

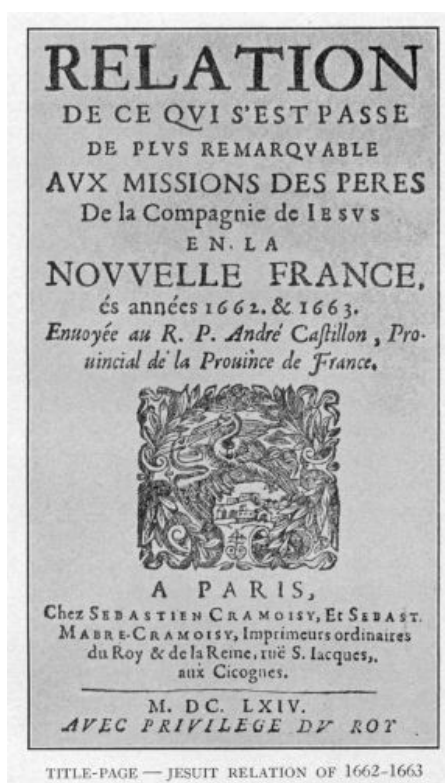
References and Descriptions of the Illinois Tribes and the Illinois Country in the Jesuit Relations: 1640 – 1768

A comprehensive collection extracted and assembled from various digital versions of Reuben Gold Thwaites' 73-volume translations, spanning 1610-1791.

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Volume 18: 1640: Le Jeune

OF THE HOPE WE HAVE FOR THE CONVERSION OF MANY SAVAGES.

I have said that at the entrance to the first of [131] these Lakes we find the Hurons. Leaving them, to sail farther up in the lake, we find on the North the Ouasouarini; farther up are the Outchougai, and still [Page 229] farther up, at the mouth of the river which comes from Lake Nipisin, are the Atchiligouan. Beyond, upon the same shores of this fresh-water sea, are the Amikouai, or the nation of the Beaver. To the South of these is an Island in this fresh-water sea about thirty leagues long, inhabited by the Outaouan; these are people who have come from the nation of the raised hair. After the Amikouai, upon the same shores of the great lake, are the Oumisagai, whom we pass while proceeding to Baouichtigouian — that is to say, to the nation of the people of the Sault, for, in fact, there is a Rapid, which rushes at this point into the fresh-water sea. Beyond this rapid we find the little lake, upon the shores of which, to the North, are the Roquai. To the North of these are the Mantoue, people who navigate very little, living upon the fruits of the earth. Passing this smaller lake, we enter the second fresh-water sea, upon the shores of which are the Maroumine; and still farther, upon the [132] same banks, dwell the Ouinipigou, a sedentary people, who are very numerous; some of the French call them the “Nation of Stinkards,” because the Algonquin word “ouinipeg” signifies “bad-smelling water,” and they apply this name to the water of the salt sea, —so that these peoples are called Ouinipigou because they come from the shores of a sea about which we have no knowledge; and hence they ought not to be called the nation of Stinkards, but the nation of the sea. In the neighborhood of this nation are the Naduesiu, the Assinipour, the **Eriniouai**, the Rasaouakoueton, and the Pououtouatami. These are the names of a part of the nations which are beyond the shores of the great river saint Lawrence and of the great lakes of [Page 231] the Hurons on the North. I will now visit the Southern shores. I will say, by the way, that sieur Nicolet, interpreter of the Algonquin and: Huron languages for the Gentlemen of new France, has given me the names of these nations, which he himself has visited, for the most part in their own country. All these peoples understand Algonquin, except the Hurons, who have [133] a language of their own, as also have the Ouinipigou, or people of the sea. We have been told this year that an Algonquin, journeying beyond these peoples, encountered nations extremely populous. “I saw them assembled,” said he, “as if at a fair, buying and selling, in numbers so great that they could not be counted;” it conveyed an idea of the cities of Europe. I do not know what there is in this. Let us now visit the Southern coast of the great river St. Lawrence.

Volume 44: 1658: Druillettes

NAMES OF MANY RECENTLY-DISCOVERED NATIONS.

Father Gabriel Druillettes, from whom we have obtained the greater part of what is contained in this Chapter, conferred the name of Saint Michel upon the first Village which he mentions. Its inhabitants are called, in Algonquin, Oupouteouatamik. In this Village

there are computed to be about seven hundred men; that is to say, three thousand souls, since to one man there are at least three or four other persons, namely, women and children. They have for neighbors the Kiskacoueiak and the Negaouichiriniouek. There are in this Village about a hundred men of the Tobacco [Page 245] Nation, who took refuge there to escape the cruelty of the Iroquois.

" The second Nation is composed of the Noukek, Ouinipegouek, and Malouminek. These people are but a very short distance from the Village of Saint Michel, or from the Oupouteouatamik. They reap, without sowing it, a kind of rye which grows wild in their meadows, and is considered superior to Indian corn. About two hundred Algonquins, who used to dwell on the Northern shores of the great Lake or the Fresh-water sea of the Hurons, have taken refuge in this place.

"The third Nation is distant about three days' journey inland, by water, from the Village of St. Michel. It is composed of the Makoutensak and Outitchakouk. The two Frenchmen who have made the journey to those regions say that these people are of a very gentle disposition.

"The fourth Nation has a Village of a thousand men, distant three days' journey from the Village of St. Michel, its total population being four or five thousand souls.

"The fifth Nation, called the Aliniouek, is larger; it is computed at fully 20,000 men and sixty Villages, making about a hundred thousand souls in all. It is seven days' journey Westward from St. Michel.

"The sixth Nation, whose people are called Oumamik, is distant [81] sixty leagues, or thereabout, from St. Michel. It has fully eight thousand men, or more than twenty-four thousand souls.

"The seventh, called the Poulak, or Warriors, contains thirty Villages, situated West by North from St. Michel.

"The eighth lies to the Northwest, ten days' [Page 247] journey from St. Michel, and has fully 40 Villages, inhabited by the Nadouechiouek and Mantouek.

"The ninth, situated beyond the Nadouechiouek, thirty-five leagues or thereabout from lake Alimibeg, is called the Nation of the Assinipoualak, or Warriors of the rock.'

"The tenth Nation is that of the Kilistinons, who comprise four Nations or tribes. Those of the first are called the Alimibegouek Kilistinons; of the second, the Kilistinons of Ataouabouscatouek Bay; of the third, the Kilistinons of the Nipisiriniens, because the Nipisiriniens discovered their country, whither they resort to trade or barter goods. They comprise only about six hundred men, that is, two thousand five hundred souls, and are not very stationary. They are of a very approachable disposition.

"The people of the fourth tribe are called Nisibourounik Kilistinons.

"The fourteenth Nation has thirty Villages, inhabited by the Atsistagherronnons, and is six or seven days' journey Southwest by South from St. Michel. The Onnontagueronnons have recently declared war against them."

The Father speaks also of learning from a Nipisirinien Captain that he had seen at one place two thousand Algonquins tilling the soil; and that the other Villages of the same

country were still more populous. This Captain asserted that toward the South and Southeast there were more than thirty Nations, all stationary, all speaking the Abnaquiois tongue, and all more populous than were the Hurons of old, who numbered as many as thirty or thirty-five thousand souls within the limits of seventeen leagues. [Page 249]

"I do not speak," says the Father, "of the Nations that have long been known." Indeed, he says nothing of the Kichesipiiriniouek, the Kinonchepiiririk, the Ounountcharounongak, the Mataouchkairinik, the Ouaouechkairiniouek, the Amikouek, the Atchougek, the Ousaouanik, the Ouraouakmikoug, the Oukiskimanitouk, the Maskasinik, the Nikikouek, the Michesaking, the Pagouitik, people of the great Sault, and the Kichkankoueiak. All these Nations, several of whom have been maltreated by the Iroquois, use the Algonquin tongue.

That is a fine battle-field for those who intend to enter the lists and fight for Jesus Christ. I am well aware that these peoples are not as attractive as those who have Empires and Republics, Princes and Kings; or those who are clothed in silk and brocatel; or who are courteous and highly polished. But it seems to me that Jesus Christ has not preached much to the People named above; and that faith, virtue, [8q] and holiness do not dwell as familiarly in Palaces as in houses of thatch and straw—in a word, in cabins.

Volume 45: 1659: Druillettes

OF THE CONDITION OF THE ALGONQUIN COUNTRY, AND OF SOME NEW DISCOVERIES.

During their winter season, our two Frenchmen made divers excursions to the surrounding tribes. Among other things, they saw, six days' journey beyond the lake toward the Southwest, a tribe composed of the remnants of the Hurons of the Tobacco Nation, who have been compelled by the Iroquois to forsake their native land, and bury themselves so deep in the forests that they cannot be found by their enemies. These poor people—fleeing and pushing their way over mountains and rocks, through these vast unknown forests—fortunately encountered a beautiful River, large, wide, deep, and worthy of comparison, they say, with our great river St. Lawrence. On its banks they found the great Nation of the Alimiwec, which gave them a very kind reception. This Nation comprises sixty Villages—which confirms us in the knowledge that we already possessed, concerning many thousands of people who fill all those Western regions.

Volume 51: 1667: Allouez

OF THE MISSION TO THE ILIMOUEC, OR ALIMOUUEK

The Ilimouec speak Algonquin, but a very different dialect from those of all the other tribes. I understand them only slightly, because I have talked with them only a very little. They do not live in these regions, their country being more than sixty leagues hence toward the South, beyond a great river -- which, as well as I can conjecture, empties into

the Sea somewhere near Virginia. These people are hunters and warriors, using bows and arrows, rarely muskets, and never canoes. They used to be a populous nation, divided into ten large Villages; but now they are reduced to two, continual wars with the Nadouessi on one side and the Iroquois on the other having well-nigh exterminated them.

They acknowledge many spirits to whom they offer sacrifice. They practice a kind of dance, quite peculiar to themselves, which they call `the dance of the tobacco-pipe. It is executed thus: they prepare a great pipe, which they deck with plumes, and put in the middle of the room, with a sort of veneration. One of the company rises, begins to dance, [107] and then yields his place to another, and this one to a third; and thus they dance in succession, one after another, and not together. One would take this dance for a pantomime ballet; and it is executed to the beating of a drum. The performer [Page 49] makes war in rhythmic time, preparing his arms, attiring himself, running, discovering the foe, raising the cry, slaying the enemy, removing his scalp, and returning home with a song of victory, -- and all with an astonishing exactness, promptitude and agility. After they have all danced, one after the other, around the pipe, it is taken and offered to the chief man in the whole assembly, for him to smoke; then to another, and so in succession to all. This ceremony resembles in its significance the [108] French custom of drinking, several out of the same glass; but, in addition, the pipe is left in the keeping of the most honored man, as a sacred trust, and a sure pledge of the peace and union that will ever subsist among them as long as it shall remain in that person's hands.

Of all the spirits to whom they offer sacrifice, they honor with a very special worship one who is preeminent above the others, as they maintain, because he is the maker of all things. Such a passionate desire have they to see him that they keep long fasts to that end, hoping that by this means God will be induced to appear to them in their sleep; and if they chance to see him, they deem themselves happy, and assured of a long life. All the nations of the South have this same wish to see God, which, without doubt, greatly facilitates their conversion; for it only remains to teach them how they must serve him in order to see him and be blessed.

I have proclaimed the name of Jesus Christ here to eighty people of this nation, and they have carried it and published it with approbation to the whole country of the South; consequently I can say [Page 51] that this Mission is the one where I have labored the least and accomplished the most. They honor our Lord among themselves in their own way, putting his Image, which I have given them, in the most honored place on the occasion of any important feast, while the Master of the banquet addresses it as follows: `In thy honor, O Man-God, do we hold this feast; to thee do we offer these viands.

I confess that the fairest field for the Gospel appears to me to be yonder. Had I had leisure and opportunity, I would have pushed on to their country, to see with my own eyes all the good things there of which they tell me.

I find all those with whom I have mingled affable and humane; and it is said that whenever they meet a stranger, they give a cry of joy, caress him, and show him every

possible evidence of affection. I have baptized but one child of this nation. The seeds of the faith which I have sown in their souls will bear fruit when it pleases the master of the vine to gather it. Their country is warm, and they raise two crops of Indian corn a year. There are rattlesnakes there, which cause many deaths among them, as they do not know the antidote. They hold medicines in high esteem, offering sacrifice to them as to great spirits. They have no forests in their country, but vast prairies instead, where oxen, cows, deer, bears, and other animals feed in great numbers.

Volume 54: 1670: Marquette

LETTER FROM FATHER JACQUES MARQUETTE TO THE REVEREND FATHER SUPERIOR OF THE MISSIONS.

I am obliged to render an account to Your Reverence of the condition of the Mission of saint Esprit among the Outaouaks, according to the order that I have received from You - and again, recently, from Father Dablon - since my arrival here, after a Voyage of a month amid snow and ice, which blocked our passage, and amid almost constant dangers of death.

Having been assigned by Divine Providence to continue the Mission of saint Esprit, - which Father Allouez had begun, [41] and where he had baptized the principal men of the Nation of the Kiskakonk, - I arrived here on the thirteenth of September, and went to visit the Savages in the Clearings, who are divided among five Villages. [Page 183] Their [Illinois] request [to have one of our Fathers go and join them in the Autumn] was granted, and if it please God to send some Father to us, he will take my place, while I shall go to start the Mission among the Illinois, in pursuance of the Father Superior's orders.

The Illinois are distant from la pointe thirty days' journey by land, by a very difficult route, and live by themselves, Southwestward from the point of saint Esprit. One passes the Nation of the Ketchigamins, who live in the interior, constitute more than twenty large cabins, and seek acquaintance with the French, hoping to obtain hatchets, knives, and other iron implements from them. They fear them to such a degree that they withdrew from the fire two Illinois, who, after being bound to the stakes, stated that the Frenchman had said that he wished peace to prevail over all the earth. One goes on then to the Miamiouek, and, after crossing great prairies, reaches the Illinois, who are mainly gathered [Page 185] in two Villages, containing more than eight or nine thousand souls. These people are fairly well inclined toward Christianity; since Father Allouez spoke to them, at la Pointe, about worshiping the one God, they have begun to abandon their false divinity. They worship the Sun and Thunder. Those whom I have seen seem to be of a tolerably good disposition: they do not go about at night, as do the other Savages; a man boldly kills his wife if he learns that she has not been faithful; they are more moderate in their Sacrifices; and they promise me to embrace Christianity, and observe all that I shall say in the Country. With this purpose in view, the Outaouaks gave me a young man who had lately come from the Illinois, and he furnished me the rudiments of the language, during

the leisure allowed me by the Savages of la Pointe in the course of the Winter. One can scarcely understand it, although it is somewhat like the Algonquin; still I hope, by the Grace of God, to understand and be understood, if God in his goodness lead me to that Country.

One must not hope that he can avoid Crosses in any of our Missions; and the best means to live there contentedly is not to fear them, and to expect from God's goodness, while enjoying the small ones, to have much heavier ones. After the fashion of the Savages, the Illinois wish for us in order that we may share their miseries with them, and suffer every imaginable hardship of barbarism. They are lost sheep, that must be sought for among the thickets and woods, since for the most part they cry so loudly that one hastens to rescue them from the jaws of the Wolf, - so urgent have been their petitions to me during the Winter. That is why they went into [Page 187] the Country this Spring, to notify the elders to come and get me in the Autumn.

The Illinois journey always by land; they raise Indian corn, which they have in great abundance, have squashes as large as those of France, and have a great many roots and fruits. There is fine hunting there of Wild Cattle, Bears, Stags, Turkeys, Ducks, Bustards, Pigeons, and Cranes. The people quit their Village some time in the year, to go all together to the places where the animals are killed, and better to resist the enemy who come to attack them. They believe that, if I go to them, I shall establish peace everywhere, that they will always live in one place, and that it will be only the young men who will go hunting.

When the Illinois come to la Pointe, they cross a great river which is nearly a league in width, flows from North to South, and to such a distance that the Illinois, who do not know what a Canoe is, have not yet heard any mention of its mouth. They simply know that there are some very large Nations lower down than themselves, some of whom, toward the East-Southeast of their Country, raise two crops of Indian corn in a year. A Nation that they call Chaouanou came to see them last Summer; and this young man who has been given me, and is teaching me the language, saw them. They are laden with glass Beads, which shows that they have communication with Europeans. They had come overland a journey of nearly thirty days, before reaching the Country. It is hard to believe that that great River discharges its waters in Virginia, and we think rather that it has its mouth in California. If the Savages who promise to make me a Canoe do not break their [Page 189] word to me, we shall explore this River as far as we can, with a Frenchman and this young man who was given me, who knows some of those languages and has a facility for learning the others. We shall visit the Nations dwelling there, in order to open the passage to such of our Fathers as have been awaiting this good fortune for so long a time. This discovery will give us full knowledge either of the South Sea or of the Western Sea.

Six or seven days' journey below the Illinois, there is another great River, on which live some very powerful Nations, who use wooden Canoes; of them we can write nothing else until next year - if God grant us the grace to conduct us thither.

The Illinois are warriors and take a great many Slaves, whom they trade with the Outaouaks for Muskets, Powder, Kettles, Hatchets and Knives. They were formerly at war with the Nadouessi, but made peace with them some years ago, which I confirmed, in order to facilitate their coming to la Pointe, - where I am going to await them, that I may accompany them into their Country.

Volume 55: 1671: Dablon

SOME PARTICULARS CONCERNING THE NATION OF THE ILINOIS, ESPECIALLY REGARDING THE GOOD DISPOSITION AND POLITENESS OF THOSE PEOPLES.

AS the name Outaouacs has been given to all the Savages of these regions, although of different Nations, because the first to appear among the French were the Outaouacs, so it is with the name of the Illinois, who are very numerous and dwell toward the South, since the first who visited point saint Esprit to trade were called Illinois.

These People are situated in the midst of that beautiful region mentioned by us, near the great river named Missisipi, of which it is well to note here what information we have gathered. It seems to form an inclosure, as it were, for all our lakes, rising in the regions of the North and flowing toward the south, until it empties into the sea - supposed by us to be either the vermilion or the Florida Sea, as there is no knowledge of any large rivers in that direction except those which empty into these two Seas. Some Savages have assured us that this is so noble a river that, at more than three hundred leagues' distance from its mouth, it is larger than the one flowing before Quebec; for they declare that it is more than a league wide. They also state that all this vast stretch of country consists of nothing but treeless prairies, - so that its inhabitants are all obliged to burn peat and animal excrement dried in the Sun, - until we come within [Page 207] twenty leagues of the sea, when Forests begin to appear again. Some warriors of this country who tell us they have made their way thither, declare that they saw there men resembling the French, who were splitting trees with long knives; and that some of them had their houses on the water, - for thus they expressed themselves in speaking of sawed boards and of Ships. They state further that all along that great river are various Tribes of different Nations, of dissimilar languages and customs, and all at war with one another. Some are seen situated on the coast, but many more in the interior; and so they continue until we reach the Nation of the Nadouessi, who are scattered over more than a hundred leagues of territory.

Now the Illinois, of whom we are speaking, lie on the farther side of this great river; and from them those living here with the Fire Nation separated, for the purpose of forming here a sort of transplanted Colony, - to be soon followed, as we hope, by others whom the holy Ghost shall lead into these regions to receive instruction from us. For it is almost impossible for us to make the long journey to their country; and indeed many of them

have already joined their countrymen here, - [178 i.e., 180] offering a fine field for Gospel laborers, as it is impossible to find one better fitted for receiving Christian influences. These people showed us such politeness, caresses, and evidences of affection as will scarcely be credited; and this is especially true of the chief of that Illinois Nation, who is respected in his cabin as a Prince would be in his Palace. He was ever [Page 209] surrounded there by the leading men of the Village, whom we might almost call courtiers, so becoming and deferential was their demeanor, and so respectful the silence which they never failed to observe as a mark of their esteem for his person and for us.

It was a Cabin of considerable size, in the middle of which he had put his most precious possessions, in order to receive us there, and had taken his seat opposite us; and he hardly ever went out during our entire stay, as if to honor us with his presence and not to lose our company or conversation. Even in the streets and in the other Cabins, when we were invited out to eat, he commonly attended us, or sent some of his people to escort us. The duties of the kitchen, although speedily despatched, were not performed in his presence or in ours. He took remarkable pains to prevent our being disturbed by the throngs of people who were constantly feasting their eyes upon us. When it was time to hold our evening prayers, he always bestirred himself, and showed the most charming eagerness to make a bright, shining fire that would give us abundant light for reading; and he even imposed a profound silence upon all who were present.

To show us the greater honor, he took care to have his Cabin constantly full of the chief men of his Nation, who seemed to pay their Court very well for Barbarians. His countenance, moreover, is as gentle and winning as is possible to see; and, although he is regarded as a great warrior, he has a mildness of expression that delights all beholders. [Page 211] The inner nature does not belie the external appearance, for he is of a tender and affectionate disposition. This he made manifest one night when we were explaining to him, in the presence of many people and with the Cross before us, the Mystery of the Passion and death of JESUS CHRIST; whereupon he showed such tenderness and compassion - which could be read in his eyes and on his whole countenance - that some Frenchmen who accompanied us were greatly charmed and astonished, Thus triumphs that dying God in this remote corner of the world, where the Devil has so long held sway. Although, during our entire sojourn at that place, our discourse with this Captain and with the rest was only on the things of the Faith, he never showed any weariness; but the more he heard, the more, eager he seemed to learn. Therefore we have reason to believe that one who has such fine qualities and suffers himself to be so easily moved by our Mysteries, Will not long delay embracing, them.

And what we say of the Chief may be said of all the rest of this Nation, in whom we have noted the same disposition, together with a docility which has no savor of the Barbarian. Besides their evident eagerness to receive our instructions, they enjoy a great advantage over other Savages, as far as the Faith is concerned, in that they have hardly any superstitions, and are not wont to offer Sacrifices to various spirits, as do the Outaouacs

and others. The reason of this may be that, as they do not fish, but live on Indian corn, which is easily raised in those fertile lands that they occupy, and on game, which [Page 213] is very plenty, and of which they are never in want, they have no fear of the perils of the Lakes, -where many other Savages perish while fishing, either in their Canoes, or by breaking through the ice. These last-named people believe that there are water spirits which devour them, and which plunder their nets when the latter are carried off by storms; and hence they try to appease them or to win their favor by numerous Sacrifices. These people are free from all that, and worship only the Sun. But, when they are instructed in the truths of our Religion, they will speedily change this worship and render it to the Creator of the Sun, as some have already begun to do.

During our sojourn in this Village, twelve or fifteen men arrived there from the real country of the Illinois - partly to visit their relatives or their countrymen, and partly to do some trading. When they were about to take their departure and return home, they appeared before us ceremoniously, in a body; and, after saluting us, told us in the presence of a great crowd, which always surrounded us, that they came to commend their journey to us; and that they besought us to conduct them safely to their own country, there to rejoin their kinsfolk, and to preserve them from all mishap on the way. They thus offered us a fine opening for imparting to them a knowledge of the great Master of our lives, whose servants and deputies only we are, and to whom we were very willing to appeal for a happy issue to their journey. They answered us with a compliment which had no savor of the Savage, assuring us that they valued so highly what they had learned from us that they were not content [Page 215] to go and publish it throughout their country; but would make the message resound among other and much more remote peoples, by recounting to the latter the marvels they themselves had seen. And thus they took their leave of us, very proud of having spoken with some spirits, as they said, and of having received tidings from the other world.

Let us add one word more on these Illinois, concerning their manners and customs. All Savages in general pride themselves especially on their fine head-gear; and, above all, on wearing their hair either long or short, as may be their National mode. These people seem to have united both fashions, having what the Outaouacs regard as, handsome in their short and erect hair, and also what pleases others in their long locks; for, clipping the greater part of the head, as do the above-named people, they leave four great mustaches, one on each side of each ear, arranging them in such order as to avoid inconvenience from them.

They are not very rich in household utensils, their country hardly furnishing them material for making bark dishes, as the trees growing on those vast and beautiful prairies are not suitable for the purpose. But if they are thus at a disadvantage, so beautiful a country seems, in compensation, to contribute to the lovable disposition with which they are endowed, and of which they gave us the most convincing proof upon our departure. For the Chief of whom we have spoken, - who is, as it were, the King of the Nation, - together with the leading men and a part of the Village, determined to accompany us, as a

[Page 217] mark of honor, to our place of embarkation, a short league's distance from the Village. Upon our return thither, we hope to find a Chapel, which they are preparing to build themselves, in order to begin there in good earnest the functions of Christianity.

Volume 59: 1674-77: Dablon & Marquette

FATHER PERE JACQUES MARQUETTE AND LOUIS JOLLIET 1673 JOURNEY TO THE MISSISSIPPI

[Dablon's Introduction]

OF THE FIRST VOYAGE MADE BY FATHER MARQUETTE TOWARD NEW MEXICO, AND HOW THE IDEA THEREOF WAS CONCEIVED.

The Father had long premeditated This Undertaking, influenced by a most ardent desire to extend the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, and to make him Known and adored by all the peoples of that country. He saw himself, As it were, at the door of these new Nations when, as early as the year 1670, he was laboring in the Mission at the point of st. Esprit, at the extremity of lake superior, among the outaouacs; he even saw occasionally various persons belonging to these new peoples, from whom he obtained all the Information that he could. This induced him to make several efforts to commence this undertaking, but ever in vain; and he even lost all hope of succeeding therein, when God brought about for him the following opportunity.

In The year 1673, Monsieur The Count De Frontenac, Our Governor, and Monsieur Talon, then Our Intendant, Recognizing The Importance of this discovery, — either that they might seek a passage from here to the sea of China, by the river that discharges into the Vermillion, or California Sea; or because they desired to verify what has for some time been said concerning the 2 Kingdoms of Theguaio And Quiuira, which Border on Canada, and in which numerous gold mines are reported to exist, — these Gentlemen, I say, appointed at the same time [Page 89] for This undertaking Sieur Jolyet, whom they considered very fit for so great an enterprise; and they were well pleased that Father Marquette should be of the party.

They were not mistaken in the choice that they made of Sieur Jolyet, For he is a young man, born in this country, who possesses all the qualifications that could be desired for such an undertaking. He has experience and Knows the Languages spoken in the Country of the Outaouacs, where he has passed several years. He possesses Tact and prudence, which are the chief qualities necessary for the success of a voyage as dangerous as it is difficult, Finally, he has the Courage to dread nothing where everything is to be Feared. Consequently, he has fulfilled all The expectations entertained of him; and if, after having passed through a thousand dangers, he had not unfortunately been wrecked in the very harbor, his Canoe having upset below sault st. Louys, near Montreal, — where he lost both his men and his papers, and whence he escaped only by a sort of Miracle, — nothing would have been left to be desired in the success of his Voyage.

[Marquette's own account, after the fact]

SECTION 1ST. DEPARTURE OF FATHER JACQUES MARQUETTE FOR THE DISCOVERY OF THE GREAT RIVER CALLED BY THE SAVAGES MISSISIPI, WHICH LEADS TO NEW MEXICO.

The feast of The IMMACULATE CONCEPTION of the BLESSED VIRGIN — whom I have always Invoked since I have been in this country of the outaouacs, to obtain from God the grace of being able to visit the Nations who dwell along the Missisipi River — was precisely the Day on which Monsieur Jollyet [Page 91] arrived with orders from Monsieur the Count de frontenac, Our Governor, and Monsieur Talon, Our Intendant, to accomplish This discovery with me. I was all the more delighted at This good news, since I saw that my plans were about to be accomplished; and since I found myself in the blessed necessity of exposing my life for the salvation of all these peoples, and especially of the Illinois, who had very urgently entreated me, when I was at the point of st. Esprit, to carry the word of God to Their country.

We were not long in preparing all our Equipment, although we were about to Begin a voyage, the duration of which we could not foresee. Indian Corn, with some smoked meat, constituted all our provisions; with these we Embarked — Monsieur Jollyet and myself, with 5 men — in 2 Bark Canoes, fully resolved to do and suffer everything for so glorious an Undertaking.

Accordingly, on The 17th day of may, 1673, we started from the Mission of st. Ignace at Michilimakinac, where I Then was. The Joy that we felt at being selected for This Expedition animated our Courage, and rendered the labor of paddling from morning to night agreeable to us. And because We were going to seek Unknown countries, We took every precaution in our power, so that, if our Undertaking were hazardous, it should not be foolhardy. To that end, we obtained all the Information that we could from the savages who had frequented those regions; and we even traced out from their reports a Map of the whole of that New country; on it we indicated the rivers which we were to navigate, the names of the peoples and of the places through [Page 91] which we were to pass, the Course of the great River, and the direction we were to follow when we reached it. Above all, I placed our voyage under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Immaculate, promising her that, if she granted us the favor of discovering the great River, I would give it The Name of the Conception, and that I would also make the first Mission that I should establish among Those New peoples, bear the same name. This I have actually done, among the Illinois.

SECTION 2ND. THE FATHER VISITS, IN PASSING, THE TRIBES OF THE FOLLE AVOINE. WHAT THAT FOLLE AVOINE IS. HE ENTERS THE BAY DES PUANTS; SOME PARTICULARS ABOUT THAT BAY. HE ARRIVES AMONG THE FIRE NATION.

With all these precautions, we Joyfully Plied our paddles on a portion of Lake huron, on That of the Illinois and on the bay des Puants. The first Nation that we came to was That of the folle avoine. I entered Their river, to go and visit these peoples to whom we have preached The Gospel for several years, — in consequence of which, there are several good Christians among Them. The wild oat, whose name they bear because it is found in their country, is a sort of grass, which grows naturally in the small Rivers with muddy bottoms, and in Swampy Places. It greatly resembles the wild oats that Grow amid our wheat. The ears grow upon hollow stems, jointed at Intervals; they emerge from the Water about the month of June, and continue growing until they rise About two feet above it. The grain is not larger than That [Page 95] of our oats, but it is twice as long, and The meal therefrom is much more abundant. The Savages Gather and prepare it for food as Follows. In The month of September, which is the suitable time for The harvest, they go in Canoes through These fields of wild oats; they shake its Ears into the Canoe, on both sides, as they pass through. The grain falls out easily, if it be ripe, and they obtain their supply In a short time. But, in order to clean it from the straw, and to remove it from a husk in which it is Enclosed, they dry it in the smoke, upon a wooden grating, under which they maintain a slow fire for some Days. When The oats are thoroughly dry, they put them in a skin made into a bag, thrust It into a hole dug in the ground for This purpose, and tread it with their feet — so long and so vigorously that The grain separates from the straw, and is very easily winnowed. After this, they pound it to reduce it to flour, — or even, without pounding it, they Boil it in water, and season it with fat. Cooked in This fashion, The wild oats have almost as delicate a taste as rice has when no better seasoning is added.

I told these peoples of the folle avoine of My design to go and discover Those Remote nations, in order to Teach them the Mysteries of Our Holy Religion. They were Greatly surprised to hear it, and did their best to dissuade me. They represented to me that I would meet Nations who never show mercy to Strangers, but Break Their heads without any cause; and that war was kindled Between Various peoples who dwelt upon our Route, which Exposed us to the further manifest danger of being killed by the bands of Warriors who are ever in the [Page 97] Field. They also said that the great River was very dangerous, when one does not know the difficult Places; that it was full of horrible monsters, which devoured men and Canoes Together; that there was even a demon, who was heard from a great distance, who barred the way, and swallowed up all who ventured to approach him; Finally that the Heat was so excessive In those countries that it would Inevitably Cause Our death.

I thanked them for the good advice that they gave me, but told them that I could not follow it, because the salvation of souls was at stake, for which I would be delighted to give my life; that I scoffed at the alleged demon; that we would easily defend ourselves against those marine monsters; and, moreover, that We would be on our guard to avoid the other dangers with which they threatened us. After making them pray to God, and giving them some Instruction, I separated from them. Embarking then in our Canoes, We arrived shortly afterward at the bottom of the Bay des puants, where our Fathers labor

successfully for the Conversion of these peoples, over two thousand of whom they have baptized while they have been there.

This bay bears a Name which has a meaning not so offensive in the language of the savages; For they call it la baye sallé ["salt bay "] rather than Bay des Puans, — although with Them this is almost the same and this is also The name which they give to the Sea. This led us to make very careful researches to ascertain whether there were not some salt-Water springs in This quarter, As there are among the hiroquois, but we found none. We conclude, therefore, *that This name has been given to [Page 99] it on account of the quantity of mire and Mud which is seen there, whence noisome vapors Constantly arise, Causing the loudest and most Continual Thunder that I have ever heard.

The Bay is about thirty leagues in depth and eight in width at its Mouth; it narrows gradually to the bottom, where it is easy to observe a tide which has its regular ebb and flow, almost Like That of the Sea. This is not the place to inquire whether these are real tides; whether they are Due to the wind, or to some other cause; whether there are winds, The precursors of the Moon and attached to her suite, which consequently agitate the lake and give it an apparent ebb and flow whenever the Moon ascends above the horizon. What I can Positively state is, that, when the water is very Calm, it is easy to observe it rising and falling according to the Course of the moon; although I do not deny that This movement may be Caused by very Remote Winds, which, pressing on the middle of the lake, cause the edges to Rise and fall in the manner which is visible to our eyes.

We left This bay to enter the river that discharges into it; it is very beautiful at its Mouth, and flows gently; it is full Of bustards, Ducks, Teal, and other birds, attracted thither by the wild oats, of which they are very fond. But, after ascending the river a short distance, it becomes very difficult of passage, on account of both the Currents and the sharp Rocks, which Cut the Canoes and the feet of Those who are obliged to drag them, especially when the Waters are low. Nevertheless, we successfully passed Those rapids; and on approaching Machkoutens, the fire Nation, I had the Curiosity to drink the mineral [Page 101] Waters of the River that is not Far from That village. I also took time to look for a medicinal plant which a savage, who knows its secret, showed to Father Alloues with many Ceremonies. Its root is employed to Counteract snake-bites, God having been pleased to give this antidote Against a poison which is very common in these countries. It is very pungent, and tastes like powder when crushed with the teeth; it must be masticated and placed upon the bite inflicted by the snake. The reptile has so great a horror of it that it even flees from a Person who has rubbed himself with it. The plant bears several stalks, a foot high, with rather long leaves; and a white flower, which greatly resembles The wallflower. I put some in my Canoe, in order to examine it at leisure while we continued to advance toward Maskoutens, where we arrived on The 7th of June.

SECTION 3RD. DESCRIPTION OF THE VILLAGE OF MASKOUTENS; WHAT PASSED THERE BETWEEN THE FATHER AND THE SAVAGES. THE FRENCH BEGIN TO ENTER A NEW AND UNKNOWN COUNTRY, AND ARRIVE AT MISSISIPI.

Here we are at Maskoutens. This Word may, in Algonquin, mean “the fire Nation,” — which, indeed, is the name given to this tribe. Here is the limit of the discoveries which the french have made, For they have not yet gone any farther.

This Village Consists of three Nations who have gathered there — Miamis, Maskoutens, and Kikabous. The former are the most civil, the most liberal, and the most shapely. They wear two long locks over their ears, which give them a pleasing appearance.

[Page 103] They are regarded as warriors, and rarely undertake expeditions without being successful. They are very docile, and listen quietly to What is said to Them; and they appeared so eager to Hear Father Alloues when he Instructed them that they gave Him but little rest, even during the night. The Maskoutens and Kikabous are ruder, and seem peasants in Comparison with the others. As Bark for making Cabins is scarce in this country, They use Rushes; these serve Them for making walls and Roofs, but do not afford them much protection against the winds, and still less against the rains when they fall abundantly. The Advantage of Cabins of this kind is, that they make packages of Them, and easily transport them wherever they wish, while they are hunting.

When I visited them, I was greatly Consoled at seeing a handsome Cross erected in the middle of the village, and adorned with many white skins, red Belts, and bows and arrows, which these good people had offered to the great Manitou (This is the name which they give to God). They did this to thank him for having had pity On Them during The winter, by giving Them an abundance of game When they Most dreaded famine.

I took pleasure in observing the situation of this village. It is beautiful and very pleasing; For, from an Eminence upon which it is placed, one beholds on every side prairies, extending farther than the eye can see, interspersed with groves or with lofty trees. The soil is very fertile, and yields much indian corn. The savages gather quantities of plums and grapes, wherewith much wine could be made, if desired. [Page 105]

No sooner had we arrived than we, Monsieur Jollyet and I, assembled the elders together; and he told them that he was sent by Monsieur Our Governor to discover New countries, while I was sent by God to Illumine them with the light of the holy Gospel. He told them that, moreover, The sovereign Master of our lives wished to be known by all the Nations; and that in obeying his will I feared not the death to which I exposed myself in voyages so perilous. He informed them that we needed two guides to show us the way; and We gave them a present, by it asking them to grant us the guides. To this they very Civilly consented; and they also spoke to us by means of a present, consisting of a Mat to serve us as a bed during the whole of our voyage.

On the following day, the tenth of June, two Miamis who were given us as guides embarked with us, in the sight of a great crowd, who could not sufficiently express their astonishment at the sight of seven frenchmen, alone and in two Canoes, daring to undertake so extraordinary and so hazardous an Expedition.

We knew that, at three leagues from Maskoutens, was a River which discharged into Missisipi. We knew also that the direction we were to follow in order to reach it was west-southwesterly. But the road is broken by so many swamps and small lakes that it is easy to lose one's way, especially as the River leading thither is so full of wild oats that it is difficult to find the Channel. For this reason we greatly needed our two guides, who safely Conducted us to a portage of 2,700 paces, and helped us to transport our Canoes to enter That river; after [Page 107] which they returned home, leaving us alone in this Unknown country, in the hands of providence.

Thus we left the Waters flowing to Quebeq, 4 or 500 Leagues from here, to float on Those that would thenceforward Take us through strange lands. Before embarking thereon, we Began all together a new devotion to the blessed Virgin Immaculate, which we practiced daily, addressing to her special prayers to place under her protection both our persons and the success of our voyage; and, after mutually encouraging one another, we entered our Canoes.

The River on which we embarked is called Meskousing. It is very wide; it has a sandy bottom, which forms various shoals that render its navigation very difficult. It is full of Islands Covered with Vines. On the banks one sees fertile land, diversified with woods, prairies, and Hills. There are oak, Walnut, and basswood trees; and another kind, whose branches are armed with long thorns. We saw there neither feathered game nor fish, but many deer, and a large number of cattle. Our Route lay to the southwest, and, after navigating about 30 leagues, we saw a spot presenting all the appearances of an iron mine; and, in fact, one of our party who had formerly seen such mines, assures us that The One which We found is very good and very rich. It is Covered with three feet of good soil, and is quite near a chain of rocks, the base of which is covered by very fine trees. After proceeding 40 leagues on This same route, we arrived at the mouth of our River; and, at 42 and a half degrees Of latitude, We safely entered Missisipi on The 17th of June, with a Joy that I cannot Express. [Page 107]

SECTION 4TH. OF THE GREAT RIVER CALLED MISSISIPI; ITS MOST NOTABLE FEATURES; OF VARIOUS ANIMALS, AND ESPECIALLY THE PISIKIOUS OR WILD CATTLE, THEIR SHAPE AND NATURE; OF THE FIRST VILLAGES OF THE ILINOIS, WHERE THE FRENCH ARRIVED.

Here we are, then, on this so renowned River, all of whose peculiar features I have endeavored to note carefully. The Missisipi River takes its rise in various lakes in the country of the Northern nations. It is narrow at the place where Miskous empties; its Current, which flows southward, is slow and gentle. To the right is a large Chain of very high Mountains, and to the left are beautiful lands; in various Places, the stream is Divided by Islands. On sounding, we found ten brasses of Water. Its Width is very unequal; sometimes it is three-quarters of a league, and sometimes it narrows to three arpents. We gently followed its Course, which runs toward the south and southeast, as far as the 42nd degree of Latitude. Here we plainly saw that its aspect was completely changed. There are

hardly any woods or mountains; The Islands are more beautiful, and are Covered with finer trees. We saw only deer and cattle, bustards, and Swans without wings, because they drop Their plumage in This country. From time to time, we came upon monstrous fish, one of which struck our Canoe with such violence that I Thought that it was a great tree, about to break the Canoe to pieces.[21] On another occasion, we saw on The water a monster with the head of a tiger, a sharp nose Like That of a wildcat, with whiskers and straight, Erect ears; The head 'was gray and The Neck quite black; but We saw no [Page 111] more creatures of this sort. When we cast our nets into the water we caught Sturgeon, and a very extraordinary Kind of fish. It resembles the trout, with This difference, that its mouth is larger. Near its nose — which is smaller, as are also the eyes — is a large Bone shaped Like a woman's busk, three fingers wide and a Cubit Long, at the end of which is a disk as Wide As one's hand. This frequently causes it to fall backward when it leaps out of the water When we reached the parallel of 41 degrees 28 minutes, following The same direction, we found that Turkeys had taken the place of game; and the pisikious, or wild cattle, That of the other animals.

