

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE HURONS.

THIS is only to give some little foretaste of the language, and notice some of its peculiarities, in anticipation of a Grammar and a complete Dictionary.

They have a letter to which we have nothing to correspond—we express it by Khi; the use of it is common to the Montagnés and to the Algonquins. They are not acquainted with B. F. L. M. P. X. Z; and I. E. V. are never consonants to them. The greater part of their words are composed of vowels. They lack all the labial letters. This is probably the reason why they all open their lips so awkwardly, and why we can scarcely understand them [80] when they whistle or when they speak low. As they have hardly any virtue or Religion, or any learning or government, they have consequently no simple words suitable to express what is connected with these. Hence it is that we are at a loss in explaining to them many important matters, depending upon a knowledge of these things. Compound words are most in use with them, and have the same force as the adjective and substantive joined together, among us. *Andatarasé*, fresh bread; *Achitetsi*, a foot long. The variety of these compound nouns is very great, and that is the key to the secret of their Language. They have, like us, a diversity of genders; and, like the Greeks, of number; besides a certain