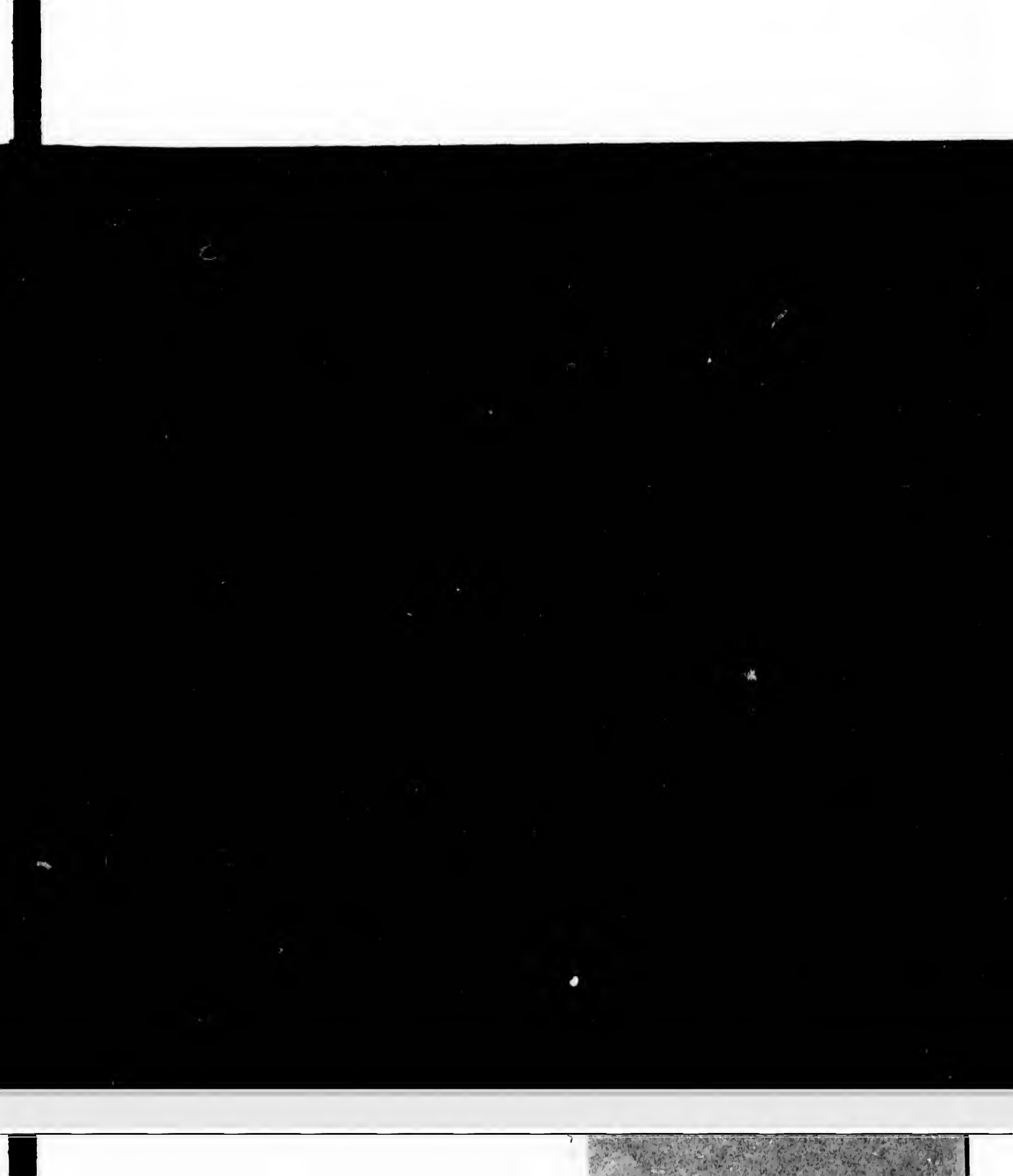


second month, 1727, in company with a kinsman  
and his wife, who went to redeem some of their  
children, and were so happy as to obtain what

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persuasions enticing my child to marry, in order to obtain her freedom, by reason that those captives married by the French, are by that mar-

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would sometimes take my very blanket, so that I had nothing to do but take my little boy by the hand for his help, and assist him as well as I could, taking him up in my arms a little at times, because so small; and when we came at very bad places, he would lend me his hand, or coming behind, would push me before him; in all which, he shewed some humanity and civility more than I could have expected: For which privilege I was secretly thankful to God, as the moving cause thereof.

