

families numbering about three hundred souls,—sad remains of a nation formerly so numerous, which calamities [92] have assailed at a time when they were most faithful to God. Heaven had there its elect,—in depopulating the earth, it has peopled itself with our spoils; and it suffices to content us in our losses to see that those who remain with us, although they have lost their goods, their relatives, their country, have not lost their faith. A year ago, more than three thousand persons had received Holy Baptism: what more holy wish could we have formed for them, than that they should take with them into Heaven their baptismal innocence? God granted them that grace sooner than they expected: could we rightly complain that he had hurried his favors upon them?—considering that we would have deemed ourselves only too blest, had we died in their company, so as to enjoy the same happiness.

By roads which covered a distance of about three hundred leagues we marched, upon our guard as in an enemy's country,—there not being any spot where the Iroquois is not to be feared, and where we did not see traces of his cruelty, or signs of his treachery. On one side we surveyed districts which, [93] not ten years ago, I reckoned to contain eight or ten thousand men. For all that, there remains not one of them. Going on beyond, we coasted along shores but lately reddened with the blood of our Christians. On another side you might have seen the trail, quite recent, of those who had been taken captive. A little farther on, were but the shells of cabins abandoned to the fury of the enemy,—those who had dwelt in them having fled into the forest, and condemned themselves to a life which is but