

So for these reasons some of the Savages try to defend their Polygamy, further alleging that otherwise there would be an extinction of the family for lack of descendants; ignoring the blessings of Christian marriage. And therefore their renowned Membertou is worthy of greater praise, because although he was the greatest Sagamore, the most followed, and the most feared, that they had had for several centuries, [65] yet he did not care to have more than one wife at a time; although a Pagan, judging from instinct that this plurality was both infamous and troublesome, on account of the quarrels which always arose from it, as much among the wives as among the children of different mothers.

Now these women, although they have so much trouble, as I have said, yet are not cherished any more for it. The husbands beat them unmercifully, and often for a very slight cause. One day a certain Frenchman undertook to rebuke a Savage for this; the Savage answered angrily: "How now, have you nothing to do but to see into my house, every time I strike my dog?" The comparison was bad, the retort was keen. Few divorces occur among them, and (as I believe) little adultery. If the wife should so far forget herself, I do not believe that it [66] would be less than a matter of life and death to the two adulterers. The immorality of the girls is not considered so important, nor do they fail for this reason to find husbands; yet it is always a disgrace.

As to their dress, demeanor, and manners, the women and girls are very modest and bashful; the men also are not immodest, and are very much insulted, when some foolish Frenchman dares to meddle with their women. Once when a certain mad-