Next to this, we had some very great runs of water and brooks to wade through, in which at times we met with much difficulty, wading often to our middles, and sometimes our girls were up to their shoulders and chins, the Indians carrying my boy on their shoulders. At the side of one of these runs or rivers, the Indians would have my eldest daughter Sarah to sing them a song: Then was brought into her remembrance that passage in the 137th Psalm, "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea we wept when we remembered Zion; we hanged our harps on the willows in the midst thereof; for they that carried us away captive, required of us a song, and they that wasted us required of us mirth." When my poor child had given me this account it was very affecting, and my heart was very full of trouble, yet on my child's account, I was glad that she had so good an inclination, which she yet further manifested in longing for a bible, that we might have the comfort of reading the holy text at vacant times, for our spiritual comfort under our present affliction.

Next to the difficulties of the rivers were the prodigious swamps and thickets, very difficult to

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pass through, in which places my master would sometimes lead me by the hand a great way together, and give me what help he was capable of under the straits we went through ; and we passing one after another, the first made it pretty passable for the hindmost.

But the greatest difficulty that deserves the first to be named, was want of food, having at times nothing to eat but pieces of old beaver-skin match-coats, which the Indians having hid (for they came naked as is said before) which in their going back again they took with them, and they were used more for food than raiment : Being cut into long narrow straps, they gave us little pieces, which by the Indians' example we laid on the fire until the hair was singed away, and then we ate them as a sweet morsel, experimentally knowing, "that to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet."

It is to be considered further, that of this poor diet we had but very scanty allowance ; so that we were in no danger of being over charged. But that which added to my trouble, was the complaints of my poor children, especially the little boy. Sometimes the Indians would catch a squirrel, or a beaver, and at other times we met with nuts, berries, and roots they digged out of the ground, with the bark of some trees ; but we had no corn for a great while together, though some of the younger Indians went back and brought some corn from the English inhabitants (the harvest not being gathered) of which we had a little allowed us : But when they caught a beaver, we lived high while it lasted, they allowed me the guts and garbage for myself and children : But not allowing us to clean and wash them as they ought, made the food very irksome to us to feed



upon, and nothing besides pinching hunger could have made it any way tolerable to be borne.

The next difficulty was no less hard to me; for my daily travel and hard living made my milk dry almost quite up, and how to preserve my poor babe's life, was no small care on my mind; having no other sustenance for her many times but cold water, which I took in my mouth, and let it fall on my breast, when I gave her the teat to suck in, with what it could get from the breast; and when I had any of the broth of the beaver's guts, or other guts, I fed my babe with it, and as well as I could I preserved her life until I got to Canada, and then I had some other food, of which more in its place.

Having by this time got considerably on the way, the Indians parted; and we were divided amongst them. This was a sore grief to us all: But we must submit, and no way to help ourselves. My eldest daughter was first taken away, and carried to another part of the country, far distant from us, where, for the present, we must take leave of her, though with a heavy heart.

We did not travel far after this, before they divided again, taking my second daughter and servant maid from me, into another part of the country: So, I having now only my babe at my breast, and little boy six years old, we remained with the captain still. But my daughter and servant underwent great hardships after they were parted from me, travelling three days, without any food, taking nothing for support but cold water; and the third day, what with the cold, the wet, and hunger, the servant fell down as dead in a swoon, being both very cold and wet, at which the Indians with whom they were, were surprised,

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shewing some kind of tenderness, being unwilling then to lose them by death, having got them so near home, hoping, if they lived, by their ransom to make considerable profit of them.

In a few days after this, they got near their journey's end, where they had more plenty of corn and other food: But flesh often fell very short, having no other way to depend on for it but hunting; and when that failed, they had very short commons. It was not long ere my daughter and servant were likewise parted; and my daughter's master being sick, was not able to hunt for flesh: Neither had they any corn in that place, but were forced to eat bark of trees for a whole week.

Being almost famished, in this distress, Providence so ordered that some other Indians hearing of their misery and want came to visit them; (these people being very kind and helpful to one another, which is very commendable) and brought unto them the guts and liver of a beaver, which afforded them a good repast, being but four in number, the Indian, his wife and daughter, and my daughter.

