

cumulated misfortunes to turn them to the Author of all good ; but the Hurons, persuaded that the presence of the missionaries was the crowning evil, replied to every argument brought forward to convince them of the superiority of the God of the Christians over the spirits whom they adored : " Every nation has its gods : our misfortune is to have gods weaker than yours, and unable to prevent our destruction."¹ 1635.

To heal their imagination on this point, during a drought which threatened the country with a general famine, Father de Brebeuf invoked the Almighty, and his prayer was followed by abundant rain. He did the same on another occasion, and with similar success.² These wonders for some time arrested the murmurs. The great number of dying children, who were seen to be baptized and die immediately, had also led these poor blinded people to consider baptism as a spell cast by the Fathers on the children to kill them ; but it happened that some sick people, whose cure was beyond all hope, recovered perfect health as soon as they received the sacrament of regeneration, and these unexpected cures recalled the better disposed, but only for a short time : the impression made on their minds by these marvellous events was soon effaced, and the work was always to be begun anew. Wonders wrought, and their effect.

Sometimes the profound ignorance of these savages, which made them so frequently attribute to supernatural causes many things in which there was nothing to exceed the powers of nature, led them to the opposite extreme ; as happens to those who, for fear of being over-credulous, rush into an incredulity that reason itself disavows. But these changes in minds arraying themselves irrationally, and with no certain rule, against religion, were not frequent among a people who care little for what does not strike the senses ; and the troubles and disgust of the

¹ Relation de la Nouvelle France (1636), p. 83.

² Bressani, Breve Rel., p. 63 ; Rel. de la Nouvelle France (1636), p. 83.