

“One reason is in order to retain their authority and power by having a lot of children, for in that lies the strength of the house, in the great number of allies and connections; the second reason is their entertainment and service, which is great and laborious, since they have large families and a great number of followers and, therefore require a number of servants and housewives; now they have no other servants, slaves, or mechanics but the women. These poor creatures endure all the misfortunes and hardships of life; they prepare and erect the houses or cabins, furnishing them with fire, wood, and water.”‡

No ordinary savage could have resisted the advantages of such an institution. No other Sagamore certainly did. Cacagous, for instance, who was Sagamore at this port of St. John when Biard visited it in 1611 and who should have been been a Christian, since he was baptized at Bayonne in France, openly boasted of the number of his wives. Calling them before him, as if in review, he presented seven of his eight squaws to the scandalized Jesuit, “with as much pride,” groans Father Biard, “instead of an equal degree of shame, as if I had asked him the number of his legitimate children.”||

Memberton alone rose superior to the allurements and advantages of the seraglio. He was never husband to more than one living wife; and the record of the baptisms at Port Royal in 1610 surprises us with the smallness of his own immediate family.

The Jesuit chroniclers attribute this continence to his hatred of domestic broils. Our old chief dearly loved a peaceful hearth. We quote again from Biard:—

‡ Ibid

|| Ibid. Vol. I. p. 43.