbelievers, and above all for her Iroquois relatives. She finished her devotion by saying her beads. She confided this exercise to her companion, who made it known. Except for her habit of hiding the beautiful practices taught her by the Holy Spirit, we might have occasion to admire still more the rapid progress which faith made in her soul. She had regulated the visits which she made to our Lord to five times a day without fail; but it can be said that the church was the place where she was ordinarily found."

Spiritual writers are accustomed to divide the Christian life into three progressive grades; namely, the purgative, the illuminative, and the unitive. Chauchetière declares that Kateri's life at the Sault might well serve as an example to the most fervent Christians of Europe, and compares her spirit with that of Saint Catherine of Sienna; then he sums up in a few words her exalted spiritual attainments by saying that she was already in the "unitive way" before having well known the other two.

#### FOOTNOTES:

Cholenec's letter.

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

### KATERI ILL.—THÉRÈSE CONSULTS THE BLACKGOWN.—FEAST OF THE PURIFICATION.—THE BED OF THORNS.

KATERI'S health was fast failing; and those with whom she lived, perceiving this, watched her more closely and sought to check her in her fasts and penances. They saw that on Wednesdays and Saturdays she ate nothing. At these times she would spend the whole day in the woods gathering fuel. They were careful after this to have the soup ready before she started out in the morning; but even then she would occasionally find an excuse to slip away without her breakfast. When it was the turn of one of the other women of the same lodge-fire to go for wood, Kateri sometimes interfered, saying that the woman in question had a baby to nurse and ought to stay in the cabin; as for herself, there was nothing to keep her, she could just as well go as not. Before they noticed that she had not yet taken a mouthful, she would be off to the woods and at work. When she could no longer fast without attracting notice, she still kept up the practice of mingling ashes with her food, or denying herself in some other way.

About this time a child of her adopted sister died. As Kateri was assisting the other women to make a grave for her little nephew, one of them said to her, laughing, "Where is yours, Kateri?" "It is there," she answered, pointing to a certain spot.<sup>[67]</sup> The incident was soon forgotten; but Kateri was not mistaken, as was proved later. The place she indicated was near the tall cross by the river, where she was accustomed to pray, and where she had her first long talk with Thérèse Tegaiguenta.

Her only pleasure now was in prayer or in spiritual conversations with her friend Thérèse or with Anastasia; for both of them spoke often of God. All other companionship had become distasteful to her. Her natural gift of ready and witty conversation, as well as her helpful disposition, won her many friends without effort. She was beloved as well as revered by the whole population, while careful to shun more and more all intercourse that did not help her heavenward. In her humility it did not occur to her that she on her part could perhaps do something towards lifting others to the high plane of her own thoughts. Chauchetière relates the following incident of how she was once called on for advice, much to her own surprise. Two young married people—François, the Seneca, and his wife Marguerite—had watched Kateri's way of life with much interest and admiration. They knew she had made a vow of virginity, and one day they called her into their cabin with the idea of learning from her how a good Christian ought to live in this world. In order that she might be less embarrassed and speak freely, they sent at the same time for her companion, Thérèse. When both were seated, the door was closed as a token that what they were about to ask Kateri was a great secret, and that they were ready to keep it sacred. François the Seneca (called by the French *La Grosse Buche*) began the conversation. He addressed himself both to Kateri and to Thérèse, saying first that he knew what they had done and the state of life they had embraced. This he said, that they might speak out. As for himself he wished to be a good Christian and to give himself entirely to God. His wife was of the same mind. He spoke for both. Kateri was much surprised at this discourse. She was silent for some time, and then asked her companion to speak. It would take too long to tell all that was said on both sides concerning the state of life that was most pleasing to God. It is enough to say that they gave no advice to the

young married couple other than that they should go to the blackgown and propose their plan to him. The woman was not more than twenty, and the man scarcely older. This good François, it seems, wished to live with his wife as with his sister. He did so for some years, and would have continued to do so had he not been advised to the contrary. His wish was to repair as far as possible the evil he had done before his baptism. He was an excellent hunter and a good warrior. He was afflicted later in life with a painful disease, from which he suffered severely for fourteen years. Kateri was at all times his model. He endeavored to imitate her patience and resignation, as well as her other virtues. After death he wore about his neck a little chaplet, which he called Kateri's beads. Strung next to the cross on which the *Credo* was to be said were two beads, one for a *Pater* and one for an *Ave*; then there were three other little beads on which he was accustomed to say the *Gloria Patri* three times, to thank the Blessed Trinity for the graces bestowed upon Kateri. Always cheerful and contented himself, he consoled and encouraged his wife, who, although a great devotee, was apt to complain of her poverty. When his health no longer permitted him to go to the chase, he mended kettles, made pipes, and did what work he could about the village. He brought up his children strictly, taught them the catechism with care, and was always on hand to sing in the church. He had a book or scroll of pictures in which all the chief events recorded in the Old and New Testaments were depicted. Copies of this ingenious form of Indian Bible are still to be seen at Caughnawaga and elsewhere. François, the Seneca, by these means won many converts to Christianity. He was accustomed, however, to give Kateri the credit for his success. He besought her intercession with God in all his undertakings, and endeavored to imitate her as far as possible in his life and in his death, which occurred in 1695.

As Kateri had a great love for virginity,—a fact of which her whole life is a proof,—she did not fail to cultivate a deep and tender devotion to the Virgin Mother of Christ, whom she regarded in a special manner as her queen and mistress. Each day in reciting the litany she had occasion to call upon her as the "Queen of Virgins." To Kateri this was one of the sweetest and dearest of her many beautiful titles. To prove herself a devoted follower of this virgin of all virgins, she would gladly have cut off her hair, as the nuns do; but the fear of appearing singular and eccentric deterred her. Though she thus tried as much as possible to hide from observation by accommodating herself to the ways and dress of those with whom she lived, there grew to be a something about her,—a "je ne scay quoy," says Chauchetière,—an atmosphere of purity and sanctity that almost amounted to a visible halo. Even her directors sometimes wondered at the impression of personal sanctity which she made upon the people. If we consider her lonely, long, and frequent prayers, not only in the chapel but at the foot of the tall cross by the river-bank, there is nothing to be wondered at. Even the roughest and giddiest of the young people of Caughnawaga were awed to a respectful demeanor as she passed near them. Not only Indians, but occasionally the French from La Prairie hovered about and watched for her as she came or went from her cabin or field, in order to get a look at the young Mohawk girl who, as they said, lived like "a religious." Of this reverential admiration, however, Kateri was quite unconscious. Unquestioned and undisturbed she followed her own course, the details of which were known only to her bosom friend, Thérèse.

At last Kateri was seized with a dangerous illness. A violent fever came on, and she lay at the point of death. Thérèse, pale and trembling with alarm, now thought of their weekly scourgings in the deserted cabin; she feared to have her friend die without letting the blackgown know what they had been doing, and besought Kateri to allow her to go to Father Cholenec and tell him all. To this Kateri willingly assented. The blackgown concealed his astonishment at what he heard from Thérèse, and blamed both her and her friend for their want of discretion. Kateri, however, recovered from this attack. As soon

as she was well she began at once and did not cease to importune her confessor to have pity on her and allow her at least some of her accustomed austerities, in order, as she said, that her body might not have the victory over her. Whether undergoing self-inflicted pains or those that come directly from the hand of God, her fortitude was extraordinary, even for an Indian. Though subject to many and frequent bodily infirmities, she never for a moment lost her patience, or uttered the least complaint. On the contrary, she seemed always desirous of increasing her sufferings rather than of alleviating them, but only from this one motive,—that she might bear a closer resemblance to the crucified Saviour. When she was ill, and her confessor had forbidden her to fast, she would put herself in a painful position. Anastasia, whom she called mother, perceiving this, reproached her, saying that she would kill herself. Kateri only reminded her, with a smile, that our Lord was much more ill at ease on the cross,—that she was not suffering at all in comparison with him!

During the last winter of her life Kateri had frequent attacks of illness severe enough to keep her in the cabin. No sooner was she on her feet, however, than she was again at work. She did not spare herself or shorten her devotions. When she was too weak to kneel, she could still be seen at her prayers in the church, supporting herself against a bench. On one occasion when her health was restored for a time, she accompanied Thérèse to La Prairie, whither she was sent to carry certain articles from the village at the Sault. On the way there or back, Kateri, falling a little behind the others, took off her moccasins and walked barefooted on the ice. She was noticed and hastily put on her shoes again. She soon overtook the others, and would willingly have let them suppose she had been delayed by a little accident of some sort. Thérèse, who knew her best, thought otherwise.

On the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin most of the villagers were away at the hunting-camp. Kateri chose to walk through her field on that day with bare feet, as if in a sort of procession, while she recited her beads several times over, the snow being more than knee-deep.