By this time my master and our company got to our journey's end, where we were better fed at times, having some corn and venison, and wild fowl, or what they could catch by hunting in the woods; and my master having a large family, fifteen in number, we had at times very short commons, more especially when game was scarce.

But here our lodging was still on the cold ground, in a poor wigwam (which is a kind of little shelter made with the rind of trees and mats for a covering, something like a tent). These are so

easily set up and taken down, that they oft remove them from one place to another : Our shoes and stockings and our other cloaths being worn out in this long journey through the bushes and swamps, and the weather coming in very hard, we were poorly defended from the cold, for want of necessaries ; which caused one of my feet, one of the little babe's, and both of the little boy's to freeze ; and this was no small exercise, yet through mercy we all did well.

Now though we got to our journey's end we were never long in one place, but very often removed from one place to another, carrying our wigwams with us, which we could do without much difficulty. This being for the conveniency of hunting, made our accommodations much more unpleasant than if we had continued in one place, by reason the coldness and dampness of the ground, where our wigwams were pitched made it very unwholesome and unpleasant lodging.

Having now got to the Indian town, many of the Indians came to visit us, and in their way welcomed my master home, and held a great rejoicing, with dancing, firing of guns, beating on hollow trees, instead of drums, shouting, drinking and feasting after their manner, in much excess for several days together, which I suppose in their thoughts was a kind of thanks to God put up for their safe return and good success : But while they were in their jollity and mirth, my mind was greatly exercised towards the Lord, that I, with my dear children separated from me, might be preserved from repining against God, under our affliction on the one hand, and on the other, we might have our dependence on him who rules the hearts of men, and can do what he pleases in the

kingdoms of the earth, knowing that his care is over them who put their trust in him ; but I found it very hard to keep my mind as I ought, in the resignation which is proper it should be in, under such afflictions and sore trials, as at that time I suffered in being under various fears and doubts concerning my children that were separated from me, which helped to add to and greatly increase my troubles : And here I may truly say, my afflictions are not to be set forth in words to the extent of them.

We had not been long at home ere my master went a hunting, and was absent about a week, he ordering me in his absence to get in wood, gather nuts, &c. I was very diligent, cutting the wood and putting it in order, not having very far to carry it : But when he returned, having got no prey, he was very much out of humour, and the disappointment was so great that he could not forbear revenging it on us poor captives. However he allowed me a little boiled corn for myself and child, but with a very angry look threw a stick or corn-cob at me, with such violence as did bespeak he grudged our eating. At this his squaw and daughter broke out in a great crying. This made me fear mischief was hatching against us : And on it, I immediately went out of his presence into another wigwam ; upon which he came after me, and in great fury tore my blanket off my back, and took my little boy from me and struck him down as he went along before him ; but the poor child not being hurt, only frightened in the fall, started up and ran away, without crying ; then the Indian my master left me ; but his wife's mother came and sat down by me, and told me I must sleep there that night. She then going from

me a little time, came back with a small skin to cover my feet withal, informing me that my master intended now to kill us; and I being desirous to know the reason, expostulated, that in his absence I had been diligent to do as I was ordered by him. Thus as well as I could, I made her sensible how unreasonable he was. Now, though she could not understand me, nor I her, but by signs, we reasoned as well as we could: She therefore made signs that I must die, advising me, by pointing up with her fingers, in her way, to pray to God, endeavouring by her signs and tears to instruct me in that which was most needful, viz. to prepare for death, which now threatened me; the poor old squaw was so very kind and tender, that she would not leave me all the night, but laid herself down at my feet, designing what she could to assuage her son-in-law's wrath, who had conceived evil against me, chiefly as I understood because the want of victuals urged him to it. My rest was little this night, my poor babe sleeping sweetly by me.

