

1611. If he could not succeed, the offended party was entitled to right himself, and the *lex talionis* was strictly observed.

The Indians
of Acadia.

Little quarrels were settled on the spot. They got each other by the head, gave a few cuffs, and generally separated without doing each other any great harm. Husbands treated their wives harshly. A Frenchman one day reproached one of these Indians for beating his wife severely. The Indian replied that he was master in his own cabin, and that no one had a right to gainsay him if he beat his dog. A woman surprised in adultery, risked her life; and although less attention was paid to the conduct of girls, those whose shame was exposed were dishonored.¹ The French were not long in the country without perceiving that familiarity with their women was not liked, and the women, on their side, evinced much modesty and discretion.

If we may credit Lescarbot, from whom I drew almost all these details,² an infant, as soon as it was born, and before it was allowed to take the breast, was forced to swallow grease and oil. The eldest son always bore the father's name, with a syllable added; a different name was given to the second, which also had a syllable added for the third, and so on with the rest: but these names were apparently changed at marriage. Dead bodies were embalmed, or rather, after being slashed and emptied, were dried to prevent corruption.³ Mourning consisted in painting themselves black, and in great lamentations.⁴

As soon as a father of family died, he was taken from his cabin, which was set on fire without removing any thing. Each then presented the corpse the best he had, and they adorned the tomb without and within. Warriors, before taking the war-path, fought with their wives, and if they got the worst, had no doubt of the success of their expedition; but if, on the contrary, their wives were the

¹ Biard, Relation, p. 14.

² Lescarbot, 1618, pp. 696-970.

³ Biard differs (p. 19).

⁴ Ibid., and in Carayon, xii., p. 84.