

## CHRISTMAS 1678

(Continued.)



TOWARDS the end of August, several women went to Fr. Frémin's cabin. They had some good news for him. On an island in the river, close to their long houses, they had sown Indian corn three times successively. Each year the worms had devoured it before the first green shoots began to sprout. There had been talk about giving up these fields. Finally, the matriarchs had come to see Fr. Frémin, as they reminded him, and suggested that he go and bless the island. He had willingly complied with their wishes and, at the sight of these poor people kneeling round him, recited the prayers of the Church for a good harvest. And now, they informed him that the crops in the island were more plentiful than in the other fields of the village. A good store of fine maize was encouraging for the winter months. All thanked the good Lord for His kindness and Kateri was not among the least of them to do so.

Each morning as the mist arose from the river, heralding the approach of autumn, Kateri, quite happy, quietly went about her life of work and prayer. A life spent among her own people. Later on, her first biographers called her "the guardian angel of the Mission," and "the apostle of the native people." Unknown and out of the public eye, she played this role even during her lifetime. How pleased she must have been

at the sight of the many conversions of Indians from everywhere, which were taking place!

For several years now, quite a few Christian Indians were in the habit of going to preach in the Iroquois homeland. Among them were the Great Mohawk, Hot Ashes, Stephen Skandegoraksen, and another Stephen, whom the Fathers called the