I dreaded the tragical design of my master, looking every hour for his coming to execute his bloody will upon us: but he being weary with hunting and travel in the woods, having toiled for nothing, went to rest and forgot it. Next morning he applied himself again to hunting in the woods, but I dreaded his returning empty, and prayed secretly in my heart, that he might catch some food to satisfy his hunger and cool his ill humour. He had not been gone but a little time until he returned with booty, having shot some wild ducks; and now he appeared in a better temper, ordered the fowls to be dressed with speed, for these kind of people, when they have plenty,

spend it as freely as they get it; using with gluttony and drunkenness, in two days time as much as, with prudent management, might serve a week. Thus do they live for the most part, either in excess of gluttony and drunkenness, or under great straits of want of necessaries. However, in this plentiful time I felt the comfort of it in part with the family, having a portion sent for me and my little ones, which was very acceptable. Now, I thinking the bitterness of death was over for this time, my spirits were a little easier.

Not long after this, he got into the like ill humour again, threatening to take away my life. But I always observed whenever he was in such a temper, he wanted food and was pinched with hunger. But when he had success in hunting, to take either bears, beavers, bucks or fowls, on which he could fill his belly, he was better humoured, though he was naturally of a very hot and passionate temper, throwing sticks, stones, or whatever lay in his way, on every slight occasion. This made me in continual danger of my life; but God, whose Providence is over all his works, so preserved me that I never received any damage from him that was of any great consequence to me; for which I ever desire to be thankful to my Maker.

When flesh was scarce we had only the guts and garbage allowed to our part; and not being permitted to cleanse the guts any otherwise than emptying the dung, without so much as washing them, as before is noted; in that filthy pickle we must boil them, and eat them, which was very unpleasant: But hunger made up that difficulty, so that this food which was very often our lot, became pretty tolerable to a sharp appetite, which

otherwise could not have been dispensed with. Thus I considered, none knows what they can undergo, until they are tried; for what I had thought in my own family not fit for food, would here have been a dainty dish and sweet morsel.

By this time, what with fatigue of spirits, hard labour, mean diet, and often want of natural rest, I was brought so low, that my milk was dried up, my babe very poor and weak, just skin and bone; for I could perceive all her joints from one end of the back to the other; and how to get what would suit her weak appetite I was at a loss; on which one of the Indian squaws perceiving my uneasiness about my child, began some discourse with me in which she advised me to take the kernels of walnuts, clean them and beat them with a little water, which I did, and when I had so done, the water looked like milk; then she advised me to add to this water, a little of the finest of Indian corn meal, and boil it a little together; I did so and it became palatable, and was very nourishing to the babe, so that she began to thrive and look well; which was before more like to die than live. I found that with this kind of diet the Indians did often nurse their infants. This was no small comfort to me: but this comfort was soon mixed with bitterness and trouble, which thus happened; my master taking notice of my dear babe's thriving condition, would often look upon her and say, when she was fat enough she would be killed, and he would eat her; and pursuant to his pretence, at a certain time, he made me fetch him a stick that he had prepared for a spit to roast the child upon, as he said, which when I had done, he made me sit down by him, and undress the infant. When the child was naked, he felt her arms, legs, and

thighs, and told me she was not fat enough yet; I must dress her again until she was better in case.

Now though he thus acted, I could not persuade myself, that he intended to do as he pretended; but only to aggravate and afflict me: neither ever could I think but our lives would be preserved from his barbarous hands, by the over-ruling power of him in whose providence I put my trust both day and night.

A little time after this my master fell sick, and in his sickness, as he lay in his wigwam, he ordered his own son to beat my son; but the old squaw the Indian boy's grandmother would not suffer him to do it: then his father being provoked, caught up a stick very sharp at one end, and with great violence threw it from him, at my son, and hit him on the breast, with which my child was much bruised, and the pain, with the surprise made him turn as pale as death; I entreated him not to cry, and the boy though but six years old, bore it with wonderful patience, not so much as in the least complaining, so that the child's patience assuaged the barbarity of his heart: who, no doubt, would have carried his passion and resentment much higher, had the child cried, as always complaining did aggravate his passion, and his anger grew hotter upon it. Some little time after, on the same day he got upon his feet, but far from being well. However, though he was sick, his wife and daughter let me know, he intended to kill us, and I was under a fear, unless Providence now interposed, how it would end. I therefore put down my child, and going out of his presence, went to cut wood for the fire as I used to do, hoping that would in part allay his passion; but withal ere I came to the wigwam



again I expected my child would be killed in this mad fit, having no other way but to cast my care upon God, who had hitherto helped and cared for me and mine.

