

the Jesuits alone were the authors and the cause of the diseases which from year to year kept depopulating the country; that he had discovered our mysteries, and the most hidden secrets of our enchantments. Some said that we nourished, in a retired place of our house, a certain serpent [16] of which their fables make mention, and that this was the disease. Others said that it was a kind of toad, all marked with pits, and that somebody had even perceived it. Certain ones made out that this disease was a somewhat more crafty demon; and, by what they said, we kept it concealed in the barrel of an arquebus, and thence it was easy for us to send it wherever we would. They reported a thousand like fables, and all that was held to be true, since it proceeded, they said, from the very lips of a Frenchman, who before his death had rendered this good office to the whole country of the Hurons,—of apprising them of so black a magic, by which in fact all their villages appeared to be desolated. Those were the most powerful weapons with which they combatted us; this was the imperative reason which made us all criminals. The surrounding nations were soon informed of this; everybody was imbued with it, and even the children, as well as the fathers, in whatever place we might go to, favored in that matter the definite decree for our death.

Before we pass on, I think that it is a thing which deserves [17] to be remarked,—the sickness and the health of this young man. It would be in some sort to slight the providence of God, not to bless him therefor, since that has greatly shone forth in it.

This good young man, returning here from Kébec in a company of several canoes of Hurons, who had