

in the 25 or 30 leagues of country which the Hurons occupy,—others estimate it at much less,—there are more than thirty thousand souls. The neutral nation is much more populous, the Hiroquois largely so, and the Algonquains have a country of very great extent. I would like to have now only five or six of our Fathers in each of these nations; and yet I would not dare to ask for them, although for one that we desire ten would volunteer, all ready to die in these countries. But I learn that all we have in France for this mission is little; how then shall we take the children, especially those of these populous nations, to maintain and instruct them? Alas, must it be that the goods of this world are a barrier to the blessings of Heaven? Oh, that we had only the crumbs of bread that fall from the tables of the rich of the world, to give to these little children! I do not [336] complain, I ask nothing from any one whomsoever; but I cannot restrain my emotion when I see that dirt (for what else is wealth here below?) prevents these people from knowing and adoring God. And if any one thinks it strange that I speak in this way, let him come, let him open his eyes, let him see these people crying for the bread of the word of God; and, if he is not touched with compassion, and if he does not cry louder than I do, I will condemn myself to perpetual silence.

On the third of August, Monsieur de Champlain, having returned from three Rivers, where he had gone after the departure of our Fathers, told us that a French interpreter for the Algonquin nation had come from the Hurons and brought the tidings that Father Brebeuf was suffering greatly; that his Savages were sick, and that he had to paddle continual-