

the summons may be more efficacious, inasmuch as they do not always put faith in young people. These Messengers address their errand to the principal Captain [178] of the Village, or, in his absence, to the one who is nearest him in authority, stating the day on which they are to assemble. These summons are entreaties, not commands, and accordingly some excuse themselves entirely, others delay setting out; whence it happens that these assemblies are sometimes tedious, for they do not like to set out in bad weather, and certainly they have enough difficulty in sometimes coming ten or twelve leagues on foot, and this in Winter and over the snow.

All having arrived, they take their seats each in his own quarter of the Cabin, those of the same Village or of the same Nation near one another, in order to consult together. If by chance some one is absent, the question is raised whether, notwithstanding this, the assembly would be legitimate; and sometimes, from the absence of one or two persons, the whole gathering is dissolved, and adjourns until another time. But if all are gathered, or if, notwithstanding, they think it their duty to go on, the Council is opened. It is not always the Leaders of the Council who do this; difficulty in speaking, unwillingness, [179] or even their dignity dispenses them from it.

After salutations, thanks for the trouble taken in coming, thanksgivings rendered, I know not to whom, that every one has arrived without accident, that no one has been surprised by enemies, nor has fallen into any stream or River, nor has been injured,—in brief, that every one has arrived happily, all are exhorted to deliberate maturely. Then the affair to be