

Europeans. When once they have received the Faith, and when they believe that he who obeys God's commands will be saved, and that, if he commits a sin, it will be forgiven, provided he be really [59] contrite and have confessed, they expect that God on his part will infallibly do what he has promised; and, in truth, they are right. I shall here mention, as the conclusion of this Chapter, a ceremony of the Savages that has afforded us consolation, for they are beginning to give quite a Christian character to the harmless usages that they have derived from their infidel ancestors. It has often been mentioned in the previous Relations that it was the custom of the Savages to bring back to life those among them who were persons of note, or who were greatly beloved by them during their lifetime. This is still done, in order that the orphans may not be abandoned; for he to whom the name of their father is given takes charge of the children. A Christian Captain of St. Joseph who wished to bring one of his relatives back to life, gave a feast at which about 50 guests were present. I should say, in passing, that it is by means of feasts and presents that most of their affairs are transacted. When each one had taken his place,—which is always the first he finds,—this Captain delivered the following harangue: “Were I not a Christian, and had I not the belief that we shall all rise again, I would have every reason to grieve for the [60] loss of my nephew last year; his death would sadden my heart. But—inasmuch as life is taken away from us only to be again restored, as we are to see and meet one another again—it is not a death, but an absence; and consequently I take this resurrection of my nephew, that