

"And therefore the renowned Membertou is worthy of greater praise because although he was the greatest Sagamore, the most feared, that they had for several centuries, yet he did not care to have more than one wife at a time; although a pagan judging from instinct that this plurality was both infamous and troublesome on account of the quarrels which always arose from it, as much among the wives as among the children of different mothers."*

In a previous Relation (1612-1614 Biard is still more explicit as to Membertou's attitude towards polygamy. He says, "Even before his conversion he [Membertou] never cared to have more than one wife, which is wonderful as the great Sagamores of this country maintain a numerous seraglio, etc."

Moreover, it is a noteworthy fact that the record of the baptism of himself and family at Port Royal ascribes to him but one wife, three sons, and one daughter. Nor were the names of other wives omitted on grounds of religion, for we read that Father Fleche scrupled not either to baptize the two wives of Louis Membertou—the old Sagamore's son—or to enter their names in the register of the Mission.

Parkman's sneer † that Membertou's continence was "hardly a superlative merit in a centenarian," thus loses its point; while his assertion of the plurality of Memberton's "squaws," meaning wives, is evidently incorrect.

If from the standpoint of political expediency our Mic-Mac Sagamore felt himself strong enough to override the advantages of a large family connection and

* Ibid. Vol. III. p. 103.

† Biard's Relation Ed. Ibid. p. 23.

‡ Pioneers of France, Morang's Edition. p. 284.