We call them "wild cattle," because they are very similar to our domestic cattle. They are not longer, but are nearly as large again, and more Corpulent. When Our people killed one, three persons had much difficulty in moving it. The head is very large; The forehead is flat, and a foot and a half Wide between the Horns, which are exactly like Those of our oxen, but black and much larger. Under the Neck They have a Sort of large dewlap, which hangs down; and on The back is a rather high humPage The whole of the head, The Neck, and a portion of the Shoulders, are Covered with a thick Mane Like That of horses; It forms a crest a foot long, which makes them hideous, and, falling over their eyes, Prevents them from seeing what is before Them. The remainder of the Body is covered with a heavy coat of curly hair, almost Like That of our sheep, but much stronger and Thicker. It falls off in Summer, and The skin becomes as soft As Velvet. At that season, the savages Use the hides for making fine [Page 113] Robes, which they paint in various Colors. The flesh and the fat of the pisikious are Excellent, and constitute the best dish at feasts. Moreover, they are very fierce; and not a year passes without their killing some savages. When attacked, they catch a man on their Horns, if they can, toss Him in the air, and then throw him on the ground, after which they trample him under foot, and kill him. If a person fire at Them from a distance, with either a bow or a gun, he must, immediately after the Shot, throw himself down and hide in the grass; For if they perceive Him who has fired, they Run at him, and attack him. As their legs are thick and rather Short, they do not run very fast, As a rule, except when angry. They are scattered about the prairie in herds; I have seen one of 400.

We continued to advance, but, As we knew not whither we were going, — for we had proceeded over one Hundred leagues without discovering anything except animals and birds, — we kept well on our guard. On this account, we make only a small fire on land, toward evening, to cook our meals; and, after supper, we remove Ourselves as far from it as possible, and pass the night in our Canoes, which we anchor in the river at some distance from the shore. This does not prevent us from always posting one of the party as a

sentinel, for fear of a surprise. Proceeding still in a southerly and south-southwesterly direction, we find ourselves at the parallel of 41 degrees, and as low as 40 degrees and some minutes, — partly southeast and partly southwest, — after having advanced over 60 leagues since We Entered the River, without discovering anything.

Finally, on the 25th of June, we perceived on the [Page 115] water's edge some tracks of men, and a narrow and somewhat beaten path leading to a fine prairie. We stopped to Examine it; and, thinking that it was a road which Led to some village of savages, We resolved to go and reconnoiter it. We therefore left our two Canoes under the guard of our people, strictly charging Them not to allow themselves to be surprised, after which Monsieur Jollyet and I undertook this investigation — a rather hazardous one for two men who exposed themselves, alone, to the mercy of a barbarous and Unknown people, We silently followed The narrow path, and, after walking About 2 leagues, We discovered a village on the bank of a river, and two others on a Hill distant about half a league from the first. Then we Heartily commended ourselves to God, and, after imploring his aid, we went farther without being perceived, and approached so near that we could even hear the savages talking. We therefore Decided that it was time to reveal ourselves. This We did by Shouting with all Our energy, and stopped, without advancing any farther. On hearing the shout, the savages quickly issued from their Cabins, And having probably recognized us as frenchmen, especially when they saw a black gown, — or, at least, having no cause for distrust, as we were only two men, and had given them notice of our arrival, — they deputed four old men to come and speak to us. Two of these bore tobacco-pipes, finely ornamented and Adorned with various feathers. They walked slowly, and raised their pipes toward the sun, seemingly offering them to it to smoke, — without, however, saying a word. They spent a rather long time in covering the short distance between their village [Page 117] and us. Finally, when they had drawn near, they stopped to Consider us attentively. I was reassured when I observed these Ceremonies, which with them are performed only among friends; and much more so when I saw them clad in Cloth, for I judged thereby that they were our allies. I therefore spoke to them first, and asked them who they were. They replied that they were Illinois; and, as a token of peace, they offered us their pipes to smoke. They afterward invited us to enter their Village, where all the people impatiently awaited us. These pipes for smoking tobacco are called in this country Calumets. This word has come so much into use that, in order to be understood, I shall be obliged to use it, as I shall often have to mention these pipes.

SECTION 5TH. HOW THE ILLINOIS RECEIVED THE FATHER IN THEIR VILLAGE.

At the Door of the Cabin in which we were to be received was an old man, who awaited us in a rather surprising attitude, which constitutes a part of the Ceremonial that they observe when they receive Strangers. This man stood erect, and stark naked, with his hands extended and lifted toward the sun, As if he wished to protect himself from its rays, which nevertheless shone upon his face through his fingers. When we came near him, he paid us This Compliment: "How beautiful the sun is, O frenchman, when thou comest to visit us! All our village awaits thee, and thou shalt enter all our Cabins in peace." Having

said this, he made us enter his own, in which were a crowd of people; they devoured us with their eyes, but, nevertheless, observed profound silence. We could, however, hear these words, [Page 119] which were addressed to us from time to time in a low voice: "How good it is, My brothers, that you should visit us."

After We had taken our places, the usual Civility of the country was paid to us, which consisted in offering us the Calumet. This must not be refused, unless one wishes to be considered an Enemy, or at least uncivil; it suffices that one make a pretense of smoking. While all the elders smoked after us, in order to do us honor, we received an invitation on behalf of the great Captain of all the Illinois to proceed to his Village where he wished to hold a Council with us. We went thither in a large Company, For all these people, who had never seen any frenchmen among Them, could not cease looking at us. They Lay on The grass along the road; they preceded us, and then retraced their steps to come and see us Again. All this was done noiselessly, and with marks of great respect for us.

When we reached the Village of the great Captain, We saw him at the entrance of his Cabin, between two old men, — all three erect and naked, and holding their Calumet turned toward the sun. He harangued us In a few words, congratulating us upon our arrival. He afterward offered us his Calumet, and made us smoke while we entered his Cabin, where we received all their usual kind Attentions.

Seeing all assembled and silent, I spoke to them by four presents that I gave them. By the first, I told them that we were journeying peacefully to visit the nations dwelling on the River as far as the Sea. By the second, I announced to them that God, who had Created them, had pity on Them, inasmuch as, after they had so long been ignorant of him, he [Page 121] wished to make himself Known to all the peoples; that I was Sent by him for that purpose; and that it was for Them to acknowledge and obey him. By the third, I said that the great Captain of the French informed them that he it was who restored peace everywhere; and that he had subdued The Iroquois. Finally, by the fourth, we begged them to give us all The Information that they had about the Sea, and about the Nations through Whom we must pass to reach it.

When I had finished my speech, the Captain arose, and, resting His hand upon the head of a little Slave whom he wished to give us, he spoke thus: "I thank thee, Black Gown, and thee, O frenchman, "addressing himself to Monsieur Jollyet," for having taken so much trouble to come to visit us. Never has the earth been so beautiful, or the sun so Bright, as to-day; Never has our river been so Calm, or so clear of rocks, which your canoes have Removed in passing: never has our tobacco tasted so good, or our corn appeared so fine, as We now see Them. Here is my son, whom I give thee to Show thee my Heart. I beg thee to have pity on me, and on all my Nation. It is thou who Knowest the great Spirit who has made us all. It is thou who speakest To Him, and who hearest his word. Beg Him to give; me life and health, and to come and dwell with us* in order to make us Know him." Having said this, he placed the little Slave near us, and gave us a second present, consisting of an altogether mysterious Calumet, upon which they place more value than

upon a Slave. By this gift, he expressed to us The esteem that he had for Monsieur Our Governor, from the account which we had given of him; and, by a [Page 123] third, he begged us on behalf of all his Nation not to go farther, on account of the great dangers to which we Exposed ourselves. I replied that I Feared not death, and that I regarded no happiness as greater than that of losing my life for the glory of Him who has made all. This is what these poor people cannot Understand.

The Council was followed by a great feast, Consisting of four dishes, which had to be partaken of in accordance with all their fashions. The first course was a great wooden platter full of sagamité, — that is to say, meal of indian corn boiled in water, and seasoned with fat. The Master of Ceremonies filled a Spoon with sagamité three or 4 times, and put it to my mouth As if I were a little Child. He did The same to Monsieur Jollyet. As a second course, he caused a second platter to be brought, on which were three fish. He took some pieces of them, removed the bones therefrom, and, after blowing upon them to cool Them, he put them in our mouths As one would give food to a bird. For the third course, they brought a large dog, that had just been killed; but, when they learned that we did not eat this meat, they removed it from before us. Finally, the 4th course was a piece of wild ox, The fattest morsels of which were placed in our mouths.

After this feast, we had to go to visit the whole village, which Consists of fully 300 Cabins. While we walked through the Streets, an orator Continually harangued to oblige all the people to come to see us without Annoying us. Everywhere we were presented with Belts, garters, and other articles made of the hair of bears and cattle, dyed red, Yellow, and gray. These are all the rarities they possess. [Page 125] As they are of no great Value, we did not burden ourselves with Them.

We Slept in the Captain's Cabin, and on the following day we took Leave of him, promising to pass again by his village, within four moons. He Conducted us to our Canoes, with nearly 600 persons who witnessed our Embarkation, giving us every possible manifestation of the joy that Our visit had caused them. For my own part, I promised, on bidding them Adieu, that I would come the following year, and reside with Them to instruct them. But, before quitting the Illinois country, it is proper that I should relate what I observed of their Customs and usages.

SECTION 6TH. OF THE CHARACTER OF THE ILINOIS; OF THEIR HABITS AND CUSTOMS; AND OF THE ESTEEM THAT THEY HAVE FOR THE CALUMET, OR TOBACCO-PIPE, AND OF THE DANCE THEY PERFORM IN ITS HONOR.

When one speaks the word "Illinois," it is as if one said in their language, "the men," — As if the other Savages were looked upon by them merely as animals It must also be admitted that they have an air of humanity which we have not observed in the other nations that we have seen upon our route. The shortness Of my stay among Them did not allow me to secure all the Information that I would have desired; among all Their customs, the following is what I have observed.

They are divided into many villages, some of which are quite distant from that of which we speak, which is called peouarea. This causes some difference in their language, which, on the whole, [Page 127] resembles allegonquin, so that we easily understood each other. They are of a gentle and tractable disposition; we Experienced this in the reception which they gave us. They have several wives, of whom they are Extremely jealous; they watch them very closely, and Cut off Their noses or ears when they misbehave. I saw several women who bore the marks of their misconduct. Their Bodies are shapely; they are active and very skillful with bows and arrows. They also use guns, which they buy from our savage allies who Trade with our french. They use them especially to inspire, through their noise and smoke, terror in their Enemies; the latter do not use guns, and have never seen any, since they live too Far toward the West. They are warlike, and make themselves dreaded by the Distant tribes to the south and west, whither they go to procure Slaves; these they barter, selling them at a high price to other Nations, in exchange for other Wares. Those very Distant Savages against whom they war have no Knowledge of Europeans; neither do they know anything of iron, or of Copper, and they have only stone Knives. When the Illinois depart to go to war, the whole village must be notified by a loud Shout, which is uttered at the doors of their Cabins, the night and The Morning before their departure. The Captains are distinguished from the warriors by wearing red Scarfs. These are made, with considerable Skill, from the Hair of bears and wild cattle. They paint their faces with red ocher, great quantities of which are found at a distance of some days' journey from the village. They live by hunting, game being plentiful in that country, and on indian corn, of which they always have a good crop; [Page 129] consequently, they have never suffered from famine. They also sow beans and melons, which are Excellent, especially those that have red seeds. Their Squashes are not of the best; they dry them in the sun, to eat them during The winter and the spring. Their Cabins are very large, and are Roofed and floored with mats made of Rushes. They make all Their utensils of wood, and Their Ladles out of the heads of cattle, whose Skulls they know so well how to prepare that they use these ladles with ease for eating their sagamité.

They are liberal in cases of illness, and Think that the effect of the medicines administered to them is in proportion to the presents given to the physician. Their garments consist only of skins; the women are always clad very modestly and very becomingly, while the men do not take the trouble to Cover themselves. I know not through what superstition some Illinois, as well as some Nadouessi, while still young, assume the garb of women, and retain it throughout their lives. There is some mystery in this, For they never marry and glory in demeaning themselves to do everything that the women do. They go to war, however, but can use only clubs, and not bows and arrows, which are the weapons proper to men. They are present at all the juggleries, and at the solemn dances in honor of the Calumet; at these they sing, but must not dance. They are summoned to the Councils, and nothing can be decided without their advice. Finally, through their profession of leading an Extraordinary life, they pass for Manitous, — That is to say, for Spirits, — or persons of Consequence.

There remains no more, except to speak of the Calumet. There is nothing more mysterious or more [Page 131] respected among them. Less honor is paid to the Crowns and scepters of Kings than the Savages bestow upon this. It seems to be the God of peace and of war, the Arbiter of life and of death. It has but to be carried upon one's person, and displayed, to enable one to walk safely through the midst of Enemies — who, in the hottest of the Fight, lay down Their arms when it is shown. For That reason, the Illinois gave me one, to serve as a safeguard among all the Nations through whom I had to pass during my voyage. There is a Calumet for peace, and one for war, which are distinguished solely by the Color of the feathers with which they are adorned; Red is a sign of war. They also use it to put an end to Their disputes, to strengthen Their alliances, and to speak to Strangers. It is fashioned from a red stone, polished like marble, and bored in such a manner that one end serves as a receptacle for the tobacco, while the other fits into the stem; this is a stick two feet long, as thick as an ordinary cane, and bored through the middle. It is ornamented with the heads and necks of various birds, whose plumage is very beautiful. To these they also add large feathers, — red, green, and other colors, — wherewith the whole is adorned. They have a great regard for it, because they look upon it as the calumet of the Sun; and, in fact, they offer it to the latter to smoke when they wish to obtain a calm, or rain, or fine weather. They scruple to bathe themselves at the beginning of Summer, or to eat fresh fruit, until after they have performed the dance, which they do as follows:

The Calumet dance, which is very famous among these peoples, is performed solely for important reasons; sometimes to strengthen peace, or to unite [Page 133] themselves for some great war; at other times, for public rejoicing. Sometimes they thus do honor to a Nation who are invited to be present; sometimes it is danced at the reception of some important personage, as if they wished to give him the diversion of a Ball or a Comedy. In Winter, the ceremony takes place in a Cabin; in Summer, in the open fields. When the spot is selected, it is completely surrounded by trees, so that all may sit in the shade afforded by their leaves, in order to be protected from the heat of the Sun. A large mat of rushes, painted in various colors, is spread in the middle of the place, and serves as a carpet upon which to place with honor the God of the person who gives the Dance; for each has his own god, which they call their Manitou. This is a serpent, a bird, or other similar thing, of which they have dreamed while sleeping, and in which they place all their confidence for the success of their war, their fishing, and their hunting. Near this Manitou, and at its right, is placed the Calumet in honor of which the feast is given; and all around it a sort of trophy is made, and the weapons used by the warriors of those Nations are spread, namely: clubs, war-hatchets, bows, quivers, and arrows.

Everything being thus arranged, and the hour of the Dance drawing near, those who have been appointed to sing take the most honorable place under the branches; these are the men and women who are gifted with the best voices, and who sing together in perfect harmony. Afterward, all come to take their seats in a circle under the branches; but each one, on arriving, must salute the Manitou. This he does by inhaling the smoke, and blowing it from his [Page 135] mouth upon the Manitou, as if he were offering to it

incense. Every one, at the outset, takes the Calumet in a respectful manner, and, supporting it with both hands, causes it to dance in cadence, keeping good time with the air of the songs. He makes it execute many differing figures; sometimes he shows it to the whole assembly, turning himself from one side to the other. After that, he who is to begin the Dance appears in the middle of the assembly, and at once continues this. Sometimes he offers it to the sun, as if he wished the latter to smoke it; sometimes he inclines it toward the earth; again, he makes it spread its wings, as if about to fly; at other times, he puts it near the mouths of those present, that they may smoke. The whole is done in cadence; and this is, as it were, the first Scene of the Ballet.

The second consists of a Combat carried on to the sound of a kind of drum, which succeeds the songs, or even unites with them, harmonizing very well together. The Dancer makes a sign to some warrior to come to take the arms which lie upon the mat, and invites him to fight to the sound of the drums. The latter approaches, takes up the bow and arrows, and the war-hatchet, and begins the duel with the other, whose sole defense is the Calumet. This spectacle is very pleasing, especially as all is done in cadence; for one attacks, the other defends himself; one strikes blows, the other parries them; one takes to flight, the other pursues; and then he who was fleeing faces about, and causes his adversary to flee. This is done so well — with slow and measured steps, and to the rhythmic sound of the voices and drums — that it might pass for a very fine [Page 137] opening of a Ballet in France. The third Scene consists of a lofty Discourse, delivered by him who holds the Calumet; for, when the Combat is ended without bloodshed, he recounts the battles at which he has been present, the victories that he has won, the names of the Nations, the places, and the Captives whom he has made. And, to reward him, he who presides at the Dance makes him a present of a fine robe of Beaver-skins, or some other article. Then, having received it, he hands the Calumet to another, the latter to a third, and so on with all the others, until every one has done his duty; then the President presents the Calumet itself to the Nation that has been invited to the Ceremony, as a token of the everlasting peace that is to exist between the two peoples. Here is one of the Songs that they are in the habit of singing. They give it a certain turn which cannot be sufficiently expressed by Note, but which nevertheless constitutes all its grace.

Ninahani, ninahani, ninahani, nani ongo.

SECTION 7TH. DEPARTURE OF THE FATHER FROM THE ILLINOIS; OF THE PAINTED MONSTERS WHICH HE SAW UPON THE GREAT RIVER MISSISSIPI; OF THE RIVER PEKITANOUI. CONTINUATION OF THE VOYAGE.

We take leave of our Illinois at the end of June, about three o'clock in the afternoon. We embark in the sight of all the people, who admire our little Canoes, for they have never seen any like them.

We descend, following the current of the river called Pekitanoui, which discharges into the Mississipy, flowing from the Northwest. I shall have [Page 139] something important to say about it, when I shall have related all that I observed along this river.

While passing near the rather high rocks that line the river, I noticed a simple [plant] which seemed to me very Extraordinary. The root is like small turnips fastened together by little filaments, which taste like carrots. From this root springs a leaf as wide As one's hand, and half a finger thick, with spots. From the middle of this leaf spring other leaves, resembling the sconces used for candles in our halls; and each leaf bears Five or six yellow flowers shaped like little Bells.

We found quantities of mulberries, as large as Those of france; and a small fruit which we at first took for olives, but which tasted like oranges; and another fruit as large As a hen's egg. We cut it in halves, and two divisions appeared, in each of which 8 to 10 fruits were encased; these are shaped like almonds, and are very good when ripe. Nevertheless, The tree that bears them has a very bad odor, and its leaves resemble Those of the walnut-tree. In These prairies there is also a fruit similar to Hazelnuts, but more delicate; The leaves are very large, and grow from a stalk at the end of which is a head similar to That of a sunflower, in which all its Nuts are regularly arranged. These are very good, both Cooked and Raw.

While Skirting some rocks, which by Their height and Length inspired awe, We saw upon one of them two painted monsters which at first made Us afraid, and upon Which the boldest savages dare not Long rest their eyes. They are as large As a calf; they have Horns on their heads Like those of deer, a horrible look, red eyes, a beard Like a tiger's, a face [Page 141] somewhat like a man's, a body Covered with scales, and so Long A tail that it winds all around the Body, passing above the head and going back between the legs, ending in a Fish's tail. Green, red, and black are the three Colors composing the Picture. Moreover, these 2 monsters are so well painted that we cannot believe that any savage is their author; for good painters in france would find it difficult to paint so well, — and, besides, they are so high up on the rock that it is difficult to reach that place Conveniently to paint them. Here is approximately The shape of these monsters, As we have faithfully Copied It.

While conversing about these monsters, sailing quietly in clear and calm Water, we heard the noise of a rapid, into which we were about to run. I have seen nothing more dreadful. An accumulation of large and entire trees, branches, and floating islands, was issuing from The mouth of The river pekistanoui, with such impetuosity that we could not without great danger risk passing through it. So great was the agitation that the water was very muddy, and could not become clear.

Pekitanoui is a river of Considerable size, coming from the Northwest, from a great Distance; and it discharges into the Missisipi. There are many Villages of savages along this river, and I hope by its means to discover the vermillion or California sea.

Judging from The Direction of the course of the Missisipi', if it Continue the same way, we think that it discharges into the mexican gulf. It would be a great advantage to find the river Leading to the southern sea, toward California; and, As I have said, this is what I hope to do by means of the Pekitanoui, [Page 143] according to the reports made to me by the savages. From them I have learned that, by ascending this river for 5 or 6 Days, one reaches a fine prairie, 20 or 30 Leagues Long. This must be crossed in a Northwesterly direction, and it terminates at another small river, — on which one may embark, for it is not very difficult to transport Canoes through so fine a country as that prairie. This 2nd River Flows toward The southwest for 10 or 15 Leagues, after which it enters a Lake, small and deep [the source of another deep river — substituted by Dablon], which flows toward the West, where it falls into The sea. I have hardly any doubt that it is The vermillion sea, and I do not despair of discovering It some day, if God grant me the grace and The health to do so, in order that I may preach The Gospel to all The peoples of this new world who have so Long Groveled in the darkness of infidelity.

Let us resume our Route, after Escaping As best We could from the dangerous rapid Caused by The obstruction which I have mentioned.

SECTION 8TH. OF THE NEW COUNTRIES DISCOVERED BY THE FATHER. VARIOUS PARTICULARS. MEETING WITH SOME SAVAGES. FIRST NEWS OF THE SEA AND OF EUROPEANS. GREAT DANGER AVOIDED BY MEANS OF THE CALUMET.

After proceeding about 20 Leagues straight to the south, and a little less to the southeast, we found ourselves at a river called ouaboukigou, The mouth of which is at the 36th degree of latitude. Before reaching it, we passed by a Place that is dreaded by the Savages, because they believe that a manitou is there, — that is to say, a demon, — that [Page 145] devours travelers; and The savages, who wished to divert us from our undertaking, warned us against it. This is the demon: there is a small cove, surrounded by rocks 20 feet high, into which The whole Current of the river rushes; and, being pushed back against the waters following It, and checked by an Island near by, the Current is Compelled to pass through a narrow Channel. This is not done without a violent Struggle between all these waters, which force one another back, or without a great din, which inspires terror in the savages, who fear everything. But this did not prevent us from passing, and arriving at Waboukigou. This river flows from the lands of the East, where dwell the people called Chaouanons in so great numbers that in one district there are as many as 23 villages, and 15 in another, quite near one another. They are not at all warlike, and are the nations whom the Iroquois go so far to seek, and war against without any reason: and, because these poor people cannot defend themselves, they allow themselves to be captured and taken Like flocks of sheep; and, innocent though they are, they nevertheless sometimes experience The barbarity of the Iroquois, who cruelly burn Them.

A short distance above the river of which I have just spoken are cliffs, on which our frenchmen noticed an iron mine, which they consider very rich. There are several veins of ore, and a bed a foot thick, and one sees large masses of it united with Pebbles, A sticky

earth is found there, of three different colors — purple, violet, and Red. The water in which the latter is washed assumes a bloody tinge. There is also very heavy, red sand. I placed some on a [Page 147] paddle, which was dyed with its color — so deeply that The water could not wash it away during the 15 days while I used it for paddling. Here we Began to see Canes, or large reeds, which grow on the bank of the river; their color is a very pleasing green; all the nodes are marked by a Crown of Long, narrow, and pointed leaves. They are very high, and grow so thickly that The wild cattle have some difficulty in forcing their way through them.

Hitherto, we had not suffered any inconvenience from mosquitoes; but we were entering into their home, as it were. This is what the savages of this quarter do to protect themselves against them. They erect a scaffolding, the floor of which consists only of poles, so that it is open to the air in order that the smoke of the fire made underneath may pass through, and drive away those little creatures, which cannot endure it; the savages lie down upon the poles, over which bark is spread to keep off rain. These scaffoldings also serve them as protection against The excessive and Unbearable heat of this country; for they lie in the shade, on the floor below, and thus protect themselves against the sun's rays, enjoying the cool breeze that circulates freely through the scaffolding.

With the same object, we were compelled to erect a sort of cabin on The water, with our sails as a protection against the mosquitoes and the rays of the sun. While drifting down with The current, in this condition, we perceived on land some savages armed with guns, who awaited us. I at once offered them my plumed calumet, while our frenchmen prepared for defense, but delayed firing, that The savages might be the first to discharge their guns. I spoke [Page 149] to them in huron, but they answered me by a word which seemed to me a declaration of war against us. However, they were as frightened as we were; and what we took for a signal for battle was an Invitation that they gave us to draw near, that they might give us food. We therefore landed, and entered their Cabins, where they offered us meat from wild cattle and bear's grease, with white plums, which are very good. They have guns, hatchets, hoes, Knives, beads, and flasks of double glass, in which they put Their powder. They wear Their hair long, and tattoo their bodies after the hiroquois fashion. The women wear head-dresses and garments like those of the huron women. They assured us that we were no more than ten days' journey from The sea; that they bought cloth and all other goods from the Europeans who lived to The east, that these Europeans had rosaries and pictures; that they played upon Instruments; that some of them looked Like me, and had been received by these savages kindly. Nevertheless, I saw none who seemed to have received any instruction in the faith; I gave Them as much as I could, with some medals.

This news animated our courage, and made us paddle with Fresh ardor. We thus push forward, and no longer see so many prairies, because both shores of The river are bordered with lofty trees. The cottonwood, elm, and basswood trees there are admirable for Their height and thickness. The great numbers of wild cattle, which we heard bellowing, lead us to believe that The prairies are near. We also saw Quail on the water's

edge. We killed a little parroquet, one half of whose head was red, The other half and The Neck yellow, and The whole [Page 151] body green, We had gone down to near the 33rd degree of latitude having proceeded nearly all the time in a southerly direction, when we perceived a village on The water's edge called Mitchigamea. We had recourse to our Patroness and guide, The Blessed VIRGIN IMMACULATE; and we greatly needed her assistance, For we heard from afar The savages who were inciting one another to the Fray by their Continual yells. They were armed with bows, arrows, hatchets, clubs, and shields. They prepared to attack us, on both land and water; part of them embarked in great wooden canoes — some to ascend, others to descend the river, in order to Intercept us and surround us on all sides. Those who were on land came and went, as if to commence The attack. In fact, some Young men threw themselves into The water, to come and seize my Canoe; but the current compelled Them to return to land. One of them then hurled his club, which passed over without striking us. In vain I showed The calumet, and made them signs that we were not coming to war against them. The alarm continued, and they were already preparing to pierce us with arrows from all sides, when God suddenly touched the hearts of the old men, who were standing at the water's edge. This no doubt happened through the sight of our Calumet, which they had not clearly distinguished from afar; but as I did not cease displaying it, they were influenced by it, and checked the ardor of their Young men. Two of these elders even, — after casting into our canoe, as if at our feet, Their bows and quivers, to reassure us — entered the canoe, and made us approach the shore, whereon we landed, not without fear on our part. At first, we had to [Page 153] speak by signs, because none of them understood the six languages which I spoke. At last, we found an old man who could speak a little Illinois.

We informed them, by our presents, that we were going to the sea. They understood very well what we wished to say to Them, but I know not whether they apprehended what I told them about God, and about matters pertaining to their salvation. This is a seed cast into the ground, which will bear fruit in its time. We obtained no other answer than that we would learn all that we desired at another large village, called Akamsea, which was only 8 or 10 leagues lower down. They offered us sagamité and fish, and we passed The night among them, with some anxiety.

SECTION 9TH. RECEPTION GIVEN TO THE FRENCH IN THE LAST VILLAGE WHICH THEY SAW. THE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THOSE SAVAGES. REASONS FOR NOT GOING FARTHER.

We embarked early on the following day, with our interpreter; a canoe containing ten savages went a short distance ahead of us. When we arrived within half a league of the Akamsea, we saw two canoes coming to meet us. He who commanded stood upright, holding in his hand The calumet, with Which he made various signs, according to the custom of the country. He joined us, singing very agreeably, and gave us tobacco to smoke; after that, he offered us sagamité, and bread made of indian corn, of which we ate a little. He then preceded us, after making us a sign to follow Him slowly. A place had been prepared for us under The scaffolding of the chief of the warriors; it was [Page 155]

clean, and carpeted with fine rush mats. Upon These we were made to sit, having around us the elders, who were nearest to us; after them, The warriors; and, finally, all The common people in a crowd. We fortunately found there a Young man who understood Illinois much better than did The Interpreter whom we had brought from Mitchigamea. Through him, I spoke at first to the whole assembly by The usual presents. They admired what I said to Them about God and the mysteries of our holy faith. They manifested a great desire to retain me among them, that I might instruct Them.

We afterward asked them what they knew about the sea. They replied that we were only ten days' journey from it — we could have covered the distance in 5 days; that they were not acquainted with The Nations who dwelt There, because Their enemies prevented Them from Trading with those Europeans; that the hatchets, Knives, and beads that we saw were sold to Them partly by Nations from The east, and partly by an Illinois village situated at four days' journey from their village westward. They also told us that the savages with guns whom we had met were Their Enemies, who barred Their way to the sea, and prevented Them from becoming acquainted with the Europeans, and from carrying on any trade with them; that, moreover, we exposed ourselves to great dangers by going farther, on account of the continual forays of their enemies along the river, — because, as they had guns and were very warlike, we could not without manifest danger proceed down the river, which they constantly occupy.

During this conversation, food was continually [Page 157] brought to us in large wooden platters, consisting sometimes of sagamité, sometimes of whole corn, sometimes of a piece of dog's flesh. The entire day was spent in feasting. These people are very obliging and liberal with what they have; but they are wretchedly provided with food, for they dare not go and hunt wild cattle, on account of Their Enemies. It is true that they have an abundance of indian corn, which they sow at all seasons. We saw at the same time some that was ripe, some other that had only sprouted, and some again in the Milk, so that they sow it three times a year. They cook it in great earthen jars, which are very well made. They have also plates of baked earth which they use in various ways. The men go naked, and wear Their hair short; they pierce their noses, from which, as well as from Their ears, hang beads. The women are clad in wretched skins; they knot Their hair in two tresses which they throw behind their ears, and have no ornaments with which to adorn themselves. Their feasts are given without any ceremony. They offer the Guests large dishes, from which all eat at discretion and offer what is left to one another. Their language is exceedingly difficult, and I could succeed in pronouncing only a few words notwithstanding all my efforts. Their Cabins, which are made of bark, are Long and Wide; they sleep at the two ends, which are raised two feet above the ground. They keep Their corn in large baskets made of Canes, or in gourds as large as half- barrels. They know nothing of the Beaver. Their wealth consists in the skins of wild cattle. They never see snow in their country, and recognize The winter only through The [Page 159] rains, which there fall more frequently than in summer. We ate no other fruit there than watermelons. If they knew how to till their soil, they would have fruits of all kinds.

In the evening, the elders held a secret council, in regard to the design entertained by some to break our heads and rob us; but the Chief put a stop to all these plots. After sending for us, he danced the calumet before us, in the manner I have already described, as a token of our entire safety; and, to relieve us of all fear, he made me a present of it. Monsieur Jolliet and I held another Council, to deliberate upon what we should do — whether we should push on, or remain content with the discovery which we had made. After attentively considering that we were not far from the gulf of Mexico, the basin of which is at the latitude of 31 degrees 60 minutes, while we were at 33 degrees 40 minutes, we judged that we could not be more than 2 or 3 days' journey from it; and that, beyond a doubt, the Missisipi river discharges into the florida or Mexican gulf, and not to The east in Virginia, whose sea-coast is at 34 degrees latitude, — which we had passed, without, however, having as yet reached the sea, — or to the west in California, because in that case our route would have been to The west, or the west-southwest, whereas we had always continued It toward the south. We further considered that we exposed ourselves to the risk of losing the results of this voyage, of which we could give no information if we proceeded to fling ourselves into the hands of the Spaniards who, without doubt, would at least have detained us as captives. Moreover, we saw very plainly that we were not in a condition to resist Savages allied to [Page 161] The Europeans, who were numerous, and expert in firing guns, and who continually infested the lower part of the river. Finally, we had obtained all the information that could be desired in regard to this discovery. All these reasons induced us to decide upon Returning; this we announced to the savages, and, after a day's rest, made our preparations for it.

SECTION 10TH. RETURN OF THE FATHER AND OF THE FRENCH. BAPTISM OF A DYING CHILD.

After a month's Navigation, while descending Missisipi from the 42nd to the 34th degree, and beyond, and after preaching the Gospel as well as I could to the Nations that I met, we start on the 17th of July from the village of the akensea, to retrace our steps. We therefore reascend the Missisipi which gives us much trouble in breasting its Currents. It is true that we leave it, at about the 38th degree, to enter another river, which greatly shortens our road, and takes us with but little effort to the lake of the Illinois. We have seen nothing like this river that we enter, as regards its fertility of soil, its prairies and woods; its cattle, elk, deer, wildcats, bustards, swans, ducks, parroquets, and even beaver. There are many small lakes and rivers. That on which we sailed is wide, deep, and still, for 65 leagues. In the spring and during part of The summer there is only one portage of half a league. We found on it a village of Illinois called Kaskasia, consisting of 74 Cabins. They received us very well, and obliged me to promise that I would return to instruct them. One of the chiefs of this nation, with his young men, escorted us to the Lake of the Illinois, whence, at last, at The [Page 163] end of September, we reached the bay des puants, from which we had started at the beginning of June.

Had this voyage resulted in the salvation of even one soul, I would consider all my troubles well rewarded, and I have reason to presume that such is the case. For, when I

was returning, we passed through the Illinois of Peouarea, and during three days I preached the faith in all their Cabins; after which, while we were embarking, a dying child was brought to me at The water's edge, and I baptized it shortly before it died, through an admirable act of providence for the salvation of that Innocent soul.

Volume 60: 1677: Allouez' Return to the Illinois

NARRATIVE OF A 3RD VOYAGE TO THE ILINOIS MADE BY FATHER CLAUDE ALLOIS.

Successor to the late father Marquette was needed who should be no less jealous than he. To fill his place, father Claude Allouez was chosen, who had labored, the leader in all our missions to the outaouaks, with Untiring Courage. He was engaged, at the time, in that of St. François Xavier in the bay des puants, and was soon ready to set out. Let us hear what he says of his voyage.

SECTION 1ST. FATHER ALOUÉS SETS OUT OVER THE ICE. A YOUNG MAN KILLED BY A BEAR; OF THE REVENGE THAT WAS TAKEN FOR THIS. VARIOUS CURIOSITIES ENCOUNTERED ON THE WAY.

After these Trips, the weather being favorable for setting out, — it was toward the close of the month of October, 1676, — I embarked in a canoe with two men, to attempt to go to winter with the Illinois. But I did not go far, for the winter had set in so early that year that, the ice overtaking us, we were compelled to go into camp, and wait until the ice was strong enough to bear us. It was not until the month of february that we began our voyage — a very unusual mode of navigation, for, instead of putting the Canoe into the water, we placed it upon the ice, over which the wind, which was in our favor, and a sail made it go as on water. When the wind failed us, in place of paddles we used Ropes to draw it along, as horses draw carriages. Passing near the nation of the poueteouatamis, I learned that a Young man had recently been killed by bears.

At 12 leagues from the village of the poueteouatamis, we entered a very deep bay, from which we carried our Canoe through the woods as Far as the great lake of the Illinois; this portage extends about a league and a half. The vigil of st. Joseph, patron of all Canada, finding us on this lake of the Illinois, we gave it the name of that great saint; accordingly, we shall call it, from this time, the lake of st. Joseph. [Page 153]

We embarked, then, on the 29th of march, and had to contend vigorously with the ice, which we were compelled to break before us in order to secure a passage. The water was so cold that it froze on our paddles, and on that Side of the canoe on which the sun did not strike. It pleased God to bring us through the danger in which we were placed upon landing, when a strong Gust of wind blew the ice against our canoe on one side, and pushed [it] on the other *our Canoe* against the ice that lined the shore.

Our great difficulty was that, the rivers being still frozen, we could not enter them until the 3rd of april. We consecrated that into which we at last entered, during the season of holy week, by a large Cross which we planted on its bank, in order that a number of savages who resort there for their Hunting — some by Canoe on the lake and others on foot through the woods — might be reminded of the Instructions given them regarding this mystery, and, by the sight of it, be moved to pray to God.

The next day, we saw a rock 7 or 8 feet out of the water and 2 or 3 brasses in circumference, named "the pitch rock." Indeed, one could see the pitch Trickling down in little threads on the Side on which the sun was warming it. We took some and found it good for pitching Canoes; and I make use of it for Sealing my letters. We saw also, on the same Day, another rock, a little smaller, part of which was under water and part out. That part which was wet by the waves was of a beautiful red color, very bright and shining. A few Days afterward, we came across a streamlet that issued from the slope of a Hill, the waters of which appeared mineralized; the sand in [Page 155] it is red, and the savages tell us that it comes from a little lake in which they have found small pieces of red Copper. We proceeded, continuing always to coast along the great prairies, which extend farther than the eye can reach. Trees are met with from time to time, but they are so placed that they seem to have been planted with design, in order to make avenues more pleasing to the eye than those of orchards. The base of these trees is often watered by little streamlets, at which are seen large herds of stags and hinds refreshing themselves, and peacefully feeding upon the short grass. We followed these vast plains for 20 leagues and repeated many times, "Benedicite opera Domini Domino."

After voyaging 76 leagues over the lake of saint Joseph, we at length entered the river which leads to the Illinois. I met there 80 savages of the country, by whom I was welcomed in a very hospitable manner. The Captain came about 30 steps to meet me, carrying in one hand a fire brand and in the other a Calumet adorned with feathers. Approaching me, he placed it in my mouth and himself lighted the tobacco, which obliged me to make pretense of smoking it. Then he made me come into his Cabin, and having given me the place of honor, he spoke to me as follows:
 " My Father, have pity on me; suffer me to return with thee, to bear thee company and take thee into' my village. The meeting I have had to-day with thee will prove fatal to me if I do not use it to my advantage. Thou bearest to us the gospel and the prayer. If I lose the opportunity of listening to thee, I shall be punished by the loss of my nephews, [Page 157] whom thou seest in so great number; without doubt, they will be defeated by our enemies. Let us embark, then, in Company, that I may profit by thy coming into our land." That said, he set out at the same time as ourselves, and shortly after we arrived at his abode.

SECTION 2ND. FATHER ALLOUEZ ARRIVES AT THE VILLAGE OF THE ILLINOIS.
 DESCRIPTION OF THAT VILLAGE AND OF THE COUNTRY. THE FAITH IS
 PROCLAIMED TO ALL THE NATIONS.

Notwithstanding all the efforts that we made to hasten our journey, it was not until the 27th of april that I was able to arrive at Kachkachkia, the great village of the Illinois. I entered, at once, the Cabin in which father marquette had lodged; and, the old men being assembled there with the entire population, I made known the reason for which I had come to them, — namely, to preach to them the true God, living and Immortal, and his only son Jesus Christ. They listened very attentively to my whole discourse and thanked me for the trouble that I was taking for their salvation.

I found this Village largely increased since a year ago. Formerly, it was Composed of but one nation, that of the Kachkachkia; at the present time, there are 8 tribes in it, the first having summoned the others, who inhabited the neighborhood of the river mississipi. One cannot well satisfy himself as to the number of people who Compose that village. They are housed in 351 cabins, which are easily counted, as most of them are situated upon the bank of the river.

The spot which they have Chosen for their abode [Page 159] is situated in latitude 40 degrees 41 minutes. On one Side of it is a long stretch of prairie, and on the other a multitude of swamps, which are unhealthy and often Covered with fog, — giving Rise to much sickness, and to loud and frequent Peals of thunder; they delight, however, in this location, as they can easily espy from it their enemies.

These savages are naturally high-spirited, valorous, and daring. They wage war with 7 or 8 different nations, but do not use guns, finding them too cumbersome and slow. They carry them, nevertheless, when they march against nations who do not understand the use of them, to frighten them by the noise and put them to rout. Usually, they carry only the club, the bow, and a Quiverful of arrows, which they shoot with such skill and rapidity as scarcely to give time to those who have guns to Take Aim. They carry also a large shield, made of the skins of the wild bison, arrow- proof, and covering the whole Body. They have several wives, and are extremely jealous of them, leaving them on the least suspicion. Usually these latter conduct themselves well, and dress modestly; not so the men, who feel no shame at their nudity.