As Lent approached, she increased her austerities till at last she reached the climax of all. Thinking that she had not much longer to live, and must hasten to do penance while on earth, she looked about for some new instrument of pain. It was then the beginning of Lent, and she had been meditating on the Passion of our Lord. She was gathering wood. Near at hand, she saw a great thorny brier. In a transport of fervor she seized it. The thorns were sharp and cutting. Had she looked far and near, she could not have found anything better suited to her purpose. She eagerly and hurriedly conceals it in her bundle of fagots, then lifts the scraggy mass to her back, adjusts the burden strap on her forehead, and starts at once for the lodge of Anastasia. Finding her own lodge-seat, she loosens the thorny brier from the fagots, covers it quickly with a large mat, and then proceeds to stow the wood in its proper place. The evening drags, but at length the inmates all come in for the night, and soon the evening meal is over. The prayers have been said. The lodge-fires flicker and die out. The Indians fall asleep,—all but Kateri. She has no thought of rest. She prays far into the night. Her bed is made, and a cruel bed it is. At last she looks towards it. She lifts the rug that covers it, clasps tightly in her hand a little crucifix she always wears about her neck, and with a fervent aspiration of love to God, throws herself upon the thorns. As she rolls from side to side, she grows faint, and her lips are parched with thirst, but still she has no desire to leave her thorny couch. She murmurs prayer after prayer, and waits for the daylight to come before rising from her bed to hide the brambles, now flecked with blood. Kateri is as busy as usual the next day, and her blithe smile comes and goes as freely as ever. Still, when night settles down on the

village, she does not sleep, but tosses again on her bed of thorns. On the following day Thérèse observes that Kateri is tired and weak. She draws her breath quickly, as they walk over the rough ground together, and her head droops low at her prayers. Her friend tries to coax her to take more rest, to leave this or that task for another day. But all in vain. To Kateri every moment is precious now, and not one daily duty is left undone when she retires for the third time to her bed of thorns. When day dawns, she is up as usual, and Thérèse comes early to see her. Gladly would she escape the searching eye of her friend, but it is of no use. Kateri is ghastly pale, and Thérèse, suspecting the truth, will not be put off. She spies the thorns, and Kateri confesses all. A pang went to the heart of Thérèse, when she thought of Kateri's innocence and of her own sins. How could she have slept while this pure-hearted one whom she loved so well was rolling upon thorns! The next thought of the impulsive, warm-hearted Thérèse was one of concern for the life of her friend. She spoke quickly and vehemently to Kateri, declaring that she would certainly offend God if she inflicted such sufferings on herself without the permission of her confessor. This aroused the scruples of Tekakwitha. "Catherine, who trembled at the very appearance of sin," says Cholenec, "came immediately to find me, to confess her fault and ask pardon of God. I blamed her indiscretion, and directed her to throw the thorns into the fire." This she did at once. When it was simply a question of obedience to one who held rightful authority over her, Kateri did not hesitate. Her confessor testifies that she never showed the least attachment to her own will, but was always submissive to his direction. "She found herself very ill," he continues, "towards the time that the men are accustomed to go out to the hunting-grounds in the forest, and when the females are occupied from morning until evening in the fields. Those who are ill are therefore obliged to remain alone through the whole day in their cabins, a plate of Indian corn and a little water having in the morning been placed near the mat." It was thus that Kateri Tekakwitha passed through her last illness, during the Lent of 1680. She lay helpless in the lodge of Anastasia, while the corn was being planted in the fields, and the birds were flying northward across the Mohawk River. These little friends of hers brought back to her many a thought of her native valley, as they stopped to dip their bills in the St. Lawrence, and to sing awhile to Kateri in her pain.

The children, too, came in to see her now and then. The blackgown whose task it was to teach them, gathered them close to her mat one day. She was too ill to move; but when he unrolled the pictures of the Old and New Testaments which he had with him, and began to explain them to the eager, bright-eyed little ones, a glow of interest came into the weary eyes that were dull with suffering a moment before. Forgetting all else but her insatiable desire for true knowledge, Kateri with great effort raised herself on her elbow, that she might see and understand better what was going on. A question now and then from her drew out a fuller explanation from the blackgown. The children themselves, with quick sympathy, caught from her low, earnest tones, a keener relish for the truth, and listened with rapt attention to the lesson drawn from the sacred story. At the stroke of the Angelus the instruction was over, and also the children's visit. How quickly the time had passed! Kateri thanked the blackgown, and begged him to come again with his class to the lodge, that he might teach both her and them. "Farewell, Kateri," the children cry, as they hasten out to their sports. Quickly they forget her, and she too has forgotten them; she has clasped her crucifix in her hands, and is still buried in prayer when the women begin to come in from the field.

This incident is given by Cholenec in his manuscript entitled "La Vie de Catherine Tegakouita, Première Vierge Iroquoise." He adds: "Père Chauchetière wanted her put in the church; but I put her in the place she had indicated, without knowing it till long afterwards."

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

### KATERI'S DEATH.—"I WILL LOVE THEE IN HEAVEN."—THE BURIAL.—HER GRAVE AND MONUMENT.

FOR nearly a year Kateri had been slowly losing strength. She had a continuous low fever; but during the last two months of her life her sufferings were very acute, and she could not change her position without severe pain. It was in Passion Week that the children were instructed by the blackgown at her bedside for the last time. Anastasia and the other women of the lodge continued to attend to her few wants morning and evening, before and after their work in the fields. They knew, however, by this time, that the young girl could not recover. Anastasia drearily watched her sinking day by day. She had never fully understood Kateri, but she loved her very much, and did all that would have been expected of an Indian mother under the circumstances. The dish of Indian corn and a pot of fresh water were left beside her each day; and towards the last, women were appointed to watch with the sufferer at night. These watchers belonged to the Association of the Holy Family. Kateri was not more neglected than others who were ill at these busy times. She, however, was perfectly content, and even glad to be left alone with God. This relish for solitude did not prevent her from greeting with a smile or a gay, bright word any or all who came to her side. There was one in the village at whose coming her heart bounded. It is needless to say that this was Thérèse Tegaiaguenta. Of all hearts at the Sault St. Louis, hers was the saddest through the days that Kateri lay dying. It was hard to work in the corn-field; it was hard not to be with her in the lodge. On Palm Sunday, at least, they could have a few hours together between Mass and Benediction. Whenever Thérèse knelt at prayer in the chapel, she felt that Kateri, lying on her mat, joined her in spirit. But when she prayed for her friend's recovery, she knew that Kateri's lips were unresponsive. They murmured no amen. The only prayer they could form at such times was like unto this: "God pity Thérèse, and give her the strength she needs!"

On Monday in Holy Week, she asked for permission to fast, in honor of our Saviour's passion. She wished to pass the whole day without food. They told her that this she could not do,—that she had not long to live, and that she ought to be thinking of other things. Not long to live? Was this in truth what they said? She could not conceal her happiness at the thought of death. The angel with shadowy wings was close at hand, waiting to show her the face of Rawenniio.

On Tuesday she failed rapidly in strength. They feared she would die, and prepared to give her the last sacraments. Father Cholenec did not intend for a moment that she should

be deprived of the Viaticum,—that strength of the wayfarer, and bread of angels, so needful to the dying. But just how it should be administered was a question. Thus far the Blessed Sacrament had never been carried to an Indian's cabin. The sick were put on a bark litter and borne to the door of the church, where they received Holy Communion. Kateri was too weak for this. The two Fathers at the mission consulted together, and quickly resolved to make an exception in her case. No one either then or afterwards murmured at this distinction accorded to the Lily of the Mohawks. Father Choleneq at once entered the sanctuary, took the sacred particle from the tabernacle, and passed out of the church, following the shortest road to Anastasia's cabin. All who were then in the village assembled to accompany him, and knelt about the door of the lodge, leaving a passage for the blackgown to enter. In the mean time Kateri heard of the honored Guest whom she was to receive; whose sacramental presence had been so long denied her, on account of her inability to drag herself to the chapel. This had not been possible since the first weeks of Lent. She was now overjoyed at the good news they brought her. Her face lighted up with happiness. Then all at once she remembered the miserable condition and great poverty to which long-continued sickness had reduced her. So she held fast to the hand of Thérèse, who was then at her side, and begged her earnestly not to leave her. As soon as they were left alone for a moment, she confided to her friend that she owned no decent garment in which to receive her Lord, who was about to visit her, having only those she now wore. Thérèse, touched at this avowal from one who knew so well how to care for herself and others when she had been able to work, quickly brought a chemise of her own for Kateri, and dressed her properly for the great event so near at hand. Kateri had hidden her poverty even from Anastasia. All is at last in readiness, both within the lodge and without; her heart's desire is at hand. "Behold He cometh, leaping over the mountains."

The blackgown, with the sacred Viaticum, entered the rude bark cabin, which was crowded with kneeling Indians. The *Confiteor* was recited. Kateri Tekakwitha renewed her baptismal vows and the solemn offering she had made of her body to Almighty God. She recalled the graces bestowed upon her, and especially such as had enabled her to preserve her chastity through life. She then received the Body and Blood of Christ, and after a few moments of silent adoration, all present joined with her in prayer. Throughout the afternoon other Indians of the village, as they came in from the hunt or the field, were constantly going back and forth to the lodge where she lay. All wished to see her and to hear her dying words. Not one was indifferent to the passing of her soul. Many were the signs of love and of reverence shown for her on that day. It would seem as if she had been to each one of them like a favorite sister. All were eager to gain a remembrance in her prayers.

"The Father profited by this occasion," says Chauchetière, "and obliged Catherine to exhort some persons who needed to be encouraged in virtue." He adds that the words of the dying always had great effect at the mission in converting those who could not be brought otherwise to be baptized or to confess their sins. If this were the case ordinarily, how doubly effective must have been the words thus wrung from Kateri, despite her humility, by the command of her director! But after all, it was her example, in life and in death, that preached most forcibly to them. The effort she made to speak—for, indeed, it was more natural for her to be silent—exhausted her very much. Thinking she was about to expire, Father Choleneq wished to anoint her at once, and ran in haste as far as the church; but her calm assurance to Thérèse, to the Father, and to others that there was no occasion for hurry, caused them to believe afterwards that the hour of her death, as well as the place of her burial, had been privately revealed to her by God.



During the evening of Tuesday Thérèse left her friend for a time. In the night she was again watching by Kateri's side with another woman.<sup>[68]</sup> The sufferer asked them to take turns in order to get more rest, or they would be too weary the next day. When Thérèse remained alone with her, Kateri, who had looked forward to this moment, said: "I know very well, my sister, what I am saying. I know the place from which you came, and I know what you were doing there. Take courage!" she continued with great tenderness; "you may be sure that you are pleasing in the eyes of God, and I will help you more when I am with Him." The eyes of Thérèse opened wide at these words, and then filled with tears. How could Kateri have known what she had done? She had stolen off to the woods without saying a word to any one, and had cruelly scourged herself as she prayed from her heart for her dying friend. But Kateri, it seems, did know about it; and in the morning early, when Thérèse wished to stay by her lest she should not be there at the last, she said in a decided tone: "You may go to the field, Thérèse; do not fear. You will be back in time." In this, too, she was not mistaken.

