

their design to surprise you, under color of a visit, as you will see by the enclosed, which, though badly written and spelt, will, to our great regret, give you all the particulars. I am sorry that the subject of this is not more agreeable; but the importance of the affair has not permitted me to be silent. Our minister above carefully inquired of the chiefs of this canaille their reasons for the wretched act, but he could get no answer from them but this, that the said Father had left, among some articles that he had left in their keeping, a devil, who had caused all their corn or maize to be eaten up by worms.\* This is all I can at present write to you. Praying God to vouchsafe to guard you and yours from this treacherous nation, and assuring you that I am

“Your most humble and obedient servant,

“WILLIAM KIEFT.

“Fort Amsterdam, in New Netherland, Nov. 14, 1646.”

IX.

LETTER OF JAN LABATIE TO MONSIEUR LA MONTAGNE.

(Enclosed in the foregoing.)

“Praised be God at Fort Orange!

“MONSIEUR, MONSIEUR LA MONTAGNE:

“I have not wished to lose this occasion of letting you know my state of health. I am in good health, thank God, and pray God that it may be so with you and your children.

“I have not much more, but how the French arrived the seventeenth of this month at the Maquaas Fort. This is to let you know how those ungrateful barbarians did not wait till they were fairly arrived at their cabins, where they were stripped all naked, without shirt, only they gave each a pair of drawers to cover decency.

“The very day of their coming they began to threaten

\* The allusion here is to Dominice John Megapolensis, to whom the Indians brought some of the books and clothes of the murdered missionary. The friendship existing between this early representative of the Dutch Church in New York and the Catholic missionaries, is one of the most pleasing incidents in this period. To his kind solicitude and subsequent hospitality, two acknowledged that, next to God, they owed their lives. A correspondence was subsequently carried on between them, and the missionaries lost no opportunity of expressing their gratitude to so eminent a benefactor, and the name of this clergyman of the Reformed Dutch Church is deservedly honored by the Catholics of New York.