They live on indian corn and other fruits of the earth, which they cultivate, like the other savages, on the prairies. They eat 14 kinds of roots, which they find in the prairies; they made me eat some and I found them good and very sweet. They Gather from trees and plants 42 different kinds of fruits, all of which are excellent; and catch 25 sorts of fish — among them, the eel. They Hunt the [Page 161] roebuck, the bison, the Turkey, the Wildcat, a species of tiger, and other animals; they Reckon up 22 kinds of these, and some 40 kinds of game and birds. I have been told that, lower down the river, there are saline springs, and that they make salt from them; I have not yet seen the experiment tried. I am also assured that, not far from their village, there is slate-stone as fine as ours. I have seen in this country, as with the outaouacs, red Copper — which is found, as elsewhere, in little pieces, on the banks of the river. And, lastly, they assure me that there are here rocks with pitch, similar to those which I saw on the shores of lake st. Joseph. The savages Cut

them, and find silver— like veins; they pulverize these and make of them a very fine red paint. They also come across other veins, from which the pitch oozes; this, when thrown into the fire, burns like ours.

This is all that I was able to observe in this country, in the short time that I lived in it. What follows is what I did for the Christian faith. As I had but a short time to remain here, — having come only to acquire the information necessary for the establishment of a complete mission, — immediately applied myself to give all the instruction I could to these 8 different nations, to whom, by the grace of God I made myself sufficiently understood. I went, for that purpose, into the Cabin of the Chief of the nation that I wished to instruct; and, there making ready a small altar, using the ornaments of my portable Chapel, I exposed the Crucifix; when they had looked at it, I explained to them the mysteries of our holy faith. I could not have desired a larger audience, or closer attention. They carried [Page 163] to me their smaller children to be baptized, and brought me the older ones to be Instructed. They themselves repeated all the prayers that I taught them. In a word, after I had done the same for all the nations, I had recognized, as a result, the same number of peoples to whom nothing more remained [I saw that nothing was lacking to all these peoples] save careful Cultivation, for them to become good Christians. This is what we hope hereafter to effect at leisure.

I have made a beginning in This mission, by the baptism of 35 children, and one sick adult; this man died a short time afterward, as did one of his children, to go to take possession of paradise in the name of the whole nation.

And, in order to take possession also of all these peoples in the name of Jesus Christ, on the 3rd of may, the festival of the holy Cross, we planted in the middle of the village a Cross 35 feet in height, chanting the “vexilla” in the presence of a large number of ilinois of all the nations. Of these I can say in truth that they did not regard Jesus Christ Crucified as a folly, or a scandal; on the contrary, they assisted at that ceremony with great respect, and listened with admiration to all I had to say regarding that mystery. The children even came devoutly to kiss the Cross, while the grown-up people Earnestly entreated me to plant it there so firmly that it might never be in danger of falling.

The time of my departure having come, I bade Adieu to these peoples, and left them eagerly anticipating my return as soon as possible— an expectation all the more willingly encouraged by me, inasmuch as on the one Hand I have great reason [Page 165] for thanking God for the little crosses of which, in this voyage, he granted me a share; and because on the other I see the mission quite ready, and very promising. Doubtless, the devil will oppose himself to it, and perhaps will profit by the war which the Iroquois intend to make against the Ilinois. I pray our lord to avert it, lest beginnings so glorious may be entirely destroyed.

[Postscript by Dablon] In the year after, 1678, father aloués set out on his return to that mission, to remain there two consecutive years, that he might thus work more effectively

for the Conversion of those peoples. We have since learned that the Iroquois have made an incursion thus far, but that they were defeated by the Illinois. This will go far to foment war between these nations; and if God do not interpose, will do much injury to this mission. [Page 167]

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LETTER BY FATHER JACQUES GRAVIER IN THE FORM OF A JOURNAL OF THE MISSION OF L'IMMACULÉE CONCEPTION DE NOTRE DAME IN THE ILINOIS COUNTRY.

February 15, 1694.

I have much pleasure in giving you information respecting the condition of this mission of the *Illinois*, in order that you may be able to see, by this sort of journal that I send you, all that has occurred in it since the month of March of the previous year; and how great a blessing we might expect in this mission, were fervent laborers sent hither. After having been among the *Oumiamis* during the winter, on the ice, I found the Illinois — who had, some months before, left the places we call *Kiskaskia* and *Kouir akouintauka*. They had met every day during my absence to pray to God in the Chapel, night and morning, as regularly as if I had been present,— after which an old man, who had for a long time been infirm, went through all the streets of the Village calling out that the women and children also were to go to adore God, and to say their prayers to him,... and when they informed me that several children had died, without my having had the consolation of having baptized them before my departure.

About the end of the Same Month of April, I [Page 159] blessed the new chapel, which is built outside the fort, at a spot very convenient for the savages. On the eve before blessing the chapel and the cross, which is nearly 35 feet high, I invited the french to be good enough to be present. They promised to be there, and to manifest in public the honor in which they held it. They showed the savages by 4 volleys from their guns their veneration for this symbol of salvation.

About the middle of May the deputies of the savages of this village, accompanied by two frenchmen, went to seek the alliance of the *Missouri* and of the *Osages*. These french Merchants, with the view of carrying on an advantageous trade with those tribes, made some proposals of peace to them; to these they agreed solely out of complaisance to the french, through consideration for whom they became reconciled with the *Osages*. I would willingly have performed that journey to see for myself whether anything could be done there for the glory of God among the *Tamaroua* and the *Kaoukia*, who are *Illinois*; and to sound the *Missouri* and *Osages*, in order to ascertain what could be obtained from them with respect to Christianity, — for I have no doubt that I would have found many dying children and adults to baptize. But, as there are among them some libertines who do not love the Missionary's presence, because they wish to continue their evil conduct, I

contented myself with telling them that I would cheerfully have undertaken the journey with them, as its difficulties and fatigues would have been agreeable to me while working for the interests of God.

About that time, as I showed that I was surprised by the indifference to instruction that I observed among the *Peouareoua*, notwithstanding the politeness [Page 161] with which the old men received me, one of them told me in confidence that his tribesmen had resolved to prevent the people from coming to the chapel to listen to me, because I inveighed against their customs and their juggleries; that they would, however, receive me well, in order to save appearances. I saw very well that this information was true, for the chief of the *Peouareoua*, who was the most prominent of all the jugglers, strongly opposed the Christian faith —saying that it was important for the public welfare that no one should go to pray to God in the chapel any more, until the corn was ripe and the harvest over; and that he would then exhort the people to go to be instructed. The period that he fixed was a long one, for he thought that I would offer him a present to shorten it. Seeing that I could not rely in anyway upon a man as interested as he, and one animated by no good will, I myself went to ask the inhabitants of the village to come to learn the road to heaven, without heeding the obstacles that the devil might oppose to it. I met a band of weeping women lamenting over a dying child, who expired as soon as I tried to approach him. The grandmother, who was not ignorant of the fact that I had baptized him a year ago, turned all her anger against me; after saying many harsh things against me, she threw herself on me like a fury, and violently pushed me out of the dwelling —for fear, she said, that through the enchantments of baptism I might give to her and to all present some new cause for lamentation. I endured this insult with a calmness and joy that surprised myself, praising God because he did me the honor of allowing me to suffer something for his glory and for the salvation [Page 163] of souls. This woman's ill humor did not last long. Soon afterward, she told me that some human consideration had led her to treat me thus. The death of some children who have been baptized causes the Missionary's approach to be viewed with apprehension when he visits the sick; and it is often thought that all is over with them when he administers Baptism to them.

On the 7th of June, a little child — who died shortly after having received baptism without the knowledge of his parents — was the cause of my being exposed to many rebuffs when I sought to approach him. I had omitted nothing that could satisfy his parents, to procure his salvation; but they made me go out when he was about to expire. They told me that man died utterly; and that if the soul lived, as I said it did, men would be seen to come back on earth after their death; that they remembered very well that the sister of the dying child had died after I had baptized her; and, for fear of the same happening to the sick boy if I baptized him, they ordered me to go out of the dwelling at once. Despairing of succeeding in my design, I had recourse to one of my friends; and, as he was not suspected, he approached the child — who, immediately after the sacrament had been administered to him without its being perceived, departed to enjoy eternal happiness, of which the father and mother were trying to deprive him.

On the 10th of June, I gave a feast to all the christians, according to custom. On such occasions, one has a right to say whatever one pleases to the guests, without their feeling hurt by it. I reproached some, whom I named, with their indifference and their want of assiduity in attending the meetings in the chapel to hear the instructions. I explained [Page 165] to all of them the manner of confessing, and the bonds of Christian marriage; I told them of the blessedness of the faithful, and of the favor that God had done them by placing them among the number of his adopted children. I told them that he looked with horror upon their relatives and countrymen who were so many slaves of the Devil, and would burn with him forever in Hell, unless they became converted; and that, moreover, their good or evil example was of great weight in promoting or preventing the conversion of their relatives. As a good many old men and other married people still persist in their infidelity, I have devoted myself, as well as I have been able, to instructing the children and Neophytes until their departure for winter quarters. Among the great number of children who have attended, some already know their catechism very well; most of the older girls confess themselves very well, and some have made general confessions to me of their whole lives, with astonishing accuracy. In the midst of a corrupt nation which indulges in licentiousness of every kind, I find a young widow whose parents, as is their wont, made her marry without taking the trouble of ascertaining whether she wished to be married or not. She had not the courage to manifest to her parents the aversion that she felt for it; but she had enough to remain a long time with her husband without altering her first resolution. As he loved her dearly, he would not take another wife; and, when at the point of death, he told his wife's parents that he gave her back to them as they had given her to him. He begged his brother, who was unmarried, to marry her — assuring him that he had lived with her as with a sister; but [Page 167] she would never consent, notwithstanding the pressing solicitations of her parents during 3 years. She desired greatly to become a Christian, but she did not venture to speak to me of it, although she made her companions tell me of it, and came to the chapel daily for 4 years. I baptized her last spring. As she has bared the depths of her soul to me, with much ingenuousness, I am convinced that she has a horror of everything that may be contrary to purity. She told me frankly that the resolution she had taken to live always alone — that is, not to marry — was due to the aversion that she felt for all that she heard and saw done by the married people of her country. She did not think that it was because God specially loves Virgins, and she had not been taught to have that idea; but said that, in future, she would always tell God that he alone fully possessed all her affections — that her heart was too small, and he too great, to divide it. Since she has told me of her intentions she has displayed admirable zeal in seeking to be instructed; and, so far, she has not belied herself. I endeavor to strengthen her in her resolution against the inconstancy that is natural to these savages, and to persuade her that she must be on her guard as much against herself as against those with whom she has to live; and that, otherwise, she would soon neglect to perform the duties imposed on her by her baptism.

About the 20th of June, the French and the savages who had left here during the previous month to seek the alliance of the *Osages* and *Missouris*, in the expectation of the great profits that they would derive from the trade with the latter, came back with two chiefs

from each village, accompanied by some [Page 169] elders and some women. Although these Merchants, in all the dealings of any extent that they have with savages, care very lit

tle about telling them of God and of the Missionary, the visitors all came, nevertheless, to see me, and I welcomed them as heartily as I could. I took them to the chapel, and talked to them as if they understood me well; they were present at mass, and behaved with great modesty, following the example of the *Illinois* — whom they heard me instruct on several occasions, and cause to offer prayers to God. They manifested great joy when I led them to hope that I would go to see them, to give them sense — such is the expression that they use. But, as I am alone, I cannot assist or visit the other villages of the *Illinois*, which are on the banks of the Mississippi river. The *Osages* and the *Missouri* do not appear to be as quick-witted as the *Illinois*; their language does not seem very difficult. The former do not open their lips, and the latter speak still more from the throat than they.

A young *Peouareoua* man — baptized long ago and well instructed, but who compelled me during the previous year to forbid him entrance to my lodging, and to threaten him with expulsion from the church — led his countrymen to believe that his chagrin would induce him to say and do everything that might be asked from him against Christianity. The chief of the *Peouareoua* and of all the jugglers, with some 'of his relatives, —of the same party, and among the most notable persons of the village, — omitted nothing to embitter his mind against the Neophytes and against the Missionary. "Thou wouldst not believe us," his relatives said to him; "thou wouldst attach thyself to the Black Gown, [Page 171] and he has...thee, We do not thus despise thee; We have Pity on thee, and thou shalt have a share in our feasts. Let the *Kaskaskia* Pray to God if they wish and let them obey him who has instructed them. Are we *Kaskaskia*? And why shouldst thou obey him, thou who art a *Peouareoua*? Since he has vexed thee, thou must declare publicly that thou abandonest Prayer; that it is worthless." "I shall hold a feast," said the *Peouareoua* chief, "and I shall invite all the old men and all the chiefs of bands; thou also wilt be invited. After speaking of our medicines and of what our grandfathers and ancestors have taught us, has this man who has come from afar better medicines than we have, to make us adopt his customs? His Fables are good only in his own country; we have ours, which do not make us die as his do." These discourses and other similar ones gave great pleasure to the libertine, whose name was Antoine; but he could not long with stand the reproaches of his conscience, whatever the enemies of the faith might say to make him completely renounce Christianity. In vain they assured him that I had toads, wherewith I compounded poisons for the sick. Convinced as he was of the contrary, he took up my defense; an impelled by salutary remorse for his sin, he came to me to be reconciled to God. He then related to me all that those charlatans, who were enraged against me, had done and said to make me odious to the Nation. He told me that one of those jugglers had wrapped up a live toad in several folds of ragged linen, in which it had suffocated; and had crushed it, to use it as an active poison, in order to make me perish by the same venom with which, he said, I caused the death of [Page 173] the Sick when I approached them, through the mere smell of a toad. All this was based upon the fact of his having heard me say that I was surprised to see the children handling toads as freely as they did, because we would not touch them thus in our country; and because a toad carried death

with it. This empiric rises, therefore, and goes to the middle of the cabin to pick up the bundle of rags in which he has wrapped up his toad; he uncovers it and says to the old men assembled there: "My brothers, you will see that this Antoine will bring about his own death if he merely smells of this cloth, which will be the cause of his decease." "Let me die," said Antoine, "I shall be content to do so to expose your malice; I will smell your toad." All observed profound silence, not doubting that he would at once die. He actually smelled of it several times, and lifted the toad up to his nose. "And still I am not yet dead," he said to the juggler. "Thou wilt die shortly," the latter replied to him. He again smelled of the toad several times and remained in the cabin for over two hours. The juggler, irritated at seeing his poison without effect, hung his head and said not another word — being quite ashamed and also quite surprised that Antoine did not die, and still more at hearing him say that those who were not Christians would be damned. The old men withdrew, saying to Antoine: "We are convinced that *Assapita*" — that is the juggler's name — "has not told the truth, and we are glad to see that you are not dead." This was kept very secret, for I did not hear it spoken of; and the young man told me of it only long after it had happened. This Neophyte— who for 6 or 8 years was covered with [Page175] scrofulous ulcers, and who could barely drag himself about — died after making a good confession, and I have reason to hope that God has had pity on him. Disease broke out in this village in the month of August, — that is, after they began to eat new corn, squashes, watermelons, and other half-ripe fruit. Many children and young people were sick, and I had not as free access to all of them as I would have wished. Some are so prejudiced by the jugglers that, through fear that I may give them medicine, they say that they are quite well and disapprove of my frequent visits. They cry out against me as if I were the cause of the disease, and of the mortality — although, in fact, but few people die. Some children would have died without baptism had I waited for their parents' consent. Strategy must be employed in such cases. The little children who die are grateful to me when they are before God. Some jugglers openly oppose me, and do all they can to cast discredit upon our religion. Those who are more wary show me some politeness, to save appearances, while in an underhand way they do everything in their power to prevent the savages from being instructed. On my part, I also endeavor to maintain and cultivate the spirit of the faith in the adults who have embraced it. The young women here greatly contribute to bring prayer into favor, through the instructions and lectures that I hold for them. There are many who confess frequently and very well; and two young girls from 13 to 14 years of age began by making a general confession of their whole lives — so thoroughly that, in order to forget nothing, they made use of little pieces of wood as we use counters; and, as they mentioned everything of which they accused themselves, or which [Page 177] they considered a sin, they dropped one of these small pieces of wood, like the beads of a rosary. An old man did the same, some time afterward, while at confession; and it is a custom among them to count in this manner when they mistrust their memory.

The chief of the *Kaskaskia* and his wife have, ever since the marriage of their daughter with a frenchman, been very assiduous at the instructions, and have begged me to prepare them for baptism. Their son-in-law, forced by the reproaches of his conscience, has admitted to his father-and mother-in-law that all the falsehoods which he had told to

discredit the missionaries were but fictions. The desire to slander and calumniate had urged him to fabricate these, to prevent people from embracing our holy faith, and, to please certain libertines who had induced him to spread falsehoods, and compel me, if possible, to leave the country. This they wished me to do, so that I might not witness the evil conduct of some profligates. But this frenchman said that, now that he had resolved to become a Christian, he would refuse all the presents that might be given him to speak ill of me in the future. He afterward exhorted the 2 catechumens to be devoted to prayer, and docile to my instructions, adding that, in order not to be deceived they must cling to the missionary whose sole desire was the salvation of their souls; while the other frenchmen chiefly cared for their merchandise, without troubling themselves about rescuing them from the state of damnation in which they saw them, These two worthy savages reflected so seriously on all that their son-in-law and daughter told them respecting the unfortunate condition of those who refuse my good advice that, without speaking tome of it, they agreed that the chief [Page 179] should publicly declare the resolution which he had taken to become a Christian. To make this act more solemn, he gave a feast to the chiefs of all the villages, and to the most notable among the *Peouareoua*, all famous jugglers; he openly renounced all their superstitions, and urged them in a rather long harangue to be no longer the enemies of their own happiness, by resisting the grace of Christianity which God was offering tot hem through my instrumentality. He dwelt at great length upon the importance of salvation, and upon the trouble that I took to procure it for them, in spite of all the obstacles placed in my way. All replied by exclaiming *Nikana*, —that is to say, “*My friend*” — which is their way of applauding. I learned this from one who was present at the feast, for the chief never spoke to me of it. The same evening, his wife gave a feast to all the women of her village, to inform them also that she intended to become a Christian. The better to try them, I let neither of them know what I had learned. From that time, they urged me to baptize them; I granted them that favor after they had given me several proofs of their desire to perform the duties of Christians. To make the ceremony of their baptism more profitable and more imposing, I proclaimed throughout the village that all were to be present at their baptism. I was very glad that many witnessed it. I took advantage of the occasion to exhort the others to imitate them. I went into their cabins to preach God’s Kingdom to them, without heeding those who scoffed at all my solicitations to win them to Jesus Christ, and to reveal to them the artifices employed by the Devil to deceive them and prevent me from giving [Page 181] them Sense (such is their way of speaking). One of the oldest among the elders — full of zeal for the ancient customs of the country and apprehending that his credit and that of his class would be diminished if their people embraced the faith — went through the village, calling out: “All ye who have hitherto hearkened to what the blackgown has said to you, come into my cabin. I shall likewise teach you what I learned from my grandfather, and what we should believe. Leave their myths tot he people who come from afar, and let us cling to our own traditions.”

On the 18th of September, a child died without baptism through the obstinacy of the parents, who continually repelled me when I presented myself to administer the sacrament. In order that the calamity of that unfortunate little one might be the

opportunity for the salvation of the others, I called out everywhere in the village that I deplored the loss of the soul of that child, who would eternally curse its parents. "Ye who have dying children not yet baptized," I said to them, "delay not to bring them to the chapel. Have pity on them, as I have." I walked through the village along time, in order to be heard by all. On the following day I baptized five, one of whom is already in heaven. I count my trouble as nothing, for I know how much souls have cost the savior. Owing to the obstinacy and resistance of the parents, many have gone away for the six months' wintering. I occupied myself a good deal in behalf of the sick, that I might not fail to send these little innocents to heaven. I could find time to say my breviary only during the night. Before the disease spread through the villages, I was well received everywhere; and the old men told [Page 183] me that prayer was a good thing. Without themselves praying, they exhorted me to make the women and children pray well, and to instruct them, so that no disease might break out; but, when the contagion spread, I was looked upon in most of the cabins as the bird of death; and people sought to hold me responsible for the disease and the mortality. I attributed the cause thereof with greater reason to jugglery, and pointed out to them that the disease had commenced only since they had practiced those ceremonies, and — in mockery of the holy water, and of the sprinkling with it that I performed every sunday in the chapel — had performed an impious sprinkling in their public jugglery. I reminded them that God had inflicted punishment by the death of an old woman, a few days after she had imitated our ceremonies; that he had punished another by the death of her child; and that disease and death had entered the cabins of all the most superstitious.

As there are always people here who dwell amid the fields, at a distance of more than a league from the village, until they depart for their winter quarters, I continued my short excursions from the month of July to the 24th or 25th of September. After saying mass and prayers very early in the morning, I went to visit alternately those who were in their corn and squash fields. At a distance of a league from the village is a small one, on a hill whose base is bathed by a river, constituting a landscape very agreeable to the sight. I gathered together those who were there; and in order to inform those who were in the fields of my arrival, I called out, as I was in the habit of doing in the village, that all were to come to prayer. I said the [Page 185] prayers in the cabin of the most notable man in the village, — a juggler by profession, who never the less manifested a very zealous desire that his people should honor and attend catechism twice a week. Some were scandalized at my entering the dwelling of this man, who was reported to exhibit the Manitous in the cabin every night, and to sing in their honor until day light; and who had, according to their custom, given a very superstitious feast. In fact, having gone there one day when I was not expected, I saw 3 or 4 serpent-skins hung up, with some painted feathers, and the skins of various very pretty small birds. I pretended not to have seen anything; I strongly inveighed against jugglery, and against those imaginary spirits that haven either body nor soul. They did not make their appearance after that; but, a few days afterward, I saw a little dog suspended at the end of a pole stuck into the ground. I had never seen anything of the kind since I had been among the Illinois. I was astonished, for I was not yet convinced by actual experience that they offered sacrifices to their Manitous, or that they thus hung up

dogs or other animals to stay diseases. All that they are in the habit of doing consists in saying at their feasts: "My Manitou, I prepare for thee, or I give thee, food." But the cooks eat everything, and offer nothing, or put nothing aside for the Manitou. I asked what was meant by the little dog hanging on the pole. I was told that it had died of a Disease; and that, to prevent the children from touching it, it had been put where they could not reach it. An old man, who saw very well that I was not satisfied with this explanation, told me that it was to appease the lightning, [Page187] because one of his children had been ill on a day when there had been a great deal of lightning. After pointing out, in the presence of many persons, the uselessness of this superstition, I pulled the pole out of the ground and flung it, with the dog, upon the grass, and continued my visits; for, after making the savages pray to God, I visited from time to time all whose fields were in that quarter. My walk always covered fully three leagues, over a very good road; and the distance seemed short to me, owing to the stay that I made at the various places where I halted.

All the people left for their winter quarters on the 26th of September, excepting some old women, who remained in 14 or 15 cabins, and a considerable number of *Kaskaskia*. Notwithstanding all the trouble I took to prevent the sick children from being embarked without receiving baptism, some escaped me whose parents would not allow me to baptize them. I followed others as far as the place of embarkation, to endeavor to give them their viaticum for eternity. I did right in not allowing myself to be repelled by the railleries with which the parents and all the women, who were on the point of embarking, treated my anxiety; for God rewarded my efforts with the salvation of several of these little innocents. The chief of the *Peauareoua*, who was surprised to see me at the water's edge, asked me what I was doing there, and whether I was waiting for the mother of a sick child. I replied jestingly that I wished to baptize his child, on which he began to joke. "Be not surprised," I said to him and to those who were present, "if I have been standing here so long. I am much more surprised that no pity is shown to the children, who are and [Page 189] who will be the slaves of the devil, if they die without baptism." Although this reason was not an obvious one to them, to rid themselves of my importunities I was permitted to baptize several privately. I confess that I have not been so scrupulous this year with reference to the baptism of sick little children as I was in previous years. I have administered it to them without the knowledge of their parents, and have not always thought best to await their consent; because they were affected less by the eternal happiness or misfortune of their sick children than by their erroneous dread that baptism would cause their death. For the enemies of the faith strive to convince them that baptism causes the children to die; and this is the reproach that is frequently addressed to me in most of the cabins, when I speak to them of the necessity of salvation. I often experience difficulty in persuading a mother whose first baptized child has died, to allow me to baptize the second or the 3rd. One must not be discouraged, and there are many women who, in order not to see me often in their dwellings, where I inquire about the health of their children, have brought them to me in the church to have them baptized. Although this year I met with more resistance from the majority of the parents than in previous years, regarding the baptism of their new-born children, I have never the less baptized many more than last year, — many of whom now enjoy eternal happiness, and pray for their parents' conversion. As in these beginnings I can produce hardly any effect on the

minds of the old people, the fathers and mothers, I endeavor to put into practice the advice given by St. Francis Xavier with respect to their children. [Page 191] *Namut grandiores et parentes celesti beatitudine excidunt, eorum quidem istiliberi ac pueri fruuntur qui priushujus lucis usuram quam baptismal eminnocentiam amittent.*

That is what this great servant of God says of those on the coast of la Pécherie. Although there are already many baptized adults in this nascent mission, the inconstancy of all these savages and the corruption among all these southern tribes are so great that there is more to fear for the Illinois than St. Francis Xavier had to dread in the case of the Indians of the East, — *paucos ad Coelum pervenire nisi eos qui quatuordecim annis minores cunbaptismali innocentia excedunt.* Moreover, although I do not confer all the rites of the baptism of adults on girls under 19 years of age, I will not baptize one above 6 or 7 who knows not the prayers, and who is not as well instructed as the adults, and whom I do not cause to make all the necessary acts before administering baptism. There has not been one with a little knowledge who did not know that God forbids those who marry to espouse a man who already has a wife; and the last girl, about 19 years of age, whom I baptized previous to their departure for winter quarters, received baptism only after her father, who is the new chief of the *Peouareoua*, had assured me that he would not marry her to any man who already had a wife.

Although there is a great deal of corruption among these tribes, after all, the number of nubile girls and of newly-married women who retain their innocence is much greater than those in the a [?] and the fervor of her who is married to Sieur Akohas nothing of the savage in it, so thoroughly is she imbued with the spirit of God. She tells me [Page 193] the thoughts and the elevated sentiments that she has regarding God, — with such ingenuousness that I cannot sufficiently thank God for revealing himself so intimately to a young savage in the midst of an infidel and corrupt nation. Many struggles were needed before she could be induced to consent to the marriage, for she had resolved never to marry, in order that she might belong wholly to Jesus Christ. She answered her father and mother, when they brought her to me in company with the Frenchman whom they wished to have for a son-in-law, that she did not wish to marry; that she had already given all her heart to God, and did not wish to share it. Such were her very words, which had never yet been heard in this barbarism. Consequently her language was received with displeasure; and — as I frankly stated that such sentiments were not those of a savage, and that God alone could have inspired her with them — her father, her mother, and still more the frenchman who wished to marry her, were convinced that it was I who made her speak thus. I told them that God did not command her not to marry, but also that she could not be forced to do so; that she alone was mistress to do either the one or the other, in the fear of offending God. She made no answer either to all the entreaties or to all the threats of her father and mother, who went away quite chagrined, and thinking of nothing but venting their anger against me, — imagining that it was I who prevented their daughter from giving her consent.

As I went through the village calling the savages to prayers, the father stopped me when I passed before his cabin, and told me that, in as much as I was preventing his daughter

from obeying him, he [Page195] would also Prevent her from going to the chapel; at the same time he came out of his cabin, rating me and inveighing against me, and barring the way to those who followed me. A portion of the *Kaskaskia* evertheless came to the chapel, and so did the *Peouareoua*, who went round the village to escape his sight. He had just driven his daughter out of the house after depriving her of her upper garment, her stockings, her shoes, and her petty ornaments, without a single word of remonstrance or a single tear from her. But, when he wished to takeaway what covered her, she said: "Ah! my father, what are you trying to do? Leave me; that is enough, I will not give you the rest; you may take my life rather than deprive me of it." Her father stopped short and, without saying a word, drove her from his house. Not wishing to be seen in that plight, she hid herself in the grass on the water's edge, where an old man — a catechumen, who was going to the chapel — found her, and threw her his jerkin. She covered herself with it, and at once came to the chapel, where she responded to all the prayers and chants with the others, as if nothing had happened to her. She waited for me after prayers, when I exhorted her to have courage and to do precisely whatever God inspired her, without fearing anything. I had her taken secretly to the house of the savage who had covered her with his jerkin.

That very night her father gathered the chiefs of the four villages together, and told them that, since I prevented the french from forming alliances with them,— and adding a number of other falsehoods to wha the said, — he earnestly begged them to stop the women and children from coming to the chapel. [Page 197] He experienced no difficulty in making people who are themselves still but little inclined to Christianity believe all he wished. The prohibitions and threats did not prevent there being 50 persons present on the following day from the village of the *Peouareoua*, with some *Kaskaskia* — as well as the girl, who exposed herself to ill treatment, had her father met her. He sent a spy to see whether any persons entered the chapel; and, being surprised to find so many people there, he caused to be proclaimed in the village that it was strange that the chiefs were not obeyed, since, notwithstanding their prohibition, many people had entered the chapel: that therefore they must not be surprised if he ill-treated those who persisted in going there. Those who govern the young women and the grown girls of *Peouareoua* told me that they would come to prayers in the evening, and that I was not to announce them in the village. I replied that, if I failed to do so, I would lead the savages to believe that I feared the prohibitions and the threats that had been made; and that those who had courage would obey me. They came, in fact, of their own accord to the chapel in the evening; but I nevertheless made the usual announcement. I was told from various cabins to cease my call, and that no one would go to the chapel to pray to God, because the chiefs forbade it. "Let no one go forth from the lodges," they said; "you are forbidden to pray." "Call out very loudly," another said to me; "who will obey you?" In fact, no one came out; and there were only some little girls present who made along detour to avoid those who barred the way, and came to join those who awaited me at the door of the chapel. The daughter of the chief of the *Kaskaskia* came also, and there were only 30 [Page 199] persons in all. Hardly had I begun to chant the *Vini Creator* when a man about 45 years of age entered the chapel, with a club in his hand, saying in a threatening tone:

“Have you not heard the chiefs’ prohibition? Obey them, and go out quickly.” He seized one by the arm, to make her go out; but she remained firm. I went straight to him, and said: “Go out thyself and respect the house of God.” “The chiefs forbid them to pray,” he replied. “And God commands them to do so,” I said. “Be silent and go out.” I did not expect that he would give me time to say to him all that I did. I afterward returned to the altar-step, where I continued the prayer. He took another by the arm, to make her go out. “You obey not” he said to them. “Take care not to offend the master whom we serve here,” I called out to him; “withdraw, and leave us to pray to God. And you who honor the Lord of heaven and of earth, fear not; he is with you, and he guards you.” He remained some time longer, without saying a word; and, seeing that he gained nothing, he withdrew with another old man, who had followed him. I praised all present for having been firm, and for having caused the Devil’s emissaries to lose courage; for he it was who, out of jealousy because the savages in this country are beginning to pray to God, had been the cause of this petty persecution. “But you must not be frightened; it will not last long, God permits it solely to test your constancy.”

I thought that I should not remain silent after so great an insult had been offered to God. I went to the commandant of the fort who gloated over it. He answered in an insulting manner that I had drawn all this upon myself, through my stubbornness in [Page 201] not allowing the girl of whom I have spoken above to marry the Frenchman, who was then with him: and that, if he wished to marry her, he would do so in spite of me. After several very insulting reproaches, he went so far as to utter a great many calumnies against me, in the presence of the French and of a large number of savages, who gathered near the fort to hear him inveigh against me in a most contemptuous and angry manner. God granted me the grace to bear all these humiliations in a quite tranquil state of mind, it seems to me. In order that the savages might not think that we were quarreling, I replied hardly a word to all the insults that he uttered; and I raised my voice a little merely when I considered that I should maintain the glory and worship of God, and because I always desired to revert to the insult that had been offered in the chapel. For that I demanded satisfaction of some kind, and that whatever was necessary should be done with regard to the chiefs of the savages, lest some other might seek to do as much, or more. He replied coldly that he would speak to the chiefs: but, instead of assembling them at once, he waited until the afternoon of the following day, and even then I had to return to him for the purpose. For all satisfaction, he contented himself with sending me word that the chiefs asserted that they had not told that man to offer the insult in the chapel; and it was not due to him that the same savage was not again guilty of the same insolence. For, when we assembled to call to mass, a heavy shower fell, and he imagined that they would not come to the chapel. But, when he found out the contrary and came there, he was only in time to meet them as they came out; and he was not careful [Page 203] enough to hide his Club which showed beneath his clothes. During those 2 days the chief of the *Kaskaskia* made every effort to obtain his daughter’s consent, by dint of caresses and of threats. He assured her that, if she obeyed him not, she would be treated most rigorously by him; that assuredly Prayers would no longer be said to God; that he would go to war, and that she would see him no more. She came to me, and assured me that God strengthened her; that she was

still resolved to consecrate her virginity to God; that she had wept for 2 days on account of this conspiracy against prayer, of which her father was the instigator; and that she feared that her father would become still more furious and proceed to extremities. "All the threats against me trouble me not," she said, "and my heart is content. But I fear for God's word, because I know my father and my mother." "Fear not," I said to her, "prayer is the homage paid to God." "My father has had pity on me," she said, "and I have an idea — I know not whether it is a good one. I think that, if I consent to the marriage, he will listen to you in earnest, and will induce all to do so. I wish to please God, and for that reason I intend to be always as I am in order to please Jesus Christ alone. But I thought of consenting against my inclination to the marriage, through love for him. Is that right?" These are all her own words and I merely translate her Illinois into French. "My daughter," I said to her, "God does not forbid you to marry; neither do I say to you: 'Marry or do not marry.' If you consent solely through love for God, and if you believe that by marrying you will win your family to God, the thought is a good one. But you must declare to your parents that it is [Page 205] not their threats that make you consent to the marriage." She came to the latter decision. As the urgent solicitations continued, she said to her mother: "I pity my father. I feel no resentment against him for his treatment of me, and I fear not his threats. But I think that I shall grant his request, because I believe that you and he will grant me what I ask." Finally, she told her father that she consented to the marriage; the father, the mother, and the Frenchman came to me while she was in the chapel to ascertain whether what her father said was true. She replied aloud: "I hate him," pointing to the Frenchman, "because he always speaks ill of my father, the black gown; and he lies when he says that it is he who prevents me from marrying." Then in a low tone she said to me: "It is not fear of my father that compels me to consent to the marriage. You know why I consent." The Frenchman, and the father withdrew, well satisfied to make the preparations for the marriage. But, before concluding it entirely, I wished the father to gather all the chiefs of the villages in his cabin, and retract all that he had said, because it was all untrue; to express his regret for having forbidden them to pray to God; and to tender some satisfaction, at which I wished to be present.

He consented to all this, and did so, in the most submissive and humiliated manner that can be imagined. He begged me several times to forgive him his drunkenness, — that is, his obstinacy, addressing me at every moment, and eulogizing prayer. "I never intended to abandon it," he said to those who were present, "even when I told you to stop for a few days those who were going to pray [Page 207] it was a trick, when I told you to do it. I beg you, as urgently as I can, to obey now the black gown, your true father, who really loves you, and who does not deceive you. Take courage, my brothers; exhort all to obey him and to be instructed, and when he calls out the summons to pray to God, let every one go." He said so much, and abased himself to such a degree, that — although I had resolved to tell him all that I thought of him, before so large an assembly — I contented myself with saying that, as I believed that he spoke from the bottom of his heart, I was willing to overlook all that he had done and I prayed God to forgive him; but that he and all who listened to me must remember that all who attacked prayer would be acting precisely as this man had done. Moreover, that all that he had said to them, in his chagrin,

with reference to the marriages of the French was false, and was the invention of some scandal-loving Frenchmen; that the black gowns were the witnesses of true marriage; and that to them alone God had given orders to pray for all who wished to marry, and they would be truly married.

On leaving this assembly, all the elders called out the summons to prayers throughout the village; and I think that the whole of it — women, girls, children, and even the old men — gathered around the chapel. But I would not open it to any one, in order to show them that I alone governed prayer, as I had told them at the assembly, and that it depended not on men's caprice; that, since I had not announced it, or appointed any one to do so in my stead, there would be no prayer that day. As no one knew the reason why I did not open the door of [Page 209] the chapel, they all waited for a long time, and finally withdrew, one after another, not knowing what to think. The commandant of the fort failed not to blame me; and told the savages that, since I did not open the door of the chapel, they need not pray to God, and I had only to go away. The chief of the *Kaskaskia*, who thought that I was angry, and who feared that in excusing himself he might have said something to offend me, sent the Frenchman, his future son-in-law, to me to know what was the matter. I replied that I was content with the public satisfaction he had given; but that I did not consider as persons desirous of praying those who came to the chapel at the call of the old men, but those who came at mine; and that, as I had called out the summons twice in the village without being obeyed, and as people came to the chapel only by stealth, I would therefore wait two days before I summoned them. In fact, I received in the chapel on the following day only those women who had been constant; and I did not summon them until evening. As the chapel was nearly full, I explained what it meant to be a Christian, or to truly desire to be one; that they who feared men more than God were not Christians, etc....

After the chief of the *Kaskaskia* had obtained his daughter's consent to the marriage with the Frenchman of whom I have spoken above, he informed all the chiefs of the villages, by considerable presents, that he was about to be allied to a Frenchman. The better to prepare herself for it, the girl made her first communion on the feast of the Assumption of Our Lady; she had prepared herself for it during more than 3 months — with such fervor, that she seemed [Page211] fully penetrated by that great mystery. We may believe that Jesus Christ enriched her with many graces on the occasion of his first visit, and I observed in this girl the manifest effects of a good communion. As she had not forgotten what I had said of

St. Henry on the day of his feast, and of St. Cunegonde, his wife, she hoped to persuade him whom she was about to marry to do the same. The number of prayers she said to God with that object is incredible. I left her in that hope, for I had moreover fully instructed her regarding the obligations of marriage, and everything to which she pledged herself. Her husband has told me that she spoke to him in so tender and persuasive a manner that he could not avoid being touched by it, and that he was quite ashamed of being less virtuous than she. She has taken for her special patronesses the Christian Ladies who have

sanctified themselves in the state of matrimony, — namely, St. Paula, St. Frances, St. Margaret, St. Elizabeth, and St. Bridget, whom she invokes many times during the day saying things to them that one would not believe from a young savage. The first conquest she made for God was to win her husband, who was famous in this *Illinois* country for all his debaucheries. He is now quite changed, and he has admitted to me that he no longer recognizes himself, and can attribute his conversion solely to his wife's prayers and exhortations, and to the example that she gives him. "And how can I resist," he has often told me; "all that she says to me? I am ashamed that a savage child, who has but recently been instructed, should know more than I who have been born and brought up in christianity, and that she should speak to me of the love [Page 213] of God with a gentleness and tenderness capable of making the most insensible weep; and my experience convinces me that she tells the truth when she says that there is no joy except for those who are good. Hitherto, I have never been satisfied; my conscience has always been troubled with a great many causes for remorse," he continued, " and I have such a horror of my past life that I hope, with the assistance of God's grace, that no one will ever be able to make me abandon the resolution I have undertaken to lead a good life in future." To make him expiate his past offenses, God permitted that he should displease some persons who have stirred up ugly transactions of his, and have made him odious to every one. His wife is all his consolation, through what she says to him. "What matters it, if all the world be against us?" she says. "If we love God, and he loves us, it is an advantage to us to atone during our lives for the evil that we have done on earth, so that God may have mercy on us after we die."

