

*The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610–1791*, vol. VIII, edited by Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland, The Burrows Brothers Company, 1897), pages 69–153. [Even though this edition included both the French on one page, and English on the other, only the English was copied here, hence the strange page numbers.]

*The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* are a voluminous collection of letters written by missionaries in New France and were intended to solicit support for their attempts to proselytize Indigenous peoples. The Jesuits first arrived on the banks of the St. Lawrence in 1625, and their subsequent letters contain a wealth of detail on Indigenous societies, French missionaries, and the early contact period in Canada. The Jesuits were some of the earliest Europeans to live amongst First Nations, learn their language, and document their engagements with them. The letters are at once ethnography, travel account, and literary creations. The following letter by Father Jean de Brebeuf was first sent to Father Paul Le Jeune, the superior-general of the Jesuit missions in Canada, and then to the provincial father of the Society of Jesus in Paris. Likely, it was edited at various stages along its journey to publication.

**The Jesuit relations and allied documents travels and  
explorations of the Jesuit missionaries in New France,  
1610–1791 : the original French, Latin, and Italian texts,  
with English translations and notes /**

**Cleveland: Burrows, 1897.**

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The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents

TRAVELS AND EXPLORATIONS  
OF THE JESUIT MISSIONARIES  
IN NEW FRANCE  
1610–1791

THE ORIGINAL FRENCH, LATIN, AND ITAL-  
IAN TEXTS, WITH ENGLISH TRANSLA-  
TIONS AND NOTES; ILLUSTRATED BY



PORTRAITS, MAPS, AND FACSIMILES

EDITIED BY  
REUBEN GOLD THWAITES  
Secretary of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Vol. VIII  
QUEBEC, HURONS, CAPE BRETON  
1634–1636

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[113] Relation of what occurred among the Hurons in the year 1635.

*Sent to Kebec to Father le Jeune, by Father Brebeuf.*

MY REVEREND FATHER,

I send you an account of our journey into this Huron Country. It has been filled with more fatigues, losses and expenses than the other, but also has been followed, and will be, God aiding, by more of Heaven's blessings.

[114] When last year, one thousand six hundred and thirty-four, we arrived at the three Rivers, where the trading post was, we found ourselves in several difficulties and perplexities. For, on the one hand, there were only eleven Huron canoes to embark our ten additional persons who were intending to go into their Country. On the other, we were greatly in doubt whether any others would descend this year, considering the great loss they had experienced in war with the Hiroquois, named *Sononttrerrhonons*,<sup>21</sup> last Spring, and the fear they had of a new invasion. This placed us much in doubt whether we ought to take advantage of the opportunity which was presented, or wait for a better one.

At last, after full consideration, we [115] resolved to try our fortune, judging that it was of vital importance to have a footing in the Country in order to open the door which seemed firmly closed to the Faith....

Speaking of their expressions of admiration, I might here set down several on the subject of the lodestone, into which they looked to see if there was [162] some paste; and of a glass with eleven facets, which represented a single object as many times; of a little phial in which a flea appears as large as a beetle; of the prism, of the joiner's tools; but above all of the writing, for



they could not conceive how, what one of us, being in the village, had said to them, and put down at the same time in writing, another, who meanwhile was in a house far away, could say readily on seeing the writing. I believe they have made a hundred trials of it. All this serves to gain their affections, and to render them more docile when we introduce the admirable and incomprehensible mysteries of our Faith; for the belief they have in our intelligence and capacity causes them to accept without reply what we say to them.

[163] It remains now to say something of the country, of the manners and customs of the Hurons, of the inclination they have to the Faith, and of our insignificant labors.

