

soon as they would reach there. I trusted to the charity of many good people who would not withhold alms to rescue the bodies of these poor creatures from the sufferings they endured, and their souls from eternal damnation. So I approached monsieur [41] du Plessis, our Lieutenant, and explained the situation to him. Alms are given in France to restore men to liberty who are imprisoned for debt, and why should not something be done for these poor slaves of Satan? I promised him that we would give all that we could. He took up the subject, and in the evening presented it to those who ate at our Captain's table. They answered that it would require large gifts to save their lives. Monsieur du Plessis said that they [the French] would give what they could, and that, besides, large gifts were unnecessary, as the three Hiroquois prisoners could be demanded in exchange for one Frenchman who had been killed a few years ago, or at least two could be demanded, and they would be surely given up. The interpreter who had talked to them assured me that it was an easy [42] matter. Thereupon a thousand objections were urged, and one of the company cried out that the captives ought to die; that he would rather strangle them, that they were rascals, and that in talking to a Savage in Kebec, he [the Savage] had advised him to have them killed. If the death of these poor wretches brought profits to the fur trade which people come here to carry on, there would be some reason for this eagerness for their death; but neither their life nor their death could affect it. Oh, how important it is that those sent to this country should be carefully chosen! It is true that monsieur Emery de Caën did not approve of this cruelty.