Having heard me say that many Christians, penetrated with regret for their offenses and with sorrow for having crucified Jesus Christ by their sins, practice Holy severities upon themselves, she — instead of treating herself tenderly, as some do — made for herself a girdle of thorns. This she wore for two whole days, and she would have crippled herself with it, had she not informed me of this mortification, when I compelled her to use it with more moderation. She has such tenderness for Jesus Christ suffering that she has admitted to me that she often weeps while gazing at Jesus crowned with thorns, — a picture of whom she keeps in a sort of apartment that she has made for herself. I take [Page 215] pleasure in making her say what she thinks of God, and the sentiments she feels toward him. In truth, God alone can inspire her with them. "When I think," she said, "of the blindness of the *Illinois* in not adoring or loving so great a God, I am often afflicted at it." When I asked her whether she truly loved him, she replied with sighs that she was ashamed not to love him as she should. "He is great, and his love for us is great; I am so insignificant, and my love for him is so small. But at least I desire to love him much," etc.... On another occasion I asked her whether she loved the Blessed Virgin, and what she said to her." I know not whether I do wrong in calling her *my mother*," she replied; "I pray to her with every endearing term, to be pleased to adopt me as her daughter. What should I do were she not my mother, and did she not look upon me as her daughter? Am I capable of guiding myself? I am still but a child, and know not yet how to pray. I beg her to teach me what I should say to her, that she may protect me against the Demon — who assails me on all sides, and would cause me to fall had I not recourse to her, and did she not

receive me in her arms, as a good mother receives her frightened child." She also told me, very ingenuously, that she begged her not to be angry at her for bearing her beautiful name of Mary; that she always remembered, while saying her rosary, to pray to Our Lady's beloved son Jesus, our Captain, that she might not sully the Holy name that she bore, and that he might not be angry at her for calling Our Lady her mother. "No," I said to her, "she is not angry because you call her mother. Continue to speak thus to her; she will cheerfully [Page 217] listen to you, and will look upon you as her daughter so long as you really love her son." This good girl displays admirable care in getting the children and young girls of her village baptized, and it gives her great pleasure to be chosen as Godmother. She herself brings the children of her relatives, as soon as they are born — in order, as she says, that they may at once cease to be slaves of the Devil, and become children of God. And when she learns that a child who has been baptized is dead, she rejoices at this, and begs it to intercede with God for her, and for the whole village. The grown girls and the young women who have been baptized she induces, whenever she can, to come to her home, that she may instruct them; and she tries to inspire them with horror for dances, for night assemblies, and for evil of all kinds, and to instruct them regarding confession. From time to time, she brings me one that I may confess her; and occasionally she comes to me, quite disconsolate, to say: "I have not been able to persuade such a one; she dreads confession. Try to speak to her yourself," she says to me; and informs me of all kinds of things that she adroitly discovers. Her discretion and virtue give her marvelous authority, especially over those to whom she speaks of prayer without even any aged women finding fault with her — reproofing them sometimes more energetically than I myself would do. What efforts did she not make to induce her father and mother to become Christians! She frequently added tears to her entreaties; and, since their baptism, she ceases not to remind them of the promises that they made to God. It is impossible to imagine all that she said to her mother to induce her to forgive her uncle, her [Page 219] mother's brother, for the death of one of her slaves — Whom he Cruelly killed, out of revenge for Some slight vexation formerly caused him by his sister. The father and mother of this good Christian had gone out together, the wife being armed as well as the husband, to kill the murderer; but the efforts of this girl succeeded so well that she diverted the blow, and prevented them from executing their design. The mother nearly died from chagrin at not having revenged herself, and she carried her spite so far as to come no longer to church. Her daughter took the liberty of reproofing her for this. "I shall go to the church," she said, "if I am revenged." "God," replied her daughter, "forbids revenge, and wills that punishment be left to him. "Then let him make my brother die," said the mother, "and I will be a good Christian. If he does not kill him, I will not cease to seek means to destroy him." "Oh, you offend God," her daughter replied with tears. After this great rage had softened to some extent, she ceased not to represent to her the scandal that she had given to our new church, and urged her to go to confession: and her constancy in enduring all her mother's rebuffs and hard words overcame the latter's obstinacy. One day she heard her father complaining to her husband of the ingratitude of the French, for whom he had made so many sacrifices, and to whom he had rendered good service— and he spoke truly, for without him the French would have been massacred here. He said that the French who had displayed the greatest friendship toward

him would not even look at him since he was a Christian; that the commandant, far from manifesting pleasure because he [Page 221] had overcome all the obstacles to his baptism, now despised him; that he knew not what to think or say of such conduct, unless it were that the French preferred to see him lead the life of a savage rather than that of a Christian; and that they considered him a coward because he had not revenged himself upon his brother-in-law, etc... The daughter, who was nearer him than he thought, came out of her little apartment, and, in a most winning manner, said everything to him that a daughter who dearly loves her father can say to allay his sorrow. She afterward whispered in his ear, and withdrew into her room. Her husband, who followed her closely, found her in her oratory, her eyes filled with tears, at the foot of the crucifix. This led him to believe that her father had spoken harshly to her. Being unable to obtain a word from her, he asked me to find out the cause of her affliction. She told me that she feared that the Devil would cause her father to fall, and arouse a desire for revenge in his heart; so she had asked God to strengthen her and to inspire her with what she should say to her father. At the same time, she had come out of her room and notwithstanding the repugnance she felt, she had even said to him: "My father, you speak ill. The Devil wishes to make you sin; pray go to confession, that your mind may be soothed and your soul may resume the original beauty given to it by baptism." Her father had replied to her *Nikana*, which is an expression of friendship and approval. "I withdrew at once to my oratory to thank God," she said, "and to entreat him to touch my father's heart." In fact, on the very same day at 4 o'clock in the afternoon, he came [Page 223] to me with his wife to confess, — which I had expected. In order not to be precipitate, — after reminding them of what I had said to them respecting the sacrament of penance, in the instruction that had preceded their baptism, — I put them off to the following day, and told them to come one after the other, which they did. Their daughter was so pleased at this that, on the very same day, she went to her father and mother separately to rejoice with both of them, and to encourage them to maintain themselves in God's grace. In the month of September, I had drawn up for her a daily order to regulate her prayers and occupations, from the hour of rising until night. I was exceedingly surprised on the following day on hearing her repeat all that I had explained to her at great length, even to the shortest prayer, and word for word as I had told her. It is the same as regards everything that she hears about the life of Our Lord and the lives of the saints. That which I most approve in her is the great distrust and the little esteem that she has for herself. Her most frequent prayer consists in saying: "My God, I am still but a child; I am weak. If you cease to sustain me, the Devil will deceive me and make me fall into sin."

In as much as, after the departure of the Illinois to their winter quarters, there remained only some cabins of *Kaskaskia* in which were several children, I applied myself especially to having them taught the catechism. I chose her house wherein to gather them together, hoping to satisfy her zeal by charging her with the duty of teaching them. I had the pleasure of listening while she questioned them, to see if they answered well. All the children of the [Page 225] village are welcome in her house, and they take pleasure in going there. When I asked her why she was so desirous of teaching the children, she replied that it was because God specially loved them; that their souls still retained the

beauty that they had received in baptism; and that as yet they knew not evil. I had but to tell her that, in addition to the prayers that I say every evening with those who are present in the chapel, it would be good to say them in the house for the whole family, before retiring, I told her that it was also advisable to invite some persons from the other cabins to come at that time, so that the prayers might be said and the examination of conscience be made together, — as is done in well-regulated French and savage families; and from the month of October she never failed to do so after supper.

Since the *Kaskaskia* have returned from hunting, so many people come after prayers all together to catechism — which is taught throughout the winter in my lodge, because it is too cold in the chapel—that there is not enough room for all. As she taught it as well as I, during the day, to the children, there were but few during the months of October and November at the conferences and instructions that I gave them. To the adults I explained the whole of the New Testament, of which I have copper-plate engravings representing perfectly what is related on each page. At the beginning she herself, her husband, who is a Frenchman, her father, her mother, and those of her cabin were the only persons present at the explanation that I gave of these pictures during an hour and a half; but curiosity to see the pictures, rather than to hear the explanations that I gave, attracted a great many. [Page 227]

This young woman, who is only 17 years old, has so well remembered what I have said about each picture of the Old and of the New Testament that she explains each one singly, without trouble and without confusion, as well as I could do — and even more intelligibly, in their manner. In fact, I allowed her to take away each picture after I had explained it in public, to refresh her memory in private. But she frequently repeated to me, on the spot, all that I had said about each picture; and not only did she explain them at home to her husband, to her father, to her mother, and to all the girls who went there, — as she continues to do, speaking of nothing but the pictures or the catechism, — but she also explained the pictures on the whole of the Old Testament to the old and the young men whom her father assembled in his dwelling.

After devoting the month of October to the explanation of the pictures, I continue to assemble the people, after supper, in my lodge to teach them catechism. Two reasons have led me to do so in the evening toward nightfall: 1st, in order that more persons might be present, because the women are busy during the day with their household occupations, and cannot attend the instructions during the rather long time that the catechism lasts; 2nd, because the young men go outhunting, and the children run about everywhere, and are hardly ever at home except in the morning and evening; also, in order to prevent evil conversations that take place in most of the cabins at night. God has been pleased to bless this practice throughout the winter. I have had every evening, during two hours, over three-fourths of the village of the *Kaskaskia* who are here; and they were so crowded that they could not stir. [Page 229]

It is Certain that this is a special effect of God's grace, because at present the men and women are not attracted to catechism through curiosity to hear novel things; for I instruct and question them every evening on nearly the same subjects. What surprises me most is the assiduous perseverance of the Young men of 25, 30, 35, and even of those over 40 years of age. The chief of the *Kaskaskia*, at their head with his young brother, who is the captain of the young men. The most arrogant become like children at catechism, and not one is ashamed to answer the simplest questions that I put. The fathers and mothers are delighted when I question their children; they themselves encourage them and beg me, when I go into their cabins, to question them. I cannot grant this favor to all who ask it, for otherwise I would never reach an end. It is true that the hope of getting a red bead, — which is a fruit of the size of a small bean, which has been sent to us from Martinique and other Island (Oh, that I had a bushel of them!), — or a needle, a medal, across or a rosary (especially if it be red), a small knife, or other curious object, given as a reward, incites the children to answer well; but they must answer very well for several days, to obtain either the rosary, the red bead, or a cross, and for the other articles in proportion. In all the cabins, especially those of the *Kaskaskia*, they speak to me only of the catechism; and I hear with pleasure the children singing hymns or questioning one another on what they have learned. And, when the young men are in the lodges of their chiefs, they sing, night and day, chants that instruct them and keep them occupied. On their side, the [Page 231] women do as much. The end of February being the end of the cold season, I have no longer taught catechism in my lodge, which is too small to hold all the people who come to it, but in the chapel at the same hour; and I shall continue to teach throughout the month of March, —and longer, if I find the same docility among a portion of the *Peouareoua* on their return from their winter quarters. Even if a few only of them come to the chapel, I shall have to enlarge it; for it is filled with the *Kaskaskia* alone. If one may judge by their docility and assiduity in seeking to be instructed, there is great reason to hope that God will convert them.

My sins and the malice of men have not prevented God from pouring down abundant blessings on this mission of the Illinois. It has been augmented by two hundred and six souls whom I baptized between the 30th of March and 29th of November, 1693. Many children among that number are already in heaven and pray to God for their parents' conversion. Since the chief of the *Kaskaskia* has been baptized with his wife and family, consisting of 15 persons, he blushes not for the gospel, and ceases not to exhort and instruct the young men of his village night and day. I observe, thanks be to God, that he is listened to as well as his wife, who is ever in the chapel at the head of all those of her sex. I was greatly surprised, at the end of the night, to see her come, accompanied by all the women, to make a fine present of tallow to the chapel (this is the wax of the country). She told me, in the name of all, that they offered it to God, to light the chapel when I said the great prayer — that is, during mass — and when I taught catechism, begging me to continue to [Page 233] instruct them and their children. The chief of the young men, accompanied by a portion of his comrades, also gave the chapel a similar present some time afterward, with the same compliment, — without my having in any

way urged them to that good action, and without my saying anything to them that might give them the slightest idea of presenting anything to the chapel.

The son-in-law of the chief of the Kaskaskia — who is now as zealous for the conversion of the Illinois as he was formerly opposed to it, and who renders good service to the missions — told me that, while speaking in the family of the ceremonies of our churches, and of the offerings made to God of tapers, blessed bread, etc., his mother-in-law said to him: “Why does not our father who instructs us in the faith tell us that it would be agreeable to God if we gave some offering to the chapel? Have we sense, and do we know what we should do? We will gladly imitate the Christians who give what is necessary to light the altar, and for making the bread that is blessed; and next summer we shall give some of our harvest to the great *Manitouaassouv*” that is to say, “the great spirit, or genie.” So great are the inconstancy and levity of the savages that we cannot yet rely upon the first steps that they take; but, judging from the assiduity that they continue to display, there is reason to hope that, while acting as sincerely as they do, God will not allow the enemies of their conversion and of the mission to ruin these good beginnings, which are preparing them to embrace our Holy religion. Pray to God, my Reverend Father, to preserve the neophyte chief, his wife, his family, and his son-in-law in [Page 235] their 1st fervor. They are of great assistance to the missionary, and do more than I— or rather they do all, and I do nothing, or almost nothing. If people were really convinced of what the chief of the *Kaskaskia* does here to induce all to be instructed and to abandon infidelity, I am quite sure that — far from giving any credence to all the calumnies with which he is threatened by all here who are angry at his having become a Christian —they would manifest to him the joy they feel, or should feel. That would encourage him to preserve his first fervor and to urge the whole nation to know and to worship the true God; and the French would thereby call down God’s blessings upon themselves and upon the whole colony. From all these details that I give you respecting this nascent church, you will be able, my Reverend Father, to judge how much these new flocks of Jesus Christ need to be protected against the wolves that seek to scatter them, and to be aided by the prayers of all who take an interest in the glory of God and in the salvation of souls. You who take such a part in it will please have the charity to commend them to the great pastor of souls, to beg the Reverend Father Provincial to send some courageous and zealous missionaries, and not to forget in your Holy sacrifices,

My Reverend Father,
Your very humble and very obedient
Servant in Our Lord
Jacques Gravier.

Volume 65 1697: Gravier

TWO LETTERS BY FATHER JACQUES GRAVIER TO MONSEIGNEUR DE LAVAL.

I beg Your Grace to pardon the liberty that I take in asking once more for your blessing, which will call down upon me that of God, to enable me to reach my beloved Mission in safety after so long an exile. Nothing has more comforted me, Monseigneur, than the kind manner in which Your Grace was pleased to manifest to me, during the visits that I took the liberty of paying you, that You felt an interest in that mission. If Monseigneur of Quebec has the same Sentiments for us, as we all hope, We shall perform our duties in our Outaoais Missions more peacefully than We have done for some years. We shall also be safe from the threats of Monsieur the Count de Frontenac to drive us from our Missions, as he has already done from that of l'Ange gardien of the Miamis, at Chicagwa, — the charge of which Monseigneur of Quebec had confided to me, by his patents giving me the care of the Missions to the Illinois, Miamis, and Scioux, and confirming the powers that Your Grace had conferred upon Father Marquette and Father d'alloues, who were the first Missionaries to those Southern nations. If Monsieur the Count de Frontenac had learned that in our Missions we had done anything unworthy of Our Ministry, he could easily have applied to Monseigneur The Bishop or to his [Page 53] grand Vicar. But he could not otherwise than by violence drive us from Our Mission of Chicagwa, and we hope that Monseigneur of Quebec will not suffer such violence, which is so prejudicial to his authority. And if your Grace will be good enough to speak to him of it, he will reinstate and confirm Father Pinet in his Mission, that he may there continue his duties, which he has so auspiciously begun.

Moreover, I must not wait until the fine ciborium presented by your Grace to the Illinois Mission is made, to thank you for it in the Name of these poor savages. It is your Mission, Monseigneur, since it is under the protection of The Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, whose feast Your Grace chose for the day of your consecration, and whom you have taken as the Patroness of your entire diocese; And Father Marquette could do nothing more conformable to Your Grace's intentions than to place the Illinois Mission under the protection of The Immaculate Conception of Our Lady. And, although you have ever been the father of all our Missions, this one, Monseigneur, must be especially dear to you both because it is the Mission of The Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, and because of the handsome present that you give it. Must we not think that the Ciborium given to it by Your Grace is of great value, since you are causing all your silverware to be melted to have it made? It will, therefore, be infinitely precious to us, and there can be nothing in our Missions that we shall more highly prize. A bowl that has so long served you, Monseigneur, — For that, with a small cup, comprises all your [Page 55] silverware, — could be used only on the Holy Altars, and could not be assigned to any other use without profaning it. Moreover, in proportion as the number of communicants increases in that Mission, the number of those who will pray to God in behalf of Your Grace, for having lodged the Savior of the World in so fine a Ciborium, will also increase. And since You have been pleased to promise me a Monstrance for exposing the Blessed Sacrament to the

Veneration of these poor savages, We shall be indebted to You, Monseigneur, for all the acts of adoration that Jesus Christ shall receive among the Illinois at this extremity of the World. However attached I maybe to my Mission, I confess that I would willingly perform once more the Journey from the country of the Outawacs to quebec, to be present at the Mass said for the Fiftieth Anniversary of Your Consecration, Monseigneur, as I had the happiness of assisting at that for the same anniversary of your priesthood. And I can say nothing more consoling to all our Fathers who are with the Outawacs, amid the persecutions that We endure, than to assure them that Your Grace is in good health; that You continue as kind as ever; that We live in perfect accord with all the Gentlemen of Your Seminary; and that you, Monseigneur, always look upon Us as your Children. I remain with profound respect,

Jacques Gravier, S.J
At Ville-Marie,
the 17th of September, 1697.

Volume 65 1699: Marest

LETTER OF FATHER GABRIEL MAREST, OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS, TO A FATHER OF THE SAME SOCIETY.

From the Illinois Country in New France, April 29, 1699.

I have been nearly a year in this mission. The country here is very different from that about Quebec. The climate is warm, the soil fertile, the people of affable and gentle disposition. The state of religion here is as follows: but few embrace Christianity among the men, especially the young men — who live in excessive licentiousness, which renders them utterly averse to virtue, and incapable of listening to their missionaries. Pray God, my Reverend Father, to cast a merciful eye upon them, and to withdraw them from so deplorable a condition. The women and girls, on the contrary, are very well disposed to receive baptism; they are very constant and firm, when once they have received it; they are fervent in prayer, and ask only to be instructed; they frequently approach the sacraments; and, finally, are capable of the highest sanctity. The number of those who embrace our holy religion in creases daily to a marked degree — so much so that we have recently been obliged to build a new church, as the first was too small; and, judging from the manner in which this one is filled everyday, I think we shall shortly need a third one. Praise be [Page 79] to God, who is pleased to shower his blessings here in such profusion. As the village is large, being nearly half a league in length, our fervent Christians have lately erected a chapel at each end, so that instruction maybe more easily given. They meet in these, and I go there regularly to teach them the catechism.

The children give us bright hopes for the future. It is impossible to believe how eager they are to be instructed. When they return to their cabins, they tell their fathers, who are often still infidels, what they have learned. Above all, they know how to laugh at the jugglers'

ridiculous ceremonies; and we see that jugglery is, in consequence, gradually disappearing.

Nearly ten years ago Father Gravier laid the foundations of this new Christendom, which he fostered with care and trouble beyond belief. Reverend Father Binneteau has succeeded to his labors, and to the fruits thereof. Infact, we may say that this is one of our finest missions. In truth, it is impossible to imagine in France the good that can be done among these populous nations. It must also be confessed that, as a rule, we have occupation beyond our strength; and we need to be sustained by God from on high, not to succumb beneath the burden of our labors. Here is a description of the life we lead: Every day, before sunrise, we say mass for the convenience of our Christians, who go from it to their work. The savages chant the prayers, or recite them together during mass, — after which we disperse in different directions to teach the children the catechism: and then we have to visit the sick. On [Page 81] our return, we always find several savages who come to consult us on various matters. In the afternoon, three times a week, there is general catechism for all the people. From that, we go through the cabins to strengthen the Christians, and endeavor to win some idolater. These visits are very useful, and I notice that the missionary never fails to effect some fresh conquest, or to bring back some strayed sheep, The visits are paid one day in one quarter, and on the morrow in another; for it is absolutely impossible to go through all the cabins in one day.

When we return to the house, we find it filled with our fervent Christians, who come to receive instruction or to confess. It is generally at this time that I explain the pictures of the old and of the new testament. Pictures of this kind produce an impression upon the savage's mind, and greatly assist him in remembering what we tell him. Then the public prayers are said, which all attend; and they are followed by a half-hour's instruction. After leaving the church, many wish to speak to us in private; and the night is frequently far advanced before we can satisfy every one. This is what we do every day, Saturdays and Sundays are completely occupied in hearing confessions. Thus a missionary is free only at night; and even that time is often taken to teach some of the people to sing the hymns. During the winter we separate, going to various places where, the savages pass that season. Last winter I had for my share a village of considerable size, three leagues from here; after saying mass there on Sundays, I came to say it again here, at the fort, for our French.

Three Gentlemen of the Quebec Seminary, sent [Page 83] by Monseigneur the Bishop to establish Missions on the Missisipi, passed through here. We received them as well as we were able, lodging them in our own house, and sharing with them what we could possess amid a Scarcity as great as that which prevailed in the village throughout the year. On leaving, we also induced them to take seven sacks of corn that we had left, concealing our poverty from them, so that they might have less objection to receiving what we offered them. In another of our Missions, we also fed two of their people during the whole of last winter.

As these Gentlemen did not know the Illinois language, we gave them a collection of prayers, and a translation of the catechism, with the notes that we have been able to make upon that language, in order to help them to learn it. In fine, we showed them every possible attention and kindness.

Entreat God, my Reverend Father, to grant me the grace of being faithful to him, and of fulfilling here his designs regarding me for the advancement of his glory, and the entire conversion of these people, whom he has been pleased to confide to our care.

Gabriel Marest, S. J.

Volume 66: 1702: Gravier

VARIOUS LETTERS, ADDRESSED TO REVEREND FATHER JEAN DE LAMBERVILLE, REGARDING THE ILLINOIS MISSIONS.

I send to Your Reverence The invoice of this year, 1702, for The Illinois missions, and for The 3 fathers who are now there. I beg You not to be surprised if it be somewhat large, It is to supply clothes and provisions for three fathers, besides Brother guibort and perhaps Brother gillet, who are in need of everything; and to begin at last to supply, once for all, The principal items of all that is required for 3 missions — which have always been borrowing; which have always lacked most of the necessary articles; And where in The missionaries have done nothing but languish. Father bineteau died there from exhaustion; but, If he had had a few drops of Spanish wine, for which he asked us during his last illness, and some little dainties, — such as sugar, or other things, — or had we been able to procure some Fresh food for him, he would perhaps be still alive. Father pinet and father marest are wearing out their strength; and they are 2 saints, who take pleasure in being deprived of everything — in order, they say, that they may soon be nearer paradise. But they do not fail to tell me and to write me that I must bring some little comforts for the sick, and that these languish because they are in need of everything; and they tell the truth [Page 25] For my part, I am in good health, but I have no cassock, etc.; I am in a sorry plight, and the others are hardly less so.

Three winter cassocks.

3 pairs of winter hose.

3 lined cloaks.

3 summer cassocks; 3 pairs of winter and 3 of summer breeches.

3 pairs of summer hose.

3 pairs of cloth breeches for winter.

6 pairs of breeches of black duck or strong linen.

12 hempen shirts, lined; calico handkerchiefs; Cap linings.

4 hats; 3 hoods; 3 pairs of mittens.

One Livre of black Wool.

Half a livre of black and other silk.

One Livre of fine white thread.
 2 livres of black thread. 1 livre of twine for Nets.
 3 Lines; 3 whip-[lashes?].
 3 livres of coarse white thread.
 6 pairs of Shoes.
 3 pairs of double-soled slippers.
 3 pieces of white thread galloon.
 One thousand pins.
 One Ream of good and strong paper, of large size.
 One Ream of small-sized paper. 3 good razors, with awwhetstone.
 3 sticks of Spanish wax. 3 half-double caps.
 12 [small] towels and 6 [small] napkins.
 3 covered bowls for The sick.
 12 pewter spoons, with knives and forks.
[illegible] — 6 case-knives? in 6 sheaths.
 3 deep pewter basins with a narrow edge. [Page 27]
 6 plates.
 3 tinned kettles with lids, and strong, to hold 6 pots each.
 One Syringe; one livre of Theriac; ointment, plasters, alum, vitriol, aniseed, medicines, and pastils.
 One host-Iron, and shape for cutting the wafers.
 50 livres of flour, in a Barrel. 3 Tin boxes.
 One minot of Salt, In a Barrel.
 A jar of oil.
 A Barrel of 15 pots of vinegar.
 30 livres of Sugar.
 Rice, raisins, prunes.
 25 pots of Spanish wine, In 2 kegs.
 25 pots of brandy.
 9 livres of pepper.
 One Livre of nutmegs and cloves.
 Six pairs of half-worsted hose.
 One piece of strong sail-cloth.
 One livre or 2 of cotton candle-wicking.
 India ink and cotton *[illegible]*.
 A thousand nails, large, medium-sized, and small.
 150 livres of powder.
 50 livres of assorted shot, large and small.
 30 livres of Bullets; [500 gun-flints].
 Ten livres of vermilion.
 Ten livres of large glass Beads — black, white, and Striped.
 Ten livres of small glass Beads — white, green, and transparent.
 One gross of large Clasp-knives, with horn handles.
 One gross of round buckles, both large and medium-sized.

One gross of small metal plates^[5] [Page 29]
 Six gross of small belts.
 Six gross of finger-Rings.
 3 gross of awls.
 One thousand needles.
 Six boxes of gun-flints.
 Twenty gun-screws.
 One dozen [wooden?] combs.^[6]
 3 dozen Spools of fine iron wire, or Else a roll of fine wire.
 Six Bars of soaPage
 Three dozen hatchets — medium-sized, large, and small.
 Three dozen medium-sized hoes.
 Three hatchets [*illegible*] 3mattocks.
 One dozen trade shirts — large, medium-sized, and small.
 Six blue capotes — large, medium-sized, and small.
 Six ells of stuff for capotes, to make Breech-clouts.
 Thirty livres of good tobacco.
 Three dozen wax candles, and
 Six livres of Wax tapers for the 3 missionaries.

The same is needed in proportion for each mission; and a chapel, with all its accessories, is required for The missionary to the Scious, since a father will be sent there; and he has need of a man, if Monsieur LeSueur does not defray all His expenses. Your Reverence will see Him about it. You will find this a very long list, but Nothing can be Omitted from it if you wish the missionaries to have any comfort. Since it costs nothing for The fort to the Missionaries of quebec, —who have Received through Monsieur d'Iberville 10 times more than they asked, —we Shall not be in a worse condition; and he has written to me that we should bring out engages (hired men) from France, whom we could [Page 31] get There cheaper than here, and whose passage would cost us nothing."

After having written a good deal, I have been unable to avoid making myself responsible here for 256 livres 10 sols for Jean Baptist echevalier, who has served us for nearly 3 years. He wished to leave me here, where he could earn as Much as 400 livres per annum; on that account, I engaged him for a 4th year, — to begin on The 27th of July of this year, and end on the same Day of The year 1703, — In the presence of witnesses and by assigned contract. I am not aware that he has Received more than 50 escus for the 3 years. It is the painful necessity to which I am reduced of seeing the 3 Illinois missionaries without a man this summer which has compelled me to promise him 200 livres for that 4th year; but, in order that he may cost only 150 livres at quebec, I beg Your Reverence to pay The extra 50 livres that I give him. This sum I have advanced him out of the money that Your Reverence must have received from father Lila and from father Laseur— of which, as I wrote to you, they inform me by their Letters. Thus there will be entered in the

quebec accounts only 206 livres 10 sols paid for chevalier on his wages, for 3 years ending on the 27th of July of this year, 1702; and although I promised him an extra amount of 50 livres, he will cost here only 50 escus to quebec for The first year — because we shall pay him The 50 livres that I advance him out of The money to my credit in Your Reverence's hands. And I beg You to pay [Page 33] promptly and punctually The note that I made out in favor of sieur d'Iberville, for it is important that he should not suppose that your Reverence has Any trouble in paying what we have taken from him here; we would be unable to obtain anything more here. We will take nothing except in case of extreme necessity; but, afterall, if Your Reverence do not send us what we ask, we shall be obliged to procure it here, at an advance of from 3 to 400 per cent. Place no reliance whatever on Monsieur Lesueur, whose arrogance is Unbearable, and who has had a groundless quarrel with me about his canoe, which was plundered at [*illegible*], and about The appropriation of a hundred livres of powder. I am greatly mistaken if he does not leave his company to join Monsieur d'Iberville. My Reverend father, always accept from both of them whatever they offer you, as if you had no doubt of their sincerity. But let us take the Right measures with the persons to whom these affairs pertain to maintain ourselves in this new colony, — where we shall be no less persecuted than in china and elsewhere. Unless God grant me His sure aid for my conversion, I shall no longer have any thing of the Religious about me except the habit. I remain with Great Respect, in the sacred heart of Jesus.

Jacques Gravier, S.J.
This 25th of march, 1702.

Volume 66: 1702: Marest

VARIOUS LETTERS, ADDRESSED TO REVEREND FATHER JEAN DE LAMBERVILLE,
REGARDING THE ILLINOIS MISSIONS [Continued]

Among the Cascaskias,
The 5th of July, 1702.

I have already written to you via quebec, but we take every opportunity to pay our respects to your reverence. Father Pinet, a very Holy and Zealous missionary, has left The mission at the tamarous, orarkinsa, in accordance with your directions to me. Rut he has only half quitted It, for he has Left a man in our house there who takes care of it: and thus we occasionally go thither from this place to show that we are obedient to the king pending the receipt of his orders. That Father now has charge of the Cascaskias, where I leave him alone, to His great sorrow —owing to present circumstances, where in monsieur bergier shows that he is a worthy member of the missions etrartgeres. Inform Him of the ruling by which The vicars- general have no right to visit our churches or to hear confessions in them without our consent. I am convinced that these missions will receive rude shocks. They were beginning to be on a good footing. This caused Jealousy in the minds of the gentlemen of the missions etrangeres, who have come to take them

from us. God grant that they may leave them in a better condition than we have done. It also seems as if there were a coolness on the part of monsieur D'iberville; and perhaps next year there may be a freezing coldness. God be praised, who grants to this beneficent church The same trials which he gave to those most cherished by him. I would write you more at length, had I not done so via quebec, giving you in that letter every possible information about all our affairs. As you will receive [Page 37] That letter before this one, I refer you to it, and content myself at present with telling you of my continual remembrance of your reverence. Tonight I shall commence my retreat, immediately after which I shall leave for The Scious country. I remain, with respect,

My Reverend Father,
Your Reverence's Very humble and very
obedient servant,

GABRIEL MAREST, S.J.

[Addressed: "To My Reverend Father, Father de Lamberville, of the Society of Jesus, at Paris."]

Volume 66: 1706-1708: Mermet

DOCUMENTS OF 1706-1708

LETTER BY FATHER MERMET, MISSIONARY AT CASCASKIAS, TO THE JESUITS IN CANADA.

Among the Cascaskias,
This 2nd of march, 1706.

I write you news concerning the affairs of the Illinois, some of which is good and some bad. It is good from this village, except that they threaten to leave us at the first word. It is bad, as regards both spiritual and temporal matters, among the Illinois of Détroit, — otherwise, the Peoarias, — where Father Gravier nearly lost his life on two occasions, and he is not yet out of danger. It happened thus: In obedience to the menacing orders of Monsieur the Governor, the chiefs appointed one Mantouchensa, — called by the french *tête d'Ours*["Bear'sHead"], — as being one of the most notable of the tribe, to go to Monsieur the Governor to account for the death of a soldier named la Giroffé, who had been killed by the Illinois. He was accompanied by some other Illinois savages, and went to Michilimakina with Monsieur Desliettes, with the intention of going down to Montréal But: while at Michillimakina, he saw the frightful presents that the timidity of the French caused them to give to the Outaoi's, — who, as well as the Illinois, were all to be killed, and he at once took very different measures with the Outaois. The latter told him that they were more feared at Montreal than was imagined; and that he should act [Page 51] as they did, and do things that would make him dreaded and redoubtable. These discourses, or the mere sight of the cowardice of the French, and their powerlessness to revenge themselves after the terrible threats of all the tribes — which were, to eat the first one who

broke the peace, — induced him to give up the idea of going to Montreal. He resolved to return to his own country, and kill and pillage the black gown and the French, that he might make himself at once redoubtable and rich with their spoils. He sent his comrades away from Michilimackinac, with orders to keep in sight the said father and the French who were among the Peouariacs. He followed closely upon his countrymen, and no sooner had he reached the village than he related the news, and urged the whole village to sedition. He loudly harangued that a person who took notice of everything, as the black gown did, should not be tolerated; that, after killing these French, they need use no further moderation toward the others; that they must be got rid of, and that the savages must make themselves redoubtable beyond question, in imitation of their neighbors. All these discourses excited their minds to revolt, and, although not all were of that opinion, a great many followed it. Among these was a hot-headed man, who, under the pretext that he had been offered a slight by the Said father, who would not bury one of his deceased relatives in the church, — a favor which the father had granted to no one, and which he was not even able to grant at the time when the deceased person died; for the savage had brought her dead body without taking the trouble to dig a grave, leaving the father to do everything, a thing that has never been done, — this [Page 53] hot-headed man, I say, asserted that since the Father rejected the body of his relative, he would revenge himself therefor. This he did shortly afterward; for, when he met the father in the village, he ran to his Cabin for his bow and arrows, and, without saying a word, shot the father, wounding him dangerously. Two arrows struck his breast, but glanced off; a 3rd tore his ear; the next would have killed him, had it not been for the collar of his cassock, which stopped the arrow-head; the 5th was a deadly shot, for the arrow pierced the arm above the wrist, and penetrated to below the elbow; three streams of blood poured from the opened veins and from the severed artery. The father plucked out the arrow, but the stone head stuck in the sinews near the joint of the elbow, — within, as we suppose. All this sportive affair occurred quietly, without a single Illinois trying to stop the furious man. At the first shots, the father asked the Savage: “My son, why do you kill me? What have I done to you?” He knelt to commend himself to God; and at the same time, as soon as the wound was inflicted, the father swam, a sit were, in his own blood. A good Samaritan, a stranger in the village, and a renard [Fox] by nation, had compassion on the father. He pressed tightly upon the upper part of the arm, and the artery, from which the blood had spurted freely, allowed only a few drops to escape. Then some praying women ran to the poor Father; and, assisted by the renard, who still retained his strong pressure on the father’s arm, they brought poor father Gravier home. An Illinois offered to dress the wound, and the father consented; but we saw, from what happened afterward, [Page 55] that the intentions of this physician were no better than those of his brethren. He closed the wound as SOOD as he could; and, as a Frenchman who was there said very truly, he shut up the wolf in the sheep fold, by closing up in the wound the clotted blood that was in it. At first, the father felt some relief from pain; but he afterward paid very dearly for his credulity in having tolerated his physician. Fever was added to his sufferings, and, during the three months while the father remained there, he suffered terribly. He nevertheless made an effort to trace some letters, to inform me of what had happened and resolved to withdraw — while he took steps to keep in communication with some faithful praying savages here. This

cannot be done, especially among Savages, without some information of it being given. At the very first Suspicion, they called out in the village that the father must not be allowed to depart; that those who favored his escape were to be killed, and that the french were to be closely watched. At the very first news of this accident, I applied to Rouenza, who gave me 4 young men to go to get the father. Monsieur Berger, who was nearer the Pewarias than we were, had sent thither 14 persons, but they abandoned the task; one only, one of the chief men among them, went to the father, and remained some time, watching over him; but he went home before the father's departure. One of our 4 young men came back from the Tamarrais to inform us of what they had done; the three others continued their journey, and told the Father that Rouenza had ordered them to die with him. Thus they did not leave him until he reached us at Rouenza's village, which is called st. [Page 57] Fransoisde Xavier, as you are aware. The praying women who took care of the father among the Pewarias also accompanied him. They supplied him with a Canoe, and with what he needed on the journey. The rendezvous was appointed for after Midnight, long before daybreak; but the father was nearly prevented from going, by an accident more unfortunate than the first, As you will see. About Midnight, when rain was falling and the sky very dark, and the father considered the time favorable to his escape, he was greatly surprised on being told that his house was surrounded by 200 Illinois — who had taken down a portion of his palisade, in order to get in. It was St. Michel, the blacksmith, who was watching with the father; and who, on going out by chance, saw all this great multitude, whose numbers were probably exaggerated by the darkness of the night and by his fears. He did not lose his presence of mind in his fright. He approached and questioned them, asking them: "What do you seek at this hour?" "We are looking for something," one of them replied.

St. Michel at once reentered the house, and said to the Father: "We are lost; we are beset by 200 Illinois. Listen to me, my father, while I confess my sins before I die." Deman, the father's servant, did the same. Meanwhile the Savages were deliberating as to what they should do; because, as they expected to surprise the father in his house alone, and without witnesses, they were astonished at finding there the blacksmith, who dwelt elsewhere. Hardly had the said frenchmen finished their confession, when 4 or 5 Savage knaves entered arrogantly, as if to speak to the father. But in the [Page 59] meantime St. Michel had pushed through the crowd of besiegers to warn, without loss of time, one of the chiefs, who was rather friendly to the french, of what was going on at the father's house. The chief came at once with St. Michel, and with some young men among his followers, to the dwelling of the father, who was greatly perplexed about his safety. The sight of the chief disconcerted the assassins, who had intended to kill the father in his own house, But, as they have deference for one another, they did not dare to carry out their design against the will of the last comer, who caused them to be asked what they were looking for. The band dispersed without a word, and swooped down upon St. Michel's house, which they pillaged. Some hours afterward, the father embarked without loss of time; and shortly before dawn, his Savage and french canoe men under his orders brought him safely here. That was at the end of October, three months after the attack; and, even then, I greatly feared for his life.

The poor father could barely say mass once or twice; he had to be dressed like a child; but afterward his arm swelled more than ever, and he could not use it. He uttered cries night and day, like a man who is being burned; in fact, he felt pains similar to those caused by a scorching fire. His condition excited compassion in me, for I had no means of relieving him. At last I proposed, somewhat rashly, to lance the swelled arm, and he consented. "But," he said, "you will have to cut very deep with the lancet, to reach the stone arrow-head." "I am not sufficiently skillful to flatter myself that I can find it, even if you were to point out the place where the pain is most severe; but I [Page 61] hope to give you relief by allowing the pus to flow." He consents; he exhorts me to perform the operation, and I set to work. I thrust the lancet three times into his arm, fortunately without injuring him, or opening the principal vein, although the lancet was buried to one-half its depth. After this a great quantity of putrid blood, having a very disagreeable odor, escaped, and this gave him relief; but the stone did not appear and we despaired of curing him. How could an inexperienced man, as I was, seek it among the sinews?

Therefore Jacques, *dit le Castor*, and all the french here agreed with me that he' should go to Mobile to have his wound attended to, as there are surgeons at that place who know their trade. After much resistance, he yielded to our prayers, and to the kindness of his guide, Bouat, who had been sent by Monsieur Pacaud to Ouabache; he had returned from the sea to go to Canada, and was here when the father arrived from Peouareoua. Bouat did not venture to continue his journey, on account of the insolence of the Illinois — who, at the very least, would not have failed to plunder him. In despair of being able to get past that barrier, He very kindly came to offer his services to the father to conduct him to Mobile, whence he came; he sold here all his effects, and undertook to conduct the father, and to take care of him. He even came to our house and dressed his wound some days beforehand, and did so with remarkable skill. The father allowed himself to be won by his kindness, and left here for the sea on the 6th of november.

I greatly fear that he will die of his wound, or be crippled by it for the remainder of his life. After [Page 63] one day's journey, he hesitated as to whether he should not return to see me, instead of continuing his journey; for the pain had greatly diminished, He continued it, nevertheless, with the view of returning as soon as he is cured, in order to die on his first battle-field.

[Endorsed: "Copy of a copy made at Paris, on the 24th of March, 1707.
(Signed) DAUTEUIL."] [Page 65]

Volume 67: 1723: Rale

LETTER FROM FATHER SEBASTIEN RASLES, MISSIONARY OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS
IN NEW FRANCE, TO MONSIEUR HIS BROTHER.

Narantsouak
this 12th of October, 1723.

I can no longer refuse the affectionate entreaties which you have made, in all your letters, that I would inform you somewhat in detail of my occupations, and of the character of the Savage Tribes in the midst of which Providence has placed me for so many years. I do it the more gladly because, in complying with such earnest desires on your part, I satisfy even more your affection than your curiosity.

It was the 23rd of July in the year 1689, when I set sail from la Rochelle; and, after a fairly prosperous voyage of three months, I arrived at Quebec on the 13th of October in the same year. I devoted myself at first to learning the language of our Savages. This language is very difficult; for it is not sufficient to study its terms and their signification, and to acquire a supply of words and phrases, — it is further necessary to know the turn and arrangement that the Savages give them, which can hardly ever be caught except by familiar and frequent intercourse with these tribes.