As to the first, the little paper and leisure we have compels me to say in a few words what might justly fill a volume. The Huron country is not large, its greatest extent can be traversed in three or four days. Its situation is fine, the greater part of it consisting of plains. It is surrounded and intersected by a number of very beautiful lakes or rather seas, whence it comes that the one to the North and to the North-northwest is called "fresh-water Sea" [mer douce].<sup>33</sup> We pass through it in coming from the Bissiriniens. The soil of this country is quite sandy, although not equally so. However, it produces a quantity of very good Indian corn, and one may [164] say that is the granary of most of the Algonquains. There are twenty Towns, which indicate about 30,000 souls speaking the same tongue, which is not difficult to one who has a master. It has distinction of genders, number, tense, person, moods; and, in short, it is very complete and very regular, contrary to the opinion of many. I am rejoiced to find that this language is common to some twelve other Nations, all settled and numerous; these are, the *Conkhandeenrhonons*, *khionontaterrhonons*, *Atiouandaronks*, *Sonontoerrhonons*, *Onontaerrhonons*, *Oüioenrhonons*, *Onoiochrhonons*, *Agnierrhonons*, *Andastoerrhonons*, *Scahentoarrhonons*, *Rhiierrhonons*, and *Ahouenrochrhonons*.<sup>34</sup> The Hurons are friends of all these people, except the *Sonontoerrhonons*, *Onontaerrhonons*, *Oüioenrhonons*, *Onoiochrhonons* [165] and *Agnierrhonons*, all of whom we comprise under the name Hiroquois. But they have already made peace with the *Sonontoerrhonons*, since they were defeated by them a year past in the Spring.

The deputies of the whole Country have gone to *Sonontoen*<sup>35</sup> to confirm this peace, and it is said that the *Onontaerrhonons*, *Oüioenrhonons*, *Oüiochrhonons* and *Agnierrhonons* wish to become parties to it. But that is not certain; if it were, a noble door would be open to the Gospel. They wanted me to go to this *Sonontoen*, but I did not judge it wise to go yet into any other part, until we have better established here the foundation of the Gospel Law, and until we have drawn a line by which the other Nations that shall be converted may guide themselves. Indeed, I would not go to any place where [166] we would not be immediately recognized as Preachers of Jesus Christ.

It is so clear, so evident that there is a Divinity who has made Heaven and earth, that our Hurons cannot entirely ignore it. And although the eyes of their minds are very much obscured by the darkness of a long ignorance, by their vices and sins, they still see something of it. But they misapprehend him grossly, and, having the knowledge of God, they do not render him the honor, the love, nor the service which is his due. For they have neither Temples, nor Priests, nor Feasts, nor any ceremonies.

They say that a certain woman named *Eataentsic*<sup>36</sup> is the one who made earth and men. They give her an assistant, one named *Jouskeha*, whom they declare to be her little son, with whom she governs [167] the world. This *Jouskeha* has care of the living, and of the things that concern life, and consequently they say that he is good. *Eataentsic* has care of souls; and, because they believe that she makes men die, they say that she is wicked. And there are among them mysteries so hidden that only the old men, who can speak with credit and authority about



them, are believed. Whence it comes that a certain young man, who was talking to me about this, said boastingly, "Am I not very learned?" Some told me that the house of these two Divinities is at the end of the world to the East. Now with them the world does not pass beyond their Country, that is, America. Others place their abode in the middle.

This God and Goddess live like themselves, but without famine; make feasts as they do, are lustful as they; in short, they imagine them [168] exactly like themselves. And still, though they make them human and corporeal, they seem nevertheless to attribute to them a certain immensity in all places. They say that this *Eataentsic* fell from the Sky, where there are inhabitants as on earth; and, when she fell, she was with child. If you ask them who made the Sky and its inhabitants, they have no other reply than that they know nothing about it. And when we preach to them of one God, Creator of Heaven and earth, and of all things, and even when we talk to them of Hell and Paradise and of our other mysteries, the headstrong savages reply that this is good for our Country and not for theirs; that every Country has its own fashions. But having pointed out to them, by means of a little globe that we had brought, that there is [169] only one world, they remain without reply. I find in their marriage customs two things that greatly please me; the first, that they have only one wife; the second, that they do not marry their relatives in a direct or collateral line, however distant they may be. There is, on the other hand, sufficient to censure, were it only the frequent changes the men make of their wives, and the women of their husbands. They believe in the immortality of the soul,<sup>37</sup> which they believe to be corporeal. The greatest part of their Religion consists in this point. There are, besides, only superstitions, which we hope by the grace of God to change into true Religion, and, like spoils carried off from the enemy, to consecrate them to the honor of our Lord, and to profit by them for their special advantage. Certainly, if, [170] should they some day be Christians, these superstitions help them in proportion to what they do for them now in vain, it will be necessary that we yield to them, or that we imitate them; for they spare nothing, not even the most avaricious. We have seen several stripped, or almost so, of all their goods, because several of their friends were dead, to whose souls they had made presents. Moreover, dogs, deer, fish, and other animals have, in their opinion, immortal and reasonable souls. In proof of this, the old men relate certain fables, which they represent as true; they make no mention either of punishment or reward, in the place to which souls go after death. And so they do not make any distinction between the good and the bad, the virtuous and the vicious; [171] and they honor equally the interment of both, even as we have seen in the case of a young man who had poisoned himself from the grief he felt because his wife had been taken away from him. Their superstitions are infinite; their feasts, their medicines; their fishing, their hunting, their wars,—in short, almost their whole life turns upon this pivot; dreams, above all, have here great credit.

