

and sent a squad of soldiers to meet them and to prevent disorder. The soldiers formed in two lines and the Iroquois passed through them without being impeded by a large number [107] of persons who gazed at them on all sides. They rested for the remainder of the day, and a council was held on the morrow in the same manner that I have related in the previous Chapter. It is needless for me to repeat so often that words of importance in this country are presents. Suffice it to say that, as he who harangued gave no presents, he spoke in these terms:

“I have no voice; do not listen to me. I speak not; I hold in my hand only a paddle to bring you back a Frenchman in whose mouth is the message from all our country.” He spoke of the Frenchman whom I have mentioned above, who had been taken prisoner with Father le Jogues, to whom the Iroquois had confided their presents,—that is to say, their words. This Frenchman drew out eighteen presents, all consisting of porcelain beads, of which he gave this explanation:

The first said that Onontio had a voice of thunder, that he made himself heard everywhere, and that at the sound of his words the whole Iroquois country had thrown away their weapons and their hatchets,—but so far beyond the Sky that there were no arms in the world long enough to draw them back from there.

[108] The second said that, as the arms were beyond the sight of men, they ought to visit each other without fear while they enjoyed the sweets of peace.

At the third present, “Here,” he said, representing the Iroquois, “is a mat or bed on which you can lie softly when you come to our country; for, as we