I then went to dwell in a Village of the *Abnakis* [Page 133] Tribe which is situated in a forest, and only three leagues from Quebec. This village was inhabited by two hundred Savages, nearly all of whom were Christians. Their cabins were ranged almost like houses in cities; an enclosure of high and closely — set stakes formed a sort of wall, which protected them from the incursions of their enemies.

Their cabins are very quickly set up; they plant their poles, which are joined at the top, and cover them with large sheets of bark. The fire is made in the middle of the cabin; they spread all around it mats of rushes, upon which they sit during the day and take their rest during the night.

The clothing of the men consists of a loose coat of skin, or perhaps a piece of red or blue cloth. That of the women is a covering which extends from the neck to the middle of the leg, and which they adjust very decently. They put on the head another covering which descends as far as the feet, and serves them as a cloak. Their leggings reach from the knee only to the ankle. Socks made of elk-skin, and lined inside with hair or with wool, take the place of shoes. This foot-gear is absolutely necessary for the purpose of adjusting their snow shoes, by means of which they easily walk on the snow. These snowshoes, made in lozenge shape, are more than two feet long and a foot and a half broad. I did not believe that I could ever walk with such appliances; but when I made a trial of them, I suddenly found myself so skillful that the Savages could not believe that that was the first time when I had used them.

The invention of these snowshoes has been of great use to the Savages, not only for traveling over [Page 135] the snow,— with which the ground is covered during a great part of the year, — but also for hunting wild beasts, and especially the elk. These animals, larger than the largest oxen of France, walk only with difficulty on the snow; therefore it is easy for the Savages to overtake them, and often with an ordinary knife fastened to the end of a stick they kill them, and live upon their flesh. After having dressed the skins, in which the Savages are skillful, they sell them to the French and the English, — who give them in exchange loose coats, blankets, large kettles, guns, hatchets, and knives. To have an idea of a Savage, picture to yourself a tall, strong man, agile, of a warthy complexion, without a beard, with black hair, and with teeth whiter than ivory. If you wish to see him in fine array, you will find his only ornaments to be what are called “rassades;” these are a sort of shell-work, or sometimes of stone, fashioned in the form of small beads, some white, some black, — which are strung in such a way that they represent different and very exact figures, which have their own charm. It is with these strings of beads that our Savages tie and braid their hair, above the ears and behind; they make of them earrings, necklaces, garters, and belts, five or six inches broad; and with this sort of finery they value themselves much more than does a European with all his gold and precious stones.

The occupation of the men is hunting or war. That of the women is to remain in the village, and with bark fashion baskets, pouches, boxes, bowls, dishes, etc. They sew the bark with roots, and with it make various articles, very neatly wrought. [Page 137] The canoes are also made of a single sheet of bark, but the largest can scarcely hold more than six or seven persons.

It is in these canoes made of bark — which has scarcely the thickness of an écu—that they cross the arms of the sea, and sail on the most dangerous rivers, and on lakes from four to five hundred leagues in circumference. In this manner I have made many voyages, without having run any risk. Only it once happened to me, in crossing the river saint Lawrence, that I suddenly found myself surrounded by masses of ice of an enormous size; the canoe was cracked by them. The two Savages who were piloting me immediately cried out: “We are dead men; all is over; we must perish!” Notwithstanding, they made an effort, and jumped upon one of those floating cakes of ice. I did likewise; and, after having drawn the canoe out of the water, we carried it to the very edge of the ice. There we were obliged again to enter the canoe, in order to reach another cake of ice; and thus by jumping from cake to cake we at last came to the bank of the river, without other inconvenience than being very wet and benumbed with cold.

There is nothing equal to the affection of the Savages for their children. As soon as they are born, they put them on a little piece of board covered with cloth and with a small bearskin, in which they are wrapped, and this is their cradle. The mothers carry them on their backs in a manner easy for the children and for themselves. No sooner do the boys begin to walk than they practice drawing the bow; they become so adroit in this that at the age of ten or twelve years they do [Page 139] not fail to kill the

bird at which they shoot. I have been surprised at it, and I would scarcely believe it if I had not witnessed it.

The thing which most shocked me when I began to live among the Savages, was being obliged to take my meals with them; for nothing could be more revolting. When they have filled their kettle with meat, they boil it, at most, three-quarters of an hour, — after which they take it off the fire, serve it in basins of bark, and distribute it among all the people who are in their cabin. Each one bites into this meat as one would into a piece of bread. This spectacle did not give me much appetite, and they very soon perceived my repugnance. *Why dost thou not eat?* Said they. I answered that I was not accustomed to eat meat in this manner, without adding to it a little bread. *Thou must conquer thyself,* they replied; *is that a very difficult thing for a Patriarch who thoroughly understands how to pray? We ourselves overcome much, in order to believe that which we do not see.* Then it was no longer a time to deliberate; we must indeed conform to their manners and customs, so as to deserve their confidence and win them to Jesus Christ.

There meals are not regular, as in Europe; they live from day to day. While they have any good food they use it, without being troubled as to whether they will have any at all for following days.

They are devoted to tobacco; men, women, and girls, all smoke the greater part of the time. To give them a piece of tobacco pleases them more than to give them their weight in gold.

In the beginning of June, or when the snow is [Page141] almost wholly melted, they plant *skamounar*; this is what we call “Turkey wheat” or “Indian corn.” Their manner of planting it is to make with the finger, or with a little stick, separate holes in the ground, and to drop into each one eight or nine grains which they cover with the same soil that had been taken out to make the hole. Their harvest is made at the end of August. It was in the midst of these Tribes, which are considered the least rude of all our Savages, that I served my Missionary apprenticeship. My chief occupation was the study of their language; it is very difficult to learn, especially when one has no other masters than Savages. They have several sounds which are uttered only by the throat, without making any motion of the lips; *ou*, for instance, is of this number, and that is why in writing we indicate it by the figure *ö*, in order to distinguish it from other letters. I spent part of the day in their cabins, hearing them talk. I was obliged to give the utmost attention, in order to connect what they said, and to conjecture its meaning; sometimes I caught it exactly, but more often I was deceived, — because, not being accustomed to the trick of their guttural sounds, I repeated only half the word, and thereby gave them cause for laughter. At last, after five months of continual application, I succeeded in understanding all their terms; but that did not enable me to express myself to their satisfaction. I had still much progress to make before catching the form of expression and the spirit of the language, which are entirely different from the spirit and form of our European languages. In order to shorten the time, and thus enable me [Page 143] sooner to perform my duties, I selected a

few Savages who had most intelligence, and who used the best language. I repeated to them in a clumsy manner some passages from the catechism, and they gave them to me again, with all the nicety of their language; I immediately wrote these down; and, by this means, in a reasonably short time I had made a dictionary, and also a Catechism which contained the precepts and Mysteries of Religion.

It cannot be denied that the language of the Savages has real beauties; and there is an indescribable force in their style and manner of expression. I am going to quote you an example. If I should ask you why God created you, you would answer me that it was for the purpose of knowing him, loving him, and serving him, and by this means to merit eternal glory. If I should put the same question to a Savage, he would answer thus, in the style of his own language: "The great Spirit has thought of us: 'Let them know me, let them love me, let them honor me, and let them obey me; for then I will make them enter my glorious happiness.'" If I desired to tell you in their style that you would have much difficulty in learning the Savage language, I would express myself in this way: "I think of you, my dear brother, that he will have difficulty in learning the Savage language." The Huron language is the chief language of the Savages, and, when a person is master of that, he can in less than three months make himself understood by the five Iroquois tribes. It is the most majestic, and at the same time the most difficult, of all the Savage tongues. This difficulty does not come alone from the guttural sounds, but still more [Page145] from the diversity of accents; for often two words composed of the same letters have totally different significations. Father Chaumont, who lived fifty years among the Hurons, composed a Grammar of that language which is very helpful to those who come without experience to that Mission. Nevertheless a Missionary is fortunate if he can, even with this aid, express himself elegantly in that language after ten years of constant study. Each Savage Tribe has its own special tongue; thus the Abnakis, the Hurons, the Iroquois, the Algonkins, the Illinois, the Miamis, and others, have each their own language. There are no books to teach these languages, and even though we had them, they would be quite useless; practice is the only master that is able to teach us. As I have labored in four different Missions of the Savages, — towit, among the Abnakis, the Algonkins, the Hurons, and the Illinois, — and as I have been obliged to learn these different languages, I will give you a specimen of each, so that you may perceive how little resemblance there is between them. I choose a stanza from a hymn to the blessed Sacrament, which is usually sung during Mass at the elevation of the blessed Host, and which begins with these words: *O salutaris Hostia*. The following is the translation, in verse, of this stanza into the four languages of these different Tribes.

In the Abnakis Tongue.
Kighistwi-nuanurwinns
Spem kik papiligo ii damek
Nemiani wi kwidanghabenk
Taha saii grihine. [Page147]
In the Algonkin tongue.

Kwerais Jesustegousenam
 Nera weul kastisian
 Ka rio vllighemiang
 Vas mama vik umong.

In the Huron Tongue.
 Jesus outo ettix'ichie
 Outo ettiskuaalichi-axe
 J chiercheaxerawensta
 D'aotierti xeata-wien.

In the Illinois Tongue.
 Pekiziane manetwe
 Piaro nile hiNanghi
 Keninama wi ouKangha
 Mero winang ousiang hi.

This signifies in French: "O saving Victim, who art continually sacrificed, and who givest life, thou by whom we enter into Heaven, we are all tempted; do thou strengthen us."

When I had remained nearly two years among the Abnakis, I was recalled by my Superiors; they had assigned me to the Mission of the Illinois, who had just lost their Missionary. I then went to Quebec, whence, after I had devoted three months to studying the Algonkin language, I set out on the 13th of August in a canoe for the land of the Illinois; their Country is more than eight hundred leagues distant from Quebec. You may well believe that so long a journey in these uncivilized regions cannot be made without running great risks, and without suffering many inconveniences. I had to cross lakes of an immense extent, on which storms are as frequent [Page 149] as on the Sea. It is true that we had the advantage of landing every night; but we were happy if we found some flat rock on which we could pass the night. When it rained, the only way of protecting ourselves was to keep under the overturned canoe.

We ran still greater hazards on the rivers, especially in the places where they flow with extreme rapidity. Then the canoe flies like an arrow; and, if it happen to touch any of the rocks, which are very numerous there, it is broken into a thousand pieces. That misfortune befell some of the people who were accompanying me in other canoes; and it was by a special protection of divine goodness that I did not meet the same fate, for my canoe several times went upon those rocks, but without receiving the least injury.

Finally one risks suffering the most cruel torture from hunger, for the length and difficulty of this sort of journey permits him to carry only a bag of Indian corn. It is supposed that hunting will supply food on the way; but, if there be a lack of game, one runs the risk of fasting many days. Then the only resource is to seek a sort of leaf which the Savages call *Kenghessanach*, and the French *Tripesde roches*. You would take them for chervil, of

which they have the shape, except that they are much larger. They are served either boiled or roasted; in this latter manner I have eaten them, and they are less distasteful than in the former.

I had not suffered much from hunger when I reached Lake Huron; but the case was different with my fellow-travelers, the bad weather having scattered their canoes, they were not able to join [Page151] me. I arrived first at *Missilimakinak*, whence I sent them provisions without which they would have died from hunger. They had passed seven days without any other food than the flesh of a crow, which they had killed rather by chance than by skill, for they had not strength to stand up right.

The season was too far advanced for continuing my journey to the Illinois, from whom I was still distant about four hundred leagues. Thus I was obliged to remain at *Missilimakinak*, where there were two of our Missionaries — one among the Hurons, and the other with the *Outaouacks*. These latter are very superstitious, and much attached to the juggleries of their charlatans. They assume for themselves an origin as senseless as it is ridiculous.' They declare that they have come from three families, and each family is composed of five hundred persons.

Some are of the family of *Michabou*, — that is to say, of "the Great Hare." They affirm that this Great Hare was a man of prodigious height; that he spread nets in water eighteen brasses deep, and that the water scarcely came to his armpits. They say that one day, during the deluge, he sent out the Beaver to discover land; then, as that animal did not return, he despatched the Otter, which brought back a little soil covered with foam. He then proceeded to the place in the Lake where this soil was found, which made a little island; he walked all around it in the water, and this island became extraordinarily large. Therefore, they attribute to him the creation of the world. They add that, after having finished this work, he flew away to the Sky, which is his usual dwelling-place; but before quitting the earth [Page 153] he directed that, when his descendants should die, their bodies should be burned, and their ashes scattered to the winds, so that they might be able to rise more easily to the Sky. But he warned them that, should they fail to do this, snow would not cease to cover the earth, and their Lakes and Rivers would remain frozen; and, as thus they could not catch fish, which is their ordinary food, they would all die in the spring-time.

Indeed, when, a few years ago, the winter had lasted much longer than usual, there was general consternation among the Savages of the Great Hare family. They resorted to their customary juggleries; they held several assemblies in order to deliberate upon means of dissipating this unfriendly snow, which was persistently remaining on the ground; when an old woman, approaching them, said: "My children, you have no sense. You know the commands that the Great Hare left with us, to burn dead bodies, and scatter their ashes to the winds, so that they might more quickly return to the Sky, their own country; but you have neglected those commands by leaving, at a few days' journey from here, a dead man without burning him, as if he did not belong to the family of the Great Hare. Repair your

fault at once; be careful to burn him, if you wish that the snow should disappear." "Thou art right, our Mother," they answered, "thou hast more sense than we; and the counsel thou hast given us restores us to life." Immediately they sent twenty-five men to go to burn this body; about fifteen days were consumed in this journey, during which time the thaw came, and the snow disappeared. Praises and presents were heaped upon the old woman who [Page 155] had given the advice; and this occurrence, wholly natural as it was, greatly served to uphold them in their foolish and superstitious belief.[28]

The second family of the *Outaouacks* maintain that they have sprung from *Namepich*,— that is to say, from the CarPage. They say that the carp having deposited its eggs upon the bank of a river, and the sun having shed its rays upon them, there was formed a woman from whom they are descended; thus they are called "the family of the CarPage." The third family of the *Outaouacks* attributes its origin to the paw of a *Machoua*, — that is to say, of a Bear; and they are called "the family of the Bear," but without explaining in what way they issued from it. When they kill one of these animals, they make it a feast of its own Flesh; they talk to it, they harangue it, they say: "Do not have an evil thought against us, because we have killed thee. Thou hast intelligence, thou seest that our children are suffering from hunger. They love thee, and wish thee to enter into their bodies; is it not a glorious thing for thee to be eaten by the children of Captains?"

It is only the family of the Great Hare that burns dead bodies; the two other families bury them. When a great Captain has died, an immense coffin is prepared; after having laid there in the body, clothed in the man's handsomest garments, they put in it with him his blanket, his gun, his store of powder and lead, his bow, his arrows, his kettle, his dish, his provisions, his war-club, his calumet, his box of vermilion, his looking-glass, his porcelain collars, and all the presents which were made at his death, according to custom. They fancy that with this [Page 157] equipment he will make his journey to the other world more successfully, and will be better received by the great Captains of the Tribe, who will lead him with them into a place of delights.

While they are arranging everything in the coffin, the relatives of the dead man are present at the ceremony, weeping after their manner, — that is to say, chanting in a mournful tone, and swinging in harmony a rod to which they have attached several little bells. Where the superstition of these tribes appears the most extravagant is in the worship that they pay to what they call their *Manitou*; as they know hardly anything but the animals with which they live in the forests, they imagine that there is in these animals, — or, rather, in their skins, or in their plumage, — a sort of spirit who rules all things, and who is the master of life and of death. According to them, there are *Manitous* common to the whole Tribe, and there are special ones for each person. *Oussakita*, they say, is the great *Manitou* of all the animals that move on the earth or fly in the air. He it is who rules them; therefore, when they go to the hunt, they offer to him tobacco, powder, and lead, and also well-prepared skins. These articles they fasten to the end of a pole, and, raising it on high, they say to him: "*Oussakita*, we give thee something to smoke, we offer thee something for killing animals. Deign to accept these presents, and do not permit the animals to escape

our arrows; grant that we may kill the fattest ones, and in great number, so that our children may not lack clothing or food."

They call the *Manitou* of waters and fishes *Michibichi*; [Page 159] and they offer him a somewhat similar sacrifice when they go to fish, or undertake a voyage. This sacrifice consists of throwing into the water tobacco, provisions, and kettles; and in asking him that the water of the river may flow more slowly, that the rocks may not break their canoes, and that he will grant them an abundant catch.

Besides these common *Manitous*, each person has his own special one, which is a bear, a beaver, a bustard, or some similar animal. They carry the skin of this animal to war, to the hunt, and on their journeys, — fully persuaded that it will preserve them from every danger, and that it will cause them to succeed in all their undertakings.

When a Savage wishes to take to himself a *Manitou* the first animal that appears to his imagination during sleep is generally the one upon which his choice falls. He kills an animal of this kind, and puts its skin — or its feathers, if it be a bird — in the most conspicuous part of his cabin; he makes a feast in its honor, during which he addresses it in the most respectful terms; and thereafter this is recognized as his *Manitou*.

As soon as I saw the coming of spring I left *Missilimakinak*, that I might go the country of the Illinois. I found on my way many Savage Tribes, among them the *Maskoutings*, the *Sakis*, the *Omikoues*, the *Ouinipegouans*, the *Outagamis*, and others. All these Tribes have their own peculiar language; but, in all other respects, they do not differ in the least from the *Outaouacks*. A Missionary who lives at the bay des Puants, makes excursions, from time to time, ' to the homes of these Savages, in order to instruct them in the truths of Religion. [Page 161]

After forty days of travel I entered the river of the Illinois, and, after voyaging fifty leagues, I came to their first Village, which had three hundred cabins, all of them with four or five fires, One fire is always for two families. They have eleven Villages belonging to their Tribe. On the day after my arrival, I was invited by the principal Chief to a grand repast, which he was giving to the most important men of the Tribe. He had ordered several dogs to be killed; such a feast is considered among the Savages a magnificent feast; therefore, it is called "the feast of the Captains." The ceremonies that are observed are the same among all these Tribes. It is usual at this sort of feast for the Savages to deliberate upon their most important affairs, — as, for instance, when there is question either of undertaking war against their neighbors, or of terminating it by propositions of peace. When all the guests had arrived they took their places all about the cabin, seating themselves either on the bare ground or on the mats. Then the Chief arose and began his address. I confess to you that I admired his flow of language, the justness and force of the arguments that he presented, the eloquent turn he gave to them, and the choice and nicety of the expressions with which he adorned his speech. I fully believe that, if I had written down what this Savage said to us, off hand and without preparation, you would readily

acknowledge that the most able Europeans could scarcely, after much thought and study, compose an address that would be more forcible and better arranged.

When the speech was finished, two Savages, who performed the duty of stewards, distributed dishes. [Page 163] to the whole company, and each dish served for two guests; while eating, they conversed together on in different matters; and when they had finished their repast they withdrew, — carrying away according to their custom, what remained on their dishes.

The Illinois do not give those feasts that are customary among many other Savage Tribes, at which a person is obliged to eat all that has been given him, even should he burst. When any one is present at such a feast and is unable to observe this ridiculous rule, he applies to one of the guests whom he knows to have a better appetite, and says to him: “My brother, take pity on me; I am a dead man if thou do not give me life. Eat what I have left, and I will make thee a present of something. “This is their only way out of their perplexity.

The Illinois are covered only around the waist, otherwise they go entirely nude; many panels with all sorts of figures, which they mark upon the body in an ineffaceable manner, take with them the place of garments. It is only when they make visits, or when they are present at Church, that they wrap themselves in a cloak of dressed skin in the summer-time, and in the winter season in a dressed skin with the hair left on, that they may keep warm. They adorn the head with feathers of many colors, of which they make garlands and crowns which they arrange very becomingly; above all things, they are careful to paint the face with different colors, but especially with vermilion. They wear collars and earrings made of little stones, which they cut like precious stones; some are blue, some red, and some white as alabaster; to these must be added a flatpiece of porcelain which finishes the collar. The Illinois are [Page 165] persuaded that these grotesque Ornaments add grace to their appearance, and win for them respect.

When the Illinois are not engaged in war or in hunting, their time is spent either in games, or at feasts, or in dancing. They have two kinds of dances; some are a sign of rejoicing, and to these they invite the most distinguished women and young girls; others are a token of their sadness at the death of the most important men of their Tribe. It is by these dances that they profess to honor the deceased, and to wipe away the tears of his relatives. All of them are entitled to have the death of their near relatives bewailed in this manner, provided that they make presents for, this purpose. The dances last a longer or shorter time according to the price and value of the presents, — which, at the end of the dance, are distributed to the dancers. It is not their custom to bury the dead; they wrap them in skins, and hang them by the feet and head to the tops of trees.

When the men are not at games, feasts, or dances, they remain quiet on their mats, and spend their time either in sleeping or in making bows, arrows, calumets, and other articles of that sort. As for the women, they work from morning until evening like slaves. It is they

who cultivate the land and plant the Indian corn, in summer; and, as soon as winter begins, they are employed in making mats, dressing skins, and in many other kinds of work, — for their first care is to supply the cabin with everything that is necessary.

Among all the Tribes of Canada, there is not one that lives in so great abundance of everything as do the Illinois. Their rivers are covered with swans [Page 167] bustards, ducks, and teal. We can hardly travel a league without meeting a prodigious multitude of Turkeys, which go in troops, sometimes to the number of 200, They are larger than those that are seen in France. I had the curiosity to weigh one of them, and it weighed thirty-six livres. They have a sort of hairy beard at the neck, which is half a foot long.

Bears and deer are found there in great numbers; there are also found countless numbers of oxen and of roebucks; there is no year when they do not kill more than a thousand roebucks, and more than two thousand oxen; as far as the eye can reach, are seen from four to five thousand oxen grazing on the prairies. They have a hump on the back, and the head is extremely large. Their hair, except that on the head, is curly and soft, like wool; their flesh is strong in its natural state, and is so light that, even if it be eaten wholly raw, it causes no indigestion. When they have killed an ox that seems to them too lean, they are satisfied to take its tongue and go in search of one that is more fat.

Arrows are the principal weapons that they use in war and in hunting, These arrows are barbed at the tip with a stone, sharpened and cut in the shape of a serpent's tongue; if knives are lacking, they use arrows also for flaying the animals which they kill. They are so adroit in bending the bow that they scarcely ever miss their aim; and they do this with such quickness that they will have discharged a hundred arrows sooner than another person can reload his gun.

They take little trouble to make nets suitable for catching fish in the rivers, because the abundance [Page 169] of all kinds of animals which they find for their subsistence renders them somewhat indifferent to fish. However, when they take a fancy to have some, they enter a canoe with their bows and arrows; they stand up that they may better discover the fish, and as soon as they see one they pierce it with an arrow.

Among the Illinois the only way of acquiring public esteem and regard is, as among other Savages, to gain the reputation of a skillful hunter, and, still further, of a good warrior; it is chiefly in this latter that they make their merit consist, and it is this which they call being truly a man. They are so eager for this glory that we see them undertake journeys of four hundred leagues through the midst of forests in order to capture a slave, or to take off the scalp of a man whom they have killed. They count as nothing the hardships and the long fasting that they must undergo, especially when they are drawing near the country of the enemy; for then they no longer dare to hunt, for fear that the animals, being only wounded, may escape with the arrow in the body, and warn their enemy to put himself in a posture of defense. For their manner of making war, as among all the Savages, is to surprise their enemies; therefore they send out scouts to observe the number and

movements of the enemy, and to see if they are on their guard. According to the report that is brought to them, they either lie in ambush, or make a foray on the cabins, war-club in hand; and they are sure to kill some of their foes before the latter can even think of defending themselves.

The war-club is made of a deer's horn or of wood, [Page 171] shaped like a cutlass, with a large ball at the end. They hold the war-club in one hand, and a knife in the other. As soon as they have dealt a blow at the head of their enemy, they make on it a circular cut with a knife, and take off the scalp with surprising quickness.

When a Savage returns to his own country laden with many scalps, he is received with great honor; but he is at the height of his glory when he takes prisoners and brings them home alive. As soon as he arrives, all the people of the village meet together, and range themselves on both sides of the way where the prisoners must pass. This reception is very cruel; some tear out the prisoners' nails, others cut off their fingers or ears; still others load them with blows from clubs.

After this first welcome, the old men assemble in order to consider whether they shall grant life to their prisoners, or give orders for their death. When there is any dead man to be resuscitated, that is to say, if any one of their warriors has been killed, and they think it a duty to replace him in his cabin, they give to this cabin one of their prisoners, who takes the place of the deceased; and this is what they call "resuscitating the dead."

When the prisoner has been condemned to death, they immediately set up in the ground a large stake, to which they fasten him by both hands; they cause the death song to be chanted, and — all the Savages being seated around the stake, at the distance of a few steps — there is kindled a large fire, in which they make their hatchets, gun-barrels, and other iron tools red hot, Then they come, one after another, and apply these red-hot irons to the different parts [Page 173] of his body; some of them burn him with live brands; some mangle the body with their knives; others cut off a piece of the flesh already roasted, and eat it in his presence; some are seen filling his wounds with powder and rubbing it over his whole body, after which they set it on fire. In fine, each one torments him according to his own caprice; and this continues for four or five hours, and sometimes even during two or three days. The more sharp and piercing are the cries which the violence of these torments make him utter, so much the more is the spectacle pleasing and diverting to these barbarians. It was the Iroquois who invented this frightful manner of death, and it is only by the law of retaliation that the Illinois, in their turn, treat these Iroquois prisoners with an equal cruelty.

What we understand by the word *Christianity* is known among the Savages only by the name of *Prayer*. Thus, when I tell you in the continuation of this letter that such a savage Tribe has embraced Prayer, you must understand that it has become Christian, or that it is about to become so. There would be much less difficulty in converting the Illinois, if Prayer permitted them to practice Polygamy; they acknowledge that prayer is good, and

they are delighted to have it taught to their wives and children; but, when we speak of it to them for themselves, we realize how difficult it is to fix their natural inconstancy, and to persuade them to have only one wife and to have her always.

At the hour when we assemble, morning and evening, to pray, all persons repair to the Chapel, Even the greatest Jugglers — that is to say, the greatest enemies to Religion — send their children [Page175] to be instructed and baptized. This is the greatest advantage that we have at first among the Savages, and of which we are most certain, — for, of the great number of children whom we baptize, no year passes that many do not die before they have attained the use of reason; and, as for the adults, the greater part are so devoted and attached to Prayer that they would suffer the most cruel death rather than abandon it. It is fortunate for the Illinois that they are very far distant from Quebec; for brandy cannot be taken to them, as is done elsewhere. Among the Savages this liquor is the greatest obstacle to Christianity, and is the source of countless numbers of the most enormous crimes. It is known that they buy it only in order to Plunge themselves into the most furious intoxication; the disturbances and the melancholy deaths which are witnessed every day ought indeed to outweigh the profit that is made in the trade of so fatal a liquor. I had remained two years with the Illinois, when I was recalled, that I might devote the remainder of my days to the *Abnakis* Tribe. This was the first Mission to which I had been appointed on my arrival in Canada, and apparently it is the one in which I shall finish my life. I was then obliged to return to Quebec, in order to set out from there to rejoin my dear Savages. I have already told you of the length and hardships of that journey; therefore I shall speak to you only of a very cheering incident which befell me about 40 leagues from Quebec.

I was in a sort of Village where there were twenty- five French households, and a Curé. who was in charge. Near this Village was seen a cabin of [Page 177] Savages, in which was a girl sixteen years old, whom a disease of several years' duration had brought to the point of death, Monsieur the curé, who did not understand the language of these Savage begged me to go to hear the confession of the patient, and he himself guided me to the cabin. In the conversation that I had with this young girl on the truths of Religion, I learned that she had been very well instructed by one of our Missionaries, but that she had not yet received baptism. After having spent two days in putting to her all the questions suited to assure me of her preparation, she said to me:” I implore thee, do not refuse me the grace of baptism which I ask from thee. Thou seest how my lungs are oppressed, and that I have a very short time to live; what a calamity it will be for me, and what reproaches must thou not cast upon thyself, should I die without receiving this grace!” I answered her that she should be prepared for it the next day, and I withdrew. The joy that my answer caused her produced in her such a sudden change that she was able to go early in the morning to the Chapel. I was extraordinarily surprised at her entrance, and at once, in a solemn manner, administered baptism to her; she then returned to her cabin, where she did not cease to thank divine mercy for so great a blessing, and to long for the happy moment which should unite her to God for all eternity. Her wishes were granted, and I had the happiness to be present at her death. What an ordering of providence for this poor

girl, and what a consolation for me to have been the instrument that God chose to use in order to place her in Heaven!.

Do not demand of me, my dear brother, that I [Page179] should enter into a minute account of all that has happened to me during the many years that I have spent in this Mission; my occupations are always the same, and, should I enlarge upon them, I would run the danger of tiresome repetitions; I shall content myself with relating to you certain facts which seem to me the most worthy of your attention. I can say to you that generally you would have difficulty in restraining your tears were you in my Church, with our Savages gathered there; and were you witness of the piety with which they repeat their prayers, chant the divine Office, and participate. In the Sacraments of Penance and of the Eucharist. When they have been illuminated by the light of Faith, and have sincerely embraced it, they are no longer the same men; and the greater part of them preserve the innocence that they received at baptism. It is this that fills me with the sweetest joy when I hear their confessions, which are frequent; whatever questions I may put to them, it is often with difficulty that I can find anything that requires absolution.

My occupations with them are continual. As they expect assistance only from their Missionary and have entire confidence in him, it is not enough for me to perform the spiritual duties of my ministry for the sanctification of their souls; I must also enter into their temporal affairs, must always be ready to console them when they come to consult me, and must decide their little differences; I must take care of them when they are sick, bleed them, give them medicines, etc. My days are sometimes so full that I am obliged to shut myself up, that I may find time to attend to prayer and recite my Office. [Page 181] The zeal with which God has filled me for my Savages caused me to be much alarmed in the year 1697, when I heard that a Tribe of *Amalingan* Savages were coming to settle at a day's journey from my Village. I had reason to fear that the juggleries of their charlatans, — that is to say, the sacrifices that they make to the demon, — and the disorders which are the usual consequence of those rites, might make an impression on some of my young Neophytes; but, thanks to divine Mercy, my fears were very soon dissipated, in the manner which I am about to describe to you.

One of our Captains, celebrated in this country for his valor, having been killed by the English, from whom we are not distant, the *Amalingans* sent several men of their Tribe as envoys to our Village, to dry the tears of the relatives of this illustrious dead man, — that is to say, as I have already explained to you, to visit them, to make them presents, and to declare by the usual dances the interest that they were taking in their affliction. They arrived on the eve of Corpus Christi Day. I was then employed in hearing the confessions of my Savages, which continued all that day, the following night, and the next day until noon, — when the Procession of the Most Blessed Sacrament began. It was made with great order and piety, and although in the midst of these forests, yet with more pomp and magnificence than you would suppose. This spectacle, which was new to the *amalingans*, touched them, and struck them with admiration, I believed it my duty to profit by the

favorable mood in which they were; and, after having brought them together, I made them the following address in savage style. [Page 183]

“My children, for a long time I have desired to see you; now that I have this happiness, my heart is almost bursting. Think of the joy that a father has who tenderly loves his children, when he sees them again after a long absence in which they have run great dangers, and you will conceive a part of mine. For, although you do not yet pray, I nevertheless look upon you as my children, and have for you a father’s tenderness, — because you are the children of the Great Spirit, who has given life to you, as well as to those who pray; who has made Heaven for you as well as for them; who thinks of you as he thinks of them and of me; and who desires that all should enjoy eternal happiness. What causes my sorrow and diminishes my joy in seeing you is the thought, which I have at this moment, that some day I shall be separated from a part of my children, whose destiny will be eternally unfortunate because they do not pray; while the others, who pray, will be in joy which shall never end. When I think of this sad separation, can I have a contented heart? The happiness of those who pray does not give me so much joy as the unhappiness of those who do not pray grieves me. If you have insurmountable obstacles to prayer, and if, remaining in the condition in which you are, I were able to make you enter into Heaven, I would spare nothing in order to procure for you this happiness. I would urge you on, I would make you all enter there, so much do I love you, and so much do I desire that you should be happy; but that is not possible. You must pray, and you must be baptized, that you may be able to enter that place of delight.”

After this preamble, I explained to them at great [Page 185] length the principal articles of the Faith, and continued thus:

“All these words that I have just explained to you are not human words; they are the words of the Great Spirit. They are not written like the words of men, upon a collar, on which a person can say everything that he wishes; but they are written in the book of the Great Spirit, to which falsehood cannot have access.”

In order to make you understand this savage expression, my dear brother, I must mention that the custom of these Tribes, when they write to another Tribe, is to send a collar or a broad belt, upon which they make many figures with porcelain beads of different colors. They instruct him who bears the collar, by saying to him: “This is what the collar says to such a Tribe, to such a person,” and they send him away. Our Savages would have difficulty in understanding what we say to them, and would not be very attentive, if we did not conform to their manner of thought and expression. I continued in this way: “Take courage, my children; listen to the voice of the Great Spirit, who speaks to you by my mouth; he loves you, and his love for you is so great that he has given his life, that he may procure for you an eternal life. Alas! perhaps he permitted the death of one of your Captains only that he might draw you to the place of prayer, and cause you to hear his voice. Consider that you are not immortal. The day will come when, in like manner, tears will be wiped away because of your death; what will it advantage you to have been in this life great Captains, if after your death you are cast into eternal [Page 187] flames? He

whom you come to bewail with us rejoiced a thousand times that he had heard the voice of the Great Spirit, and that he had been faithful to prayer, pray as he did, and you will live eternally. Be of good cheer, my children; do not let us separate, — do not let some go in one direction, and some in another. Let us all go to Heaven, it is our own Country; the one and only master of life — of whom I am but the interpreter — exhorts you to this. Think upon it seriously.”

As soon as I had finished speaking, they conversed together for some time; and afterward their Orator made me this answer in their name: “My father, I am overjoyed to hear thee. Thy voice has penetrated even to my heart, but my heart is still closed, and I am not able to open it at this moment, to make known to thee what is in it, or to which side it will turn. I must await many Captains and other important men of our Tribe, who will come with me next autumn; then I will open to thee my heart. Thou hast heard, my dear father, all that I have to say to thee at this time.”

“My heart is satisfied,” I replied to them; “I am very glad that my words have given you pleasure, and that you ask for time to think them over; you will, for that reason, be only the firmer in your attachment to prayer when you have once embraced it. In the meantime, I shall not cease to address myself to the Great Spirit, and ask him to look upon you with eyes of mercy, and to strengthen your thoughts so that they may turn toward Prayer,” After that, I left their assembly, and they returned to their own Village. When the autumn had come, I heard that one of [Page189] Our Savages Was intending to go to the *Amalingans* in search of grain for planting his fields. I sent for him and charged him to tell them for me that I was impatient to see my children again, that they were always present in my mind, and that I begged them to remember the promise which they had given me. The Savage delivered his message faithfully. The following is the answer that the *Amalingans* made to him:

“We are obliged to our father for constantly thinking of us. For our part, we have thought much about what he said to us. We cannot forget his words while we have a heart; for they are so deeply impressed upon it that nothing can efface them. We are persuaded that he loves us; we wish to listen to him, and to obey him in what he desires of us. We approve the prayer that he proposes to us, and we see in it nothing but what is good and praise worthy; we are all resolved to embrace it, and we would already have gone to our father in his own Village, if there had been sufficient provisions for our subsistence during the time that he would devote to our instructions. But how could we find provisions there? We know that there is hunger in the cabin of our father, and that is what doubly afflicts us — that our fathers should be hungry, and that we should not be able to go to him for the purpose of receiving instruction. If our father could come here, and spend some time with us, he could have food, and could instruct us. Thou hast heard what thou shalt say to our father.”

This answer of the *Amalingans* was brought to me at a favorable time; the greater Part of my savages had gone away for a few days, to seek means of [Page191] subsistence to last

them until they should harvest their Indian corn. Their absence gave me leisure to visit the *Amalingans*, and, on the very next day, I embarked in a canoe to go to their Village, I had Only a league more to make in order to reach it, when they perceived me; and immediately they saluted me with a continual discharge of guns, which did not cease until I left the canoe. This honor which they were paying me assured me, at the outset, of their present inclinations. I lost no time; as soon as I landed I had a Cross set up, and those who had accompanied me raised, as soon as possible, a Chapel, which they made of sheets of bark in the same way that they make their cabins, and they erected in it an altar. While they were employed in that work, I visited all the cabins of the *Amalingans*, so as to prepare them for the instructions that I was to give them. As soon as I began the instructions they came most assiduously to hear them. I summoned them three times a day to the Chapel, — to wit, in the morning after Mass, at noon, and in the evening after prayer. During the remainder of the day I went around among the cabins, in which I also gave private instructions.

When, after several days of continuous work, I believed them to be sufficiently instructed, I set the day on which they should come to be regenerated in the waters of holy Baptism. The first who came to the Chapel were the Captain, the Orator, three of the most important men of the Tribe and two women. Immediately after their Baptism, two other companies, each of twenty Savages, followed them and received the same grace. Finally, all the others [Page 193] continued to come for this purpose, on that day and the next. You may well believe, my dear brother, that, whatever hardships a Missionary may undergo, he is well repaid for his trials by the sweet consolation he experiences at having admitted an entire Tribe of Savages into the way of salvation. I was preparing to leave them and return to my own Village, when a messenger came to tell me for them that they were all collected in one place, and begged me to come to their assembly. As soon as I appeared in their midst, the Orator spoke to me in the name of all the others, saying: "Our father, we have no words to declare to thee the inexpressible joy that we all experience at having received Baptism. It seems to us now that we have another heart; all that gave us anxiety has entirely disappeared; our thoughts are no longer wavering; Baptism strengthens us internally, and we are truly resolved to honor it all the days of our life. Thou hast heard what we say to thee before thou leavest us." I answered by a short address, in which I exhorted them to persevere in the peculiar grace which they had received, and to do nothing unworthy of the name of children of God, with which they had been honored by holy Baptism. As they were preparing to set out for the sea, I added that on their return I would decide whether it would be better that we should go to live with them, or that they should come to form with us one and the same Village.

The Village in which I live is called *Nanrantaouack*, and is situated in the continental region between Acadia and new England. This Mission is about eighty leagues from *Pentagouet*, and it is a hundred [Page 195] leagues from *Pentagouet* to Port Royal. The river of my Mission is the largest of all those that water the territories of the Savages. It ought to be marked on the map under the name of *Kinibeki*; this has led the Frenchmen to give these Savages the name of *Kanibals*. This river empties into the sea at *Sankderank*,

which is only 5 or 6 leagues from *Pemquit*. After having ascended the river 40 leagues from *Sankderank* you reach myVillage, which is on the height of a promontory. We are, at most, only two days' journey from the English settlements; it takes us more than a fortnight to go to Quebec; and that journey is very difficult and arduous. It was natural that our Savages should trade with the English, and there are no advantages that these latter have not offered to them, for the purpose of winning them and gaining their friendship; but all their efforts have been useless; and nothing has been able to detach them from their alliance with the French. The only band which has united them to us so closely is their firm attachment to the catholic Faith. They are convinced that if they submitted to the English they would soon be without any Missionary, without any Sacrifice, without any Sacrament, and almost without any exercise of Religion; and that gradually they would be plunged back into their former unbelief. This firmness of our Savages has been put to every sort of test by these formidable neighbors, who have never yet been able to obtain any influence over them.

At the time when war was on the point of breaking out between the European Powers, the English Governor, who had recently arrived at Boston, asked our Savages to give him an interview on an island [Page 197] in the sea, which he designated. They consented, and begged me to accompany them, that they might consult me about the crafty propositions that would be made to them — so as to be sure that their answers should contain nothing contrary to Religion, or to the interests of the Royal service. I followed them, and my intention was to keep wholly within their quarters, in order to aid them by my counsel without appearing before the Governor. As we — numbering more than two hundred canoes — were approaching the island, the English saluted us by a discharge of all the guns of their vessels; and the Savages responded to this salute by a like discharge of all their guns. Then, the Governor appearing on the island, the Savages landed in haste; thus I found myself where I did not wish to be, and where the Governor did not wish that I should be. As soon as he perceived me, he came forward a few steps to meet me; and, after the usual compliments, he returned to the midst of his people, and I to the Savages. "It is by command of our Queen," he said to them, "that I come to see you: she desires that we should live in peace. If any Englishman should be imprudent enough to do you wrong, do not think of avenging yourselves upon him, but immediately address your complaint to me, and I will render you prompt justice. If we should happen to have war with the French, remain neutral, and do not take part in our differences; the French are as strong as we, therefore leave us to settle our quarrels with each other. We will supply all your wants, we will take your peltries, and we will give you our goods at a reasonable price." My presence prevented his [Page 199] saying all that he intended; for it was not without a design that he had brought a Minister with him.

