

PARTICULARS AS TO SOME OTHER MISSIONS.

THE Huron Missions, as long as they subsisted ; the Abénaqui Missions, which still subsist ; the Missions nearer Quebec, such as those of Three Rivers, Sylleri, Lcretto, and Tadoussac, have not, except the first, had the same opportunity as the Iroquois Mission of Sault Saint Louis and the Mountain to give martyrs to the Church ; but have furnished no less examples of all Christian virtues, at which the French, daily witnesses of the fact, were unwearied in their admirations. Details are found in the Letters of Mother Mary of the Incarnation, the truth of which it cannot be permitted to doubt ; and I can, I think, assert that these esteemed letters, both by the manner in which they are written and by the Spirit of God which they breathe, will be an eternal monument of the fecundity of grace in barbarous and savage hearts. Thus wrote that illustrious foundress to her son Dom Claude Martin, a Benedictine monk of the congregation of St. Maur, in August, 1644.¹

“ You ask me, moreover, whether our Indians are as perfect as I state in my letters. I will tell you that in point of manners, I mean their mode of acting and paying compliments, you will not find French politeness ; we have not sought to teach them this, but to impress firmly the Commandments of God and of the Church ; the Points and Mysteries of our Faith, the Prayers and Practices of our religion, such as the sign of the cross, examination of conscience, and like actions of piety. An Indian makes his confession as well as a religious ; he is candid to the utmost, and makes much of the least trifles. When they fall they perform public penance with admirable humility. Take an example. Indians have no other drink than the broth of the sagamity kettle, be it meat, or Indian corn, or boiled water, or pure water. When the French gave them a taste of brandy, they found it so to their taste, that they prefer it to all other cheer ; but the mischief is, that when they can get it, they have only to take one drink to become madmen and frantic. The reason is supposed to be that they eat only fresh things, neither knowing nor using salt. This drink generally kills them. Our Governor has accordingly under severe penalty forbid giving or trading any to them. Nevertheless when the ships come in it is impossible to prevent the sailors selling them some secretly. Old Christian Indians and their families do not fall into these excesses ; it is the heathen with a few dissolute young men. Yet this year it happened that some fell into this fault, and to punish it

¹ Choix de Lettres Historiques, p. 104.