

[75] Many, who were not Christians, attended the instructions as soon as they were given. Some others charged the Faith with being an evil thing, and would not listen to it,—affirming that their country had never been so afflicted as when they had commenced in earnest to abandon their old superstitions, and to receive Baptism. These people were among the wealthiest and most comfortably circumstanced. It needed, then, that God, if he would save them, should bring down their pride.

Indeed, while their provision of corn was very scanty, and although their greatest hope lay in the fishing,—which, every year during Winter, is wont to afford a very plentiful supply in that locality,—never had the latter turned out so unproductive as in the present season. Their custom is to make holes in ice two or three feet thick; under these, having come upon water, they cast their nets, in which are usually taken large quantities of fish, which flock to these openings. But this Winter there were no fish to be found in the meshes,—ten or twelve little herrings, which were occasionally encountered, being as manna from Heaven to these poor people, who were perishing from hunger. Quickly they found themselves at the end of their scanty [76] provisions,—without corn, without acorns, and without vegetables. Some proceeded to strip the trees, boiling the bark to render it eatable. Others lived on a certain moss which attaches itself to rocks,<sup>28</sup> and on a sort of punk which, being first rotted in water, becomes absorbent, and swells out like a sponge. Once a day, they cooked, in a large kettle, a small morsel of smoked fish, which yielded a bitter soup,—of which each person drank freely,