When he had finished speaking, the Savages withdrew for the purpose of deliberating together upon the answer that they should make. During that time, the Governor, taking me aside, said to me: "Monsieur, I beg you, do not influence your Indians to make war upon us." I answered him that my Religion and my Office of Priest were a security that I would give them only exhortations to peace. I was still speaking, when I suddenly found

myself surrounded by about twenty young warriors, who were fearing that the Governor intended to carry me off. In the meantime the Savages advanced, and one of them made the following reply to the Governor:

“Great Captain, thou tellest us not to join ourselves with the Frenchman, in case thou declare war upon him; know thou that the Frenchman is my brother. We have the same prayer, he and I; and we are in the same cabin with two fires; he has one fire, and I have the other. If I see thee enter the cabin on the side of the fire where my brother the Frenchman is seated, I watch thee from my mat, where I am seated by the other fire. If, in watching thee, I perceive that thou carriest a hatchet, I shall think, ‘What does the Englishman intend to do with that hatchet?’ Then I stand upon my mat, to behold what he will do. If he raise the hatchet to strike my brother the Frenchman, I take my own, and I run toward the Englishman to strike him. Could I see my brother struck in my cabin, and I remain quiet on my mat? No, no, I love my brother too well not to defend him. Therefore, I say to thee, Great Captain, do nothing to my brother, and I shall [Page 201] do nothing to thee; remain quiet on thy mat, and I shall remain at rest on mine.”

Thus ended our conference. A short time afterward some of our Savages came from Quebec, and announced that a French vessel had brought news that war was raging between France and England. Immediately our Savages, after having deliberated according to their custom, ordered the young men to kill dogs for the purpose of making the war-feast, and to find out those men who were inclined to enlist. The feast took place, the kettle was put on, they danced, and 250 Warriors were present. After the feast they set a day for coming to confess. I exhorted them to be as devoted to prayer as they were in their own Village; to observe strictly the Laws of war, to practice no cruelty, to kill no person except in the heat of combat, to treat humanely those who should surrender themselves prisoners, etc.

The manner in which these tribes make war renders a handful of their warriors more formidable than a body of 2 or 3,000 European soldiers would be. As soon as they have entered the enemy’s country, they divide into separate companies, —one of thirty warriors, another of forty, and so on. They say to some: “To you is given this hamlet to eat” (that is their expression), to others: “To you is given this village,” etc. Afterward the signal is given to strike all together, and at the same time in the different places. Our two hundred and fifty warriors spread themselves over more than twenty leagues of country, where there were villages, hamlets, and houses: and, on the appointed day they made simultaneous attacks, very early in the morning. [Page 203] In one Single day they ruined all the English; they killed more than two hundred, and took a hundred and fifty prisoners, while on their side only a few Warriors were wounded, and these but slightly. They returned from this expedition to the Village, each of them having two canoes laden with booty that he had taken.

During the whole time while the war continued, they carried desolation into all the country that belonged to the English; they ravaged their Villages, their Forts, and their

Farms; they took away great numbers of cattle, and seized more than six hundred prisoners. Moreover, these Gentlemen — rightly persuaded that I, by upholding my Savages in their attachment to the catholic Faith, was drawing more and more closely the bond which unites them to the French — have employed all sorts of, wiles and artifices to separate them from me. There are no offers or promises which the English have not made to them, if they would but deliver me into their hands, — or at least send me away to Quebec, and take in my place one of their Ministers. They have made several attempts to surprise me and to have me taken away; they have even gone so far as to promise a thousand pounds sterling to the man who should bring them my head. You may well believe, my dear Brother, that these menaces are not enough to intimidate me or to slacken my zeal; I shall be only too happy if I become their victim, and if God deem me worthy to be loaded with irons, and to shed my blood for the salvation of my dear Savages.

When the first news came of the peace that had been made in Europe, the Governor of *Boston* sent word to our Savages that, if they were inclined to [Page 205] assemble in a place which he named for them, he would confer with them upon the present juncture of affairs. All the Savages repaired to the appointed place, and the Governor spoke to them thus:

“O thou, *Naranhous* man! I inform thee that peace has been declared between the King of France and our Queen; and that, by the treaty of peace, the king of France cedes to our Queen *Plaisance* and *Portrail* [Port Royal], with all the adjacent country. Therefore, if thou wilt, we shall live in peace, thou and I: formerly we were at peace, but the suggestions of the Frenchman made thee break it, and it was to please him that thou earnest to kill us. Let us forget all those wretched affairs, and let us cast them into the Sea, so that they may no longer be seen, and that we may be good friends. The Orator responded in the name of the Savages: “It is well that the Kings should be at peace; I am very glad, and I no longer have any difficulty in making peace with thee. It is not I who have been striking thee for twelve years; it is the Frenchman who has used my arm to strike thee. It is true, we were at peace, I had even hurled away my hatchet, whither I know not; and while I was in repose upon my mat, thinking of nothing, some young men brought me a message that the Governor of Canada sent me, and which said to me: ‘My son, the Englishman has struck me, help me to avenge myself; take thy hatchet and strike the Englishman.’ I who have always listened to the word of the French Governor— I sought my hatchet, but I found it all rusty; I put it in order, and hung it to my belt, that I might come to strike thee. Now, when the Frenchman tells me to lay it down, I [Page207] throw it far away, that we may no longer see the blood with which it is reddened. Therefore, let us live in peace, I am agreed.

“But thou sayest that the Frenchman has given *Plaisance* and *Portrail*, which are in my neighborhood, with all the adjacent country; he may give thee all that he will. As for me, I have my own land, that the Great Spirit has given me on which to live; as long as there

shall be a child of my tribe, he will tigh to retain it." Thus everything was settled amicably; the Governor made a great feast for the Savages after which each one retired. The happy event of the peace and the tranquillity which we were beginning to enjoy, suggested to our Savages the thought of rebuilding our Church, which had been ruined in a sudden foray that the English made while our people were absent from the Village. As we are very far distant from Quebec, and much nearer to Boston, the Savages sent there a few of the chief men of the Tribe to ask for laborers, promising to pay them liberally for their work. The Governor received them with great demonstrations of friendship, and showed them every kind of attention. "I myself wish to rebuild your Church," he said to them, "and I will treat you better than your French Governor has done, — he whom you call your father. It is his duty to rebuild it, since it was he who in a certain way destroyed it, by inducing you to strike me, — for, on my part, I defend myself as I am able; whereas he, after having used you for his defense, abandons you. I shall deal better with you; for not only do I give you workmen, but I also will pay them myself and bear all the expense of the edifice that you are intending to construct. But, as [Page 209] it is not reasonable that I, who am English, should build a Church without putting in it an English Minister to take care of it, and to teach you prayer, I will give you one with whom you will be content, and you shall send back to Quebec the French Minister who is in your Village."

"Thy words astonish me," responded the Deputy of the Savages, "and I wonder at the proposition that thou makest me. When thou earnest here thou sawest me along time before the French Governors did; neither those who preceded thee, northy Ministers, ever spoke to me of prayer or of the Great Spirit. They saw my furs, my beaver and elk-skins, and of those alone did they think; it was those that they sought with eagerness; I was not able to furnish them enough, and, when I brought many, then I was their great friend, and that was all. On the contrary, my canoe having one day been misguided, I lost my way and wandered at random for a long time, until at last I landed near Quebec, at a large village of the Algonkins, where the black Robes were teaching. I had hardly landed when a black Robe came to see me. I was loaded with furs, but the French black Robe did not deign even to look at them; he spoke to me first of the Great Spirit, of Paradise, of Hell, and of Prayer, which is the only way of reaching Heaven. I listened to him with pleasure, and I enjoyed his talks so much that I remained a long time in that Village for the sake of hearing him. In short, the Prayer pleased me, and I besought him to instruct me; I asked for Baptism, and received it. Afterward I returned to my own Country and I recounted what had happened to me; my people envied my happiness, and wished [Page 211] to participate in it; accordingly they set out to go to the black Robe, to ask him for Baptism. It was thus that the Frenchman treated me. If, when thou didst first see me, thou hadst spoken to me of Prayer, I would have had the misfortune to pray as thou dost; for I was not capable of distinguishing whether or not thy prayer were right. Therefore I tell thee that I hold to the prayer of the Frenchman; I accept it, and I shall keep it until the world shall burn and come to an end. Accordingly keep thy Workmen, thy money, and thy Minister; I shall speak of them no more, but I shall ask the French Governor, my father, to send me some."

Indeed, Monsieur the Governor had no sooner heard about the ruin of our Church than he sent us Workmen to rebuild it. It has a beauty that would make it favorably regarded in Europe, and I have spared nothing in its decoration. You could see by the details which I gave you in the letter to my nephew that, in the depths of these forests and among these Savage Tribes, divine Service is performed with much propriety and ceremony, I am very attentive to this, not only when the Savages remain in the Village, but also when they are obliged to live at the Seashore, — where they go twice every year, for the purpose of finding provisions. Our Savages have so destroyed the game of their Country that for ten years they have no longer either elks or deer. Bears and Beavers have become very scarce. They seldom have any food but Indian corn, beans, and squashes. They crush the corn between two stones, reducing it to meal; afterward they make of it a porridge, which they sometimes season with fat or with dried fish. When they are without corn, [Page 213] they search the cultivated fields for potatoes, or even for acorns, which they value as highly as corn; after having dried these, they roast them in a kettle with ashes, in order to take away their bitterness. As for me, I eat them dry, and they take the place of bread.

At a certain season, our people go to a river not very far distant, where during one month the fish ascend the river in so great numbers that a man could fill fifty thousand barrels with them in a day, if he could be equal to that work. These fish are a sort of large herring, very agreeable to the taste when they are fresh; they crowd upon each other to the depth of a foot, and are drawn up as you would drawwater. The Savages put them to dry for eight or ten days, and they live upon them during the whole time while they are planting their fields.

They plant corn only in the spring, and do their last tilling about Corpus Christiday; after that, they consider to which place by the Sea they shall go to seek food until the time of harvest, which generally takes place shortly after the Assumption. After having conferred together, they send to beg me to come to their Assembly. As soon as I arrive, one of the number speaks thus, in the name of all the others: "Our father, what I say to thee is what all those whom thou seest here say to thee; thou knowest us, and thou knowest that we are in need of provisions. We have scarcely been able to give the last work to our fields, and we have no other resource, until harvest, but to go to the shore of the Sea in search of food. It would be hard for us to give up our Prayer; therefore we hope that. [Page 215] thou wilt be disposed to accompany us, so that, while seeking for food, we shall not interrupt our Prayer. Such and such men are going to take thee in their canoe, and what thou hast to carry shall be distributed among the other canoes. Thou hast heard what I have to say to thee." I have no sooner responded *kekikberba* this is a savage expression which means, "I hear you, my children; I grant what you ask"), than all cry out at the same time *ouriounie*, which is an expression of thanks. Immediately after this, they set out from the Village.

As soon as we have reached the place where we are to spend the night, they set up poles at certain intervals, in the form of a Chapel, they surround it with alargetent-cloth, and it is open only in front. The whole is set up in a quarter of an hour. I always have them take for

me a smooth cedar board, four feet long, with something to support it: this serves for an Altar, above which is placed a very appropriate canopy. I adorn the interior of the Chapel with most beautiful silk fabric; a mat of rushes colored and well wrought, or perhaps a large bear skin, serves as a carpet. These are carried all ready for use, and, as soon as the Chapel is set up, we need only to arrange them. At night I sleep upon a rug; the Savages sleep uncovered in the open fields, if it do not rain; if it rain or snow, they cover themselves with sheets of bark, which they carry with them, and which are rolled up like cloth, If the journey be made in winter, they remove the snow from the place where the Chapel is to be placed, and then it is set up as usual. Every day we have evening and morning Prayers, and I offer the holy Sacrifice of the Mass. [Page 217]

When the Savages have come to the end of their journey, they busy themselves on the very next day in erecting a Church, which they cover with their sheets of bark. I carry with me my Chapel and everything that is necessary to adorn the chance I, which I cause to be hung with silks and handsome calicoes. Divine Service is performed as it is in the Village; and in truth they, with all their bark cabins, which they erect in less than an hour, constitute a sort of Village. After the Assumption they leave the Sea, and return to the village together their harvest. They have from it something to live upon, although in a very wretched way, until after All Saints' day, when they return a second time to the Sea. At that season they have very good food. Besides large fish, shell-fish, and fruit, they find bustards, ducks, and all sorts of game, with which the Sea is covered at the place where they encamp — which is divided into a large number of small islands. The hunters who go out in the morning to hunt ducks and other kinds of game sometimes kill a score at a single shot. At the Purification, —or, at the latest, on Ash Wednesday, — they return to the Village; it is only the Hunters who separate from the people and go to hunt bears, elks, deer, and beavers.

These good Savages have often given proofs of the most sincere attachment to me, — especially on two occasions when, being with them at the Sea shore, they became greatly alarmed on my account. One day, when they were engaged in hunting, there port suddenly went forth that a party of English had burst into my quarters and carried me away. They instantly assembled, and the result of their [Page 219] deliberation was that they should Pursue this company until they overtook them, and should snatch me from their hands, even should it cost them their lives. They forthwith sent two young Savages to my quarters, although it was late in the night. When they entered my cabin, I was occupied in writing the life of a Saint in the Savage tongue. "Ah! our father," they exclaimed, "how glad we are to see thee!" "I am likewise very glad to see you," I responded; "but what brought you here in such frightful weather?" "We have come to no purpose," they said; "we were reassured that the English had carried thee away, and we came to look for their tracks. Our Warriors will not long delay coming to pursue them, and to attack the Fort, — where, if the news had been true, the English would doubtless have imprisoned thee." "You see, my children," I replied to them, "that your fears are unfounded; but the friendship that my children show me fills my heart with joy; for it is a proof of their attachment to Prayer. To-morrow you shall depart immediately

after Mass, in order to undeceive our brave Warriors, as soon as possible, and free them from all uneasiness."

Another alarm, equally false, threw me into great perplexity, and exposed me to danger from hunger and distress. Two Savages came in haste to my quarters to inform me that they had seen the English at the distance of half a day's journey. "our father," said they, "there is no time to lose; thou must go away, thou wouldst risk too much in remaining here; as for us, we shall wait for the enemy and perhaps we shall go to meet them. The runners are setting out at this very moment to watch. [Page 221] for them; but, as for thee, thou must go to the Village with these people whom we have brought to conduct thee thither, When we have learned that thou art in a place of safety, we shall be at ease."

I departed at daybreak with ten Savages who served me as guides; but, after a few days' journey, we came to the end of our small stock of provisions. My guide killed a dog which was following them, and ate it; afterward they were reduced to their seal skin pouches, which they also ate. It was not possible for me to touch them. Sometimes I lived upon a kind of wood which they boiled, and which when cooked is as tender as half-cooked radishes — excepting the heart, which is very hard and is thrown away; this wood has not a bad favor, but I had extreme difficulty in swallowing it. Sometimes they found attached to trees certain excrescences of wood, which areas white as large mushrooms; these are cooked and reduced to a sort of porridge, but it is very far from having the flavor of porridge. At other times they dried by a fire the bark of green oak, then they pounded it and made it into porridge; or perhaps they dried those leaves that grow in the clefts of rocks and are called "rock-tripe;" when these are cooked they make of them a very black and disagreeable porridge. I ate of all these, for there is nothing which hunger will not devour.

With such food, we could make but short stages each day. In the meantime, we came to a Lake which was beginning to thaw, and where there were already four inches of water on the ice. We were obliged to cross it with our snowshoes on; but as these snowshoes are made of strips of skin, as soon as they were wet they became very heavy and [Page 223] rendered our walking much more difficult. Although one of our men went in advance of us to sound the way, I suddenly sank knee-deep; another man, who was walking by my side, suddenly sank waist-deep, crying out: "My father, I am a dead man!" As I was approaching him to give him my hand, I myself sank still deeper. Finally, it was not without much difficulty that we extricated ourselves from this danger, on account of the impediment caused us by our snowshoes, of which we could not rid ourselves. Nevertheless, I ran much less risk of drowning than of dying from cold in the middle of this half-frozen Lake.

New dangers awaited us the next day at the crossing of a river, which we were compelled to pass on floating cakes of ice. We went over safely, and at last reached our Village. At once I had them dig out some Indian corn that I had left at my house; and I ate of it, wholly uncooked as it was, to appease my pressing hunger, while those poor Savages

were making every effort to entertain me well. And, in truth, the repast which they were making ready for me, however frugal and little appetizing it may appear to you, was, in their opinion, a veritable feast. They served me at first a dish of porridge made of Indian corn. For the second course, they gave me a small piece of bear- meat, with acorns, and a cake of Indian corn baked in the ashes. Finally, the third course, which made the dessert, consisted of an ear of Indian corn roasted before the fire, with a few grains of the same roasted in the ashes. When I asked them why they had made me such a fine feast, they answered:

“What, our Father! for two days thou hast eaten nothing. [Page 225] could we do less? Alas! would to God that we could very Often regale thee in this manner!”

While I was endeavoring to recover from my fatigue, one of the Savages who had camped on the Seashore, and who was ignorant of my return to the Village, caused a new alarm. Having come to my quarters, and not finding me, or any of those who had camped with me, he did not doubt that we had been carried away by a party of Englishmen; and, going on his way in order to inform the people of his own neighborhood, he came to the shore of a river. There he stripped the bark from a tree on which he drew with charcoal the English surrounding me, and one of the number cutting off my head. (This is the only writing of the Savages, and they understand each other by figures of that kind as well as we understand each other by our letters.) He immediately put this sort of letter around a pole, which he set upon the shore of the river, so that passers-by might be informed of what had happened to me. A short time after, some Savages who were paddling by the place in six canoes, for the purpose of coming to the Village, perceived this sheet of bark: “Here is some writing,” said they, “let us see what it says. Alas!” exclaimed they on reading it, “the English have killed the people in our Father’s neighborhood; as for him, they have cut off his head.” They immediately loosened the braids of their hair, which they left to hang carelessly over their shoulders; and seated themselves around the pole, until the next day, without speaking a single word. This ceremony is among them a mark of the greatest affliction. The next day, they continued their way to within half a league of the [Page 227] Village, where they stopped; then they sent one of their number through the woods to the Village, in order to ascertain whether the English had come to burn the fort and the cabins. I was reciting my breviary while walking beside the fort and the river, when this Savage came opposite to me on the other shore. As soon as he saw me he exclaimed: “Ah, my Father, how glad I am to see thee! My heart was dead, but it lives again on seeing thee. We saw a writing which said that the English had cut off thy head. How glad I am that it told a lie!” When I proposed sending him a canoe that he might cross the river, he responded: “No, it is enough that I have seen thee; I shall retrace my steps and carry this pleasant news to those who are waiting for me, and we shall very soon come to join thee.” Indeed, they came that very day.

I believe, my dearest Brother, that I have satisfied your desires by the details that I have just given you of the nature of this Country, of the character of our Savages, of my occupations, of my labors, and of the dangers to which I am exposed. Doubtless you will

judge that I have the most to fear from the English Gentlemen of our neighborhood. It is true that they long ago resolved upon my death; but neither their ill will toward me, nor the death with which they threaten me, can ever separate me from my old flock; I commend them to your devout prayers, and I am with the tenderest affection, etc. [Page 229]

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LETTRE DU PÈRE LE PETIT, MISSIONNAIRE, AU PÈRE D' AVAUGOUR, PROCUREUR DES MISSIONS DE L'AMÉRIQUE SEPTENTRIONALE. A LA NOUVELLE ORLEANS, LE 12 JUILLET, 1730

[Preceding material not relevant to Illinois not included]

The *Tchikachas*, a brave Nation but treacherous, and little known to the French, have endeavored to seduce the Illinois Tribes from their allegiance: they have even sounded some particular persons to see whether they could not draw them over to the party of those Savages who were enemies of our Nation. [Page 201]. The Illinois have replied to them that they were almost all "of the prayer" (that is, according to their manner of expression, that they are Christians); and that in other ways they are inviolably attached to the French, by the alliances which many of that Nation had contracted with them, in espousing their daughters.

"We always place ourselves," added they, "before the enemies of the French; it is necessary to pass over our bodies to go to them, and to strike us to the heart before a single blow can reach them." Their conduct is in accordance with this declaration, and has not in the least contradicted their words. At the first news of the war with the *Natchez* and the *Yazous*, they came hither to weep for the black Robes and the French, and to offer the services of their Nation to Monsieur Perrier, to avenge their death. I happened to be at the governor's house when they arrived, and was charmed with the harangues they made. *Chikagou*, whom you saw in Paris, was at the head of the *Mitchigamias*, and *Mamantouensa* at the head of the *Kaskaskias*.

Chikagou spoke first. He spread out in the hall a carpet of deerskin, bordered with porcupine quills, on which he placed two calumets, with different savage ornaments, accompanying them with a present according to the usual custom. "There," said he, in showing these two calumets, "are two messages which we bring you, the one of Religion, and the other of peace or war, as you shall determine. We have listened with respect to the Governors, because they bring us the word of the King our Father, and much more to the black Robes, because they bring us the word of God himself, who is the King of [Page 203] Kings. We have come from a great distance to weep with you for the death of the French, and to offer our Warriors to strike those hostile Nations whom you may wish to designate. You have but to speak. When I went over to France, the King promised me his protection for the Prayer, and recommended me never to abandon it. I will always

remember it. Grant then your protection to us and to our black Robes." He then gave utterance to the edifying sentiments with which he was impressed with regard to the Faith, as the Interpreter Baillarjon enabled us to half understand them in his miserable French. *Mamantouensa* spoke next. His harangue was short, and in a style widely different from that which is usual among the Savages, who a hundred times repeat the same thing in the same speech.

"There," said he, addressing Monsieur Perrier, "are two young *Padouka* slaves, some skins, and some other trifles. It is but a small present which I make you; nor is it at all my design to induce you to make me one more costly, All that I ask of you is your heart and your protection. I am much more desirous of that than of all the merchandise of the world, and when I ask this of you, it is solely for the Prayer. My views of the war are the same as those of *Chikagou*, who has already spoken. It is useless therefore for me to repeat what you have just heard."

Another old Chief, who had the air of an ancient Patriarch, then rose. He contented himself with saying that he wished to die as he had lived, in the Prayer. "The last words," added he, "which our Fathers have spoken to us, when they were on the [Page 205] point of yielding up their last breath, were to be always attached to the Prayer, and that there is no other way of being happy in this life, and much more in the next which is after death." Monsieur Perrier, who has the deepest Religious feelings, listened with evident pleasure to these savage harangues. He abandoned himself to the dictates of his own heart, without taking the precaution to have recourse to the evasion and disguises which are often necessary when one is treating with the generality of Savages. To each harangue he made such an answer as good Christians should desire. He declined with thanks their offers of service for the war, since we were sufficiently strong against the enemies who lived at the lower end of the river, but advised them to be on their guard, and to undertake our defense against those who dwelt on the upper part of the same river.

We always felt a distrust of the *Renard* Savages, although they did not longer dare to undertake any thing, since Father Guignas has detached from their alliance the Tribes of the *Kikapous* and the *Maskoutins*. You know, my Reverend Father, that, being in Canada, he had the courage to penetrate even to the *Sioux*, wandering Savages near the source of the Mississippi, at the distance of about eight hundred leagues from *New Orleans*, and six hundred leagues from Quebec. Obligated to abandon this infant Mission, by the unfortunate result of the enterprise against the *Renards*, he descended the river to repair to the Illinois. On the 15th of October in the year 1728, he was arrested when half-way, by the *Kikapous* and the *Maskoutins*. For five months he was a captive among these Savages, where he had much to [Page 207] suffer and everything to fear. The time at last came when he was to be burned alive, and he prepared himself to finish his life in this horrible torment, when he was adopted by an old man, Whose family saved his life, and procured him his liberty. our Missionaries, who were among the Illinois, were no sooner acquainted with his sad situation, than they procured him all the alleviations they were able.

Everything which he received he employed to conciliate the Savages, and succeeded even to the extent of engaging them to conduct him to the Illinois, and while there to make peace with the French and the Savages of that region. Seven or eight months after this peace was concluded, the *Maskoutins* and the *Kikapous* returned again to the Illinois country, and took away Father Guignas to spend the winter with them, from whence, in all probability, he will return to Canada. He has been exceedingly broken down by these fatiguing journeys, but his zeal, full of fire and activity, seems to give him new strength. The Illinois had no other residence but with us, during the three weeks they remained in this city. They charmed us by their piety, and by their edifying life. Every evening they recited the rosary in alternate choirs, and every morning they heard me say Mass; during which, particularly on Sundays and Feast-days, they chanted the different prayers of the Church suitable to the Offices of the day. At the end of the Mass, they never fail to chant with their whole heart the prayer for the King — The Nuns chanted the first Latin couplet in the ordinary tone of the Gregorian chant, and the Illinois continued the other couplets in their language in the [Page 209] same tone. This spectacle, which was novel, drew great crowds to the Church, and inspired a deep devotion. In the course of the day, and after supper, they often chant, either alone or together, different prayers of the Church, such as the *Dies iræ*, etc., *Viexilla Regis*, etc., *Stabat Mater*, etc. To listen to them, you would easily perceive that they took more delight and pleasure in chanting these holy Canticles, than the generality of the Savages, and even more than the French receive from chanting their frivolous and often dissolute songs.

You would be astonished, as I myself have been, on arriving at this Mission, to find that a great number of our French are not, by any means, so well instructed in Religion as are these Neophytes; they are scarcely unacquainted with any of the histories of the old and new Testament; the manner in which they hear the holy Mass and receive the Sacraments, is most excellent; their Catechism, which has fallen into my hands, with the literal translation made by Father Boullanger, is a perfect model for those who have need of such works in their new Missions. They do not leave these good Savages to be ignorant of any of our Mysteries, or of our duties, but attach them to the foundation and the essentials of Religion, which they have displayed before them in a manner equally instructive and sound.

The first thought which is suggested to those who become acquainted with these Savages is, that it must have been at great cost of labor to the Missionaries, and that it will be still more so, to form them into any kind of Christianity. But their assiduity and patience is abundantly recompensed by the blessings which it has pleased God to pour out Upon [Page 211] their labors. Rather le Boullanger has written me word that he is obliged, for the second time, considerably to enlarge his Church, on account of the great number of Savages who each year have received Baptism.

The first time that the Illinois saw the Nuns, *Mamantouensa*, perceiving before them a troop of little girls, remarked, "I see, indeed, that you are not Nuns without an object." He wished to say, that they were not mere solitaires, laboring only for their own perfection.

"You are," he added, "like the black Robes, our Fathers; you labor for others. Ah! if we had above there two or three of your number, our wives and daughters would have more sense, and would be better Christians." "Ah, well! "the Mother Superior answered him, "choose those whom you wish." "It is not fur me to choose," said *Mamantouensa*, "it is for you who know them. The choice should fall on those who are most attached to God, and who love him most."

You may well imagine, my Reverend Father, how much these holy women were charmed to find in a Savage sentiments so reasonable and Christian. Alas! it will take time and pains to teach the *Tchactas* to think and speak in this way. This indeed can only be the work of him, who knows how, when it pleases him, to change the stones into children of Abraham.

Chikagou guards most carefully, in a bag made expressly for the purpose, the magnificent snuff-box which the late Madame, the Duchess d'Orléans, gave him at Versailles. Notwithstanding all the offers made to him, he has never been willing to part with it, — a degree of consideration very remarkable in a [Page 213] Savage, whose characteristic generally is, to be in a short time disgusted with anything he has, and passionately desire whatever he sees, but does not own.

Everything which *Chikagou* has related to his countrymen, with regard to France, has appeared to them incredible. "They have bribed you," said some to him, "to make us believe all these beautiful fictions." "We are willing to believe," said his relatives, and those by whom his sincerity was least doubted, "that you have really seen all that you tell us, but there must have been some charm which fascinated your eyes, for it is not possible that France can be such as you have painted it." When he told them that in France they were accustomed to have five cabins, one on top of the other, and that they were as high as the tallest trees, that there were as many people in the streets of Paris, as there were blades of grass on the prairies, or mosquitoes in the woods, and that they rode about there and even made long journeys in moving cabins of leather, they did not credit it any more than when he added that he had seen long cabins full of sick people, where skillful Surgeons performed the most wonderful cures. "Hear!" he would say to them in sport, "you may lose an arm, a leg, an eye, a tooth, a breast, if you are in France, and they will supply you with others, so that it will not be noticed." What most embarrassed *Mamantouensa*, when he saw the ships, was to know how it was possible to launch them into the water after they had been built on land, where arms enough could be found for this purpose, and above all to raise the anchors with their enormous weights. They explained both these [Page 215] points to him, and he admired the genius of the French who were capable of such beautiful inventions.

The Illinois departed on the last day of June; they were to unite with the *Akensas*, for the purpose of falling upon the *Yazous* and upon the *Corroys*. These last having set out on their retreat to the *Tchikactas*, whither they were carrying the French scalps they had taken, were met on the way by the *Tchatchoumas* and by some *Tckactas*, who in their

contest with them took eighteen scalps and delivered some French women with their children. Some time afterward, they were again attacked by a party of the *Akensas*, who took from them four scalps, and made many of their women prisoners. These good Savages encountered on their return two pirogues of French hunters; they passed their hands over them from head to foot, according to their custom, in testifying their sorrow for the death of the French, and of their Father in Jesus Christ. They made a solemn oath that, while one *Akensa* should be remaining in the world, the *Natchez* and the *Yazous* should never be without an enemy. They showed a bell and some books, which they were taking home, they said, for the first black Chief who should come to their Village. These were all that they had found in the cabin of Father Souel.

I was in pain to learn what these barbarians had done with the body of this Missionary, but a French woman who was then their slave, has informed me that she at last induced them to give it burial. "I saw him," she would often say to me, "lying on his back in the canes very near his house; they had not taken from him anything but his cassock. Although he had been dead fifteen days, his skin was [Page 217] still as white, and his cheeks as red as if he were merely sleeping. I was tempted to examine where he had received the fatal blow, but respect stopped my curiosity; I placed myself a moment at his knees, and have brought away his handkerchief which was near him."

The faithful *Akensas* mourned every day in their Village the death of Father du Poisson, and with the most earnest entreaties, demanded another Missionary. We could not excuse ourselves from granting this request to a Nation so amicable, and at all times so attached to the French, possessing, too, a degree of modesty of which the other Nations were ignorant, and among whom there exists no peculiar obstacle to Christianity, except their extreme attachment to jugglery, But we have endeavored, my Reverend Father, to console ourselves in our grief with an argument of which you would never think, It is, that we may congratulate ourselves that our loss has not been more general. In fact, the two dear Missionaries for whom we mourn, did not appear to be by any means as much exposed to the cruelty of the Savages as are many others, particularly Father de Guyenne, and still more Father Baudouin.

The latter is without any defense in the midst of the great Nation of the *Tchactas*. We have always had a great distrust of these Savages, even at the time when they were making war for us upon the *Natchez*. Now they have become so inflated with their pretended victory, that we have much more need of troops to repress their insolence, and to keep them in their duty, than to finish the destruction of our open enemies. [Page 219]

Father de Guyenne, after much opposition on the part of the Savages in the neighborhood of Carolina, succeeded in building two cabins in two different Villages, to be near at hand to learn their language and to instruct them; but they were both demolished. He will be obliged at last to confine his zeal to the French Fort of the *Alibamons*, or to seek a more abundant harvest on the banks of the Mississippi.

It only remains, My Reverend Father, to inform you of the situation of our enemies, They are united near the river of the *Oachitas*, on which they have three forts. We believe that the *Natchez* are as yet in number about 500 warriors, without counting their women and children; they were scarcely more than 700 before the war. Among the *Yazous* and the *Corroys* there are not more than forty warriors. They have planted their corn between two little rivers which run near their forts. It would only be necessary to cut off this corn, to starve them during the winter, but the thing is not easy to effect, from what the smaller Tribes inform us, who harass them continually. The Country is cut up by *Bayouks* and filled with canebrakes, where the inconceivable quantity of mosquitoes would not permit an ambuscade to be established for any length of time.

The *Natchez*, who were shut up in their forts since the last expedition, have begun again to show themselves. Incensed that a party from *Oumas* and *Bayagoulas* had captured one of their pirogues, in which were seven men, a woman, and two children, they went in great numbers near a small fort, where they have surprised ten Frenchmen and twenty Negroes, There was but one small Soldier with two [Page 221] Negroes who were able to save themselves. He had formerly escaped the massacre made by the *Natchez* by concealing himself in an oven, and this time he escaped by hiding in the trunk of a tree. You can well believe, my Reverend Father, that this war has retarded the French colony; nevertheless, we flatter ourselves that this misfortune will be productive of benefit, by determining the Court to send the forces necessary to tranquilize the Colony and render it flourishing. Although they have nothing to fear at *New Orleans*, either from the smaller neighboring Tribes, whom our Negroes alone could finish in a single morning, or even from the *Tckactas*, who would not dare to expose themselves on the Lake in any great numbers, yet a panic terror has spread itself over almost every spirit, particularly with the women. They will, however, be reassured by the arrival of the first troops from France, whom we are now constantly expecting. As far as our Missionaries are concerned, they are very tranquil. The perils to which they see themselves exposed seem to increase their joy and animate their zeal. Be mindful then of them and of me in your holy Sacrifices, in the union with which I am, with respect, etc. [Page 223]

Volume 68: 1736: le Petit

LETTER OF FATHER MATHURIN LE PETIT, TO REVEREND FATHER FRANCISCUS RETZ, GENERAL OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS, AT ROME.

The Louisiana Mission mourns, for it has; this Year been deprived of two Missionaries. On the 6th day of february, Father Gabriel Guymoneau, of the province of france, after 20 years. spent in the Illinois Mission, was carried off by an attack of pleurisy that lasted six days, — to the great regret of all, even of the Indians, whose nature he had already softened by the remarkable purity of his. morals, and the example of all his apostolic virtues.

On palm sunday the fortune of war took from us, Father Senat, of the province of toulouse; he had been in charge of another mission of the Illinois in the same country for 18 months only, but was. already skilled in the language, and was still more remarkable for his zeal. For the purpose of giving spiritual assistance, he accompanied an army composed of french and indians against Barbarians. called tohikakas, who are enemies of this colony. The result of this was unfortunate. Our men were either slain by the enemy or put to flight. Father Senat might, as many had done, have sought safety in flight; but, refusing a horse that was offered him, he preferred yielding to the fury of the barbarians, rather than leave without Spiritual succor the brave head of the army and the french, whom he saw [Page 309] Stretched on the ground through their wounds, or carried off by the enemy. He could not resist the voice of Charity, or the words of the wounded lying here and there: "Dearest Father, will you forsake us?" The Barbarians, who rushed upon him in a body, as he was kneeling in prayer, were immediately seen showering blows from clubs upon their captive, the prelude to a much greater torture. For no one doubts, although nothing certain has so far reached us, that the Barbarians, according to their custom, shamefully insulted in every manner that victim of zeal and charity; they suspended him, bound, to a frame, and, out of revenge against the French, they immolated him by fire, which was all the more cruel because it burned more slowly. Father Senat had often declared that he desired nothing more ardently than to sacrifice himself, some day, for the Glory of God and the salvation of souls. At the port of La Rochelle, before he embarked for this country, he was heard in the heat of fever, and in a sort of pious delirium, to break out into the following exclamations: "Must I die here? My God! Wilt thou not grant Be to reach my dearest mission, and water it with my blood?"

Mathurin Le Petit, S.J.

Volume 69: 1750: Louis Vivier

LETTER FROM FATHER VIVIER, MISSIONARY AMONG THE ILINOIS,
TO FATHER _____

When one leaves France for distant countries, it is not difficult to make promises to one's friends; but, when the time comes, it is no slight task to keep them, especially during the first years. We have here but a single opportunity, once a year, for sending our letters to France. It is therefore necessary to devote an entire week to writing, without interruption, if one wish to fulfill all one's promises. Moreover, what we have to write of this country is so little curious and so little edifying that it is hardly worth while to take up a pen. It is less for the purpose of gratifying your curiosity than of responding to the friendship that you display for me, that I write to you to-day. Let us try, nevertheless, to give you some idea of the country, of its inhabitants, and of our occupations. The Illinois country lies about the 39th degree of north latitude, about 9 degrees from new Orleans, the capital of the whole Colony. The climate is very much like that of France, with this difference, that the winter here is not so long and is less continuous, and the heat in summer is a little greater. The

country in general is covered with an alternation of plains and forests, and is watered by very fine rivers. Wild cattle, deer, elk, bears, and wild turkeys abound everywhere, in [Page 143] all seasons, except near the inhabited portions. It is usually necessary to go one or two leagues to find deer, and seven or eight to find oxen. During a portion of the autumn, through the winter, and during a portion of the spring, the country is overrun with swans, bustards, geese, ducks of three kinds wild pigeons, and teal. There are also certain bird: as large as hens, which are called pheasants in this country, but which I would rather name "grouse; 'I they are not, however, equal in my opinion to the European grouse. I speak not of partridges or of hares, because no one condescends to shoot at them. The plants, trees, and vegetables that have been brought from France or from Canada, grow fairly well. As a rule, the country can produce all things needed to support life, and even to make it agreeable.

There are three classes of inhabitants: French, Negroes, and Savages; to say nothing of Half-breeds born of the one or the other, — as a rule, against the Law of God. There are 5 French Villages and 3 Villages of Savages within a distance of 21 leagues, between the Mississippi and another river called the Kaskaskias. In the five French Villages there may be eleven hundred white people, three hundred black, and about sixty red slaves, otherwise Savages. The three Illinois Villages do not contain more than eight hundred Savages, of all ages. The majority of the French settled in this country devote themselves to the cultivation of the soil. They sow quantities of wheat; they rear cattle brought from France, also pigs and horses in great numbers. This, with hunting, enables them to live very comfortably. There is no fear of famine in this Country; there is always three times as much food as can [Page 145] be consumed. Besides wheat, maize — otherwise "Turkish corn" — grows Plentifully every year, and quantities Of flour are Conveyed to new Orleans, Let us consider the Savages in particular. Nothing but erroneous ideas are conceived of them in Europe; they are hardly believed to be men. This is a gross error. The Savages, and especially the Illinois, are of a very gentle and sociable nature. They have wit, and seem to have more than our peasants — as much, at least, as most Frenchmen. This is due to the freedom in which they are reared; respect never makes them timid. As there is neither rank nor dignity among them, all men seem equal to them. An Illinois would speak as boldly to the King of France as to the lowest of his subjects. Most of them are capable of sustaining a conversation with any person, provided no question be treated of that is beyond their sphere of knowledge. They submit to raillery very well; they know not what it is to dispute and get angry while conversing. They never interrupt you in conversation. I found in them many qualities that are lacking in civilized peoples. They are distributed in cabins; a cabin is a sort of room in common, in which there are generally from 15 to 20 persons. They all live in great peace, which is due, in a great measure, to the fact that each one is allowed to do what he pleases. From the beginning of October to the middle of March, they hunt at a distance of forty or fifty leagues from their Village; and, in the middle of March, they return to their Village. Then the women sow the maize. As to the men, with the exception of a little hunting now and then, they lead a thoroughly idle life; they chat and smoke, and that is all. As a [Page 147] rule, the Illinois are very lazy and greatly addicted to brandy; this is the cause of the insignificant results

that we obtain among them. Formerly, we had Missionaries in the three Villages. The Gentlemen of the Missions étrangères have charge of one of the three. We abandoned the second through lack of a Missionary, and because we obtained but scanty results. We confined ourselves to the third, which alone is larger than the two others. We number two Priests there, but the harvest does not correspond to our labors. If these Missions have no greater success, it is not through the fault of those who have preceded us, for their memory is still held in veneration among French and Illinois. It is perhaps due to the bad example of the French, who are continually mingled with these people; to the brandy that is sold to them, and above all to their disposition which is certainly opposed to all restraint, and consequently to any Religion. When the first Missionaries came among the Illinois, we see, by the writings which they have left us, that they counted five thousand persons of all ages in that Nation. To-day we count but two thousand. It should be observed that, in addition to these three Villages which I have mentioned, there is a fourth one of the same Nation, eighty leagues from here, almost as large as the three others. You may judge by this how much they have diminished in the period of sixty years. I commend myself to your holy sacrifices, in the union whereof I have the honor to be, etc.

