

1645. was to replace a lost member: that, moreover, he would be charmed to have peace restored; but that to him the thing seemed surrounded with difficulties.¹

What passed between him and the Hurons. The governor then turned towards the Hurons to hear their answer also, but one of them, taking up the word, replied, haughtily, that he was a warrior, not a trader; that he had not left his town to traffic, but to carry on war; that his stuffs and his kettles did not tempt him; that if he was so anxious for his prisoners, he might take them—he could easily replace them, or die in the endeavor; that if that misfortune befell him, he would have at least the consolation of dying like a man; but that his nation would say that Ononthio had caused his death.

This reply embarrassed the governor-general, but another Huron, a Christian, soon extricated him from his dilemma.

“Ononthio,” said he, “let not the words of my brother indispose you against us. If we cannot consent to give you up our prisoners, it is for reasons that you will not disapprove. We should lose honor if we did so. You see no old man among us; young people, as we are, are not masters of their actions, and warriors would be dishonored if, instead of returning home with captives, they made their appearance with goods. What would you say yourself, father, to your soldiers if you saw them come back from the war in the guise of merchants? The mere wish which you express to have our slaves might take the place of ransom; but it does not lie with us to dispose of them. Our brothers, the Algonquins, could do what you ask of them, because they are with their sachems, who are answerable to no man for their conduct; not being restrained by the same motives as ourselves, they could not, in courtesy, refuse you so trifling a matter. Our sachems, when they know our intentions, will, doubtless, pursue the same course. We all desire peace; we enter into your

¹ Relation de la N. F., 1644, p. 47; Creuxius, Hist. Can., pp. 414-6.