

THE IROQUOIS CHARACTER cont'd

On the side of the weaker there have been alternations of sullen acquiescence and of fruitless resistance. It is not surprising that under such circumstances the character of each party has been presented to other in the most forbidding light.

The Indians must be judged like every other people, not by the traits which they display in the fury of a desperate warfare, but by their character of their social and domestic life. On this point the testimony of missionaries and of other competent observers who have lived among them is uniform. At home the Indians are the most kindly and generous of men. Constant good humor, unfailing courtesy, ready sympathy with distress and a truly lavish liberality, mark their intercourse with one another.

The Jesuit missionaries among the Hurons knew them before intercourse with the whites and the use of ardent spirits had embittered and debased them. The testimony which they have left on record is very remarkable. The missionary Brebeuf, protesting against the ignorant prejudice which would place the Indians on a level with the brutes, gives the result of his observations in emphatic terms. "In my opinion," he writes, "It is no small matter to say of them that they live united in towns, sometimes of fifty, sixty, or a hundred dwellings that is of three or four hundred households, that they cultivate their fields, from which they derive their food for a whole year; and that they maintain peace and friendship with one another." He doubts, "If there is another nation 'under heaven' more commendable in this respect than the Huron 'nation of the Bear', among whom he resided.

"They have," he declares, "a gentleness and affability almost incredible for barbarians". They keep up "this perfect goodwill", as he terms it, "by frequent visits, by the aid which they give one another in sickness, and by their festivals and social gatherings, whenever they are not occupied by their fields and fisheries or in hunting or trade". "They are" he continues, less in their own cabins than in those of their friends. If anyone falls sick, and wants something which may benefit him, everybody is eager to furnish it. When ever one of them has something specially good to eat, he invites his friends and make a feast. Indeed they hardly ever eat alone.

Ads:

Wanted - Will buy old articles, relics, old glass, china etc. Phone 356-1868. Kurt Sorensen, Niagara Falls, Ontario

For Sale Barley and Red Clover Seed. Phone 445-2982. Dr. D.J. Smith V.S.

For Sale - Latham Raspberry Plants for sale \$10.00 per hundred. Percy Cayuga - Phone 445-2239

Skates need sharpening? - Visit Don's skate-sharpening shop. Don also sharpens circular saws, scissors, knives, etc. Phone 445-2980. Don Martin, Ohsweken.

For Sale Field pumpkins, large size 25 cents. Also 1 snow tire with rim 7:35. 14. Apply to Dan Jamieson, R1, Ohsweken