Among the Illinois, this 8th_of June, 1750.

LETTER FROM FATHER VIVIER OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS,
TO A FATHER OF THE SAME SOCIETY.

Among the Illinois,
November 17, 1750

I accept with pleasure the proposal which you make me. The slight merits I may acquire by my labors I consent willingly to share with you, on the assurance that you give me of assisting me with your holy prayers. I gain too much from this association not to be desirous of entering into it with all my heart.

There is another point which you desire, and on which I will satisfy you; and that is, the description of our Missions. We have three in this quarter: one consisting of Savages; one of French; and a third, partly of French and partly of Savages.

The first is composed of over six hundred Illinois, all baptized excepting five or six; but the brandy sold by the French, especially by the soldiers, in spite of the King's repeated prohibitions, and that which is sometimes distributed to them under the pretext of maintaining them in our interest, has ruined this Mission, and has caused the majority of them to abandon our holy Religion; The Savages — and especially the Illinois, who are the gentlest and most tractable of men — become, when intoxicated, madmen and wild beasts. Then they fall upon one [Page 201] another, stab with their knives, and tear one another. Many have lost their ears, and some a portion of their noses, in these tragic encounters. The greatest good that we do among them consists in administering baptism

to dying children. I usually reside in this Mission of Savages with Father Guienne, who acts as my Master in the study of the Illinois language.

The French Cure under Father Vattrin's charge is composed of more than four hundred French people, of all ages, and more than two hundred and fifty Negroes. The third Mission is seventy leagues from here. It is much smaller; Father Meurin^[49] has charge of it. The remainder of our Louisiana Mission consists of a residence at New Orleans, where the Superior-general of the Mission resides with another of our Fathers, and two Brethren. We have there a considerable settlement, which is in very good condition. The revenues of this settlement, added to the pensions given us by the King, supply the needs of the Missionaries.

When the Mission is sufficiently provided with laborers (who in this Colony should be twelve in number), one is maintained among the Akansas, another among the Tchactas and a third among the Alibamons. Reverend Father Baudouin, the present Superior-general of the Mission, formerly resided among the Tchactas; he dwelt eighteen years among those barbarians. When he was on the eve of deriving some fruit from his labors, the disturbances excited by the English in that Nation, and the danger to which he was manifestly exposed, compelled Father Vitri, then Superior-general, in concert with" Monsieur the Governor, to recall him [Page 203] to New Orleans. NOW that the troubles are beginning to subside, they are thinking of reëstablishing this Mission. Father Moran was among the Alibamons some years ago. The impossibility of exercising his Ministry, as regards both the Savages and the French, induced the Superior to recall him and confide to him the direction of the Nuns and of the King's hospital, which is in our charge. The English, as well as the French, trade among the Alibamon Savages. You can imagine what an obstacle this may be to the progress of Religion. The English are ever ready to preach controversy. Would a poor Savage be in a position to make a choice? At present we have no one among the Akansas. Such, my Reverend Father, is the state of our Mission. The remainder of my letter will be a short description of this country. I shall give particulars which will perhaps be of little interest to you, but which would become useful to this country if the Government would take into consideration a portion of what is herein contained.

The mouth of the Mississippi lies on the 29th degree of north latitude. The King maintains a small garrison there, and also a Pilot to meet vessels and bring them into the river. The multitude of islands and of banks — not of sand, but of mud: which fill it, make its entrance very difficult for those who have never been there. The question is, to find the channel; and there is only one Pilot who is accustomed to the place and knows it thoroughly. Vessels experience difficulty in ascending the Mississippi. Besides the fact that the tide of the sea is not felt in it, it winds continually; so that it is necessary either to tow, or to have at one's command wind [Page 205] from all points of the compass. From the twenty- ninth to the thirty-first degree of latitude, it did not seem to me wider than the Seine in front of Rouen, but it is infinitely deeper. As one ascends, it becomes wider, but is shallower in proportion. Its length from the North to the South is known to be more than

seven hundred leagues. According to the reports of the latest travelers, its source — which is more than three hundred leagues to the North of the Illinois — is formed by the discharge of some lakes and swamps.

Mississippi, in the Illinois language, means “the great river.” It seems to have usurped that name from the Missouri. Before its junction with that river, the Mississippi is of no great size. Its current is slight, while the Missouri is wider, deeper, more rapid, and takes its rise much farther away. Several rivers of considerable size empty into the Mississippi; but the Missouri alone seems to pour into it more water than all these rivers together. Here is the proof of it: the water of most — I might say, of all of the rivers that fall into the Mississippi is only passably good, and that of several is positively unwholesome; that of the Mississippi itself, above its junction with the Missouri, is not of the best; on the contrary, that of the Missouri is the best water in the world. Now that of the Mississippi, from its junction with the Missouri to the sea, becomes excellent; the water of the Missouri must therefore predominate. The first travelers who came through Canada discovered the Mississippi; that is the reason why the latter has acquired the name of “great,” at the expense of the glory of the other.

Both banks of the Mississippi are bordered, throughout [Page 207] nearly the whole of its course, by two strips of dense forests, the depth of which varies more or less from half a league to four leagues. Behind these forests the country is more elevated, and is intersected by plains and groves, wherein the trees are almost as thinly scattered as in our public promenades. This is partly due to the fact that the Savages set fire to the prairies toward the end of the autumn, when the grass is dry; the fire spreads everywhere and destroys most of the young trees. This does not happen in the places nearer the river, because, the land being lower, and consequently more watery, the grass remains green longer, and is less susceptible to the attacks of fire.

The plains and forests contain wild cattle, which are found in herds; deer, elk, and bears; a few tigers; numbers of wolves, which are much smaller than those of Europe, and much less daring; wild-cats; wild turkeys and pheasants; and other animals, less known and of smaller size. This river, with all those that flow into it, as well as the lakes, — of which there are a great number, but which, individually, are quite small in extent, — are the abode of beavers; of a prodigious number of ducks, of three kinds; of teal, bustards, geese, swans, snipe; and of some other aquatic birds, whose names are unknown in Europe, to say nothing of the fish of many kinds in which they abound.

It is only at fifteen leagues above the mouth of the Mississippi that one begins to see the first French settlements, as the land lower down is not habitable. They are situated on both sides of the river as far as the Town. The lands throughout this extent, which is fifteen leagues, are not all occupied; many [Page 209] await new settlers. New Orleans, the Metropolis of Louisiana, is built on the east bank of the river; it is of medium size, and the streets are in straight lines; some of the houses are built of brick, and others of wood. It is

inhabited by French, Negroes, and some Savages who are slaves; all these together do not, it seemed to me, number more than twelve hundred persons.

The climate, although infinitely more bearable than that of the islands, seems heavy to one who has recently landed. If the country were less densely wooded, especially on the side toward the sea, the wind coming thence would penetrate inland and greatly temper the heat. The soil is very good, and nearly all kinds of vegetables grow very well in it. There are splendid orange-trees; the people cultivate indigo, maize in abundance, rice, potatoes, cotton, and tobacco. The vine might succeed there; at least I have seen some very good muscatel grapes. The climate is too hot for wheat. Buckwheat, millet, and oats grow very well. Poultry of all kinds are raised, and horned cattle have multiplied considerably. The forests are at present the chief and surest source of revenue of many habitans; they obtain from them quantities of lumber for building purposes, which they manufacture easily and at slight expense in the sawmills, which several persons have erected.

You will observe that the land, thirty leagues below the Town and for nearly the same distance above it, is of peculiar formation. Throughout nearly the whole country, the bank of a river is the lowest spot; here, on the contrary, it is the highest. From the river to the beginning of the Cypress [Page 211] forests, several arpents behind the settlements, there is a slope of as much as fifteen feet. Do you wish to irrigate your land? Dig a drain to the river, with a dyke at the end of the drain; and in a shod time, it will be covered with water. To work a mill, it is only necessary to have an opening to the river. The water flows through the Cypress forests to the sea. Care must be taken, however, not to abuse this facility anywhere; as the water could not always flow away easily, it would, in the end, inundate the settlements.

At New Orleans there is nothing scarcer than stones; you might give a louis to get one belonging to the country, and you would not find it; bricks made on the spot are substituted for it. Lime is made from shells, which are obtained at a distance of three or four leagues on the shores of lake Pontchartrain. Hills of shells are found there, — a singular thing for that region; they are also found far inland, at a depth of two or three feet below the surface. The following articles are sent down to New Orleans from the upper country and adjacent territories: salt beef, tallow, tar, fur, bear's grease, and, from the Illinois especially, flour and pork. In this vicinity, and still more toward Mobile, grow in abundance the trees called "wax-trees," because means have been found to extract from their seeds a wax, which, if properly prepared, would be almost equal to French wax. If the use of this wax could be introduced into Europe, it would be a very considerable branch of trade for the Colony. You will see, by all these details, that some trade can be carried on at New Orleans. In former years, when eight to ten ships entered the Mississippi, that was considered a great number; this [Page 213] year over forty entered, mostly from Martinique and San Domingo; they came to load cargoes chiefly of timber and bricks, to rebuild the houses destroyed by two fires, which are said to have been caused in those two islands by fire from Heaven.

Ascending the river, one finds French settlements above as well as below New Orleans. The most notable establishment is a small German Colony, ten leagues above it. La Pointe coupée is thirty-five leagues from the German settlement. A palisaded fort has been built there, in which a small garrison is maintained. There are sixty residences, spread over an extent of five or six leagues, along the west bank of the river. Fifty leagues from la pointe toupee are the Natchez. We now have there only a garrison, — which is kept imprisoned, as it were, in a fort, through fear of the Chicachats and other Savage enemies. Formerly there were at that place about sixty dwellings, and a savage Nation of considerable numbers called the Natchez, who were greatly attached to us and rendered us great services. The tyranny which a French Commandant undertook to exercise over them drove them to extremities. One day they killed all the French, excepting a few who sought safety in flight. One of our Fathers, who was descending the Mississippi and was asked to tarry there to say Mass on Sunday, was included in the massacre. Since that time the blow has been avenged by the almost total destruction of the Natchez Nation; only a few remain scattered among the Chicachats and Chéraquis, where they live precariously and almost as slaves.

At la Pointe coupée, and still more at Natchez, excellent tobacco is grown. If, instead of obtaining [Page 215] from strangers the tobacco that is consumed in France, we obtained it here, we would get a better quality, and save the money that goes out of the Kingdom for that product; and the colony would be settled.

One hundred leagues above the Natchez are the Akansas, a savage Nation of about four hundred warriors. We have near them a fort with a garrison, where the convoys ascending to the Illinois stop to rest. There were some settlers there but in the month of May, 1748, the Chicachats, our irreconcilable foes, aided by some other barbarians, suddenly attacked the post; they killed several persons, and carried off thirteen into captivity. The rest escaped into the fort, in which there were at the time only a dozen soldiers. They made an attempt to attack it, but no sooner had they lost two of their people than they retreated. Their Drummer was a French deserter from the Akansas garrison itself. The distance from the Akansas to the Illinois is estimated at nearly one hundred and fifty leagues. Throughout all that extent of country, not a single hamlet exists. Nevertheless, in order to secure our possession of it, it would be very advisable that we should have a good fort on the Ouabache, the only place by which the English can enter into the Mississippi.

The Illinois are on the parallel of 38 degrees 15 minutes of latitude. The climate, which is very different from that of New Orleans, is almost similar to that of France; the great heats make themselves felt there a little earlier and more intensely; but they are neither so constant nor so lasting. The severe cold comes later. In winter, when the [Page 217] North wind blows, ice forms on the Mississippi sufficiently thick to bear the heaviest carts; but such cold weather does not last long. The winter here is an alternation of severe cold and quite mild weather, according as the winds blow from the North or from the South; and they succeed each other with fair regularity. This alternation is very injurious to the fruit-

trees. The weather may be very mild, a little warm even, as early as mid-February; the sap ascends in the trees, which become covered with blossoms; then a wind from the North springs up, and destroys the brightest hopes.

The soil is fertile, and vegetables of all kinds would grow in it almost as well as in France, if they were cultivated with care. Nevertheless wheat, as a rule, yields only from five to eightfold; but it must be observed that the lands are tilled in a very careless manner, and that they have never been manured during the thirty years while they have been cultivated. This poor success in growing wheat is due still more to the heavy fogs and too sudden heats. But, on the other hand, maize — which in France is called Turkish corn — grows marvelously; it yields more than a thousandfold; it is the food of domestic cattle, of the slaves, and of most of the natives of the country, who eat it as a treat. The country produces three times as much food as can be consumed in it. Nowhere is game more abundant; from mid-October to the end of March the people live almost entirely on game, especially on the wild ox and deer.

The horned cattle have multiplied exceedingly; most of them cost nothing, either for care or for food. The working animals graze on a vast common [Page 219] around the village; others, in much larger numbers, which are intended for breeding, are shut up throughout the year on a peninsula over ten leagues in extent, formed by the Mississippi and the river of the Tamarouas. These animals, which are seldom approached, have become almost wild, and artifice must be employed in order to catch them. If a habitant needs a pair of oxen, he goes to the peninsula. When he sees a bull large enough to be trained, he throws a handful of salt to him, and stretches out a long rope with a noose at the end; then he lies down. The animal which is eager for salt, draws near; as soon as its foot is in the noose the man on the watch pulls the rope, and the bull is captured. The same is done for horses, calves, and colts; this is all that it costs to get a pair of oxen or of horses. Moreover, these animals are not subject to any diseases; they live a long time, and, as a rule, die only of old age.

In this part of Louisiana there are five French and three Illinois villages within a distance of twenty- two leagues; they are situated upon a long prairie bounded on the East by a chain of mountains and the river of the Tamarouas, and on the West by the Mississippi. The five French villages contain in all about one hundred and forty families. The three villages of Savages may furnish three hundred men capable of bearing arms. There are several salt-springs in this country, one of which, two leagues from here, supplies all the salt consumed in the surrounding country, and in many posts which are dependencies of Canada. There are mines without number, but as no one is in a position to incur the expense necessary for opening and working them, [Page 221] they remain in their original condition. Certain individuals content themselves with obtaining lead from some of these, because it lies almost at the surface of the ground. They supply this country, all the Savage Nations of the Missouri and Mississippi, and several posts of Canada. Two men who are here, a Spaniard and a Portuguese, who claim to know something about mines and minerals, assert that these mines in no wise differ from those of Mexico and Peru; and that,

if slightly deeper excavations were made, silver ore would be found under the lead ore. This much is certain: that the lead is very fine, and that a little silver is obtained from it. Borax has also been found in these mines, and in some places gold, but in very small quantities. Beyond a doubt, there are copper mines; because, from time to time, very large pieces of it are found in the streams.

There is not, in all America, any special Officer who has such a province as has he who commands for the King among the Illinois. On the North and Northwest, the extent is unlimited; it spreads through the vast country watered by the Missouri and the rivers that fall into it, — the finest country in the world. How many Savage Nations in these immense regions offer themselves to the Missionaries' zeal! They belong to the district of the Gentlemen of the *Missions étrangères*, to whom Monseigneur the Bishop of Quebec allotted them many years ago. There are three of these Gentlemen here, who have charge of two French Cures. Nothing can be more amiable than their character, or more edifying than their conduct. We live with them as if we were members of the same body. [Page 223]

Among the Nations of the Missouri are some who seem to be specially disposed to receive the Gospel: as, for instance, the Panismahas. One of the Gentlemen of whom I have just spoken wrote one day to a Frenchman who traded among the Savages, and asked him in his letter to baptize dying children. When the chief of the village perceived the letter, he said to the Frenchman: "What is the news?" "There is none," replied the latter. "How," retorted the Savage, "because our color is red, can we not know the news?" "It is the black Chief," replied the Frenchman, "who writes, recommending me to baptize dying children, in order to send them to the great Spirit." The Savage chief, thoroughly satisfied, said to him: "Be not anxious; I myself undertake to notify thee whenever a child is in danger of death." He gathered his people together and said to them: "What think ye of this black Chief?" (for that is the name which they give to the Missionaries.) "We have never seen him; we have never done him any good; he dwells far from us, beyond the sun. And yet he thinks of our village; he desires to do good to us; and, when our children die, he wishes to send them to the great Spirit. This black Chief must be very good."

Some traders who came from his village have mentioned to me instances which prove that, savage as he is, he none the less possesses intelligence and good sense. At the death of his predecessor all the suffrages of his Nation were in his favor. At first, he excused himself from accepting the position of Chief; but at last, on being compelled to acquiesce, he said to them: "You desire then that I should be [Page 225] your Chief; I consent, but you must bear in mind that I wish to be your Chief in reality, and that I must be faithfully obeyed in that capacity. Hitherto the widows and orphans have been left destitute. I intend that in future their wants shall be provided for; and, in order that they may not be forgotten, I desire and intend that they be the first to get their share." Accordingly, he gave orders to his Escapia — who is, as it were, his Steward — to set aside, whenever a hunt should take place, a quantity of meat sufficient for the widows and orphans. These people have as yet but very few guns. They hunt on horseback with arrows and spears; they

surround a herd of cattle, and but few escape them. When the animals fall to the ground, the Chief's Escapia touches a certain number of them with his hand; these are the share of the widows and orphans, and no one else can take any portion of them. One of the hunters, — through inadvertence, no doubt, — having begun to cut a piece from one of these, the Chief killed him on the spot with a shot from his gun. This Chief receives the French with great distinction; he makes them eat with him alone, or with the chief of another Nation, if such happen to be present. He honors with the title of " sun " the most wretched Frenchman who may happen to be in his village; and he says, therefore, that the sky is always serene while the Frenchman sojourns there. Only a month ago he came to pay his respects to our commandant. I proceeded to fort de Chartres,^[56] six leagues from here, for the express purpose of seeing him. He is a thoroughly fine man. He was polite to me, in his own fashion; and invited me to go to give his people sense, — that is, to instruct [Page 227] them. According to the reports of the Frenchmen who have been there, his village can furnish nine hundred men capable of bearing arms.

For the rest, this country is of far greater importance than is imagined. Through its position alone, it deserves that France should spare nothing to retain it. It is true that it has not yet enriched the King's coffers, and that convoys to and fro are costly; but it is none the less true that the tranquillity of Canada and the safety of the entire lower part of the Colony depend upon it. Assuredly, without this post there can be no communication by land between Louisiana and Canada. There is another consideration: several regions of the same Canada and all those on the lower part of the river would be deprived of the provisions they obtain from the Illinois, which are often a great resource to them. By founding a solid establishment here, prepared to meet all these troubles, the King would secure the possession of the most extensive and the finest country in north America. To be convinced of this one has but to glance at the well-known map of Louisiana, and to consider the situation of the Illinois country and the multitude of Nations against whom the post usually serves as a barrier. In union with your holy sacrifices, I remain, etc. [Page 229]

Volume 70: 1764: François Philibert Watrin
BANISHMENT OF THE JESUITS FROM LOUISIANA.

You write me, Monsieur, that you were surprised to learn of the arrival at Paris of Jesuits banished from Louisiana by a decree pronounced against them in that colony. You wish to know the reasons for this decree, and what followed its execution. I am familiar with the affair that interests you, and likewise with all that can in any way relate thereto. I lived for almost thirty years in Louisiana, and only departed thence at the beginning of this year.^[36] I am persuaded that your curiosity has no other motives than your love for religion and for truth. In the recital which I am about to give you, I shall be careful to say nothing which will depart in the least from these two rules.

In the month of June, 1763, the Jesuits of New Orleans, the capital of Louisiana, were still between hope and fear as to their future fate. As early as the preceding year, they had seen their enemies distribute with a triumphant air, manuscript copies of the decree given by the Parliament of Paris, August 6, 1761. But people worthy of respect had calmed their fears. They were expecting a great deal from the information given in their favor, and, above all, from the petition addressed to the King by the bishops of France. They finally learned what they were to expect, at the arrival of the ship, which brought, with the news of peace, orders for their destruction. [Page 213]

There came upon the ship Monsieur d'Albadie, commissary-general of the navy and controller of Louisiana, and with him Monsieur de la Frenière, procurator-general of the superior council of this colony — both newly appointed to their positions^[37] Monsieur the commissary did not delay to notify the superior of the Jesuits of what was brewing against them. "I believe," he said to him, "that Monsieur the procurator-general is charged with some order that concerns you." This was a sufficient warning, for any one who could have understood him; but the Jesuits, too confident, were disposed to believe that, in spite of the example of so many Parliaments of France, nothing would be done against them in Louisiana; and, at a moment so critical, they did not take the slightest precaution about protecting their property.

Proceedings were begun. It was decreed that the Institute of the Jesuits should be brought to the council, to be examined. It was a great undertaking for this tribunal. All the judges who composed it ought at least to have studied theology and civil and ecclesiastical law. But, above all, they ought to have understood the language in which the institute is written. Now, this is not the kind of knowledge that is required from judges of colonies. In selecting them, search is not made for pupils of universities, but those among the habitants who show some capacity for business are chosen. Accordingly, one finds in these councils elderly shopkeepers, physicians, and officers of troops. Those who are best educated are usually the pupils of the naval bureaus; it is they who, up to the present, have been most often chosen, at least in Louisiana, as presidents of [Page 215] councils, an honor attached to the office of intendant or commissary-controller.

For these reasons, we are justified in saying that it was a great undertaking for the council of New Orleans to pronounce upon the Institute of the Jesuits. In truth, it is reasonable to suppose that Monsieur de la Frenière, instructed from his youth in the Latin language, had also studied civil law during the long sojourn that he had made in France; but his ability could not communicate itself to the judges who were to pronounce their decision upon his requisition; the majority of them, at least, could be reproached for their ignorance of the language of the document which they were about to judge. In that there was a great lack of competency, there was another still greater, — I mean to say, the lack of authority and jurisdiction. The matter upon which these judges undertook to pronounce was a spiritual matter, if ever there were one; now, they all were only lay judges. And, after the opinion declared by the council of Trent regarding the Institute of the Jesuits, if a new

examination were to be made, to whom could such inquiry pertain except to the Church universal?

None of these considerations deterred the council of Louisiana. One powerful motive encouraged the judges to enter upon the affair; there had arrived several volumes of requisitions and reports upon the same subject rendered in different parliaments of France, with the decrees pronounced in consequence thereof.

To these Gentlemen, it was enough to believe themselves well informed; one could not go astray [Page 217] while following such guides. The requisition was announced by Monsieur the procurator-general; the decree which we are about to report will show what was demanded. The matter came to judgment; it is not certain whether the votes of the councilors-in-ordinary were entirely unanimous, but it is certain that besides this number there was one ballot favorable to the Jesuits; it was that of Monsieur de Châtillon, lieutenant-colonel of the regiment of Angoumois. In this capacity he had the right to be present at and vote in the council. This worthy old man did not fear to declare himself for those to whom so little protection then remained.

The decree was declared on the 9th of July. It was said that the Institute of the Jesuits was hostile to the royal authority, the rights of the bishops, and the public peace and safety; and that the vows uttered according to this institute were null. It was prohibited to these Jesuits, hitherto thus styled, to take that name hereafter, or to wear their customary garb, orders being given them to assume that of secular ecclesiastics. Excepting their books and some wearing apparel which was allowed to them, all their property, real and personal, was to be seized and sold at auction. It was ordained that the chapel ornaments and the sacred vessels of New Orleans should be delivered up to the Reverend Capuchin Fathers; that the chapel ornaments and sacred vessels of the Jesuits living in the country of the Illinois should be delivered up to the Royal procurator for that country, and that the chapels should then be demolished; and that, finally, the aforesaid Jesuits, so-called, should return to France, embarking upon the first ships ready to depart, [Page 219] prohibiting them, meanwhile, from remaining together. A sum of six hundred livres was assigned to pay each one's passage, and another, of 1, 500 francs, for their sustenance and support for six months. They were enjoined to present themselves, after that term, to Monsieur the duke de Choiseul, secretary of State in the department of marine, to ask him for the pensions which would be assigned from the proceeds of the sale of their property. I have mentioned above the general motives for the condemnation of the Jesuits of Louisiana, motives copied from the decrees of the Parliaments of France; but, in that which the council of New Orleans issued, it undertook to insert something special and new. It stated that the Jesuits established in the colony had not taken any care of their missions; that they had thought only of making their estates valuable; and that they were usurpers of the vicariate-general of New Orleans.

If their own interests alone had been at stake, the Jesuits of Louisiana, after the loss of their property, could still have borne in silence the attack upon their reputation made by this

decree. But there are times when silence is an admission, and it is not permitted to admit the wrong imputed when a scandal would result therefrom. Now, what a scandal if missionaries sent to America for the instruction of the French and the savages, missionaries subsisting there upon the benefactions of the King — if such men should be forced by the voice of conscience to acknowledge, at least tacitly, that they took no care of their missions; that they only gave their attention to their estates; and, besides, that they are usurpers of the vicariate-general of an episcopate! But no, conscience Will not oblige the Jesuits of Louisiana to acknowledge what is imputed [Page 221] to them! It obliges them, on the contrary, to speak, and, in what they have to say for their justification, they do not fear to be convicted of falsehood; at least, they do not fear that anything true or substantial will be opposed to them.

There is to-day hardly any province in France where there is not some prominent person who has lived in Louisiana; of these persons, there is not one who has not known Jesuits there, and most of them have even been able to scrutinize these Jesuits very closely. Now, the Jesuits await with confidence the testimony that can be rendered concerning them, upon the points in question here; still more, they dare to cite, as witnesses of their conduct, three governors of Louisiana, and a vicar-general of the episcopate of Quebec for this same colony. All were still living in this month of June of this year, 1764; no one has begged for their suffrages; no one has even informed these gentlemen of what is about to be cited from them.

The first witness Will be, then, Monsieur de Bienville, now captain of the Royal ships, who twenty- two years ago retired to Paris. He must be regarded as the founder of the colony of Louisiana; it was he who in 1698 accompanied his brother, Monsieur d'Iberville, when that illustrious naval officer discovered the mouth of the Mississippi, which sieur de la Salle, that famous adventurer, had missed. Monsieur de Bienville was then left upon the shores of this river, to begin a settlement there; it was he who governed this colony for 44 years, with the exception of a few intervals; it was he who put it nearly in the condition in which it is to-day, by building New Orleans and the fort of Mobile, and by forming the [Page 223] other posts that are seen in Louisiana. During so long a government, he was always very attentive to all that was taking place in the various parts of this vast province; he knew the worth of all those who were employed there. Now, no one in this country can have forgotten the very special kindness with which he honored the Jesuits of this colony; would he have acted thus toward missionaries who, failing in the care of their mission, had failed in the most essential of their duties?

The second witness Will be Monsieur the Marquis de Vaudreuil, late governor of New France; he succeeded Monsieur de Bienville in the government of Louisiana. The Jesuits found in him also a protector, and even an openly declared friend; it would be difficult to add anything to the tokens of kindness which he constantly conferred upon them. But what was it that could win for them such kindness? It was, without doubt, the impression which they made upon him by their fidelity to their principal duties. No, the integrity of Monsieur de Vaudreuil would not have permitted him to treat so honorably missionaries

who, neglecting the duties of their occupation, would have deserved from him only reproaches and coldness.

A third witness for the Jesuits of Louisiana is Monsieur de Kerlerrec, captain of a ship, and last governor of this colony; a single proof suffices to show what he thought of them. It is a letter which he wrote to them, a little before their ruin; he recalled to them these words of Our Lord to his disciples: *Beati eritis cùm vos oderint homines, et persecuti vos fuerint, et dixerint, omne malum adversum vos mentientes, propter me: gaudete et exultate!* Is it credible [Page 225] that Monsieur de Kerlerrec would have chosen to apply this text to missionaries who did not give any care to their missions?

Finally, a fourth witness will be Monsieur the abbé de L'Isle Dieu; for more than 30 years he has been in Paris, vicar-general of the episcopate of Quebec, and especially charged with the affairs of that diocese which concern Louisiana, Now, it is also this abbé who has shown what he thought of the Jesuits of Louisiana when he wrote to them after the, decree of the 6th of August, 1762 — that they were *passing away with the regrets of the episcopal body and of all good people*. In writing thus, it is probable that he did not regard them as people who had failed to care for their missions.

“But,” someone will say, “cannot the Jesuits of Louisiana defend themselves, then, except through the testimony of others? Ought they not to let the work that they have done in their missions, the operations and the fruits of their zeal speak for them? Every estimable person ought to be praised, above all, before his judges, by his good actions: *Laudent eam in portis opera ejus.*” The Jesuits Will not fear to accede to what is here asked from them; and, to show what they, accomplished in their missions, I am going to separate these into two portions. The first includes the missions of the Illinois country, which are the older; the second comprises the mission of New Orleans, with that of the Chactas and the Alibamons, In the country named Illinois, the Jesuits had four permanent missions. The first was that one where the savages called Cascakias were instructed, and these are the exercises which were carried on there: At sunrise, the bell rang [Page 227] for prayer and mass: the savages said prayers in their own language, and during the mass they chanted, to the air of the Roman chant, hymns and canticles, also translated into their language, with the suitable prayers; at the end of the mass, the missionary catechized the children. Having returned to his house, he was occupied in instructing the adult neophytes and catechumens, to prepare them for baptism or for penitence, for communion or for marriage; as soon as he was free, he went through the village to arouse the believers to fervor, and to exhort unbelievers to embrace Christianity. The rest of the day was needed for reciting the divine office, studying the language of the savages, and preparing the instructions for Sundays and feast-days; for so many exercises, so varied and so continual, there was surely needed care, and a great deal of care. The savages, at least, certainly believe that the Jesuits took care of them; as for the first news of the decree declared against their missionaries, they wished to go to find the officer who commanded in that country, to beg him at least to leave them Father Meurin, who was charged with their mission. And what other idea could they have of the Jesuits? a single one of the latter

could represent them all, as men entirely devoted to the instruction of the savages. Such was Father de Guyenne, who died in 1752 [sc. 1762]. Having spent 36 years in the missions of Louisiana, he had traversed those of the Alibamons, the Arkansas, and the Miamis. He had been curé of fort Chartres, and had everywhere been respected as a man of rare virtue, of singular discretion, and of an inviolable attachment to the duties of a missionary. Since the [Page 229] year 1763 [sc. 1743?] he had devoted himself to the Illinois mission. Called to more honorable and easier positions, he had remained with his savages; and by his constancy he had preserved religion, which had become much unsettled in that nation; he had even greatly revived their fervor by his untiring application to all the exercises. Finally, four years before his death, afflicted by a partial paralysis which rendered him incapable of movement, and feeling a great weakness in his chest, — an old trouble, which left him hardly enough strength to make himself heard, — he did not cease receiving at all times his dear neophytes, who came from a long league's distance to be instructed. He catechized them, exhorted them, and heard their confessions; he prepared them for the communion; and, in the capacity of superior of the house, he used his power to relieve their poverty. Does not a man so faithful to his ministry up to the last day of his life make it presumable that, among the Jesuits established amid the Illinois, there remained some zeal and care in regard to their missions?

At one and one-fourth leagues from the village of the Illinois savages, there was a French village also named Cascakias; for 44 years there has been in this village a parish, which has always been governed by the Jesuits. Now, we dare to repeat here, regarding those who were charged with this employ, what has been said above of their associates in general, — that there is hardly any province in France where there are not still witnesses of the exactness of these curés in discharging their functions, that is, in visiting the sick and in relieving the poor. These too are witnesses of their assiduity at the [Page 231] tribunal of penance, and at the almost daily instruction of the children, — to which must be still added the instruction of the negroes and the savages, slaves of the French, to prepare them for baptism and for the reception of the other sacraments. Besides, every evening, a public prayer was said in the church, and some pious book was read; finally, on Sundays and feast-days, two instructions in the catechism were given, one for the French children and the other for the black slaves and the savages, — without counting the solemn mass, and the vespers that were sung punctually with the benediction [of the Blessed Sacrament]. But here is something which is more than care; since the year 1753, there has been in the French village of Cascakias a newly- built parochial church; this church is 104 feet long and 44 wide. Now, it never could have been finished if the expense of the building had not been drawn from the building fund and from the contributions of the parishioners. Three Jesuits, successively curés of this parish, — Father Tartarin, Father Watrin, and Father Aubert, — have employed for this purpose the greater part of what they obtained from their surplice and their mass-fees. When the curés have the construction and ornamentation of their church so much at heart, it is also probable that they do not fail in their other duties.

But here is yet another proof of the care that the Jesuits have taken of this parish: fifteen years ago at a league from the old village, on the other bank of the Mississippi, there was established a new village under the name of Sainte Geneviève. Then the curé of Cascakias found himself obliged to go there to administer the sacraments, at least to the sick; [Page 233] and, when the new inhabitants saw their houses multiplying, they asked to have a church built there. This being granted them, the journeys of the missionary became still more frequent, because he thought that he ought then to yield himself still more to the willingness of his new parishioners, and to their needs. However, in order to go to this new church he must cross the Mississippi, which, in this place, is three eighths of a league wide; he sometimes had to trust himself to a slave, who alone guided the canoe; It was necessary, in fine, to expose himself to the danger of perishing, if in the middle of the river they had been overtaken by a violent storm. None of all these inconveniences ever prevented the curé of Cascakias from going to Sainte Genevieve when charity called him thither, and he was always charged with this care until means were found to place at Sainte Geneviève a special curé, — which occurred only a few years ago, when the inhabitants of the place built a house for the pastor. These two villages, that of Cascakias and that of Sainte Geneviève, made the second and the third establishment of the Jesuits in the Illinois country. There is no need to call attention to the fact that, to accomplish only a part of the work that has just been indicated, care, courage, and constancy were necessary.

At eighty leagues from the Illinois was the post called Vincennes or Saint Ange, from the names of the officers who commanded there. This post is upon the river Ouabache, which, about seventy leagues lower down, together with the Ohio, which it has joined, discharges its waters into the Mississippi; there were, at the last, in this village at least sixty [Page 235] houses of French people, without counting the Miami savages, who were quite near. There too was sufficient cause for care and occupation, — which the Jesuits did not refuse, — a conclusion which must be reached if one considers that this post was every day increasing in population; that the greater part of its new inhabitants, having long been voyageurs, were little accustomed to the duties of Christians; and that, to establish among them some manner of living, many instructions and exhortations, private and public, were necessary. Now, the proof that the Jesuits acquitted themselves of their duty in this respect is proved by the complaints that the parishioners made against them; for these people claimed that their curés went beyond their duty, and assumed too much care. This is precisely the opposite of what the council of Louisiana stated. But what did the Jesuits do for the Alibamons and the Chactas? For the Alibamons: The French were established near the savages; the missionary discharged the duties of curé toward them. In this capacity Father Leroi had pledged them not to trade any more brandy to the savages, that promise being made by them publicly. It is true that that resolve, so useful and so necessary to religion, and even to the temporal interests of the savages and of the French, did not last long, the old custom being soon reëstablished; the hope of sordid gain prevailed over the most righteous arguments. But sensible people have not forgotten the service that the missionary had rendered.

And what did he do for the savages? He lived with them, always ready to teach them the Christian doctrine as soon as it pleased God to open their hearts; meanwhile, he kept them in alliance and [Page 237] friendship with the French, and he succeeded in this all the better, because these people saw clearly, by his conduct, that he was not in their midst to make a fortune. This disinterestedness established his credit, and through that he became useful — we dare to say, even necessary — to the colony.

It was especially in the Chactas nation that the missionaries rendered this essential service; those who know Louisiana know of what importance it was to maintain an alliance between this nation and ours. If alienated from our interests and excited against US, they could some day destroy the colony by sacking New Orleans, a City which is without defense. It was to prevent such acts that the missionaries endured the burden of living with the Chactas, so barbarous a people, and made them feel how advantageous to them was the friendship of the French, and of what value in their estimation ought to be the presents brought to them regularly every year. If these presents were to fail, as happened during the war, it was for the missionary to keep up their good Will by promising to indemnify them. What services did the Jesuits not render also when every year they went with Messieurs the Governors to the fort of Mobile, where the Chactas assembled for the distribution of presents? To do that usefully and judiciously, it was necessary for the Governor to know at least the principal individuals of the nation, and among them the most friendly and the most important. Now who could give them these ideas, if not the missionary who lived with them, — who kept in touch with the most trusty, and who, to learn what was going on in the thirty villages of the Chactas, visited them regularly? Yet if it had only [Page 239] been necessary to visit the villages! But, either in going through them, or in remaining in his cabin, during how many years was not the missionary exposed to death, when the Chactas, divided among themselves, — some being in favor of, others against, the French, — were killing one another! How much did the missionary then not have to fear for his life, from those who would have willingly avenged upon a Frenchman the deaths of their compatriots, killed by the partisans of the French? That was the price at which the missionary then rendered services to the colony. That is what was done for twenty years by Father Baudoin, — who, having become superior at New Orleans, was condemned, at the head of those whom the decree of condemnation reproaches with not having taken any care of their missions.

However, it is hard to believe that there were not some apparent motives for thus reproaching them. This, perhaps, was the occasion for it: In 1763, there were no more missionaries among the Arkansas, where the Jesuits had been obliged by the terms of their foundation, to furnish one. Several years before, Father Carette had left this post; his brethren had decided that he ought to have left it sooner. In spite of the little hope that there was of leading the savages of the place to Christianity, the Father studied their language a long time, and labored to correct the morals of the French, but reaped hardly any fruit from his toil. He nevertheless followed both the French and the Savages in their various changes of location, occasioned by the overflowing of the Mississippi, near which the post is situated. Notwithstanding so many annoyances, the missionary was not

discouraged at seeing his efforts [Page 241] rendered useless by the conduct of those who ought to have sustained them; he continued in patience, until the event which we are about to describe. In the fort of the Arkansas there was no longer any chapel, no longer any room wherein one could say mass, except the room where the commandant took his meals. This was not a very suitable place, not only because it was a dining-room, but on account of the bad conduct and freedom of language of those who frequented it; everything that was in the fort entered there. even to the fowls. A chicken, flying over the altar, overturned the chalice, which had been left there at the end of the mass. The spectators were not affected by this; one of those who ought to have been most concerned about it, exclaimed: *Ah! behold the shop of the good God thrown down!* To these sentiments, so little religious, corresponded a life as little Christian. Father Carette at last concluded that he must withdraw, at least until he should see a chapel built in the fort, and until they were disposed to respect religion there; besides, he was necessary elsewhere, for work from which better success was expected.

Since we have called attention to the occupations of the Jesuits at the different posts of Louisiana, it is right to speak also of what they did at New Orleans. In that city there is a royal hospital, established for the troops. The title of chaplain of this hospital was given to Father d'outraleau in 1737, and it has ever since been continued to the Jesuits of New Orleans; it was an office sufficient to occupy one missionary. In the same City is a monastery of Ursuline nuns; by their endowments they are charged with the education of thirty orphan [Page 243] girls maintained at the expense of the King, and there were always many inmates besides; it is known that the Ursulines are bound by their institute to instruct also in their schools girls from outside, and in their house they received many Young ladies as boarders. Now the superior of the Jesuits has been for thirty years superior also of this house; and, not being able alone to render all the services needed there, it was necessary that he should be assisted by one of his brethren.

Finally, the Jesuits had upon their estates a hundred and twenty or a hundred and thirty slaves; ought not the care of instructing and governing these to give some of these missionaries enough to do? Fourteen families suffice for the formation of a parish. But, if it be now asked what fruit the Jesuits of Louisiana have gathered from their missions, we might answer that the missionaries owe their labor, and that it is God who gives the fruit when it pleases him. Moreover, the most laborious missions have often appeared the most sterile; thus, in Canada, the missionaries who devoted themselves to the instruction of the Outouas, the Poutouatamis, the Sauteurs, the Outagamis or Renards [Foxes], and the Miamis, produced scarcely any perceptible fruit there. And yet, they have not been less revered as truly apostolic laborers. Such was the opinion that the late Monseigneur de Ponbriand, bishop of Quebec, had of one of these missionaries, Father Chardon, during a very great number of years that he spent at the bay, with the Outagamis and other savages. This Father had not seen any apparent result from his work; having retired to [Page 245] Quebec, in his extreme old age, the prelate deigned to honor him with a visit when he was almost dying, and asked him for his benediction. The humble

missionary threw himself at the feet of his bishop, to ask him for his; and, having obtained it, he was obliged to consent to what Monseigneur de Ponbriand asked from him.

