

which the Hurons have always given to Father Jean de Brebeuf); that he had been the first Apostle to the country; that he had died in order to assist them even to his last sigh; that they hoped that his example would touch us, and that our hearts could not refuse to die with them, since they wished to live as Christians.

In a word, their eloquence—or, rather, the disposition of their souls, and the reasons which nature could supply to them—conquered us. We could not doubt that God had chosen to speak to us by their lips; and although, at their coming, we all had entertained another design, we all found ourselves changed before their departure, and with a common consent we believed that it was necessary to follow God in the direction whither [97] he chose to call us,—whatever peril there might be in it for our lives, and in whatever depth of darkness we may continue,—for the remaining future, which is not in our power.

Our design is, therefore, to transfer the entire body of our forces, and this house of sainte Marie, to the Island of St. Joseph, which will be at once the center of our missions, and the bulwark of these countries. We have need more than ever of the prayers of France. Whatever may befall us, we carry with joy our souls in our hands, and our death will be our desire,—provided that our lives be spent only for the maintenance of the Faith and the glory of God in all these regions.

It will not be inappropriate to add, in this Chapter, the letter which the Father who had charge of that Mission writes to the Reverend Father Hierôme