

seeing that, her husband being at a distance, she would remain deprived of a strong support, both spiritual and temporal. One of our Fathers who was there, wishing to console her, said to her that this journey would be brief,—twelve or fifteen days at most. “Alas,” she said, “our children will have died in that space of time, without his having learned the news of their illness.” “My wife,” answered the husband, “whom do you take me for? I am nothing at all, and what would my presence avail here? Should my children be sick, all that I could do would be to feel distressed for them, and grieve my spirit, in order to try to [176] relieve them; but that and nothing are all one. To God alone it belongs to preserve or to restore health to whom he pleases; as for us, we have only to try to please him in all our actions. That is what makes me leave you now; it is enough for me that it is his will. As for our family, he will take care of it, if he please: and then here are my brothers the Jesuits who remain with you. Even if I were here, the best that I could do would be to follow their advice; keep your mind at rest.” Before starting he confessed and received communion; and at the moment of the separation he knelt down in his cabin, to offer and commend his family to God.

Thereupon he went away, while it was terrible weather; the cold was cracking the trees; a furious wind was blowing in his face; but the fire of his charity was stronger than all these inclemencies. Having joined our missionaries, they begin to scour the hamlets and villages; having arrived at the first one, very weary and fatigued, they present themselves to enter a [177] cabin, but the door is shut on