Under this great feud, the old squaw, my master's mother-in-law left him; but my mistress and her daughter abode in the wigwam with my master; and when I came with my wood, the daughter came to me, whom I asked, if her father had killed my children, and she made me a sign No, with a countenance that seemed pleased it was so; for instead of his further venting his passion on me and my children, the Lord in whom I trusted did seasonably interpose, and I took it as a merciful deliverance from him, and the Indian was under some sense of the same as himself did confess to them about him afterwards.

Thus it was, a little after he got up on his feet, the Lord struck him with great sickness, and a violent pain, as appeared by the complaint he made in a doleful and hideous manner; which when I understood, not having yet seen him, I went to another squaw, that was come to see my master, which could both speak and understand English, and enquired of her if my mistress (for so I always called her, and him master) thought that master would die? she answered, yes, it was very likely he would, being worse and worse: Then I told her, he struck my boy a dreadful blow without any provocation at all, and had threatened to kill us all in his fury and passion; upon which the squaw told me my master had confessed the above abuse he offered my child, and that the mischief he had done, was the cause why God afflicted him with that sickness and pain, and he had promised never to abuse us in such sort more:

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and after this he soon recovered, but was not so passionate; nor do I remember he ever after struck either me or children, so as to hurt us, or with that mischievous intent as before he used to do. This I took as the Lord's doing and it was marvellous in my eyes.

Some few weeks after this, my master made another remove, having as before made several; but this was the longest ever he made, it being two days journey, and mostly upon ice. The first day's journey the ice was bare, but the next day some snow falling, made it very troublesome, tedious and difficult travelling; and I took much damage in often falling, having the care of my babe, that added not a little to my uneasiness; and the last night when we came to encamp, it being in the night, I was ordered to fetch water; but having sat awhile on the cold ground, I could neither go nor stand; but crawling on my hands and knees, a young Indian squaw came to see our people, being of another family, in compassion took the kettle, and knowing where to go, which I did not, fetched the water for me. This I took as a great kindness and favour, that her heart was inclined to do me this service.

I now saw the design of this journey; my master being as I suppose, weary to keep us, was willing to make what he could of our ransom; therefore he went further towards the French, and left his family in this place, where they had a great dance, sundry other Indians coming to our people, this held some time, and while they were in it, I got out of their way in a corner of the wigwam as well I could; but every time they came by me in their dancing, they would bow my head towards the ground, and frequently kick

me with as great fury as they could bear, being sundry of them barefoot, and others having Indian mockosons: This dance held some time, and they made (in their manner) great rejoicings and noise.

It was not many days ere my master returned from the French; but he was in such a humour when he came back, he would not suffer me in his presenee. Therefore I had a little shelter made with some boughs, they having digged through the snow to the ground, the snow being pretty deep. In this hole I and my poor children were put to lodge, the weather being very sharp, with hard frost, in the month called January, made it more tedious to me and my children. Our stay was not long in this place, before he took me to the French, in order for a chapman; and when we came among them I was exposed for sale, and he asked for me eight hundred-livres: But his chapman not complying with his demand, put him in a great rage, offering him but six hundred, he said in a great passion, if he could not have his demand, he would make a great fire and burn me and the babe in the view of the town, which was named Fort-Royal. The Frenchman bid the Indian make his fire, and I will, says he, help you, if you think that will do you more good than six hundred livres, calling my master fool, and speaking roughly to him, bid him be gone. But at the same time the Frenchman was civil to me; and for my encouragement, bid me be of good cheet, for I should be redeemed, and not go back with them again.

Retiring now with my master for this night, the next day I was redeemed for six hundred livres; and in treating with my master, the Frenchman

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queried, Why he asked so much for the child's ransom? Urging, when she had her belly full, she would die. My master said, No, she would not die, having already lived twenty-six days on nothing but water, believing the child to be a devil. The Frenchman told him, No, the child is ordered for longer life; and it has pleased God to preserve her to admiration. My master said No, she was a devil, and he believed she would not die, unless they took a hatchet and beat her brains out. Thus ended their discourse, and I was, as aforesaid, with my babe, ransomed for six hundred livres, my little boy, likewise at the same time, for an additional sum of livres, was redeemed also.

