

They are very diligent and attentive to the instructions we give them; I do not know whether it is through complaisance, for they have a great deal of this naturally, or through an instinct from above, that they listen to us so willingly concerning the mysteries of our Faith, and repeat after us, whether they understand it or not, all that [214] we declare to them. They very willingly make the sign of the Cross, as they see us make it, raising their hands and eyes to Heaven and pronouncing the words, "Jesus, Mary," as we do,—so far that, having observed the honor we render to the Cross, these poor people paint it on their faces, chests, arms, and legs, without being asked to do so. I am very willing that they should do all these things in the beginning from a natural simplicity, which causes them to imitate all they see, rather than from any greater consideration; because in time they may be helped by it, and they will not be the first, who come to practice by choice that to which by casual encounter they have become accustomed. Besides, what is of no small importance, they sometimes urge us to pray our good Jesus for them, [215] for the success of their hunting and for relief from their diseases.

The other encouragement we see here, for the preaching of the Gospel, is in the honesty and decency that we see shining forth in them like two bright rays of light in the midst of darkness. We never think of distrusting our Savages, or of watching their hands and their feet, as with some others who attract everything to them and appropriate all they find at their convenience. Everything is free to them in all places, and yet nothing is in danger in their presence, even if they are alone in a cabin and