Father Martin, in describing these last hours of Kateri, gives the following conversation which took place that same morning, and which shows the touching simplicity of her Indian friends. "If we must go," they said to her, "ask God not to let you die while we are away." Kateri again assured them that there was time enough. "On your return you will find me still living," she said. They went away satisfied, and God blessed their confidence.

It will be remembered that this was the morning of Wednesday in Holy Week. What follows is from Chauchetière, who says that the companion of the dying girl was sent for about ten o'clock that day.

"Marie Thérèse Tegaiaguenta arrived in the cabin shortly before Extreme Unction was given. After she [Kateri] had received all the sacraments, she conversed with her companion. She was failing, however, all the time, and at last, speaking with difficulty and unable to raise her voice, seeing her comrade weeping bitterly, she bade her this last farewell: 'I leave you,' said Catherine; 'I am going to die. Remember always what we have done together since we knew one another. If you change, I will accuse you before the judgment-seat of God. Take courage; despise the discourse of those who have no faith. When they would persuade you to marry, listen only to the Fathers. If you cannot serve God here, go away to the mission of Lorette. Never give up mortification. I will love you in heaven,—I will pray for you,—I will help you—'

"The Father who was near by on his knees to say the prayers for the dying, heard a little of what Catherine was saying. He kept his eyes fixed upon the face of Catherine to notice what was passing, and at the same time he encouraged them both. Catherine had her face turned towards Heaven, and her companion embraced her with one hand, having the other resting on the cheek of Catherine, and listening with attention to the last words of the dying one.

"This blessed girl in saying to her companion, 'I will love thee in Heaven,' lost the power of speech. It had been a long time since she closed her eyes to created things. Her hearing, however, still remained, and was good to the last breath. It was noticed several times that when some acts were suggested to her she seemed to revive. When she was excited to the love of God, her whole face seemed to change.<sup>[69]</sup> Every one wished to share in the devotion

inspired by her dying countenance. It seemed more like the face of a person contemplating than like the face of one dying. In this state she remained until the last breath. Her breathing had been decreasing since nine or ten o'clock in the morning, and became gradually imperceptible. But her face did not change. One of the Fathers who was on his knees at her right side noticed a little trembling of the nerve on that side of her mouth, and she died as if she had gone to sleep. Those beside her were for a time in doubt of her death.

"When they felt certain that all was over, her eulogy was spoken in the cabin, to encourage others to imitate her. What her father confessor said, together with what they had seen, made them look upon her body as a precious relic. The simplicity of the Indians caused them to do more than there was need for on this occasion, as, for instance, to kiss her hands; to keep as a relic whatever had belonged to her; to pass the evening and the rest of the night near her; to watch her face, which changed little by little in less than a quarter of an hour. It inspired devotion, although her soul was separated from it. It appeared more beautiful than it had ever done when she was living. It gave joy, and fortified each one of them in the faith he had embraced. It was a new argument for belief with which God favored the Indians to give them a relish for the faith!"

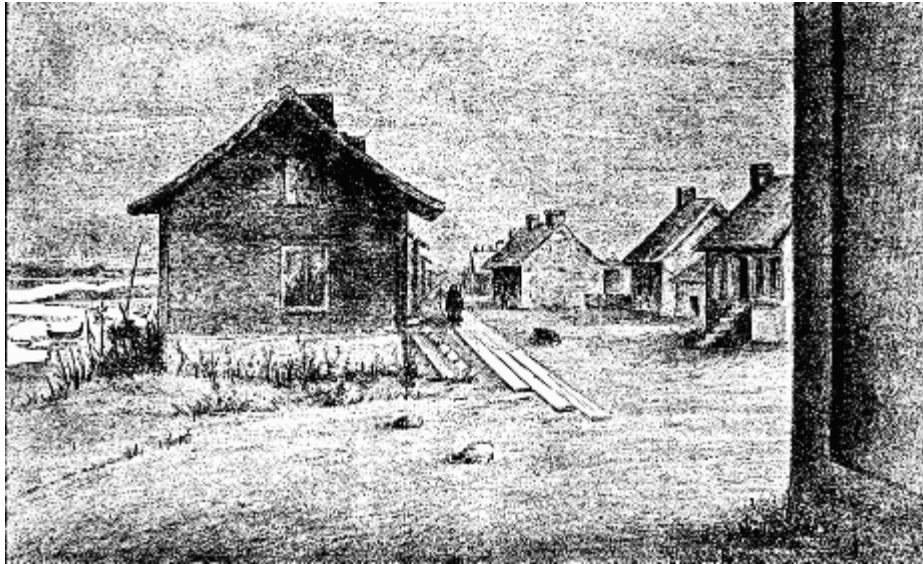
Thus died Kateri Tekakwitha, on Wednesday, April 17, 1680. She was twenty-four years of age.

The change in her countenance after death, mentioned by Chauchetière, is described at some length by Cholenec. He recalls the fact that when Kateri was four years old she was attacked by the small-pox, and that some marks of it were left on her face. It had been much more disfigured, however, by her austerities and by her last illness. "But this face," says Cholenec, "thus emaciated and marked, changed all at once, about a quarter of an hour after her death; and it became in an instant so beautiful and so fair that, having perceived it at once (for I was in prayer near her), I gave a great cry, so much was I seized with astonishment, and I had the Father called, who was working on the repository for Thursday morning. He ran to see it at once, and with him all the Indians, at the news of this prodigy, which we had leisure to contemplate until her burial. I must admit frankly," her confessor continues, "that the first thought which came to me was that Catherine might have indeed entered at that moment into heaven, and that on her virginal body was reflected in advance a small ray of the glory which was dawning on her soul!"

The spirit of Kateri Tekakwitha rejoiced in leaving its casket of clay; but the friend who had known her best still lingered disconsolate by her mat, till at last the crowd was scattered and none remained but those who belonged to the cabin wherein she died. Then the body was cared for in the usual manner. Thérèse, whose loving task it was to bring the necessary garments, now assisted Kateri's adopted sister and the good matron, Anastasia, in their last sad duties to the gentle inmate of their lodge. Her hair was oiled and braided. New moccasins were put on her feet. She was tenderly laid out on a mat, and the entrances of the lodge were again left open for visitors. A moving throng passed in and out. Many lingered for a long, long time, unable to withdraw their eyes from the face of the Iroquois maiden so long hidden by her blanket, and now so wondrous fair to behold. It was aglow with a miraculous beauty that gave deep joy to those who looked upon it; with the joy came also a longing to be pure and holy, and to possess the happiness reflected on those noble features. As she lay thus motionless on her mat, two Frenchmen from La Prairie, who had come to the Indian village to be present at the services there on Holy

Thursday, wandered idly into the cabin. They passed close to the body of Kateri. "How peacefully that young woman sleeps!" said one of them. It did not occur to them that she was dead, and they were about to pass on. "But they were very much surprised," writes Cholenec, "when they learned a moment after that it was the body of Catherine, who had just expired. They immediately retraced their steps, and casting themselves on their knees at her feet, recommended themselves to her prayers. They even wished to give a public evidence of the veneration they had for the deceased, by immediately assisting to make the coffin which was to enclose those holy relics."

Thus it happened that Kateri's body, instead of being borne to the grave, according to the Indian custom, on an open bier of bark, covered only with a blanket, was enclosed in a wooden coffin after the custom of the white men. This made it easier to identify her remains later when they were carried to the new village site farther up the river, to which the Indians of the Sault moved some years later. They took Kateri's bones with them as their most precious treasure, and have kept them at the church ever since. <sup>[70]</sup>



**STREET SCENE AT CAUGHNAWAGA IN CANADA**  
*(St. Lawrence River) 1889 (Church of St. François Xavier)*

When the two Frenchmen who had come to Caughnawaga for Holy Thursday had finished their self-imposed task, the body of Kateri was lifted from her mat into the coffin, but the lid was not adjusted at once over the face. The Indians continued to gaze upon it, and would not consent to have it covered until she had been lowered into the grave which they had prepared for her. This was on the side of the cemetery nearest to the river, at the foot of the tall cross, where she had loved to pray. There, on the afternoon of Thursday in Holy Week, the Lily of the Mohawks and the "Geneviève of New France" was laid to rest. So great was the fame of her sanctity that her grave soon became a much-frequented spot. Pilgrim after pilgrim has directed his footsteps to that cross and mound. In the long list of these we find the names of governors, bishops, military commanders, and well-known authors. <sup>[71]</sup> Even after her bones were removed, the place where Kateri had prayed, and where her body rested for a time, was looked upon as sacred ground. From the day of her burial in 1680 to the present time, it has been

distinctly and unmistakably marked with a tall wooden cross. Whenever the old one crumbled away, a new one was erected to replace it. John Gilmary Shea gives the following graphic account of what occurred at her grave in 1843:—

"The old cross was mouldering; and a new one, twenty-five feet high, was prepared, in which were encased some relics of the holy virgin of Caughnawaga. On Sunday, the 23d of July, 1843, the Caughnawagas, headed by their missionary and chiefs, repaired to the little river Portage, near which their former church and village had stood, on a bluff between that little stream and the lordly St. Lawrence. The space on the left was soon filled by whites, drawn thither by interest or curiosity, both of French and English origin. The banner of La Prairie and the pennons of the Sault floated above the crowd on either side of the highly adorned cross, at the foot of which was a painting of the Christian heroine. At the signal given by the discharge of artillery on the right and left, the clergy in procession advanced into the centre, chanting the "Vexilla Regis." At another discharge Father Felix Martin, one of the first Jesuits to whom it was given to return to the land enriched by the sweat and blood of his Society, rose to address the assembled throng in French. Then, after a hymn in Iroquois, the Rev. Joseph Marcoux,<sup>[72]</sup> the pastor of the tribe, pronounced a discourse in the guttural language of his flock, and gave place to the Rev. Hyacinth Hudon, Vicar-General of Montreal, who delivered a third address in English, and then performed the ceremony of blessing the cross. That sign of faith was then slowly raised, amid the chants of the Church, the thunder of the cannon, and the mingled shouts of men of many climes and races who, differing in language, bowed to the symbol of a common faith."

