



BLESSED KATERI TEKAKWITHA

Woodcarving by Bishop Robert Lebel, D.D.
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leaves. Pretty little bark plates and wooden bowls, which they had carried over from the first Gandaouague were available when, during the day, they felt hungry for hominy. No doubt, the heavy wooden mortars and pestles were soon ready to pound the Indian corn, the basic staple of their food. Before the end of autumn, the **kanonsote** were habitable. Blessed Marie of the Incarnation could well have repeated her comments of 1667, "One would think that nothing could be found other than cots and huts, but everything was found so beautiful and so agreeable that Monsieur de Tracey and all the members of his suite were surprised."

Before long Gandaouague had its little chapel, dedicated to St. Peter. As at Tionnontoguen, the men of the place helped to build it. Tekakwitha did not dare enter.

Truly a good shepherd, Fr. Pierron did his best to adapt "prayer," that is Christianity, to the mentality of his Mohawks. He had quickly found out that they were experts at gaming—it was their main pastime when they were not away at war. So he invented a game just for them, which he called "Point to Point." The Iroquois called it, "The way to arrive at the place where one lives forever, whether in Paradise or in Hell."

As the inventor of the game noted, it speaks effectively through its paintings and through the emblems with which it is illustrated. Furthermore, it is easy to learn. The seven sacraments are depicted in it, the three theological virtues, the Commandments of God and of the Church with the principal mortal sins, and even the most usual venial sins. Original sin comes next in its place, followed by all the evils it has generated. Fr. Pierron also included the four ends of man, the fear of God, indulgences, and the works of mercy. Finally, in four different cartouches, grace, conscience, the liberty each one has to save or damn himself, and finally, the little number of the elect, a subject which is not very popular in our own 20th century.

This game certainly exercised a good influence in Gandaouague and in time made life for Tekakwitha much easier, even if she never played it herself. Fr. Pierron did not stop at that; he initiated other reforms. He opposed jugglery, which he judged criminal as this practice was a barrier to conversions. He succeeded in overcoming it considerably by procuring for the sick, much better than the jugglers, health of the body and often that of the soul.

The Blackrobe did not neglect either, to attack debauchery and drunkenness, which go hand in hand. His Christians, the new ones as well as the old, backed him. They had found out that a fiend of foreign origin was seriously cutting down the conversion