This whole country, and I believe it is the same elsewhere, is not lacking in wicked men, who, from motives of envy or vengeance, or from other cause, poison or bewitch, and, in short, put to death sooner or later those whom they wish to injure. When such people are caught, they are put to death on the spot, without any form of trial, and there is no disturbance about it. As to other murders, they [172] are avenged upon the whole Nation of the murderer; so that is the only class I know about that they put to death with impunity. I knew indeed a girl that stole, who was at once killed without any inquiry, but it was by her own brother. If some traitor appears, who is planning the ruin of the Country, they endeavor in common to get rid of him as soon as possible; but these accidents are very rare.

They say that the Sorcerers ruin them; for if any one has succeeded in an enterprise, if his trading or hunting is successful, immediately these wicked men bewitch him, or some member of



his family, so that they have to spend it all in Doctors and Medicines. Hence, to cure these and other diseases, there are a large number of Doctors whom they call *Arendiouane*. These persons, in [173] my opinion, are true Sorcerers, who have access to the Devil. Some only judge of the evil, and that in divers ways, namely, by Pyromancy, by Hydromancy, Necromancy, by feasts, dances, and songs; the others endeavor to cure the disease by blowing, by potions, and by other ridiculous tricks, which have neither any virtue nor natural efficacy. But neither class do anything without generous presents and good pay.

There are here some Soothsayers, whom they call also *Arendiouane* and who undertake to cause the rain to fall or to cease, and to predict future events. The Devil reveals to them some secrets, but with so much obscurity that one is unable to accuse them of falsehood; witness one of the village of *Scanonaenrat* <sup>38</sup> [174] who, a little while before the burning of the villages before mentioned, had seen in a dream three flames falling from the Sky on those villages. But the Devil had not declared to him the meaning of this enigma; for, having obtained from the village a white dog, to make a feast with it and to seek information by it, he remained as ignorant afterward as before.

Lastly, when I was in the house of Louys de sainte Foy, an old woman, a sorceress, or female soothsayer of that village, said she had seen those who had gone to the war, and that they were bringing back a prisoner. We shall see if she has spoken the truth. Her method is by pyromancy. She draws for you in her hut the lake of the Hiroquois; <sup>39</sup> then on one side she makes as many fires as there are persons who have gone on [175] the expedition, and on the other as many fires as they have enemies to fight. Then, if her spell succeeds, she lets it be understood that the fires from this side have run over, and that signifies that the warriors have already crossed the lake. One fire extinguishing another marks an enemy defeated; but if it attracts it to itself without extinguishing it, that is a prisoner taken at mercy. It is thus,—to finish my discourse, which would be too long if I tried to say everything,—that the Devil amuses this poor people, substituting his impieties and superstitions in place of the compliance they ought to have with the providence of God, and the worship they ought to render him.

As regards morals, the Hurons are lascivious, although in two leading points less so than many Christians, who will blush [176] some day in their presence. You will see no kissing nor immodest caressing; and in marriage a man will remain two or three years apart from his wife, while she is nursing. They are gluttons, even to disgorging; it is true, that does not happen often, but only in some superstitious feasts,—these, however, they do not attend willingly. Besides, they endure hunger much better than we,—so well that after having fasted two or three entire days you will see them still paddling, carrying loads, singing, laughing, bantering, as if they had dined well. They are very lazy, are liars, thieves, pertinacious beggars. Some consider them vindictive; but, in my opinion, this vice is more noticeable elsewhere than here. We see shining among them some rather noble moral [177] virtues. You note, in the first place, a great love and union, which they are careful to cultivate by means of their marriages, of their presents, of their feasts, and of their frequent visits. On returning from their fishing, their hunting, and their trading, they exchange many gifts; if they have thus obtained something unusually good, even if they have bought it, or if it has been given to them, they make a feast to the whole village with it. Their hospitality towards all sorts of strangers is remarkable; they present to them in their feasts the best of what they have prepared, and, as I have already said, I do not know if anything similar, in this regard, is to be found elsewhere. I think I have read, in the lives of the Fathers, that a Pagan army was converted on seeing the charity and hospitality of a Christian town, the inhabitants of which vied with each other in [178] caressing and feasting the Strangers,—judging