In September, 1884, the author of this volume visited her grave, and found that the cross described above had been blown down in a recent storm. It was lying in broken fragments on the river-bank, near the little enclosure of wooden pickets surrounding the grave. Pious hands were soon at work there, however, and on Sunday, Oct. 5, 1884, another cross was raised. Again a large gathering of Canadians and Indians assembled to assist at the ceremony. Rev. Father Burtin, Oblate missionary, and successor to Father Marcoux, preached both in French and Iroquois. The following words of the preacher (which were translated into English and published in an Albany journal) must have made a profound impression upon his hearers, the Iroquois people of Caughnawaga. "There have been," he said, "in this village, chiefs renowned in war, who had dealings with governors of Canada, and were widely spoken of during their lives. Now that they are dead, their names are mostly forgotten, while the name of Catherine Tekakwitha is well known not only here, but throughout Canada and beyond the ocean."

In the month of June, 1888, the author, having travelled by the ferry-boat from Montreal to La Prairie, and thence driven a few miles westward along the river-bank, was fortunate enough to stand once again by the grave of Tekakwitha.<sup>[73]</sup> There, in addition to the new cross, which stood firm and erect within the little enclosure, a large granite monument was to be seen lying close beside it, partially unboxed and ready to be placed upon the grave. It had been sent to Canada from the land of Tekakwitha's birth. It has since been set in place, and protected by a strong canopy and enclosure of wood. The initials of the two donors of this substantial token are carved on a lower corner of the monumental stone. It is a solid piece of Barre granite, in the shape of a sarcophagus,—six feet six inches long, two feet ten inches wide, two feet six inches high. On the top a cross is

carved, and the following inscription in the Iroquois language:—

KATERI TEKAKWITHA.

Apr. 17, 1680.

*Onkwe Onwe-ke Katsitsiio Teiotsitsianekaron.*<sup>[74]</sup>

The French translation is the exact interpretation given by M. Cuoq, who composed the Iroquois inscription. He says that *Onkwe Onwe* means literally, "The true men;" thus the Indians designate all who belong to their own race. *Katsitsiio* means "beautiful flower," and is here applied to Tekakwitha, the Lily of the Mohawks. This title, given to her by the English, is altogether foreign to the Iroquois language, as they have no distinctive word for *Lily* (nothing more definite than "white flower"); and *Mohawks* is a name they dislike, because it was first given to them by their enemies; they prefer, therefore, their own term, *Caniengas*. Tekakwitha was a Canienga and an Iroquois, but she was also, on her mother's side, an Algonquin. Hence it is that the general name which applies to the whole red race is used in the inscription,—*Onkwe Onwe*! All "true men" are indeed akin to this beautiful flower that bloomed in our Mohawk Valley.

FOOTNOTES:

For this incident see Cholenec, in "La Vie de Catherine Tegakouita," Carton O, Jesuit College Library, Montreal.

Father Martin, in his account of this scene, says that Kateri, after her last words to Thérèse, covered her crucifix with kisses and tears, and finally cried out three times, "Jesus, I love thee!" Chauchetière himself, in another place, mentions these as her last words. He and Cholenec were both eyewitnesses of her death. Cholenec says, "At three hours after midday, after having pronounced the holy names of Jesus and Mary, a slight spasm came on, when she entirely lost the power of speech."

They are now (1889) in a carefully secured chest of polished wood in the sacristy of the church of St François Xavier du Sault at the present village of Caughnawaga, about five miles up the river from their first resting-place. The old wall and priest's house connected with the above-named church date back to 1720, but the church itself is more modern. It was rebuilt in 1845. The desk at which Charlevoix and Lafitau wrote is still used by the missionary who occupies the *presbytère*. The exact site of this mission of St François Xavier du Sault at the present time and its four previous sites, also the position of Tekakwitha's grave, with her cross and monument, and its direction from the city of Montreal, are shown on the map in chapter xvii.

Among those who have shown special honor to the memory of Kateri Tekakwitha by visiting her grave and spreading her fame by means of their writings, and who have not been already quoted in this work, we find the following persons of note: the Marquis Denonville, Governor of Canada; Monseigneur de Saint-Valier, second Bishop of Quebec; Capt. J. du Luth, commander of Fort Frontenac in 1696; De la Potherie, Commissioner of the King, and author of the "Histoire de l'Amérique Septentrionale," and of verses in honor of Tekakwitha, written in 1722; Chateaubriand,—see "Les Natchez," livre iv., as follows: "Les vertus de Catherine (dit-il) resplendirait après sa

mort. Dieu couvrit son tombeau de miracles riches et éclatants en proportion de la pauvreté et de l'obscurité de la Sainte ici-bas, et cette vierge ne cesse de veiller du salut de la Nouvelle France, et de s'intéresser aux habitants du désert." Poems on Kateri Tekakwitha have been written by the Abbé Rouquette, of New Orleans, and by Rev. C. A. Walworth, of Albany; and to crown all these efforts to do her honor, the touch of a gifted artist of New York State, Mr. Charles M. Lang, has been brought to bear on this ever-growing theme.

Author of a very complete Iroquois-French dictionary, preserved and still in use in manuscript form at the *presbytère*, or priest's house, at Caughnawaga in Canada.

Tekakwitha's cross and grave may also be reached by a drive of about five miles across the reservation from Caughnawaga, which is now a railroad station on the new Canadian Pacific road, and is connected by a steam-ferry with Lachme, where the steamers touch before going over the Great Rapid, and where trains arrive many times a day from Montreal.

English translation,—"*The fairest flower that ever bloomed among the redmen.*" French translation,—"*C'est une belle fleur qui s'est épanouie parmi les Indiens.*"

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## CHAPTER XXV.

### THE MEMORY AND INFLUENCE OF KATERI TEKAKWITHA AFTER HER DEATH.—MODERN CAUGHNAWAGA.

IT has been seen how the waning yet ever-brightening spark of a saintly life went out among the Indians of the Sault, and the reader has learned where Kateri Tekakwitha was laid to rest; but her memory is still alive at the places where she lived and died, and even far away among the Indians of the North and West; and wherever she is known her influence is still a power for good. The Rev. P. Fouquet, a missionary who labors among the aborigines of British Columbia, in a letter addressed to the Rev. V. Burtin, Curé of Caughnawaga, P. Q., under date of July 22, 1888, says:—

"I have spoken to hundreds of Indian villages of your admirable *Sauvagesse* [thus he calls Tekakwitha].... Nothing is so useful to our Indians; her example is a great encouragement to them in the practice of Christian virtues."

The Flathead (Kalispel) Mission in Montana, with its large Indian school and thriving settlement of industrious Christians, owes its origin in great part to the zeal of a few adventurous Iroquois who migrated to that region from Caughnawaga in Canada. Among these was a certain chief called Ignatius *the Iroquois*. He had grown up under the shadow of Tekakwitha's cross, and after living for a time among his new friends the Kalispel



people, who gained from him and his comrades a favorable opinion of Christianity, he did not hesitate to undertake a dangerous journey across the great plains of the United States in order to obtain for them a missionary. It was in paving the way for Father De Smet, the Apostle of the Rocky Mountains, that the brave Iroquois lost his life. When that Father succeeded after many difficulties in accomplishing the long journey from St. Louis in the Mississippi Valley, to the Kalispels in Montana, he reaped a most unexpected harvest of Indian converts. This was because they still cherished the memory of Ignatius the Iroquois, who from his youth had revered that of Kateri Tekakwitha. May we not then justly claim for her a share in the success of that Kalispel mission? Was it not her strong, sweet influence for good that had spanned the continent at last, and raised the cross aloft among the redmen of the Rocky Mountains?

Not alone among the Indians of the West, but far away to the East, and beyond the Atlantic Ocean, the name of Kateri Tekakwitha is often spoken. In April, 1888, the people of Caughnawaga joined with their missionary, Père V. Burtin, in celebrating the diamond wedding of his aged parents, who live at Metz, in Lorraine. The name the Caughnawagas have given to their beloved pastor is Takaronhianckon, which means "Two Skies Together," because he belongs to two countries,—the land of his adoption, and his fatherland over the sea. Père Burtin delights in praising the virtues of Kateri Tekakwitha, and often mentions her in his letters. Her name has become a household word in the missionary's old home on the banks of the Moselle, which he has not seen for more than thirty years. This double celebration of a diamond wedding on both sides of the Atlantic proves not only the strength of true domestic affection that neither time nor distance has been able to obliterate, but also the love and gratitude of the Indians to the man who forsook house and kindred so many years ago for their sake.

Pictures of Kateri were painted by Chauchetière shortly after her death, and were distributed in many directions. They were first engraved and sent to Europe by order of Madame de Champigny in the year 1695. One or more of these reached the French Court, which was then at its most brilliant period under Louis XIV. The powdered and befrilled ladies of that time looked with wonder on the rough cut sent to them of a little squaw in blanket and moccasins, holding in her hand a cross, and worthy, they were told, to be held up as a model for the Christians of Europe. She had indeed lived as a light in the wilderness, and was looked upon by all who knew her as a lily of purity and star of faith.

