

expressed by quite absurd gestures and manners. With the western nations it is customary to plant in the middle a great calumet, as is sometimes also practised among the others; for since, by our influence, all these nations have more affairs to arrange with each, they have borrowed many usages from each other, and especially that of the calumet, which they now commonly use in their treaties.

1645.

The Iroquois had brought seventeen belts, which were as many words, that is to say, propositions that they were to make; and to expose them to the sight of all as they explained them, they had planted two posts, with a cord between them, on which to hang the belts. All being ranged in the order described, the orator of the cantons¹ rose, took a belt, presented it to the governor-general, and said: "Ononthio, give ear to my voice; all the Iroquois speak by my mouth. My heart has no evil thought; all my intentions are upright. We wish to forget all our songs of war, and let them give place to chants of joy." He immediately began to sing, his colleagues keeping time with their *hé*, drawn in cadence from the bottom of the chest; and while chanting, he walked with great strides and gesticulated in a manner ludicrous enough.

He often looked up to the sun, rubbed his arms as if to prepare for the struggle; at last he resumed a calmer air, and continued his speech. "The belt which I present you, Father, thanks you for giving life to my brother; you have rescued him from the teeth of the Algonquins, but how could you let him set out alone? Had his canoe turned, who was to help him to right it? Had he drowned or perished by any accident, you would have had no tidings of peace, and perhaps have cast the blame on us, when it rested solely on yourselves." With these words

¹ Kiotsaeton, or the Hook (Crocchet): Lettres Historiques de la M. Marie de l'Incarnation, p. 118. His associate was Aniagan.