

have several wives, but the greater number of them that I have seen have only one; some of the Sagamores pretend that they cannot do without this plurality, not because of lust (for this nation is not very unchaste) but for two other reasons. One is, in order to retain their authority and power by having a number of children; for in that lies the strength of the house, in the great number of allies and connections; the second reason is their entertainment and service, which is great and laborious, since they have large families and [63] a great number of followers, and therefore require a number of servants and housewives; now they have no other servants, slaves, or mechanics but the women. These poor creatures endure all the misfortunes and hardships of life; they prepare and erect the houses, or cabins, furnishing them with fire, wood, and water; prepare the food, preserve the meat and other provisions, that is, dry them in the smoke to preserve them; go to bring the game from the place where it has been killed; sew and repair the canoes, mend and stretch the skins, curry them, and make clothes and shoes of them for the whole family; they go fishing and do the rowing; in short, undertake all the work except that alone of the grand chase, besides having the care and so weakening nourishment of their children. They bind their babies [64] upon little slats like those which hang from the shoulders of street-porters in Paris, with the wings taken away. These slats hang from a broad strap fastened to their foreheads; thus burdened with their children, they go to the water, to the woods, and to fish. If the child cries they begin to dance and sing, thus rocking their little one, and when it stops crying they go on with their work.