



**HOT ASHES:** Kateri's Vice-Postulator certainly goes places . . .  
**FIREBRAND:** . . . to get Kateri out of debt! . . .

the freezing depths her little daughter, Marie, aged three, and pulled her out half dead!

Understandably Father Peter Cholenec, S. J. gave her a good talking to. What motive, he wanted to know, had led her to do it? "She answered simply and in good faith, that she feared that when the child grew older she would become slack and fall into sin, so she had forced her to do penance in advance!"

The mere account of these frightful penances leave us non-plussed today. Is such the ingredient of which holiness is made? The missionary clearly analysed the situation: "... I admit," he wrote, "that these excesses are not always a sure mark of sanctity, as vanity and self-love may creep into them. We have, however, reason to believe that in our Christians they were a true mark, *since they persevered for the rest of their lives.*" And he added quite appropriately: "All we could do in these cases was to prevent a repetition of these excesses which the good intentions and lack of understanding of the new Christians rendered somewhat excusable."

As Martin Skandegorasken and many others of the Mission, Stephen's love for Christ welled over into a flood of zeal. With the Great Mohawk and another from the Sault, probably the catechist Kinnouskouen, he set out to convert the Mohawk Nation. To all appearances, they undertook this trip in 1677, the very year Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha ran away from Gandouagué with the assistance of her brother-in-law, of an unknown Huron, and of Hot Ashes. It seems that Stephen was then a *dogique*, or a prayer-chief, in other words a catechist, but a catechist invested with considerable authority.

They entered the gates of Candouagué, the capital of the Canton on July 15, "feast of St. Bonaventure" as liturgically minded Father James Bruyas noted. A timely arrival, indeed, for the three heralds of Christ were met by friends who were to return with them to the Mission of St. Francis Xavier at the end of the month. Eight days later many of these braves would have been away on a raid!

"I wish", wrote Father Bruyas to Father Cholenec, "for the consolation and the advancement of this Church, to receive such visits often. I tried to make their stay as comfortable as possible in our poverty."

Stephen and Kinnouskouen immediately set to work. To prepare his two friends' coming, the Great Mohawk doubtless took