

peltries for hatchets, knives, blankets, and other wares that Messieurs the Directors and Associates send them. Having finished their trades (to use the word which is current here) the last council takes place. The holy Virgin presided at it, for this assembly [324 i.e., 320] was held upon the day of her birth. Monsieur the Chevalier de l'Isle had me sit near him, and next our new Huron Christian. The presents of the French were exposed in the middle of the place, and the leaders and principal men of this nation were seated in a circle before us. Monsieur the Chevalier said to me, "My father, let us begin with the concerns of Christianity, for that is the most important question." In fact, it is always necessary to begin with this subject a council with the French; for when the speech is begun by the announcement of the presents, those who have no interest in the faith rise and go away unceremoniously, as soon as one begins to speak of our belief. But as long as the presents attract their attention, neither their minds nor their bodies are withdrawn very far from the speeches which are made to them. It is the custom of these people to speak through presents, and through feasts; while the pot is boiling, you will find the Savages as attentive as you wish. The feast distributed, the Savages close their ears and open their mouths. They do not keep so many senses occupied all at once. But let us enter the council.

Monsieur the Chevalier de l'Isle began to speak, and told them that he was greatly pleased with the presents [325 i.e., 321] they had made him; that he honored the steadfastness of their friendship, since neither the capture of their countrymen by their en-