well that those must profess the true Religion and worship the true God, the common Father of all, who had hearts so benign and who did so much good to all sorts of persons, without distinction. We have also hope that our Lord will give at last the light of his knowledge, and will communicate the fire of his graces, to this Nation, which he seems to have disposed thereto by the practice of this noble virtue. They never close the door upon a Stranger, and, once having received him into their houses, they share with him the best they have; they never send him away, and, when he goes away of his own accord, he repays them by a simple “thank you.” This makes me hope that, if once it pleases God to illumine them, they will respond perfectly [179] to the grace and inspiration of his Son. And, since he has come as a Stranger into his own house, I promise myself that these good people will receive him at all hours into their hearts without making him wait too long on account of their hardness, without withholding from him anything in the whole range of their affections, without betraying him or driving him outside by any serious fault, and without claiming anything in his service other than his honor and glory; which is all the fidelity one can ask in a soul for the good use and holy employment of the favors of Heaven.

What shall I say of their strange patience in their poverty, famine, and sickness? We have seen this year whole villages prostrated, their food a little insipid *sagamité*; and yet not a word of complaint, not a movement [180] of impatience. They receive indeed the news of death with more constancy than those Christian Gentlemen and Ladies to whom one would not dare to mention it. Our Savages hear of it not only without despair, but without troubling themselves, without the slightest pallor or change of countenance. We have especially admired the constancy of our new Christians. The next to the last one who died, named Joseph *Oatij*, lay on the bare ground during four or five months, not only before but after his Baptism,—so thin that he was nothing but bones; in a lodge so wretched that the winds blew in on all sides; covered during the cold of winter with a very light skin of some black animals, perhaps black squirrels, and very poorly nourished. He was never heard to make a complaint, however. May our Lord Jesus Christ be ever [181] praised. It is on such dispositions and foundations that we hope, with the grace of God, to build the edifice of the Christian Religion among these people, who, besides, are already affectionately inclined toward us and have a great opinion of us. It is now our part to correspond to our vocation, and to the voice of Our Savior, who says to us, *videte regiones, quoniam albae sunt iam ad messem*. It is true, my Reverend Father, that *messis multa, operarii pauci*, and, besides, we are very weak for so great an enterprise, at least I am, and therefore I beseech our Reverend Father Provincial and Your Reverence to send us help. For this I could cry willingly to the good God, *mitte quem missurus es*; as for us, we are children, who can only stammer. Yet see what we, trusting in the goodness of Our Lord, and not in our own strength and skill, [182] have done for the conversion of this People since our arrival. In the first place, we have been employed in the study of the language, which, on account of the diversity of its compound words, is almost infinite. One can, nevertheless, do nothing without this study. All the French who are here have eagerly applied themselves to it, reviving the ancient usage of writing on birch bark, for want of paper. Fathers Davost and Daniel have worked at it, beyond all; they know as many words as I, and perhaps more; but they have not yet had practice in forming and joining them together promptly, although Father Daniel already explains himself passably well. As for me, who give lessons therein to our French, if God does not assist me extraordinarily, I shall yet have to go a long time to the school of the Savages, so prolific is [183] their language. That does not prevent me from understanding almost all they say, and from making them fairly understand my meaning, even in the explanation of our most ineffable mysteries. In addition, we have



employed ourselves in visiting, entreating, and instructing the sick, who have been, as I have said, very numerous. It has been in this pious exercise that we have won souls for our Lord, to the number of thirteen. The first was a little girl of this village, only four or five months old; she died a quarter of an hour after her baptism, in which she was named Josepha, to fulfill a vow I had made to give this name to the first that we should regenerate with the holy waters,—in gratitude for so many favors that we have received and are receiving [184] by the interposition of that great Saint. This was on the sixth of September, 1634. The second was another little girl, about two years of age, whom we baptized on the next day. She died on the eleventh of the same month and year, having been named Marie.