I now having changed my landlord, my table and diet, as well as my lodging, the French were civil beyond what I could either desire or expect. But the next day after I was redeemed, the Romish priest took my babe from me, and according to their custom, they baptized her, urging if she died before that, she would be damned, like some of our modern pretended reformed priests, and they gave her a name as pleased them best, which was Mary Ann Frossways, telling me, my child, if she now died, would be saved, being baptized; and my landlord speaking to the priest that baptized her, said, It would be well now Frossways was baptized for her to die, being now in a state to be saved. But the priest said, No, the child having been so miraculously preserved through so many hardships, she may be designed by God for some great work, and by her life being still continued, may much more glorify God than if she should now die. A very sensible remark, and I wish it may prove true.

I having been about five months amongst the Indians, in about one month after I got amongst the French, my dear husband, to my unspeakable comfort and joy, came to me, who was now himself concerned to redeem his children, two of our daughters being still captives, and only myself and two little ones redeemed; and through great difficulty and trouble he recovered the younger daughter. But the eldest we could by no means obtain from their hands, for the squaw to whom she was given, had a son whom she intended my daughter should in time be prevailed with to marry. The Indians are very civil toward their captive women, not offering any incivility by any indecent carriage (unless they be much over gone in liquor) which is commendable in them so far.

However the affections they had for my daughter made them refuse all offers and terms of ransom; so that after my poor husband had waited and made what attempts and endeavours he could to obtain his child, and all to no purpose, we were forced to make homeward, leaving our daughter to our great grief, behind us, amongst the Indians, and set forward over the lake, with three of our children and the servant-maid, in company with sundry others, and by the kindness of Providence we got well home on the first day of the seventh month, 1725. From which it appears I had been from home, amongst the Indians and French, about twelve months and six days.

In the series of which time, the many deliverances and wonderful providences of God unto us, and over us, hath been, and I hope will so remain to be as a continued obligation on my mind, ever to live in that fear, love and obedience to God, duly regarding, by his grace, with meekness and

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wisdom, to approve myself by his spirit, in all holiness of life, and godliness of conversation, to the praise of him that hath called me, who is God blessed for ever.

But my dear husband, poor man! could not enjoy himself in quiet with us, for want of his dear daughter Sarah, that was left behind; and not willing to omit any thing for her redemption which lay in his power, he could not be easy without making a second attempt; in order to which, he took his journey about the nineteenth day of the second month, 1727, in company with a kinsman and his wife, who went to redeem some of their children, and were so happy as to obtain what they went about: But my dear husband being taken sick on the way, grew worse and worse, as we were informed, and was sensible he should not get over it; telling my kinsman, that, if it was the LORD's will he must die in the wilderness, he was freely given up to it. He was under a good composure of mind, and sensible to his last moment, and died, as near as we can guess, in about the half-way between Albany and Canada, in my kinsman's arms, and is at rest, I hope, in the LORD: And though my own children's loss is very great; yet I doubt not but his gain is much more; I therefore desire and pray, that the LORD will enable me patiently to submit to his will in all things he is pleased to suffer to be my lot while here, earnestly supplicating the God and Father of all our mercies, to be a father to my fatherless children, and give unto them that blessing which maketh truly rich, and adds no sorrow with it; that as they grow in years they may grow in grace, and experience the joy of his salvation, which is come by JESUS CHRIST, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

Now though my husband died, by reason of which his labour was ended, yet my kinsman prosecuted the thing, and left no stone unturned that he thought, or could be advised, was proper to the obtaining my daughter's freedom; but could by no means prevail; for as is before said (she being in another part of the country distant from where I was) and given to an old squaw, who intended to marry her in time to her son, using what persuasions she could to effect her end. sometimes by fair means, and sometimes by severe. In the mean time a Frenchman interposed and they, by persuasions enticing my child to marry, in order to obtain her freedom, by reason that those captives married by the French, are by that marriage made free among them, the Indians having then no pretence longer to keep them as captives, she therefore was prevailed upon, for the reasons afore assigned, to marry, and she was accordingly married to the said Frenchman.

Thus, as well, and as near as I can from my memory (not being capable of keeping a journal) I have given a short, but a true account of some of the remarkable trials and wonderful deliverances, which I never purposed to expose; but that I hope thereby the merciful kindness and goodness of God may be magnified, and the reader hereof provoked with more care and fear to serve him in righteousness and humility and then my designed end and purpose will be answered.

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