

God had created the Sun, why he had formed animals. These fluent talkers of nonsense had no answer to these questions. Our Neophyte, seeing them mute, began to speak, and discoursed very well upon the Creation of the world, how God [113] had made the Sun to give us light, the animals to furnish us with food, thinking of us as a good father thinks of his children. His speech showed us that the Faith was every day taking deeper root in his heart. He keeps with him one of his relatives, who was baptized at the point of death. This woman, having recovered her health, concerned herself very little about her soul. When one spoke to her about the Sacraments, she ridiculed them, the Confession exciting her laughter. Our Neophyte reproved her, imposing silence upon her for a time, but he did not change her heart; she persevered in her jesting, especially ridiculing the Sacrament of Penance. At last, she was smitten all at once with a catarrh which almost closed the respiratory passage, and deprived her of her speech; having lost her tongue, God opened her ears. The Father who instructed her, going to visit her, frightened her. "Now behold thyself seized by the throat; it is at this time that the Devil wishes to prevent thee in earnest from confessing; thou didst refuse to do it when thou wert in health,—perhaps thou wilt never be able to do it, now that thou art sick." This poor woman, touched by God, made a sign that she wished to unburden her conscience; and immediately, [114] and in her cabin, the Father indicated to her the signs she was to make to the questions he should ask her. As she was perfectly conscious, she not only observed these, but she made so strong an effort that she partly