

CHAPTER V.

GOD PRESERVES FATHER ISAAC JOGUES AFTER THE
MURDER OF HIS COMPANION. HE INSTRUCTS
HIM IN A VERY REMARKABLE MANNER.

WHEN those poor captives had recovered a little of their strength, the principal men of the country talked of conducting them back to Three Rivers, in order to restore them to the French; the affair made so much progress that it was considered [83] as settled. But, as their captors could not agree, the Father and his companions endured, more than ever, the pangs of death. Those Barbarians are accustomed to give prisoners, whom they do not choose to put to death, to the families who have lost some of their relatives in war. These prisoners take the place of the deceased, and are incorporated into that family, which alone has the right to kill them, or to let them live. The others would not dare to offend them; but when they retain some public prisoner, like the Father, without giving him to any individual, this poor man is every day within two finger-lengths of death. If some rascal beat him to death, no one will trouble himself about it; if he drag out his poor life, it is by favor of some individuals who have love for him. In such condition was the Father, and one of the Frenchmen; for the other had been given to take the place of a Hiroquois killed in war.

The young Frenchman who was the Father's com-