

Those who were totally without means to guard against the famine were attacked by a contagious malady, which carried off a great number of them, especially of the children.

The War had already made its ravages, not only in the devastation which occurred [13] in the preceding Winter, but in the number of massacres which happened all through the Summer, on the mainland in the vicinity of this Island; poverty compelled numbers of families to go thither, to seek death as much as life, in the open country given over to the fury of the enemy. But, that nothing might be lacking in the miseries of an afflicted people, all the days and nights of Winter were but nights of horror, passed in constant fear and expectation of a hostile party of Iroquois, of whom tidings had been received; these (it was said) were to come to us to sweep this Island, and to exterminate, with us, the remnants of a nation drawing to its end. Here is an aspect of the matter calamitous indeed; but it was in the midst of these desolations that God was pleased to bring forth, from their deepest misfortunes, the well-being of this people. Their hearts had become so tractable to the faith that we effected in them, by a single word, more than we had ever been able to accomplish in entire years. These poor people, dying of hunger, came of their own accord to see us, and besought of us Baptism,—[14] consoling themselves with hopes of Paradise, which they beheld as near to them as was the death itself which they carried in their bosoms.

One mother was visited, who had but her two breasts, and these dry and without milk,—which, nevertheless, were the sole offering she had been