

Sokokiois appeared in the land of the Hiroquois, laden with presents, which he came to offer for the ransom and deliverance of a Frenchman named Ondesson,—thus the Hurons and Hiroquois named Father Jogues. This man related that one of his fellow-countrymen, a man of note, having fallen into the hands of the Algonquins, had been very badly treated; but that Onontio and the French had made great gifts to redeem him, and had saved his life; and thereupon he drew forth some letters from the Captain of the French, to be delivered to Ondesson. This embassy gave some credit to the Father, and caused him to be regarded for a short time with more compassionate eyes; but those Barbarians, having accepted the gifts, nevertheless did not set him at liberty,—violating the law of nations, and the law accepted among all these tribes.

This new benevolence did not prevent a madman from almost beating to death this poor Father; this man entered with fury into his cabin, [108] and gave him two heavy blows with a war-club on the head, prostrating him half dead; and if some persons had not hindered him, he would have taken the Father's life. Nothing else happened, except that his poor aunt began to weep; and, from that time, she warned him secretly of the evil designs which were brewed against him, urging him to escape and to extricate himself from that harsh captivity. I will say, in passing, that these madmen—of whom there is a great number in that country, and in many other regions of America—are rather agitated, and, as it were, possessed, by some Demon, who causes in them this fury from time to time, than injured in the brain by any natural disease.