There is a very old, full-length portrait of Kateri Tekakwitha still hanging in the sacristy at Caughnawaga, P. Q. Others are to be seen at St. Mary's Church, Albany, and in the possession of the Jesuits at Troy, New York. An ideal portrait of her by Mr. Lang, completed in the early part of the year 1889, is by far the best representation of her now in existence. The same artist has also painted her, in a landscape of great beauty, as just moving away from her favorite place of prayer near the mission cross on the St. Lawrence. A Sister in the Hôtel Dieu at Montreal has a quaint colored print, representing her very much as she appears in the rude, uncolored engraving which accompanies the account given of her in "L'Amérique Septentrionale" by De la Potherie. The illustration in Chauchetière's life of her, published in quaint style by John Gilmary Shea, in 1887, is not unlike these two.

What served far more than any pictorial representation ever made, to keep her saintly memory before the people of her own village, was the formation of Kateri's Band, or Les Sœurs de Catherine, as they were called. These were young Indian girls whom Thérèse Tegaiaguenta banded together after Kateri's death, and incited to imitate the virtues of her friend, who, as she firmly believed, was still loving her and helping her in heaven,



according to her promise. It has already been said that Thérèse received by common consent the name of the one who while on earth had been her inseparable companion. Hence it is easy to account for the fact that in a "Life of Marguerite Bourgeois," published in 1852, the author should have confused the identity of these two young Indians of the Sault, and given an account of the Lily of the Mohawks under the name of *Thérèse Tegakouita*. Their souls were locked together in life; their names in death.

While Thérèse lived, the Caughnawagas gave her the name and a part of the love and reverence they had shown to Kateri herself. When once she had formed the band known as Kateri's Sisters, and had passed from among men, then indeed there was nothing left on earth of the Lily of the Mohawks save lifeless relics and what the old writers are pleased to call "an odor of sanctity." *Onkwe Onwe-ke Katsitsiio Teiotsitsianekaron*. These words, as we have already seen, may be read on the monument at the foot of Tekakwitha's Cross, but her bones do not rest there. They were carried to the modern village of Caughnawaga, and some fragments of them even still farther from her grave;<sup>[75]</sup> for at the time of the French and Indian War the Jesuits resolved to divide the Caughnawaga mission, and remove some of their flock farther away from the dangers of Montreal. The Tarbells—who as children had been captured at Groton, Connecticut, in Queen Anne's War, and afterwards became too thoroughly identified with the Caughnawagas to return to their Puritan relatives when the opportunity offered—headed this party sent westward from the Sault to form a new settlement. Choosing Aquasasne,—“the place where the partridge drums,”—a plain east of a slight hill, at one of the few spots where the rapid-vexed river glides calmly by, —they began the mission of St. Francis Regis, and threw up a log-cabin for the Jesuit Father Mark Anthony Gordon, who accompanied them, *bearing as a precious treasure part of the remains of Catherine Tehgahkwitha*.<sup>[76]</sup>

This portion of her remains was lost in a fire which destroyed the log chapel and its contents shortly before the treaty of peace was signed between England and France, in 1763. A new wooden church soon replaced the rude chapel, and in 1791 this in turn gave way to the present massive stone church of that mission. The St. Regis settlement was found to be on the New York boundary line; so the village is now part British and part American. Methodist and Episcopal missions have been started there at different times, but most of the Indians of the place still adhere to the faith of Jogues and Tekakwitha.

The Catholic Iroquois,—many of them famous as warriors,—naturally enough, sided with the French during the long period of our intercolonial wars;<sup>[77]</sup> but when the Revolution broke out they refused to take up arms against the people of the English Colonies at the instigation of their British oppressors, as did the Mohawk followers of Brant. Though urged and threatened by Sir Guy Carleton to do so, they maintained their neutrality. Some actually joined the American army of patriots. One of these, Atiatonharonkwen, or Louis Cook, rose to the rank of captain. During the stirring times of 1812 the settlement at Aquasasne was disturbed by incursions of both American and British troops; but since that war came to an end the missions of Caughnawaga and St. Regis have enjoyed peace and quiet. Their people have shared in the general prosperity and progress of this country and Canada. They support themselves by means of agriculture and the manufacture of baskets, sleds, moccasins, snow-shoes, and other articles ornamented with beads in the Indian fashion. The Caughnawagas, moreover, are noted for being especially brave and skilful in the use of every kind of river-craft. As raftsmen and pilots they are unequalled. The patriarchal figure of the famous Caughnawaga Indian, Jean Baptiste, with his swarthy face and bright-red shirt, seen year after year at the pilot-wheel of nearly every excursion-steamer that shot the Great Rapid of the St. Lawrence on its way to Montreal,

will not soon be forgotten by the many travellers whom he steered safely to their destination. Others as skilful still dwell at the same Indian village, ready at any time to board the steamers as they pass along.

When the Gordon expedition was being fitted out for Egypt in 1884, an urgent invitation was extended to the Caughnawaga raftsmen to join it. About one hundred of them did so, and dexterously carried the British troops through the rapids of the Upper Nile. On their return they were received in England with marked consideration, and were thanked by Queen Victoria in person for their services to the realm. They then recrossed the ocean to Caughnawaga, well pleased with their venture into foreign lands.

Among these same people of the Sault are lineal descendants of those proud Mohawks with whom the fathers of Albany maintained so long the close alliance formed at Tawasentha, when the foundations of the city were first laid on land belonging to the most warlike of the Five Nations. Accordingly, when the Albanians, in 1886, prepared to celebrate the bi-centennial of their charter, a deputation of these Mohawks was formally invited from Caughnawaga by the Mayor of Albany. On their arrival they were publicly received at the City Hall as honored guests, the freedom of the city was extended to them, and they took a prominent part in the ceremonies accompanying the celebration. They were present in full Indian costume, both at the opening of the city gates, and at the grand military high mass celebrated on bi-centennial Sunday at St. Mary's, the oldest Catholic Church of the city. Their presence on that occasion recalled with touching interest the memory of their first apostle of Christianity, Isaac Jogues, who was sheltered from the cruelty of his captors by the kind-hearted burghers of Albany. The sacrifice of his life, which he offered for them when he returned to the Mohawk Valley, had brought these Indians to the Christian faith; and the example of Kateri—their "Little Sister," as they still call her—had helped to hold them to it through the vicissitudes of two centuries.

The fervor of these Indian people of the Great Rapid, whose ancestors were converted from paganism in the valleys of New York State, has not abated since the days of Kateri, nor has the work of the Jesuit missionaries among them been fruitless in lasting results, notwithstanding the assertion of Kip to the contrary, in his introduction to "Early Jesuit Missions." The large congregation of Christian Iroquois still dwelling at the Sault is in itself a living proof of the success and continuance of the old mission work. No one could attend the religious observances there without being impressed by their sincere and heartfelt devotion to the Christian faith. The Corpus Christi procession, as witnessed by the author, in 1888, at the village of Caughnawaga, was picturesque and edifying beyond description.

#### FOOTNOTES:

See Hough's History of St. Lawrence County.

Shea's History of the Missions, p. 339.

To this period belong the curious details concerning the traditional story of the Iroquois mission bell, and its connection with the raid on Deerfield in the winter of 1703-4, which have been collected by Judge N. B. Sylvester, in his "History of the Connecticut Valley."

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## CONCLUSION.

It is for the people of the United States, where many nationalities and many creeds are brought into daily contact, that this book has been written; and therefore certain occurrences which took place after the death of Kateri Tekakwitha, and which have been given at length in some memoirs and sketches of her life otherwise comparatively meagre, are here purposely omitted. Thus we pass by much that might be said of the devotion of people in various parts of Canada and elsewhere to her memory; as also the accounts of visits made from long distances to her grave, and to her early home in the Mohawk Valley. Steps have been taken towards public honors in the church, and even to her canonization as a saint.<sup>[78]</sup> Into these matters it has not been thought necessary to enter. One exception, however, should be made. Some things occurred soon after her death which are so closely connected with the personality of Kateri herself, and with those who were nearest to her on earth, that they seem properly to belong to a complete record of her life and times. These are given in an account of certain remarkable visions in which Kateri Tekakwitha appeared to Father Chauchetière and two of her friends in 1680, and twice afterwards to the same reverend father. The account of these apparitions is to be found in "Book Third" of the manuscript entitled, "La Vie de Catherine Tegakouita, Première Vierge Iroquoise," written by Father Cholenec. It forms a part of the materials in Carton O,<sup>[79]</sup> at the Jesuit College Library, in Montreal. A translation of it is here given. Nothing is added, and nothing taken from the good father's account; nor is there any call to make an apology for the simple faith which glows in his language. It was his faith and that of many others who knew Tekakwitha, and thus makes a part, of her history.