On the 26th of the same month, I baptized Marie *Oquiaendis*, the mother of the Captain of this village, grandmother of the other Marie. She is still living, and attributes her recovery to the virtue of Holy Baptism, publishing it everywhere. In truth, she was almost gone; and as soon as she was washed with the sacred waters she began to improve. On the 20th of October, I set out to go to the Tobacco Nation.<sup>40</sup> In this journey God granted me the favor of baptizing and sending to Heaven three little children, one of whom, among others, was about to give forth his last breath when I reached the lodge and had scarcely time [185] to sprinkle him. When I returned from the journey I found that Father Daniel had baptized Joseph *Joutaya*, who was believed to be at the point of death. I had instructed him previously. He survived a long time, in a languishing condition, and doing many acts of virtue. We helped him both bodily and spiritually; so well that he and all his family attributed the prolongation of his life to nothing but the double assistance he had received from us. At last, having happily died in the confession and invocation of the true God, and in repentance for his sins, we solemnly interred him as he had desired. We admired the care, the charity, and the perseverance of his wife in the duties and services she rendered to him during a long, very dirty, and very disgusting sickness. She and all her house, (where we have already baptized three) have continued [186] warmly attached to us; and they have often protested to me that they will all be, in life, in death, and beyond, at our service. But we do not judge them yet sufficiently instructed. It is this cabin where lives the first Huron I ever baptized, which was in the year one thousand six hundred and twenty-nine, before our departure from this Country. It was a little child, looked upon as dead, who seemed to be born and live again in a double sense, in the life-imparting waters of holy Baptism. He still lives, being about five years of age, and is very gentle.

On the twenty-first of October, was baptized Joseph *Sondaarouhané*, about forty or fifty years of age. He had great goodness and natural sweetness, and had been attached to me for a long time. He yielded up his blessed spirit to God, on the twentieth of November. On the same [187] day was baptized Joachim *Tsindacaiendoua*, an old man of 80 years. He was one of the best-natured Hurons I have ever known. The next day he left this life, to begin a better one, as we believe; we interred him solemnly in a separate place. This ceremony attracted upon us the eyes of the whole village, and caused several to desire that we should honor their burial in the same way,—notably Joseph *Joutaia*, the one above-mentioned, who, after the obsequies were over, told me that he would have been very glad if we had passed through his cabin in the style in which we were dressed, so that he might see us from the place in which sickness kept him bound; for they had talked so much to him about the matter that he declared of his own will that he wished to be interred by our hands, which was done.

[188] Since I have referred to this man's decision, I will tell a memorable thing which happened to him after his Baptism. The Devil appeared to him in the form of one of his deceased brothers. Entering his cabin without any salutation, he sat down on the other side of the fire



opposite our new Christian, and remained a long time without speaking. At last beginning to speak, he said to him, "How now, my brother, do you wish to leave us?" Our Joseph, who was not yet sufficiently equipped for this warfare, replied, "No, my brother, I don't wish to leave you; I will not leave you," and it is said this false brother then began to caress him. Still, he has since declared several times that he desired to go to Heaven.

On the twenty-seventh of November, Martin Tsicok, already a very [189] old man and of a very gentle disposition, was baptized. This good man did not cease to invoke Jesus and Mary from his baptism until the 15th of December, when he died. I began to instruct him with this truth, that our souls after death all go to Hell or to Paradise; that Paradise is a place full of delights and contentment, and on the contrary that Hell is a place of fires, of pains, and eternal torments; that, besides, he should think, while he was yet in life, to which of these places he desired to go and dwell forever. Then this good old man, turning to his wife, said to her, "My wife, is it not indeed better to go to Heaven? I am afraid of those horrible fires of hell." His wife was of the same opinion, and thus he willingly listened to the instructions we gave him.

On the nineteenth of January, I set out [190] for the house of Louys de sainte Foy, distant from our village seven or eight leagues. I had been neither able nor willing to go sooner, as he had gone to the neutral Nation<sup>41</sup> to seek his father, who had remained there, a cripple.

On this journey passing through *Onnentissati*,<sup>42</sup> I went to see a man named *oukhahitoïia*, who last year embarked one of our men. Finding him dying, I instructed him; he believed, he detested his past life, he was baptized under the name of François, and two days later quitted this world to fly to Heaven.

