

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE POLITY OF THE HURONS, AND THEIR GOVERNMENT.

I DO not claim here to put our Savages on a level with the Chinese, Japanese, and other Nations perfectly civilized; but only to put them above the condition of beasts, to which the opinion of some has reduced them, to give them rank among men, and to show that even among them there is some sort of Political and Civil life. It is, in my opinion, a great deal to say that they live assembled in Villages, with sometimes as many as fifty, sixty, and one hundred Cabins,—that is, three hundred and [146] four hundred households; that they cultivate the fields, from which they obtain sufficient for their support during the year; and that they maintain peace and friendship with one another. I certainly believe that there is not, perhaps, under heaven a Nation more praiseworthy in this respect than the Nation of the Bear. Leaving out some evil-minded persons, such as one meets almost everywhere, they have a gentleness and affability almost incredible for Savages. They are not easily annoyed, and, moreover, if they have received wrong from any one they often conceal the resentment they feel,—at least, one finds here very few who make a public display of anger and vengeance. They maintain themselves in this perfect harmony by frequent visits, by help they give one another in sickness, by feasts and by