Cholenec's words are as follows:

"The sixth day after the death of Catherine, this was Easter Monday, a virtuous person worthy of belief,<sup>[80]</sup> being in prayer at four o'clock in the morning, she appeared to him surrounded with glory, bearing a pot full of maize, her radiant face lifted towards heaven as if in ecstasy. This vision of joy so marvellous was accompanied by three circumstances which rendered it still more admirable. For in the first place it lasted two whole hours, during which this person had leisure to contemplate her at his ease. He did so with a joy and a pleasure that cannot be expressed, Catherine having wished by so signal a favor to acknowledge the great services she had received from him during her life. Furthermore, this same apparition was accompanied with several prophecies by as many symbols which were to be seen on each side of Catherine in her ecstasy; of which prophecies some have been already verified, others have not as yet. For example, at the right appeared a church overturned, and opposite at the left an Indian attached to a stake and burned alive. This happened in the month of April of the year 1680; and in 1683, the night of the 20th of August, a storm, so terrible and with so much thunder and lightning that it could only have been caused by the evil spirit, took up the church of the Sault,—60 feet long, of stone masonry,—took it up, I say, at one corner with such violence that, contrary to all likelihood, it turned it over on to the opposite angle and dashed it to pieces. Two of our fathers who were at the church were carried off into the air. A third, who had run to the house to ring the bell, felt the cord suddenly wrenched from his hands, and was carried off like the other two. All three next found themselves on the ground under the *débris*,

from which they were drawn forth with much difficulty; and instead of having their bodies all mangled by so violent a concussion, they came out of it with some slight hurts; this they attributed to the prayers of Catherine, when they all three came together again. As for me, said one, I said mass to-day in honor of Catherine. And for me, replied the other, I was this morning at her tomb, to recommend myself to her in a special manner. And as for me, added the third, having for a year past a strong idea that some misfortune was to befall the mission, I have been every day since then, and to-day again, to pray to Catherine at her tomb to deliver us, and I have not ceased during all that time to importune the superior of the mission to have Catherine's bones transported into our church, without knowing why I did it. Behold what has reference to the overturned church. As for the Indian seen in this apparition, attached to the stake and burned alive, that was sufficiently verified some years after, when an Indian of this mission was burned at Onondaga, and two women the two following years; and as we do not doubt at all that Catherine, who had made it known so long beforehand, obtained for these Indians the invincible constancy that they showed in their torments, we will speak of it at the end of this third book as a marvellous effect of the power she has in heaven.<sup>[81]</sup>

"Finally, the third circumstance of this apparition, so remarkable, is that in the following year, 1681, on September 1st, and in the year 1682, on April 21st, the same person had the same vision and under the same circumstances; with this only difference, that in the first apparition Catherine was shown to him as a rising sun, with these words which were audible to him: *'Adhuc visio in dies;*' instead of which, in the two following ones, she was shown to him as a sun at mid-day, with these other words: *'Inspice et fac secundum exemplar,*' God giving him to understand by this, that he wished pictures of Catherine to be painted, which have been worked upon for a long time, and which having been painted, have contributed wonderfully towards making her known; because, having been put on the heads of the sick, they have worked miraculous cures.

"Two days after the first of these three apparitions, and eight days after the death of Catherine, she showed herself to her good mother Anastasia in this way. This fervent christian, after everybody had gone to bed in her cabin, remained alone in prayer on that evening; and feeling herself finally overcome by sleep she laid down on her mat to rest. But scarcely had she closed her eyes when she was awakened by a voice calling her with these words: 'Mother, arise.' She recognized the voice of Catherine, and at once without the least fear, she raised herself to a sitting posture and turning towards the side from which this voice came, she saw Catherine standing near her all brilliant with light. She had half of her body hidden to the waist in this brightness, and the other half, said this woman, was shining like a sun. She carried in her hand a cross, more brilliant yet than all the rest. So much light came from it that I do not believe one could see anything in the world more beautiful. I saw her, she continued, distinctly in this posture, awake as I was, and she spoke these words to me quite as distinctly: 'Mother, look at this cross; oh! how beautiful it is! It has been my whole happiness during my life, and I advise you also to make it yours.' After these few words she disappeared, leaving her mother full of joy, and her spirit so filled with this vision that after many years she had still the memory of it as fresh as on the first day. It seems that Catherine, in gratitude for the assistance she had received from Anastasia, wished by the sight of that cross so beautiful and so ravishing, and by the words she added, to dispose her to bear generously the one that God was preparing for her; because she has lost since then three of her children killed in war, the eldest of whom was one of the captains of the village; a disaster which she bore with heroic constancy, so much had she been fortified within by this apparition of her dear daughter.

"Catherine was seen also by her companion, one day when she was alone in her cabin.

She sat down beside her on her mat, recalled to her something she had done, and after giving her some advice for her conduct, she withdrew. As for the rest, the great affection Catherine had for the cross, and the manner in which she appeared to her mother Anastasia, gave the idea of painting her with the cross in her hand as the posture most suitable to her.

"But God has spoken still more clearly as to the sanctity and merit of Catherine, his spouse, by authentic testimony. I mean those prodigious graces, and so numerous, that he has already bestowed and continues to bestow through her intercession, on every sort of people."

The record is ended; and yet one thought lingers. The moccasin trail of our "Little Sister" leads ever onward to the lodge of the true God. There, if we follow, though with steps not half so swift as hers, Kateri will not fail to greet us with her low, sweet, friendly Caughnawaga greeting: "Sago!"



**MODERN CAUGHNAWAGA, P. Q.**  
*(From the Landing.)*

#### FOOTNOTES:

See [Appendix—Note F](#), Indian Petition to Rome.—As recently as July 30, 1890, there was a large and enthusiastic gathering of Americans, Canadians and Indians at Tekakwitha's grave, presided over by the Bishops of Montreal, Albany and Nicolet, for the purpose of assisting at the solemn dedication and blessing of her newly placed monument.

Another manuscript contained in this same *Carton O*, which will doubtless be carefully examined by those who are interested in promoting the cause of canonization of Kateri Tekakwitha, is that of M. Rémy Curé of La Chine, dated March 12, 1696, and testifying to miracles worked through her intercession in his own parish.

This person was Father Chauchetière. He says in the Preface to his life of Catherine Tegakouita: "Catherine me porta dans une vision à faire des peintures pour l'instruction des sauvages, etc."

Some account of the Iroquois martyr, Etienne, who fulfilled this prophecy of the vision, has been already given in Chapter XXI. For further details see Kip's "Early Jesuit Missions," Pages 119-123.

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## APPENDIX.

### NOTES.

#### A. LOCATION OF MOHAWK VILLAGES.

THERE is much confusion and apparent discrepancy in the various accounts given of Mohawk villages in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as may be seen by consulting the works of O'Callaghan, Parkman, Martin, Schoolcraft, Morgan, and others. A few prominent and unmistakable facts, however, are accepted by all. There were certainly three principal fortified towns in the Mohawk Valley all through the early colonial days, built and occupied by the *Caniengas* (*Kanienkehaka*), or "People of the Flint," as they chose to call themselves, but who were known to the Dutch as *Maquaas*, to the French as *Agniés*, and to the English as *Mohawks*. These people were divided into three clans or *gentes*, each named for a certain animal, and each governing a town or castle of its own. Their three towns varied in name and location, but seem always to have borne the same relation to one another. As General Clark briefly expresses it: "The castles *first*, *second*, and *third* (from the east) correspond to *Lower*, *Middle*, and *Upper*, and also to the *Turtle*, *Bear*, and *Wolf*." Kateri Tekakwitha dwelt at the first, or Turtle Castle, which was nearest to the Dutch settlers. These last worked their way up the Mohawk Valley from the Hudson; while the Indians on their part were also moving gradually westward, rebuilding their villages after short intervals, sometimes on the northern and sometimes on the southern bank of the Mohawk, but always in the same relative order,—that is, Turtles to the east, Bears in the centre, and Wolves to the west.

The following extracts from letters of Gen. John S. Clark to the author of this volume will be of interest to all who wish to know what sort of proofs and arguments have been used in locating the sites of the Mohawk villages which were in existence during the times of Isaac Jogues and Kateri Tekakwitha:—

FEBRUARY 10, 1885.

The determination of the exact position of all the so-called Mohawk Castles at definite dates can never be ascertained. This you can readily understand by reading Father Pierron's account in 1668 (Relation, 1669), where he speaks of seven large villages extending over a space of seven and a half

leagues (nearly nineteen miles), and that from many causes they often changed to new locations, where, according to circumstances, they might remain five, ten, and in rare instances fifteen years. I have identified in the neighborhood of forty different sites occupied at some time between 1620 and 1750. Fortunately the very particular account of Father Jogues' captivity and the death of Goupil furnished a sufficient number of references to the topography of the locality, to enable me, after many years' study, to identify with almost absolute certainty the exact site of this one castle, OSSERNENON. This gave the key to the second and third. These determined, Father Pierron, in 1667 (the next year after the three castles were burned by the French), speaks of visiting the third castle, which had been *rebuilt a quarter of a league above*. This gave me a test fact. In company with some friends living near there, and who were well acquainted with all sites, as they supposed, where Indian relics had ever been found, I pointed out the precise point on the map, and said we must find a site here, or my theory must fall to the ground. They answered that then my theory must fail, for certainly if any Indian village had ever existed at that point they would have heard something of it. My answer was, "I have more confidence in Father Pierron than I have in your opinion." We visited the spot, and on inquiring of the farmer who owned the land, if any evidences existed, at the particular point in question, of Indian occupation, he answered: "We have found great quantities of relics, and you can find plenty of them to-day,"—as we did. Since that they have never questioned facts mentioned in the "Relations."

Greenhalgh visited all the castles in 1677, and found them on the *north side*. His description gives sufficient facts to warrant a *reasonable probability* as to the locations of the four principal castles at that date, but not absolutely certain. Apparently at this date the lower castle, Kaghawaga, was on the west bank of the Cayudutta, near Fonda; and here my conclusions must end for the present, until I collect all the facts possible to be obtained having a bearing on the question. These are references to topography, distances from other known points, and anything that by hint or direct evidence can be used in the solution of the problem.... My present opinion is that your mission chapel of 1676 was northwest of Fonda, on the west side of Cayudutta Creek....

You mention the fact of small-pox prevailing in her town in 1660, and ask, Would they be likely to move the site of the village for that reason? Most certainly. I have evidence that they did remove in 1659, but have never been able to ascertain the cause. Quite possibly this may have been the reason. This removal, as I suppose, was made to the west bank of Auries Creek, on top of a high hill and about a mile west of Ossernenon.

About 1649 the Iroquois entered on their policy of conquering their neighbors and making of them one family and one people, as they expressed it. From that date to 1675, great numbers were added,—many more than could be provided for in the way of adoption into families; consequently they were permitted to settle in villages by themselves in the near vicinity of the large ones. In this way was the number increased from three in 1640 to seven in 1668, and this also accounts for an apparent discrepancy as to numbers in accounts of different writers. One party finding a village in two parts near each other would describe it as *two*; another would consider it as one.



