

This is saying in two lines what an entire Relation could have contained, had I chosen to enter more into details, and had not the briefness of a letter compelled me to think of concluding this one. However,—to avoid another extreme, and perhaps blame for having been too brief in matters which show the goodness of God to these peoples, and which oblige us to praise his mercies,—I shall relate some of these, [160] but with no other order than that suggested by the confused recollection that I have of them.

A Christian who had recently escaped from captivity, and who saw himself on his arrival surrounded by his relatives, who came to console him, astonished all present by the words that he used. “My friends,” he said, “God did not abandon me in my captivity. If we should often think of him in prosperity we should also pray to him unceasingly in the height of our troubles. We hear, as it were, a voice within, replying to us that the evils of this life are nothing, that there is a Paradise awaiting us, and that death—which is all the less remote from us, the greater are our sufferings—will soon place us in possession of a happiness of which our cruelest enemies cannot deprive us.

“Such,” said he, “were the thoughts that consoled me in the midst of the most frightful tortures that the Hiroquois made me endure, when they applied fire and glowing flames to me. Then I felt truly that God helped me; that he was within me, and animated my [161] heart. I know not how it could have been, but it is true that my soul felt unspeakable pleasures, at the very time when my body endured the greatest pain. After these first sufferings, they consulted whether I was destined for