

them until we had the means to clothe them. He replied that he would be very glad to give us his son, but that his wife did not wish to do so. The women have great power here. A man may promise you something, and, if he does not keep his promise, he thinks he is sufficiently excused when he tells you [104] that his wife did not wish to do it. I told him then that he was the master, and that in France women do not rule their husbands. "That is very well," said he, "but I know enough to instruct my son; I shall teach him to make speeches. Instruct the Montagnais first; if thou succeedest well, then we will give thee our children."

I talked to him about God, and he listened very attentively. I taught him a little prayer in the Montagnais language, which he understands very well. He repeated it in his tongue, and promised me that he would say it often. Then, as the time had come for me to go and recite my office, I told him that I was going to pray to God. He followed me, entered my little room, and remained there until I had finished, asking me a number of questions afterward. In short, he did not go away until night.

[105] On the 18th and 20th of April, it thundered loudly and violently, with sharp flashes of lightning, and yet the river was still frozen, and the ground white with snow; this showed us that there was heat in the air, and these snows and this cold were accidental and contrary to the nature of the climate. We are on a parallel with la Rochelle, as I have already said. All the Frenchmen can testify that they have never seen in the heart of France so warm a month of May as they have experienced in Kebec.