I suspect your *petit village*, Gandawague, was one of this character; that is, a small village near the greater one. One other fact occurs to me, that may be of use to you. Gandawague was a district along the river,—ordinarily meaning "at the rapids." A slight variation may make it mean *above* or *below* or the *other side*; and so on in numerous relations of localities to the rapids. It will be found exceedingly difficult to determine the precise meaning of these words.

In the early part of June, 1885, General Clark, in company with Rev. C. A. Walworth, of Albany, and the author of this biography, revisited all the castle-sites in the Mohawk Valley which were supposed to be in any way connected with the lifetime of Kateri Tekakwitha. What follows was written soon after this expedition.

AUBURN, N. Y., June 29, 1885.

Since my return home I have given my time to a review of all the evidence relating to sites of first and second castles from 1640 to 1680, and have framed a theory that apparently harmonizes *all the facts*, and shall be much obliged for any argument or presentation of facts that will be inconsistent with it.

First, I assume that in all the changes of the Bear clan during this time, they did not remove more than a mile and a half from their original position on the high hill;<sup>[82]</sup> second, that soon after 1666 they removed to the opposite side of the river, on the Fox farm, where Greenhalgh found them in 1677, "*on a flat a stone's-throw from the river.*" You will remember that this site was on an elevated plain, unlike any other site visited.

Now after Ossernenon was abandoned, say about 1650 or 1655, all subsequent descriptions place Gandawague *two leagues* from Andagoron until 1668, when the people of Gandawague removed to the Cayudutta (Kaghnawaga), and when the accounts all place the two castles near each other,—in Dr. Shea's translation *two miles*. Theoretically, this makes a change of three miles for the lower castle,—a distance exactly corresponding to that between the high hill at Auries Creek and Kaghnawaga on the Cayudutta,—the village Andagoron having remained substantially stationary. I firmly believe that the site on the Fox farm was the one visited by Greenhalgh. If this be correct, it determines approximately the other; for they were near each other, one chapel answering for both villages.

On applying the test of distance to the battle-ground,<sup>[83]</sup> this is found correct; and measuring the four leagues as we did to Teonnontogen, it also corresponds.

Now the removal from the west bank of Auries Creek was not made bodily, but gradually. The villages were destroyed in October, 1666. They could do nothing in the way of establishing themselves in a new position that year, having to make themselves shelter for the winter. The next year, *after the bark would peel*, they could commence building their new houses on a new site, and during the spring clear new fields for corn, and in the course of the year a partial removal could take place. The palisading could be completed during the year, and in 1668 the village could be said to have changed. The new chapel was built in 1669, and in this year also they were attacked by the

Mohegans. When Gandawague was visited in 1667 no mention is made of a removal; but the fact is mentioned of the removal of Teonnontogen a quarter of a league higher up. I conclude that if Gandawague or Andagoron had either of them been removed, the fact would have been mentioned, and that indeed they returned temporarily to the old sites, which may not have been so completely destroyed as was Teonnontogen. This will reconcile all the facts, and I am unable to see any material antagonism at any point. The name Gandawague must not, however, be confounded with Caughnawaga, although for a time it may have been transferred to the new site.

I have been unable to find any data from which to determine when or about when Ossernenon was transferred to Auries Creek. The asking of the Dutch for men and horses in 1659 to draw palisades, *according to the translators*, was to repair their castles, and in one case for the "castles which you are building." They don't agree. The name on the Vanderdonck map, 1656, and that on Vischer's, 1659, of "Canagero," give a hint that the transfer had been made as early as 1655; and the very remarkable language of the Jesuit Fathers Fremin, Pierron, and Bruyas, which describes Gandawague as "*the very place watered by the blood of Jogues*," etc., almost leads one to think the removal may have been made as early as 1646; but I conclude that Ossernenon and Gandawague being only a mile apart, the description "*this is the place*" would be sufficiently specific as to locality, the village (people) being the same. A critical study of the original Dutch may enable us to determine whether in 1659 they were building a *new* or repairing an *old* castle.

In a letter to Rev. C. A. Walworth, March 3, 1885, General Clark wrote as follows:—

"Gandawague was in 1677 unquestionably on the hill northwest of Fonda, about a mile back from the river. A fine spring on the west bank of the Cayudutta marks the central point of the village, and the pits some distance to the north were their granary where they stored their corn. A smaller village was probably near Mr. Veeder's house."

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## B. THE WORDS "GANDAWAGUE" AND "TEKAKWITHA."

GANDAWAGUE may possibly mean, as General Clark has suggested, neither more nor less than "At the Turtle Village." In compound words the Indians frequently drop syllables, and certain letters are interchangeable as follows:

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{KANADA---ANAWARAKE} \\ \text{GAN-DA-----WA--GE} \\ \text{Village--Turtle-At} \end{array} \right\}$$

The name of this first, or Turtle, Castle of the Mohawks has been written in many

different ways, as may be seen by a glance at the list here given:—

OSSERNENON	Kachnuge
Asserue	Kaghnuwagé
Oneougoure	Kaghenewage
GANDAWAGUE	Kahnawake
Gannaouagé	Caghnawagah
Gandahouague	Cahaniaga
Andaraque	CAUGHNAWAGA

With all this variety of spelling, only three or four distinct names are represented. An Indian word had no written form of its own. Consequently an Englishman, a Dutchman, and a Frenchman, each putting it down in black and white for the first time, would naturally represent the sound of the word by very different letters. The three forms thus arising could not be identified at once as the same in meaning and sound without a knowledge of several languages. Since such scholars as Dr. O'Callaghan and M. Cuoq, however, have taken up the task, new light has been thrown on the subject, and much that at first sight seemed hopelessly confused in the early colonial accounts has been made clear and intelligible.

There is quite as much variety in the different ways of spelling Tekakwitha's own name as in the case of her birthplace and early home. Here are some of the forms used:—

TEGAKOUITA	Tehgawkita
Tegahkouita	TEGAKWITA
Tehgawkita	Tekaköüita
Tégahcouita	Takwita
Tekahkouitha	TEKAKWITHA

A grammatical explanation of this name is given in a note to the "Lexique de la Langue Iroquoise," by J. A. Cuoq, *prêtre de Saint-Sulpice*, as follows:—

TEKAKWITHA est la 3 p. fem. sing, de prés. de l'ind. du v. *tekkwitha*, cis-locatif de KKWITHA,<sup>[84]</sup> et conséquemment ce mot signifie; *elle approche,—elle meut qq. ch. en avant.*

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### C. TAWASENTHA

TAWASENTHA, or "The Place of Many Dead," is near the mouth of the Norman's Kill, just south of Albany. Many Indians were buried there, as numerous bones and skulls brought to light from time to time bear witness. Schoolcraft once visited the spot, and examined these relics. It was there, too, that the Song of Hiawatha was sung, as Longfellow tells us:—

"In the vale of Tawasentha,  
In the green and silent valley,  
By the pleasant water-courses  
Dwelt the singer Nawadaha.  
There he sang of Hiawatha,  
Sang the Song of Hiawatha."

Another couplet might be added to the above, with less of poetry in it, to be sure, but quite as much or more of Indian history,—

There the Mohawks went a-fishing  
In the days of Tekakwitha.

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#### D. MOHAWK TRAILS.

IN the summer of 1885 the Rev. C. A. Walworth, in company with the author, drove from Amsterdam on the Mohawk River to Jessup's Landing on the Hudson, following as closely as possible the route (described in Chapter XVI.) over which the Lily of the Mohawks probably passed in escaping from Caughnawaga to Lake George, and thence to Canada. An account of this drive was sent to General Clark, after which the following information was received from him:—

"The account of your journey is very interesting, especially that part relating to the fords above and below Jessup's Landing. I had rewritten my note relating to the trails from head of Lake George, and enclose the same.... On the Upper Susquehanna and Alleghany the present fords almost invariably mark the crossing-places of the aboriginal trails; and without doubt the two fords described above and below Jessup's Landing were the places of crossing the Upper Hudson in that vicinity. The same facts will apply also at Glenn's and Baker's Falls as now known."

A copy of the note on trails above mentioned as enclosed in the letter, is here given:—

"TRAILS FROM LAKE GEORGE.—From the head of Lake George two trails led to the Hudson. The first led southwest through a valley about eleven miles to the *ford below* the mouth of Sacondaga, at present *Luzerne*, thence along the Sacondaga to Northampton, striking the Mohawk at the lower castle in the vicinity of Schoharie River. The dotted line from the head of Lac du Saint-Sacrement on the map in 'Jesuit Relations,' 1665, apparently was intended to represent this route. The curves correspond to those of the Sacondaga in number and location. From Luzerne a branch continued down the Hudson about five miles to the vicinity of Jessup's Landing, where a crossing was made *at the ford* above the falls. This appears to have been the route of Jogues at this time, as indicated by the distance given of six leagues equal to fifteen miles.

"The second led southeasterly about nine miles, nearly on the line of the present railway to Glenn's Falls, from whence were several diverging lines. One led south along the west bank of the Hudson. Another took almost an air-line for Schenectady on the Mohawk, passing between Owl Pond and Saratoga Lake, and west of Ballston Lake, at the north end of which a branch diverged to the westward leading direct to the Mohawk Castles. The French expedition in the winter of 1665 to 1666, in taking this route, failed to follow the branch leading to the castles, and consequently found themselves, much to their surprise, in the near vicinity of the new Dutch settlement at Schenectady. Southier's maps show this trail, and several others diverging at different points. It is believed that from Glenn's Falls a trail led nearly in a southwest direction, passing along the base of Mt. McGregor, and somewhere in the Kayaderosseras Valley united with the branch from Jessup's Landing, and from thence struck the Mohawk at present Amsterdam."

