

God tried him exceedingly [97] in that journey, and that he saw himself a long time without other support than Faith alone; his desolation was so great, and the sight of his miseries appeared to him so frightful that he knew not in what direction to turn. He had recourse to prayer; he would go to the woods as soon as it was morning, bringing back even more wood than was needed to keep up the fire which burns day and night in their cabins. His task done, he withdrew alone upon a hill covered with spruce trees; and there he spent eight or ten hours in prayer, without other conversation than that with God,—remaining most of the time upon his knees on the snow, before a Cross which he had himself set up. He continued these exercises during forty days, without house, without fire, without other shelter than the Sky and the woods, and a miserable scrap of I know not what, almost as transparent as the air. Those of his cabin, having perceived his retreat, espied him; and, supposing that he was there preparing some spells in order to make men die, they tormented him from time to time, playing upon him a thousand tricks. One would present his bow, pretending that he was about to let fly his arrows upon him; another would approach him, hatchet in hand, telling him that he would strike him dead if he did not [98] desist from his charms. They broke up the Cross which served him as oratory, but he engraved another on wood; they sometimes felled trees near him, in order to frighten him. Returning at evening to the cabin, he carried another great burden of wood; but, for all recompense, they cast reproaches at him that he was a wizard; that his prayers were sorceries, which prevented the success of their hunting.