On the twenty-ninth of March, we solemnly baptized in our little Chapel Joseph Oatij; François petit Pré<sup>43</sup> was his Godfather, and many were present. We had been instructing him a long time, and hence he replied [191] personally to the questions I put to him in the Huron tongue. This good young man was of a very sickly constitution; we had gained him by continual assistance, which had twice saved his life; so that he willingly put in our hands the care of his soul, which went happily to God on the fourteenth of April, after having been fortified by the Sacrament of extreme Unction.

We especially admired his patience and tranquility of mind, especially after his baptism. Scarcely had we begun to instruct him when he began to say very often, both by day and by night, "Jesus, have pity on me! Mary and Joseph, help me!"

Lastly, on the twentieth of April, I baptized at Oënrio a very old woman, who died on the twenty-fourth. [192] At first, when I talked to her, and asked her whether she wished to go to Heaven or to Hell, she did not answer, except to say that she would go where her son wished. But having told her that her father, the late Joachim *Tsindacaiendoua*, had gone to Heaven, she said, "Then I wish to go there!"

These, then, are the fruits that we have gathered from our visits and private instructions. I believe the harvest would have been greater if I could have left our village, and visited the others. May it please our Lord to accept these few first fruits, and give us strength and opportunities to gather more of them. We have instructed many others, who asked very urgently for Baptism; but not seeing them in danger of death, we have kept them back for further instructions.

[193] About the month of December, the snow began to lie on the ground, and the Savages settled down in the village. For, during the whole Summer and Autumn, they are for the most part either in their rural cabins, taking care of their crops, or on the lake fishing, or trading; which makes it not a little inconvenient to instruct them. Seeing them, therefore, thus gathered



together at the beginning of this year, we resolved to preach publicly to all, and to acquaint them with the reason of our coming into their Country, which is not for their furs, but to declare to them the true God and his son, Jesus Christ, the universal Savior of our souls.

We gave the Instruction or Catechism in our cabin, for we had as yet no other suitable Church. This is often the most [194] we can do; for their feasts, dances, and games so occupy them that we cannot get them together as we would like.

The usual method that we follow is this: We call together the people by the help of the Captain of the village, who assembles them all in our house as in Council, or perhaps by the sound of the bell. I use the surplice and the square cap, to give more majesty to my appearance. At the beginning, we chant on our knees the *Pater noster*, translated into Huron verse. Father Daniel, as its author, chants a couplet alone, and then we all together chant it again; and those among the Hurons, principally the little ones, who already know it, take pleasure in chanting it with us, and the others in listening. That done, when everyone is seated, I rise and make [195] the sign of the Cross for all; then, having recapitulated what I said the last time, I explain something new. After that we question the young children and the girls, giving a little bead of glass or porcelain to those who deserve it. The parents are very glad to see their children answer well and carry off some little prize, of which they render themselves worthy by the care they take to come privately to get instruction. On our part, to arouse their emulation, we have each lesson retraced by our two little French boys, who question each other,—which transports the Savages with admiration. Finally the whole is concluded by the talk of the Old Men, who propound their difficulties, and sometimes [196] make me listen in my turn to the statement of their belief.

We began our Catechizing by this memorable truth, that their souls, which are immortal, all go after death either to Paradise or to Hell. It is thus we approach them, either in public or in private. I added that they had the choice, during life, to participate after death in the one or the other,—which one, they ought now to consider. Whereupon one honest old man said to me, “Let him who will, go to the fires of Hell; I want to go to Heaven;” all the others followed and making use of the same answer, begged us to show them the way, and to take away the stones, the trees, and the thickets therein, which might stop them.

Our Hurons, as you see, are not so dull as one might think them; [197] they seem to me to have rather good common sense, and I find them universally very docile. Nevertheless, some of them are obstinate, and attached to their superstitions and evil customs. These are principally the old people; for beyond these, who are not numerous, the rest know nothing of their own belief. We have two or three of this number in our village. I am often in conflict with them; and then I show them they are wrong, and make them contradict themselves, so that they frankly admit their ignorance, and the others ridicule them; still they will not yield, always falling back upon this, that their Country is not like ours, that they have another God, another Paradise, in a word, other customs.

