

[5] CHAPTER I.

OF THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY AND OF CHRISTIANITY IN GENERAL.

THE scourges of God have fallen, one after the other, upon this poor Barbarous People; the terror and dread of War have followed the fatal diseases which in previous Years caused mourning and desolation everywhere. Of the troops raised to fight the Enemy in his own country, some were scattered in consequence of the disunion that existed among them; others were put to flight; some perished almost to a man in the ambushes prepared for them; in a word, nearly all their expeditions have ended only in disaster.

Various parties of the enemy, who have crept into the Country under the cover of the woods [6] and of night, have everywhere and at almost all seasons of the Year committed massacres which are all the more to be dreaded since no one feels safe from them. Even women, and children at the breast, are not in security within sight of the palisades of their own Villages. Nay, more,—a foe will sometimes be brave enough—quite naked, and with only a hatchet in his hand—to penetrate alone at night into the Cabins of a Village; then, after murdering some of those who are sleeping therein, he will take to flight as his only defense against a hundred or two hundred persons who will pursue him for one or two entire days.