

endure, who, at the climax of their tortures, have triumphed over both life and death.

As soon as they were taken captive, they were stripped naked, and [46] some of their nails were torn out; and the welcome which they received upon entering the village of St. Ignace was a hailstorm of blows with sticks upon their shoulders, their loins, their legs, their breasts, their bellies, and their faces,—there being no part of their bodies which did not then endure its torment.

Father Jean de Brebeuf, overwhelmed under the burden of these blows, did not on that account lose care for his flock; seeing himself surrounded with Christians whom he had instructed, and who were in captivity with him, he said to them: "My children, let us lift our eyes to Heaven at the height of our afflictions; let us remember that God is the witness of our sufferings, and will soon be our exceeding great reward. Let us die in this faith; and let us hope from his goodness the fulfillment of his promises. I have more pity for you than for myself; but sustain with courage the few remaining torments. They will end with our lives; the glory which follows them will never have an end." "Echon," they said to him (this is the name which the Hurons gave the Father), "our spirits will be in Heaven when our bodies shall be suffering on earth. Pray to God for us, that he may show us mercy; we will invoke him [47] even until death."

Some Huron Infidels—former captives of the Iroquois, naturalized among them, and former enemies of the Faith—were irritated by these words, and because our Fathers in their captivity had not their tongues captive. They cut off the hands of one, and