

object of our expedition. This done, an Indian, who officiated as master of ceremonies, came to conduct us to our lodgings.

We followed him and he led us to the largest cabin in the village, which they had prepared for our residence, giving orders to the women belonging to it not to let us want for anything. In truth they were at all times very faithful during our sojourn, in preparing our food and in bring the wood necessary to afford us light over night.

This village, like those of the Indians, is nothing but a collection of cabins, surrounded with palisades 12 or 13 feet high, bound together from the top and supported at the base, behind the palisade, by large masses of wood at the height of a man. The curtains are not otherwise flanked, but form a simple enclosure, perfectly square, so that these forts are not any protection. Besides this, the precaution is seldom taken to place them on the bank of a stream, or near a spring, but on some hill, where ordinarily they are quite distant from water.

On the evening of the 12th we saw all the other chiefs arrive so as to be in readiness for the council which was to be held next day."

Here follows an interesting account of the council meeting, and of their stay of ten days in the village, but too lengthy for this paper.

He says "during this interval the Indians obtained some brandy from the Dutch at New Holland, and many times the relatives of the person who had been killed at Montreal a few days before we left there, threatened in their intoxication to despatch us with their knives. In the meantime we kept so well on our guard that we escaped all injury.

During this interval I saw the saddest spectacle I had ever witnessed. I was informed one evening that some warriors had arrived with a prisoner, and had placed him in a cabin near our own. I went to see him and found him seated with three women who vied with each other in bewailing the death of a relation who had been killed in the skirmish in which the prisoner had been captured. He was a young man 18 or 20 years old, very well formed, whom they had clothed from head to foot since his arrival.

I thought, therefore, that I would have an opportunity to demand him for our guide, as they said he was one of the Tongenhas (probably from Ohio). I then went to M. de La Salle for that purpose, who told me that these Indians were men of their word, that since they had promised us a captive they would give us one, that it mattered

little whether it was this one or another, and it was useless to press them. I therefore gave myself no further trouble about it. Night came on and we retired.

The next day no sooner dawned than a large company entered our cabin to tell us that the captive was about to be burned, and that he had asked to see the Frenchman.

I ran to the public place to see him, and found he was already on the scaffold, where they had bound him hand and foot to a stake. I was surprised to hear him utter some Algonquin words which I knew, although from the manner in which he pronounced them they were hardly recognizable. He made me comprehend at last that he desired his execution should be postponed until the next day. I conversed with the Iroquois through our interpreter, who told me that the captive had been given to an old woman in the place of her son who had been killed, that she could not bear to see him live, that all the family took such a deep interest in his suffering that they would not postpone his torture. The irons were already in the fire to torment the poor wretch.

On my part I told the interpreter to demand him in place of the captive they had promised, and I would make a present to the old woman to whom he belonged, but he was not at any time willing to make the proposition, alleging that such was not their custom, and the affair was of too serious a nature.

I even used threats to induce him to say what I desired, but in vain, for he was as obstinate as a Dutchman and ran away to avoid me.

I then remained alone near the poor sufferer, who saw before him the instruments of his torture. I endeavored to make him understand that he could have no recourse but to God, and that he should pray to him thus: "Thou, who hast made all things, have pity on me. I am sorry not to have obeyed Thee, but if I should live, I will obey Thee in all things."

He understood me better than I expected. In the meantime I saw the principal relatives of the deceased approach him with a gun barrel, half of which was heated red hot. This obliged me to withdraw. I retired, therefore, with sorrow, and had scarcely turned away when the barbarous Iroquois applied the red hot gun barrel to the top of his feet, which caused the poor wretch to utter a loud cry. This turned me about and I saw the Iroquois, with a grave and sober countenance, apply the iron slowly along his feet and legs, and some old men who were smoking around the scaffold, and all the young