

with the air which suited our situation; the tone of suppliance was the only one that became us; we took it at first, but the old man, who spoke French, would not permit us to continue it.

"Are not all men equals?" said he, "at least ought they not to be? Your misfortune is a title to respect, and I regard it as a favor, that Heaven, by bringing you here, gives me an opportunity to do good to men, whom misery still pursues. I only require of you to tell me what has befallen you, since you were cast on this island; I should be glad to sympathize with you over your past sufferings; my sensibility will be a new consolation."

At the same time, he ordered them to cook our meat with peas, and spare nothing, to show that humanity is as much a virtue of the American Indian, as of more civilized people. When this old man had given his orders, he begged us to gratify his curiosity; I endeavored to forget none of the circumstances which you know attended our misfortune, and, after having finished my story, I begged the old man to tell me why the two Indians, whom we had seen in the depth of our misery, had refused to help us.

"Indians," said he, "tremble at the mere name of sickness, and all my arguments have not yet dispelled the terror which still fills all whom you see in this cabin. It is not that they are insensible to the misery of their brethren; they would fain help them, but the fear of breathing a tainted air checks the impulses of their hearts, which are naturally compassionate. They fear death, not like other men, but to such a degree, that I know not what crimes they would not commit, to avoid it."