A year later the correspondence on Indian trails in Saratoga County at the time of Kateri Tekakwitha was resumed as follows:—

"Since my return from Saratoga, I have given all my leisure to the study of Indian trails in your vicinity.... I have a manuscript map, copied from the original in the Paris Archives, relating to the two expeditions of Courselles and Tracy, 1666. This map shows that the first, or winter expedition, after leaving Lake George descended the valley of the Hudson to Fish Creek, thence passed up that stream, over Saratoga Lake, and over Ballston Lake to the vicinity of Schenectady. This is the precise route taken (according to Mr. Sylvester) by Lieutenant Le Moyne in his winter expedition of 1690 (Northern Wilderness, p. 288), in which I agree with him.

"The second Courselles-Tracy Expedition, according to the map, crossed the Hudson at Glenn's Falls, thence passing near and south of a *small lake* east of Mt. McGregor (now known as Moreau Pond), through Doe's Corners, near Stiles' Hill, and near Glen Mitchell to present Saratoga. This is my understanding of the map; and as you will see they followed near the base of Mt. McGregor, and hugging the bases of the Greenfield (or Palmerstown) hills, followed substantially the present highway all the way from Glenn's Falls. The fragment of a trail mentioned by you was probably a portion of this original Indian pathway.

"From Saratoga, if we take the map as our guide, the expedition passed near Ballston, and thence slightly curving, proceeded on its way in a very direct course to the Mohawk Castles. They may have taken this route, but probably crossed the Kayaderosseras about half-way between Ballston and Lake Saratoga, on a trail leading direct to Schenectady. When a little north of Ballston Lake, it crossed a path leading from Schuylerville along Fish Creek and Saratoga Lake to the Mohawk at Kinaquariones (Hoffman's Ferry). The map, however, makes the two distinct, and without any connection.

"Three trails led southward from Jessup's Landing,—one in almost an air-line to Kinaquariones. I suppose that Tegakwita followed this.

A second branched off from South Corinth, and leading in almost an air-line to Orange, passed near the western edge of Round Lake. A third, taking a

southeasterly course, curved around Mt. McGregor, and led very direct to the great fishing-station, at present Schuylerville, the ancient OSSARAGUE. Your Indian samp-bowl [hollowed in the rock] was probably not far from the crossing-place of the two trails."

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### **E. INDIAN DEFENSIVE WORKS.**

GENERAL CLARK, in describing to the writer the defensive works of the Iroquois, mentioned one locality in New York State where he actually found the series of hollows in the ground left by the palisadoes of an Indian fortified village. They showed the exact arrangement of a triple wall. He also gave, in connection with this subject, several references to quaint and interesting works in the State Library at Albany, which were duly examined. Some of these are given below:—

"You will find in RAMUSIO, G. B., Venice, 1606, 'Navigazione et Viaggi, volume Terzo, etc.,' relating to America, at p. 381, a fine two-page illustration of Hochelaga and its surrounding palisade. This, as I understand it, was a Huron village. ARNOLDUS MONTANUS, America, Amsterdam, 1671, p. 136, gives a Susquehanna fortified village, with the long houses somewhat irregularly arranged, and enclosed by a single-line palisade work. Documentary History of New York, vol. iii. p. 9, will show you an Iroquois village surrounded by triple or quadruple lines of palisades, with the elevated scaffolds. You will see numerous streams of water descending to put out the fire, etc. It will require a vivid imagination to make out all that was intended to be shown by Champlain."

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### **F. INDIAN PETITION TO ROME.**

AMONG the most interesting papers forwarded to Rome during the last few years for the purpose of forwarding the cause of canonization of Kateri Tekakwitha, is the following petition. Copies of it were circulated among the Catholic mission Indians of the United States, who affixed to it their own peculiar signatures and marks. It is here given in the Latin, English and Flathead languages:

Noster Pater noster Papa:

Gentis Indicae nostrae, quamvis pauperrima sit et miserabilis, valde tamen misertus est Conditor noster, nobisque dedit religionem Catholicam. Nobis quoque iterata misericordia dedit CATHARINAM TEGAKWITAM. Sancta haec virgo quae ut nos sumus gentis Indicae fuit, cum multa fuerit gratia a

JESU CHRISTO donata, adolescentula facta est optima, magno erga Conditorem nostrum amore tenebatur, et mortua est bona et sancta: nunc autem gloriosa deget in coelis, ut credimus, et pro nobis omnibus orat. Virgo haec, credimus, data nobis fuit magno Dei favore; est enim soror nostra parvula. Nunc vero speramus fore ut et tu quoque, noster Pater, qui Vicarius es JESU CHRISTI, favorem nobis largiaris: te toto corde imploramus ut loquaris dicens: "Vos Indi, filii mei, sumite vobis CATHARINAM in ecclesia venerandam, quia sancta est et in coelis."

Sunt etiam alii duo, qui licet Galli fuerint, nobis tamen sunt quasi Indi fuissent, eo quod Indos signum crucis edocuere et viam coeli; ideoque a perversis Indis fuerunt occisi. Eorum nomina sunt SACERDOS ISAAC JOGUES et FRATER RENATUS GOUPIL. Hos quoque duos vellemus habere venerandos, ut protectores, ut advocatos.

Quos tres si nobis indulgeas PATRONOS, futurum est ut corda nostra sint laeta, conversatio nostra bona, et filii nostri perfecti evadant; multique Indicae gentis nondum baptizati in ecclesiam Catholicam ingrediantur, coeli visuri gloriam.

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Our Father the Pope:

Though we Indians are very poor and miserable, yet Our Maker had great pity on us and gave us the Catholic religion. Moreover He had pity on us again and gave us CATHERINE TEGAKWITA. This holy virgin, an Indian like ourselves, being favoured by JESUS CHRIST with a great grace, grew up very good, had a great love for Our Maker, and died good and holy, and is now glorious in heaven, as we believe, and prays for us all. This virgin, we believe, was given to us from God as a great favour, for she is our little sister. But now we hope that thou, our Father, who art the Vicar of JESUS CHRIST, wilt grant us a favour likewise; we beg thee with the whole of our hearts to speak and say: "You Indians, my children, take CATHERINE as an object of your veneration in the church, because she is holy and is in heaven."

There are also two others who, though Frenchmen, yet are as if they were Indians, because they taught the Indians the sign of the Cross and the way to heaven; and for this they were killed by bad Indians. Their names are BLACKGOWN ISAAC JOGUES and BROTHER RENÉ GOUPIL. We wish to have these two also as objects of our veneration, as our protectors and our advocates.

If thou givest us these three as our PATRONS, our hearts will be glad, our behaviour will be good, and our children will become perfect, also a great many unbaptized Indians will enter into the Catholic Church and will see the glory of heaven.

Lingua *Kalispel* (Anglice, *Flathead*.)

Lu ku Pogot /u ku Lepape.

Ue mi/ kaekonkoint kaeskeligu, u kaeteie, u pen kutunt kaenkonnemi/lils lu



KaeKohnzuten lu kaeguize/ils lu Sinchaumen Catholique. Negu kae/nkonnemi/ils lu kaeguize/ils CATHERINE TEGAKWITA. Ye stuchemish pagpagt chikuilze ezageil t kaempile lu kueis lu kutunt sinkonns tel JESUS CHRIST, mi/ gest u pogtilsh, mi/ gamenchis Kolinzuten, u lu Sinchaumis, gest u pagpagt u tlelil, u yet/goa csimpiels 'ls chichemaskat, u kaesia kaes chaushi/ils. Shei Stuchemish kaentels kutunt kaesinkonm tel Kolmzuten ne/ i kaempile lu kaep sinkusigu.

U pen yet/goa kaenmuselsi t-anui, lu ku Pogot, kaeksnkonnemi/ils, lu ku Ni/kalshelpenzutis JESUS CHRIST, t-esemilko t-kaepuus kaesgalitem kuks kolkoelt, u kuks zuti "Igu kuisigusigult kuskeligu, akaespoteem lu CATHERINE 'lsinchaumen, ne/ i pagpagt, u 'ls'chichemaskat u e/zi."

Negu telzi chesel ue Seme, u pen ezageil t-skeligu, ne/ i meyie/tem lu skeligu lu staktakenzut l'eseimeus, u lu shushuel ch's'chichemaskat, gol shei u polstem t-kuaukot skeligu shei lu eszustem KUAILKS ISAAC JOGUES, u SINSE RENE GOUPIL. Komi ye chesel negu kaek/ls'chitenzuten, kaek/chaushizuten. Lu ne kaeguize/lilt ye cheche/les kaek/ls'chitenzuten, nem lemt lu kaespuus, nem gestilsh lu kaezuut, nem yopietilsh lu kaesigusigult, u nem chgoeoeit skeligu lu estemskoli m kueis lu Sinchaumen Catholique, u nem uichis lu 'ls'chichemaskat lu simpielsten.

#### FOOTNOTES:

See [map](#) in chap. iv. p. 38, showing the position of Andagoron, the Castle of the Bears, in 1642.

This was at Kinaquariones, or Hoffman's Ferry. See Pierron's account of that battle, translated into English by Dr. Hawley, of the Cayuga County Historical Society, in his "Early Chapters of Mohawk History." See also a topographical note to the same by Gen. J. S. Clark, referring to Dutch deeds which give the distance of that battle-ground from Schenectady.

KKWITHA,—eloigner, ou avancer qq. ch.; changer qq. ch. de place.

**THE END**

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## TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES

xiv.

Numerous missing periods have been silently restored.

Inconsistent hyphenation and use of quotation marks at beginning of paragraphs have been retained as in the original.

The following typos have been corrected:

p. vi — "Hotel" twice amended to "Hôtel".

p. viii — "cotemporary" amended to "contemporary".

p. 59 — "Renssalaer" amended to "Rensselaer".

p. 191 — "Saut" amended to "Sault".

p. 264 — "Cholence" amended to "Cholenec".

p. 294 footnote — "une vision a" amended to "une vision à".

Textual representation of the diagram on p. 307:

KANADA-ANAWARAKE

GAN-DA----WA--GE

*Village-Turtle--At*