They tell us how the woman, named *Eataentsic*, fell from Heaven [198] into the waters with which the earth was covered; and that little by little, the earth became bare. I ask them who created the Heaven in which this woman could not stay, and they remain mute; as also when I press them to tell me who formed the earth, seeing that it was beneath the waters before the fall of this woman. One man asked me very cunningly, in this connection, where God was before the creation of the world. The reply was more easy for me, following St. Augustine, than the grasp of the question put to me was for them. Another good old man, having fallen sick, did not wish to hear of going to Heaven, saying he desired to go where his ancestors were. Some days afterwards, he came to me and told me a pleasant story: “Rejoice,” he said, “for I have returned



from the country of souls, and I have found none there any longer; [199] they have all gone to Heaven.”

There is nothing which does not serve for salvation when God pleases, not even dreams.

Two things among others have aided us very much in the little we have been able to do here, by the grace of our Lord; the first is, as I have already said, the good health that God has granted us in the midst of sickness so general and so widespread. For our Hurons have thought that, if they believed in God and served him as we do, they would not die in so large numbers.

The second is the temporal assistance we have rendered to the sick. Having brought for ourselves some few delicacies, we shared them with them, giving to one a few prunes and to another a few raisins, to others something else. The poor people came [200] from great distances to get their share.

Our French servants having succeeded very well in hunting, during the Autumn, we earned portions of game to all the sick. That chiefly won their hearts, as they were dying, having neither flesh nor fish to season their sagamité. Add that all our French have borne themselves, thank God, so virtuously and so peaceably on all sides, during the whole year, that they have drawn down the blessing of Heaven. We owe much also to our glorious saint Joseph, spouse of our Lady, and protector of the Hurons, who has rendered us tangible aid several times. It was a remarkable thing that on the day of his feast, and during the Octave, accommodations came to us from all sides.

[201] Before drawing to a close, I shall say only this one word about Louys de sainte Foy, which I would prefer not to say were it not that it may help to make this Nation more correctly known; it is this,—he is not such as he ought to be, and as we had wished. Nevertheless, we still have good hope. He was taken prisoner last year by the Hiroquois, in the common defeat, and carried away a captive. It cost him a finger. This severe stroke ought to suffice to bring him back to duty. His Father was not taken; he escaped by flight, but in fleeing he suffered in good earnest in the woods, where he remained, according to his account, thirty days struggling against three powerful enemies,—namely, cold, for it was Spring, and he was naked and fireless; sickness, for his two legs were powerless, and [202] he has not yet recovered; and, lastly, against hunger, in reference to which he relates a remarkable story, if it be true. He says that, having gone for ten or twelve days without eating, and praying to God, of whom he had heard his son speak, he saw what seemed a pot of grease, such as he had seen at Kebec, full of a very savory liquor, and heard a voice that said to him, “*Saranhes*, be of good cheer; thou wilt not die; take, drink what is in the pot and strengthen thyself,” which he did, and was marvelously solaced by it. A little later, he found in a thicket a small bagful of corn, with which he barely sustained life until some Savages of the neutral Nation, having accidentally found him, brought him to their village.

This man has declared to me that he and his whole family were desirous of being converted, [203] and of helping to bring the entire village to God’s service. But his is a crafty spirit, as well as his son’s, and I do not trust him yet. Our hope is in God, and in our Lord Jesus Christ, who shed his blood for the salvation of the Hurons, as well as for the rest of the world.

It is through this support, and not our own efforts, that we hope one day to see here a flourishing Christianity. Indeed, their minds are docile and flexible; I see only the liberty with which they change their wives at pleasure, and some superstitions, difficult to abolish, for in other respects they have no aversion to the Faith nor to the Christian Law. They turn willingly to God in their [204] necessities; they come to get their crops blessed, before sowing them; and ask us what we desire of them. All we have to fear is our own sins and imperfections, and I above



all. In truth, I feel myself extremely unworthy of this employment; but send holy ones to us, or pray to God our Lord that we may be such as he desires. A thousand entreaties for the holy sacrifices of your Reverence and of all our Fathers and Brothers.

YOUR REVERENCE'S

From our little House of St. Joseph, in the village of Ihonatiria in the Huron country, this 27th of May, 1635, the day on which the Holy Spirit descended visibly upon the Apostles.

Very humble and obedient  
servant in our Lord,

JEAN DE BREBEUF.