

## [149] CHAPTER XVI. [i. e., xv.]

SIEUR DE POTRINCOURT'S RETURN TO FRANCE, AND  
THE DIFFICULTY OF LEARNING THE LAN-  
GUAGE OF THE SAVAGES.

WE have heretofore explained the necessity which was urging sieur de Potrin-court to send his people back to France without delay. Now he wished to take them there himself, to more efficiently arrange all the affairs and especially to procure an immediate supply of provisions: for unless he did this, those whom he was leaving at Port Royal would be without means of passing the Winter, in evident danger of being carried off by famine. For this reason then, he departed about the middle of July of the same year, 1611, and arrived in France at the end of the following month of [150] August; he left his son, sieur de Biencourt, in his place, with twenty-two persons, counting the two Jesuits, who, seeing that for the conversion of the Pagans the language of the country was absolutely necessary, resolved to apply themselves to it with all diligence. But it would be hard to understand the great difficulties which they here encountered: the principal one being, that they had neither interpreter nor teacher. To be sure sieur de Biencourt, and some of the others, knew a little of it very well, enough for trade and ordinary affairs; but when there was a question of speaking about God and religious matters, there was the difficulty, there, the "not understand." Therefore, they were obliged to