However, the missionaries of Louisiana did not labor absolutely without result; in the missions, the most precious fruits are the virtues that are practiced there. The principal one of these doubtless is charity, especially when it attains that eminent degree at which it pledges a minister of Jesus Christ to give his life for his brethren; now, this is to what several Jesuits, who died in Louisiana, have come in the actual exercise of their ministry. Thus, in 1729, Father du Poisson, established among the Arcansas, being present at the fort of the Natchez on the very day which they had chosen for slaughtering the French, was included in the general massacre. This conspiracy may well be compared to the Sicilian Vespers. The French established at that post treated with the utmost insolence this nation of the Natchez, the most useful and the most devoted to the colony; and they undertook to avenge themselves. Father du Poisson had been requested to remain one day for some ministerial function which presented itself, in the absence of the curé; he consented to do it, and was the victim of his devotion and his charity.

One month afterward, the Yasous, another savage nation, having entered into the same conspiracy, also slew the French who lived near them. Father Souël, their missionary, was not spared; he was so beloved by the negro who served him that this [Page 247] faithful slave was killed in trying to defend or avenge his master. About the same time, Father d'Outreleau descended with several voyageurs from the Illinois country, for the affairs of the mission, and halted upon the banks of the Mississippi, to say mass. A band of these same Yasous, who had killed Father Souël, arrived at the same place, with other savages, their allies; they watched the time when the French, and especially the Father, were occupied with the holy sacrifice, and they fired a volley from their guns, which killed some Frenchmen and wounded others. Father d'outreleau received a wound in the arm and several grains of coarse shot in his mouth; it was regarded as a very remarkable effect of God's protection that he was only slightly wounded. This disaster did not dismay him; his firmness reassured his fellow-travelers, and they escaped the savages and proceeded to New Orleans. Soon afterward, it was a question of avenging upon the barbarians the deaths of the French, especially of all those who had perished among the Natchez; an army was sent thither, of which Father d'outreleau was the chaplain, and in that employ he always conducted himself in the same resolute manner.

In 1736, Father Senat, missionary to the Illinois, was appointed to accompany Monsieur d'Artaguiette, who conducted a party of French against the Chacachas. The enterprise was a failure; the French were upon the point of being surrounded by the savages, when the missionary was warned that he still had time to escape; he was offered a horse, but refused it, remembering the purpose of his voyage, and the need that the French captives would soon have of his succor. He was seized with them, and led, as they were, to the torture; a savage [Page 249] woman, utterly ignorant of the Christian religion, was a witness of their death; She reported, a little while afterward, that the French who were captured by the Chacachas had been thrown upon a lighted pile of wood in a large

cabin, *after they had sung in order to go on high*. Seeing their manner and their gestures, she had comprehended that the prayers which they were singing were to guide them to heaven.

Four years before, in 1732, Father Auneau was with Monsieur de la Vérenderie, *fils*, who commanded a party of voyageurs, seeking to discover the Western sea. This Young officer had joined a band of Christineaux, savages who were going to war against the Sioux, another very barbarous nation; the latter recognized the French mingled with their enemies, and resolved to be revenged upon them. Some time afterward, they arranged an ambuscade for other Frenchmen, who were also on a journey, and killed twenty-two of them. Father Auneau was among the number of the dead.

In the month of July, 1759, when the fort of Niagara was closely pressed by an English army which was besieging it, one thousand two hundred Frenchmen were sent to the help of this post, so important for the preservation of Canada. Father Virot was chaplain of the French army; it was put to rout, and the missionary, having fallen into the hands of the Iroquois, was cut to pieces.

Finally, in the month of July, 1763, at the time of the revolt of the savages of Canada against the English, the Sauteurs of Michilimakinac threw themselves upon the English garrison which occupied that post. They had already destroyed a large part of it, when Father du Jaunay, a Jesuit, opened his [Page 251] house to serve as an asylum to what remained of the soldiers and of the English traders; but to save their lives, he greatly endangered his own. The savage youth, irritated at seeing half of their prey snatched away from them, tried to make amends for their loss at the expense of Father du Jaunay; and the old men of the nation had difficulty in pacifying them. Behold to what trials the Jesuit missionaries in Canada and Louisiana were exposed; but it is these which may be counted as most precious fruits of their missions, for such trials must of necessity be expected by all those who establish themselves in the midst of barbarians, especially when they journey upon the Mississippi. Since the revolt of the Natchez in 1729, there is no longer any safety in ascending that river, — almost every year is marked by the death of some Frenchmen; and it is true that the precautions which must be taken during that voyage — which, to reach the Illinois, occupies three months — cannot be sufficiently careful to avert the danger. Now, since the melancholy period of 1729, one can count at least twenty-six or twenty-seven voyages made by the Jesuits upon the Mississippi. Moreover, the Missions of Louisiana have been joined here with those of Canada, because formerly these missions were united, and because to-day the same functions are still exercised there, and the same risks are run.

But if any one persist in asking the Jesuits of Louisiana for those results that are desired and expected from these missions, see what they are: In the three French parishes of the country of the Illinois we could Count a quite large number of true Christians. It was they who resisted the evil [Page 253] examples and immoral maxims which the proximity of other colonies had begun to spread in Louisiana; but among the Illinois, at least, the

missionaries checked the progress of these. Many thoroughly temperate people were seen there, in spite of the crowd of drunkards, among those who were perverting the savages by the brandy which they furnished to them. There were many others who preferred to deprive themselves of the most necessary provisions rather than to engage in so pernicious a traffic. There were, it is true, some heads of families who greatly neglected the care of their children and of their slaves; but there were also many others who themselves gave to these, or procured for them, the necessary instructions, and who knew how to keep them within the bounds of duty. There were Christians who seemed to have forgotten the precepts of fasting and abstinence, of communion and confession, and even the obligation to attend mass; but others, in great numbers, were very faithful to these duties and frequented the sacraments. How many curés there are in France with whose work people are content when they can gather like fruits!

As for the mission of the Illinois savages, the word of God was not announced there, also, without result. Despite the inconstancy of this people, the religion that was long ago established there has been preserved up to the present, the superstition called jugglery having been almost destroyed. Even the unbelievers were zealous in having their children baptized; many neophytes, judged worthy of the communion, did not dishonor, by their conduct, the opinion that had been formed of them; and many resisted the passion, so strong among these tribes, [Page 255] for brandy, and kept themselves within the bounds of temperance, even when they could drink without any cost to themselves. How much other fruit would not have been produced in this mission if serious effort had been made to stop the traffic in brandy! — Which, in this country, is the ruin of religion. It is true that this commerce was prohibited by the law of the Church and by the orders of the King; but several of those who made public the latter prohibitions, and who ought to have enforced their observance, were the first to distribute the forbidden liquor.

The first complaint noted in the decree of the council of Louisiana which condemns the Jesuits, is this: *That they have not taken care of their missions.* By all that has just been said, the reader has been able to ascertain whether this imputation was well founded. The second grievance: That the Jesuits of this colony have only taken care to extend their estates. But in answering the first complaint, has not the second one been answered at the same time? For, if the Jesuits have taken care of their missions, as has been proved, they have, in consequence, had other cares than those of their estates. But perhaps some one has chosen to say that it is not becoming for missionaries to possess great estates, because these are a distraction to the spiritual ministry. This may readily be granted; but, to avoid this embarrassment it would, then, have been necessary to provide otherwise for their subsistence, for the expenses of their journeys, for the construction and maintenance of their houses and their chapels. Now from their endowment the Jesuits received, perhaps each one [Page 257] a pension of eight hundred livres (he who writes this letter is not quite sure on this point); and, to build and maintain six houses and six chapels, they had received fifteen thousand livres. This was once repaid by a contract — hazardous, it is true, but one from which they were no longer at liberty to release themselves. Where would they, then, have found funds for these expenses, even for their food and clothes,

when, in the needs of the State, the treasurers of the colony no longer paid the debts most entitled to preference? when an ell of stuff or an ell of very common linen cloth cost fifty écus at New Orleans, an ordinary handkerchief a hundred francs; and a cask of wine was sold at two thousand five hundred francs, and was not delivered at Illinois without the payment of five or six hundred livres, which was demanded for the freight? Was it not then, necessary to have an estate, and to take care of it, to obtain therefrom the means of subsistence? Ah! how then has the council of New Orleans made it a crime in them, and a reason for condemnation in their decree?

There remains a third motive of condemnation to be discussed: the usurpation of the vicariate-general of the episcopate of Quebec. As for New Orleans, the judges of this town impute such usurpation to the Jesuits; but they have supposed, then, that every one had forgotten that, a few years before, they themselves had pronounced precisely the contrary. Here are the facts: about eighteen or twenty years ago the late Monseigneur de Ponbriand, bishop of Quebec, sent letters to Father Vitry, superior of the Jesuits of New Orleans, constituting him his vicar-general there; these letters were registered in [Page 259] the superior council. Father Vitry having died in 1750, Father Baudoin received the same commission, and peaceably exercised its functions for some time. But afterward there arose disputes; the Reverend Capuchin Fathers thought that their rights were infringed by the appointment of the Jesuits to the grand-vicariate. They persuaded themselves that, the name and function of vicar-general having been given to their superior by Monseigneur the bishop of Quebec, at the same time when the company of the Indies had named him for the curé of New Orleans, these two titles ought to be thereafter inseparable, and accordingly belong to them; their pretensions were well known to Monseigneur de Ponbriand. The Jesuits themselves (many people will not believe it, but the statement is no less true), the Jesuits directed all their efforts to be freed from a position which was for them only a source of annoyances and opposition. The prelate persisted in an absolute decision that the office should continue with those whom he had named; the Capuchin Fathers refused, however, to recognize Father Baudoin. The affair was finally brought to the council, which, after several disputes, adjudged to the Jesuits, by a decree, the legitimate possession of the grand-vicariate; and the registers of the council testify to this. The exercise of the duties of this office was continued to the Jesuits; to which New Orleans and the whole colony are witnesses. Father Baudoin, despite past disputes and some passing opposition which arose from time to time, had the name and performed the duties thereof until the day on which the decree of destruction was issued. Will it be believed hereafter, — if Louisiana [Page 261] is worthy of having a place in history, — Will it be believed that the council established to administer justice there has dared to contradict itself by a solemn decree, which expressly denies another decree issued a little while before upon the same matter, — a matter too important to be forgotten, a matter which during several years had occupied the minds of people in New Orleans? Will it be believed that those who had been declared legitimate possessors could, a little while afterward, without the least change in the matter having occurred, be condemned as usurpers? In reflecting upon this decree, — declared without information, without examination, without giving those interested the least liberty to defend themselves, — is it

not natural to think that the council of New Orleans has regarded the Jesuits as people against whom one could say all and dare all?

We have finished the examination of the several reasons set forth in the condemnation of the Jesuits, namely, *That the Jesuits did not take care of their missions, that they only cared for their estates, and that they were usurpers of the vicariate-general for New Orleans.* It is time to speak of the execution of the decree; it was to be carried out first at New Orleans, and afterward in the Illinois country, at a distance of four or five hundred leagues. There was in that country, as has been said above, a mission of the Jesuits, established at four different posts. They were not forgotten, and a courier was sent to carry the decree of destruction. Meanwhile, it was executed promptly against those of New Orleans. Their establishment was quite near this town, and proportioned to the needs of twelve missionaries; there was [Page 263] a quite large gang of Slaves for cultivating the land, and for plying other trades, as is the custom in the colonies; there were also various buildings, with herds of cattle and suitable works. Everything was seized, inventoried, and sold at auction, and this execution lasted a long time; those who were employed therein took their meals in the house. These were the higher officers of justice, with the lesser agents; it is right to suppose that the former kept themselves within the decent behavior that beseemed them, but the others did not consider themselves obliged to assume any disguise. They found themselves well feasted, and they were sure that their employment was a very lucrative one; so they did not dissemble their feelings. The superior of the Jesuits was obliged to be present at the great feasts which were given at his house during the depredation, and he saw the joy that was shown there. After the sale of the real and personal property, there remained the Chapel, with its ornaments and sacred vessels: it was stated in the decree that these effects should be taken to the Reverend Capuchin Fathers; this was done, and it was the least objectionable use that could be made of them. After that, the chapel was razed to the ground; and the sepulchers of the bodies buried for thirty years in this place, and in the neighboring cemetery, remained exposed to profanation. The Jesuits who came back from Louisiana to France have often been asked the reason for this proceeding; they have been told what astonishment and horror was felt at this event; it has been said to them that this was only to be expected from open enemies of the Catholic religion: the Jesuits could only answer these sayings by silence. [Page 265] The execution of the decree lacked nothing, save to send back the condemned to France; those who were at New Orleans did not wait to be notified of the order to depart. Father Carette embarked to cross over to San Domingo; Father Roy took refuge at Pensacola at the very time when the English entered this port to take possession of it, and the Spaniards evacuated it by virtue of the treaty of Peace; he entered the ship which was to bear the Governor of that place to Vera Cruz. The Father was welcomed there, by the Spanish Fathers of the college, with the greatest kindness; a little while afterward he was made an associate in the province that the Jesuits have in Mexico, by Father François Zéballos, superior of that province. His letter written upon this subject expressed most generous and most Christian sentiments, and all the Jesuits banished from the lands under French domination were invited thither to the same refuge. Father Le Prédour was among the Alibamons, at a distance of about two hundred leagues, and much time was necessary for

transmitting a copy of the decree to him. Then, after he had received it, he was obliged to await an opportunity to reach the fort of Mobile, and from that place, New Orleans; we have recently learned that he has returned to France. There were no more to send away, then, but Father Baudoin, superior of all the missions; but he was seventy-two years old, and infirm, — as one may expect of a man who had passed thirty-five years in Louisiana, and of those thirty-five years about twenty in the midst of the forests, with the Chactas; he had no relatives in France, nor was he accustomed to this country; as he was born in [Page 267] Canada, he was permitted to remain. He was assigned a pension of nine hundred livres, which would be equivalent in France to the sum of three or four hundred francs. Monsieur Boré, an old resident of the country, offered him an asylum with himself, upon his estate, and thus proved the sincerity of the friendship which he had always shown toward the Jesuits.

Meanwhile, the courier despatched to Illinois to bear the decree, arrived on the night of September 23 at fort Chartres, distant six leagues from the residence of the Jesuits. He delivered to the procurator of the king the commission which charged him to execute the decree; and on the next day, about eight or nine o'clock in the morning, that officer of justice repaired to the house of the Jesuits, accompanied by the registrar and the bailiff of that jurisdiction. Some days afterward, he tried to turn to account the moderation that he had used in not arriving during the night, "as his orders directed," said he; with that exception, they ought to have been satisfied with his exactness. He read to Father Watrin, the superior, the decree of condemnation, and, having given him a copy of it, he made him at once leave his room to put the seal upon it; the same thing was done with the other missionaries who happened to be in the house. There remained one hall where they could remain together, although with great inconvenience; but this favor was refused them, because the guards placed in custody of the property seized opposed this; they were unwilling that the Jesuits should be able to watch their conduct so closely. The procurator of the King feared to displease these guardians, and would not [Page 269] even permit the Jesuits to remain at the house of one of their confrères, — who, being curé of the place, had his private lodging near the parish church; they did not put the seal thereon, because there was nothing there to seize. The missionaries, driven from their own house, found quarters as best they could. The superior, sixty-seven years old, departed on foot to find a lodging, a long league away, with a confrère of his, a missionary to the savages; and the French who met him on this journey groaned to see persecution begin with him. As soon as the savages learned that he had arrived among them, they came to show to him and to Father Meurin, his associate, the share which they took in the distress of their Fathers; the news of their condemnation had already caused many tears to be shed in the village. They were asked why they were thus treated, especially in a country where so many disorders had been so long allowed. The old missionary, after several repeated interrogations, finally replied: *Arechi Kiécouègane tchichi ki canta manghi*, — *It is because we sternly condemn their follies*. They comprehended the meaning of this answer, — indeed, they knew that the Jesuits, in whatever place they may be established, consider themselves bound by their profession to combat vice; and that, in fighting it, they make enemies for themselves.

The Christian savages proposed then to send their chief men to Monsieur Neyon, commandant, and to Monsieur Bobé subdeputy-commissary of the country, to ask that at least Father Meurin, their missionary, be kept in his mission. The two Jesuits told them plainly to do nothing of the kind, because this proceeding would be scoffed at and ineffectual, [Page 271] as having been suggested. They wished, then, to ask that at least the chapel and the house of the missionary be preserved, in order that the best instructed person among them might assemble the children and repeat the prayers to them; and that every Sunday and feast-day he might summon those who prayed, — that is to say, the Christians, — by the ringing of the bell, to fulfill as well as possible the duties of religion. They did, in fact, make such a request, and obtained what they asked.

Meanwhile, the Procurator of the King relaxed a little in his severity. About the same time he received in a single day four letters from Monsieur Bobé, the commissary, who begged him to moderate his zeal, and allowed the Jesuits to live together with their brethren, the curés of the French. They were closely crowded there, in a house that was built for only one man. Their rooms had been opened, in order that each one might be able to take out his mattress and blankets, which they spread upon the floor in the house of the curé. This way of taking their rest, which lasted nearly a month, prepared them for the voyage which they were soon to make upon the Mississippi, for upon the banks of that river one encamps in hardly other fashion. The Jesuits were also permitted to take their clothes and their books, which the decree had left to them. At last, the support of these Fathers was provided for until the time when they should embark to go down to New Orleans. The greater part of the food that was found in their house, was given up to them, and this provision was, in fact, sufficient for the rest of the time that they passed in Illinois. Finally, it came to making the inventory; time [Page 273] was necessary to collect and put in order the furniture of a large house, the chattels of an important estate, and the cattle scattered in the fields and woods. Besides, there was reason for not hurrying too much; the longer the delays the better they paid those who were employed in that task. During this long execution, the people of the country were reasoning upon what was taking place before their eyes. The news of the condemnation of the Jesuits had made the savages groan; it threw most of the French people into consternation, and was regarded as a public calamity. Parishioners justly attached to their pastor saw themselves upon the point of losing him, without even a thought being given to providing a successor to him. There was no delay in presenting, in the name of nearly all the habitants, a petition addressed to the commandant and the commissary of the country, in order to secure the retention of at least Father Aubert, the curé of French Cascakias; and as the answer seemed to be deferred too long a time, a little while afterward a second petition was sent. While waiting for an answer to this, the more intelligent of the habitants asked by what right the government had taken possession of the property of the Jesuits; and what power it had over their persons in a country ceded by the treaty of peace to the crown of England. It was also asked by what reason the Jesuits were excepted from the privilege, granted without distinction to all the habitants of Illinois, of having eighteen months to choose either to remain in this country, or to go elsewhere. Above all, they were indignant at the

seizure made of the sacred vessels of a chapel belonging to the Hurons [Page 275] of Detroit, which Father Salleneuve, missionary to that nation, had brought to the Illinois country when he had taken refuge there, two and a half years before. There was another cause for astonishment: this Father, who had come from Detroit, and Father de la Morinie, from the post of Saint Joseph, did not belong to Louisiana, but to Canada; it was extreme want that had obliged them to withdraw to the country of the Illinois, and they had remained there only for lack of the necessary opportunities to return to their posts. Father Salleneuve had no work in the Illinois mission, and Father de la Morinie had only taken charge of the church of Sainte Geneviève through the motive of a zeal that refuses itself to nothing; it was plain that the council of New Orleans ought to have neither known nor thought of them. But those who had the authority in Illinois did not think thus, and the Jesuits submitted to every interpretation that the officials chose to give to the decree; they did not attempt, they did not say anything for their defense. What could they have done? Protest against the decree and its execution? The notary who would have had to receive their protest was interested in their destruction; he acted as registrar in the execution of the decree; and he did not even keep within the bounds of decorum. Would they have given public notice of their protest? They would assuredly have been treated as people revolting against public authority; they would have been seized, and perhaps placed in irons, as malefactors; orders had been given on that point. In fine, the Jesuits' only care was to carry out the order given them by their superior at New Orleans, or rather to yield to the [Page 277] request which he had made them, in the name of Jesus Christ, to submit to everything, and all to proceed to that town, without regard to any reason which might seem to excuse them from doing so. They remembered that they were disciples of the divine Master who had yielded to him who judged him unjustly, and, as the lamb before his shearer, did not open his mouth. Perhaps, at least for this time, no one was displeased with them for having practiced blind obedience!

They did more: fearing that the requests presented by the habitants might arouse against them the suspicion of an intrigue and of instigating revolt, they wrote to Monsieur the Commandant and to Monsieur the Commissary, urging them not to have any regard to the representations that were being made to them, and to hasten the departure ordered by the decree. But those gentlemen paid less attention to this letter than to the danger of a riot with which they were threatened; and they ordered that Father Aubert, the curé of Cascakias, should remain until the council of New Orleans should decide his case. Meanwhile, the auction was finished; the house, the furniture, the cattle, the lands, had been sold; the slaves were to be taken to New Orleans, to be sold there for the benefit of the king; and the chapel was to be razed by the man to whom the house had been adjudged. The Jesuits were then permitted to reënter their former home, the use of which was, by a clause inserted in the bill of sale, reserved to them until their embarkation. They found it well cleared; nothing was left except the bedsteads and the straw mattresses; and, in order to lodge there [Page 279] they were obliged to borrow from their friends each a chair and a little table. They found their chapel in a still more melancholy condition: after the sacred vessels and the pictures had been taken away, the shelves of the altar had been thrown down; the linings of the ornaments had been given to negresses decried for their

evil lives; and a large crucifix, which had stood above the altar, and the chandeliers, were found placed above a cupboard in a house whose reputation was not good. To see the marks of spoliation in the Chapel, one might have thought that it was the enemies of the Catholic religion who had caused it.

It was at that time that the Jesuits of Illinois saw their associate, Father de Vernay, arrive; he came from the post of Saint Ange, seventy or eighty leagues distant. The order to carry out the decree in regard to him had been sent there also; this order was so exactly followed that from the seizure and sale of his possessions they did not except a little supply of hazelnuts which was found in his house. Meanwhile, Father de Vernay had had the fever for six months; it remained with him until his arrival in France, six months later. This was no reason for deferring his departure; the order to leave had been given, and how would he have remained in a house stripped of furniture and provisions? He set out on his way; it was then the month of November; he had to travel across very wet woods and prairies, exposed to the cold and rain. It was in this condition that Father de Vernay came to join the band of banished missionaries, who were awaiting their embarkation. It was for their advantage that this embarkation was not too long deferred; they had [Page 281] reason to fear the ice, which from the end of November is sometimes found in abundance upon the Mississippi, upon which they were to embark. These pieces of ice, if they happened to crowd together, could soon crush the boat that became surrounded by them; at least they could stop it, and reduce the travelers to a great scarcity of provisions. Finally the day set for the embarkation came; it was the 24th of November. The baggage of the Jesuits did not greatly embarrass the vessel in which they had taken passage; they had only their beds and their clothes in small quantities, with some provisions which they had saved for the voyage; this food served not only for them, but for forty-eight negroes embarked with them. These slaves, who keenly felt the scarcity prevalent throughout the colony, no longer belonged to the Jesuits, having been confiscated for the benefit of the King. But their former masters always preserved the same care in regard to them, and shared quite willingly with these wretches the provisions which they had saved. This charity was then very necessary; the supply of food that had been shipped by the order of the King was very moderate; it had been given as if for a journey of fifteen or twenty days, but, at that season, the journey ought, from the experience of many years, to have been estimated as lasting forty or forty-five days. Fortunately, Monsieur de Volsey, officer of the troops, himself provided for what was lacking; he was in another boat with about twenty Englishmen, whom the savages, who had revolted against them, had captured some months before, and whom they had taken to the Illinois country in order to deliver them to the French. The commandant [Page 283] of fort Chartres then sent them to New Orleans; they all were People with good appetites. Monsieur de Volsey — who, in the capacity of commandant, directed the journey — was careful, every evening after landing, to go into the woods to hunt. The trouble that he took was not fruitless; accompanied by some other hunters, he killed some bears and wild cattle which supplemented the too moderate provisions.

Monsieur de Volsey had another care. In this winter season, considerable time was necessary to embark and disembark so great a number of slaves, — old men, women, and children; in the evening, upon leaving the boat, they had to climb up the banks of the river, which were high, steep, and slippery, in danger of falling into the Mississippi and drowning there. After having gained the top of the bank, they had to go into the woods with which this river is everywhere bordered, to seek a suitable place in which to encamp; often they did not find one until after they had cleared such a place, all bristling with thickets, brambles, and squine.^[48] It was necessary also to provide a stock of wood sufficient to light and keep up seven or eight great fires during the night : finally, they had to work to protect themselves from the cold by putting up tents, which were very necessary in the most severe season of the year. The Jesuits, very opportunely, had provided themselves with some tents, for themselves and for their slaves, — in the seizure of their furniture, they had been permitted to take this precaution; Monsieur de Volsey, too, always had the kindness to grant the time that was necessary for all these proceedings.

The voyage, which might have been very long, [Page 285] lasted only twenty-seven days, because the weather was not so bad as it usually is at that season. The Jesuits found means to say mass every Sunday and every feast-day. In this journey, which covers about four hundred leagues, one finds only two posts established, — that of Arkansas and that of Pointe Coupée; for the post of the Germans, which is too near the town, is not reckoned here. Passing to Arkansas, a village about one hundred and fifty leagues from Illinois, Monsieur Labaret d’Estrépy, commandant of that post, gave the Jesuits a gracious and honorable welcome; and at Pointe Coupée, Monsieur d’Esmazilières, the captain commanding that post, treated them in the same way. But, above all, Reverend Father Irénée, a Capuchin, who at the same place has charge of a parish of twelve or thirteen leagues in extent, did for their reception all that he could have done for the dearest of his brethren. Finally, at seven or eight leagues from New Orleans, they reached the estate of Monsieur de Maccarty, former lieutenant of the King in that City, who by his kind attentions recalled to their remembrance the benevolence he had always shown at Illinois, where he had been major-commandant- general. After they arrived in the town, he gave them several other tokens of his friendshiPage

But, on departing from that estate, they found themselves in great perplexity. They saw that they were about to enter New Orleans, and they’ did not know where they could lodge; they were unable to enter their old house, knowing well that it was sold and occupied by other masters; and they no longer dared to Count upon their old acquaintances. The Providence of God made provision for this need [Page 287] Monsieur Foucaut, controller of the navy, who had command at New Orleans during the absence of Monsieur the commissary-controller, had learned through Monsieur de Volsey the embarrassment of the Jesuits. He had them come to the government house, where he lived, and directed them to the lodging that he had procured for them at the house of Monsieur le Sassier, assessor of the council. They went thither, and were treated with

much courtesy; this Gentleman even invited them to stay with him until their departure for France.

Meanwhile, the Reverend Capuchin Fathers, hearing of the arrival of the Jesuits, had come at six o'clock in the evening (it was the 21st of December) to the landing-place, to manifest to them the interest that they took in their misfortune, and their intention of rendering them all the kind offices that they could. This was to the Jesuits an urgent motive to go, the next morning, to thank these Fathers, who received them with all the demonstrations by which charity can make itself known. They begged them not to take their meals anywhere else but with them. The Capuchin Fathers could not lodge them in the house where they were; they had rented it, and they themselves were not all lodged there. But the Jesuits took a neighboring house, accepting with great joy the invitation that had been given to them; and, during the six weeks which elapsed before they embarked, there were no marks of friendship which they did not receive from these Reverend Fathers. Touched by deep gratitude, they wished to show it in some manner, and found means for doing so. Their books at New Orleans had been spared to them by provision of the decree issued against them; [Page 289] these formed a little library, valuable in a country newly established, and they prayed the Capuchin Fathers to accept it.

Still other persons of the town, even more distinguished, gave the Jesuits proofs of friendship, which, on this occasion, were not suspected. Monsieur the Procurator-general honored them with a visit, and assured them of the pain that he experienced in discharging toward them a disagreeable duty. A little before their departure, Monsieur d'Albadie, commissary-controller, delivered to them a letter which he had written in their favor to Monsieur the duke de Choiseul, secretary of State for the marine, and which they were to present in person. In this letter he asked, for each one of them, a pension; and, before closing it, he had it read to one of them; in this letter he gave evidence favorable to their conduct.

However, the Jesuits perceived that their departure was desired. The season was disagreeable, it being still the month of January, the time for rough seas. But an entirely new and well-built ship presented itself; it was *La Minerve*, of Bayonne, commanded by Monsieur Balanquet, a famous ship-owner in the last war, and very much esteemed for his integrity. These reasons determined the Jesuits to embark upon this ship. There were two, however, out of their band of six, who parted from them. Father de la Morinie, remembering that he had suffered upon the sea every evil that can be felt there, almost to death itself, postponed his departure until spring, when the sea would be calmer; and Father Meurin asked the Gentlemen of the Council for permission to return to the Illinois. This was a brave resolution, [Page 291] after the sale of all the property of the Jesuits: he could not count upon any fund for his subsistence, the French were under no obligation to him, and the savages have more need of receiving than means for giving; furthermore, the health of this Father was very poor, as it had always been during the twenty-one years which he had spent in Louisiana. But he knew in what danger the Illinois neophytes were of soon forgetting religion if they remained long without missionaries; he therefore

counted as nothing all the other inconveniences, provided he could resume the duties of his mission. His request was granted, and a promise was given to him that a pension of six hundred livres would be asked for him at the court. The four other Jesuits who embarked on the 6th of February had the pleasure of finding themselves in the company of Monsieur the abbé Forget du Verger, of the Missions Étrangères, who came also from the Illinois country, where he was vicar-general for the episcopate of Quebec. During a ten years' sojourn in this country, he had given to the Jesuits a thousand marks of his friendship, and his company aided them much in bearing the trials of the voyage. They had quite favorable weather until they neared the Bahama channel, but it was necessary to pass the famous reef of the martyr's Island. The captain, who was very vigilant, did all that he could to avoid it. For nearly twelve hours he steered to the east; and yet, in spite of this precaution, the ship, borne on by the current, was found toward midnight to be upon the rocks which border the Martyr. The shock experienced when the ship struck was terrible; a craft less strong would have been shattered, or at least its seams would have opened [Page 293] *La Minerve* did not take in an inch of water more than usual. The people had recourse to prayer, and many vows were made. At sunrise, we were already at a little distance from the rocks; all day we beat from one Shore to the other, and in the evening we had forty-five brasses of water, and soon afterward could no longer find bottom. Our people took breath, and the next day we sang the *Te Deum* as an act of thanksgiving. All the rest of the voyage was quite calm, except the day and night of the 6th of March on the eve of which Saint Elmo's fire had announced bad weather; the tempest was violent and extended so far that at Bayonne, a thousand leagues distant from the ship, it was equally felt.

Finally, on the 6th of April, *La Minerve* entered the roadstead of Saint Sebastian, in Spain, because the weather did not permit her to proceed to the Bar of Bayonne. The Jesuits of the college at Saint Sebastian received the French missionaries with the kindness that one naturally feels toward strangers, especially when one sees them unjustly persecuted. These Fathers were greatly astonished that persecution had gone into the midst of North America in search of missionaries who were there only to convert unbelievers and to maintain the French in the practice of religion and piety. Another cause of astonishment for them was what has already been mentioned, "What claims could France have upon subjects ceded to the crown of England by the treaty of peace?" To this astonishment of the Spanish Fathers succeeded, in turn, the surprise of the recently- arrived Jesuits. They had been sent to France, and they saw their brethren of France, banished from the kingdom, now coming to Spain; but they [Page 295] were informed of the decrees of the parliament of Paris, and of others, which had ordered this exile against those who would not consent to become apostates by abjuring the institute. They saw, two days afterward, the arrival of Father Nektous, the last provincial of the Jesuits of Guyenne. This was for them a new embarrassment; how present themselves at the frontiers of France, when their brethren were being driven thence? They reassured themselves, however, and remembered that they were the bearers of a letter addressed to Monsieur the duke de Choiseul, and that they were to present it themselves. They resolved, therefore, to cross the Pyrenees, and at Saint Jean de Luz they found three Jesuits who were making their way to Spain. The two

eldest were nearly eighty years of age; the third, who was Young, was charged with conducting the two old men across the mountains. Their calmness and cheerfulness were for the missionaries of America an incentive which encouraged them to continue the new journey which they had undertaken. They reached Bayonne on the eve of Palm Sunday; they there found various bands of their fugitive brethren, who were seeking refuge in Spain; all were welcomed with the greatest kindness by Monseigneur the bishop of Bayonne. This prelate did them the honor of giving them, on the day of Holy Thursday in the cathedral, the communion with his own hand, after Messieurs the Canons of that Church; and on the next day he received twelve of them at his own table. He has given them since then, various other proofs of his kindness. The Jesuits received such tokens also from many other persons, but especially from Monsieur the baron [Page 297] d'Orjol, during their sojourn at Bayonne, which lasted two weeks. This Gentleman hardly left them at all, and rendered them all the kind offices that they could have expected from a most zealous member of their own order. On leaving Bayonne, the Jesuits of Louisiana obtained a passport from Monsieur the marquis d'Amou, commandant in that town; this is a precaution which strangers are obliged to use, in order to enter the kingdom and to travel there with safety. The Jesuits regarded themselves henceforth as strangers in France, and they wished to protect themselves from any bad treatment that might befall them. At Bordeaux they found also a great number of their brethren, who were uncertain of their fate, and who feared that the parliament of that town would follow the example that the parliament of the Capital had just set; they mutually consoled one another over their adventures.

Until then, the four Jesuits of Louisiana had journeyed together; upon leaving that town they separated, and each proceeded to the province whither his private affairs led him. Two joined each other again at Paris. Upon their different routes they still found many persons who gave them proofs of friendship, especially at Orleans, — where, as had happened at Bordeaux, the Reverend Carthusian Fathers renewed toward them the evidences of attachment which at all times their holy order has shown toward the Jesuits. But everywhere the same surprise was expressed that the cession made to the English had not protected the Jesuits. People were still more astonished at their calmness in regard to past events, and to the troubles that they had to fear for the future. It is [Page 299] true, they realized the difficulty of finding places of refuge suitable for them, and, at the same time, the means of subsistence; but they put their confidence in the Providence of God, who, up to that time, had not abandoned them; and they were inwardly persuaded that, when the help of man fails, it is then that the beneficent hand of the Lord makes itself better felt.

Finally, having arrived at Paris, they received, although they were not known there, the same tokens of friendship that had been shown them throughout their journey. Persons of different conditions, even the most distinguished, at all times attached to the Jesuits, signaled themselves on this occasion by new proofs of their kindness. After a time, they all repaired to Versailles, to present to Monsieur the duke de Choiseul the letter entrusted to them; but, as the day appointed for his first audience was still very distant, they had this

letter delivered in the ordinary way, and withdrew to the places where they hoped to receive the assistance that justice demanded for them.

I believe, Monsieur, that I have exactly fulfilled the promise that I made you at the beginning of this letter, not to deviate from the truth; nor do I think, besides, that there is anything herein at which any one has the right to be offended; you may, therefore, communicate it to all those who shall desire to see it.

I have the honor to be, etc.

Paris, September 3, 1764. [Page 301]

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LETTER OF FATHER SÉBASTIEN LOUIS MEURIN TO MONSEIGNEUR BRIAND,
BISHOP OF QUEBEC.

On the 26th of last august, 1767, I received your first letters, by which you did me the honor of appointing me your vicar-general in This part of your diocese. At the same time, I received your mandates regarding the jubilee and the preface of the holy trinity, etc.

On the 29th of january, 1768, I received your second letters, confirming the first. I would almost wish that my self-esteem might prevent me from telling you, Monseigneur, that I am as unworthy as any one can be of the honor which you confer on me; and more than ever incapable of such an office, of which I know but the name. I have never been acquainted with any jurisprudence, either notarial, pontifical, or any other. I have been too long left to myself, and I barely know the duties of a simple priest. It is no longer possible for me to learn anything else.

My letters of last spring must have omitted to inform you of my age, and of my weakness of body and mind. I retain only a small portion of weak judgment, have no memory, and possess still less firmness. I Need a guide both for the soul and for the body; for my eyes, my ears, and my legs are likewise very feeble. I am no longer good for anything but to be laid in the ground. I trust [Page 33] Monseigneur, that you Will be good enough to forgive me for having neither carried nor sent your graces and favors to new orleans, according to your letters and instructions, — of which I have thought proper to let even our dear ursulines remain ignorant, lest they might have occasion for sorrow, which they do not deserve.

How would I have been received there after having stated over my own signature (in order to obtain permission to return to the Illinois) that I would always act as vicar of the Reverend Capuchin Fathers, — subject to their visits, their reprimands, and corrections, and to their jurisdiction, etc., which was to be the only one throughout the missisipi country? Although I might have subscribed to all that before Monsieur the procurator-general of the King, solely for such time as the future jurisdiction should be real and established, — compelling them to admit before the magistrate that as yet they possessed it not, and could not convey any portion of it to me, — I would not have been better

received. Here is the proof. As soon as they heard, through the voyageurs, that you had honored me with the appointment of vicar-general, a warrant of proscription was issued against me; and it would have been executed had I not, on being warned thereof by a friend in authority, escaped from it by withdrawing to english territory. There, on at once taking the oath of allegiance as a former resident, I secured myself against the spanish prosecutions, — which declare that I am a criminal because I have received jurisdiction from quebec, which is so opposed to the intentions and interests of Spain, etc.

There is another instance of opposition to your [Page 35] letters, Monseigneur, of which I must not allow you to remain in ignorance, — all the more so that I have been assured that a complaint would be made to his excellency, Monsieur de gages, governor-general for his Britannic majesty. About a month ago, having learned that Sieur jautard (second purchaser of the property of the mission of ste. famille among the Kaskias, sold to sieur Lagrange by monsieur forget, vicar-general of your predecessor, and missionary curate in the said parish, etc.) was bargaining to resell it to an englishman, I went to oppose the sale on behalf of the gentlemen of your Seminary, who claim this property as still belonging to them, through its having been sold, without their power of attorney and without their knowledge, by the person who was but the steward thereof. I also undertook to support by the use of your name, Monseigneur, my contention for the preservation of all property belonging to the Churches for their maintenance and that of the missionaries whom You deign to employ. Mr. forbés, the commandant (there is no civil government here as yet), asked me for the letters containing my commission; I showed him your letters, and those of Monsieur the superior. As regards the letters conferring the appointment of Vicar-general, he replied that, inasmuch as Monsieur de gâges had given no instructions respecting the episcopacy and the office of vicar-general, he could not take cognizance of them; and that this seemed purely a scheme on your part and mine. He therefore expressly forbade me to use the letters, or to assume the title of vicar-general in any letter, or deed, or in public, until he should receive an answer from his general regarding both your jurisdiction in the country, and [Page 37] the Kaskias property. He promised me, however, that the latter should not be offered for sale until then. Sieur jautard goes to Canada, and thence to new york or london, to obtain release from the possession of the said estate. The land at fort Chartres is also, for the same reason, in danger of being carried away by the river. I have caused to be removed, and conveyed to la prairie du rocher, the [*illegible word in MS.*] of Monsieur gagnon and reverend Father luc, a recollet, worthy missionaries. This is all I could do.

There is also, in this village of the Kaskias, the property of the jesuits which was unjustly seized, confiscated, and sold by the french government after the cession of the country to england, If your lordship or Your missionaries in Canada wish to revindicate it. As for myself, I ask nothing: I am too old. But I would always be grieved to see the chapel and Cemetery profaned, being used as a garden and storehouse by the english, who rent them from Sieur Jean Baptiste Bauvais — who, under the decree of confiscation and the contract of sale and purchase of the property, etc., was obliged to demolish the chapel and leave its site and that of the cemetery uncultivated under the debris. He says that the subdelegate, the executor of the decree, has since sold the property to him. By what Right?

The presses used for the vestments and sacred vessels are now used in his apartments, as well as the altar-cruets and the floor, etc.

My continual reproaches to him on that score have kept him away from me and from the sacraments for three years. I beg you to give me a decision on this, and to say whether, in case of his presenting [Page 39] himself to me or to another, he can be granted absolution and be dispensed from handing over the said articles to the parish church. That is my only request; for I believe that he bought the remainder in good faith — but not the chapel and its furniture, which, according to the decree, were to be destroyed and burned. I beg you to decide as judge or supreme authority.

During the four years while I have ministered to these english parishes, I have received no tithes therefrom: I have received naught but what was given me out of charity by some, and the fees for masses. I have always exhorted them to pay the Tithes to the fabrique, for the support of the Churches and of the missionary, when one comes. They, I mean the rich ones, have always claimed that they owe nothing when there is no resident pastor. I beg you to decide the Case; otherwise, three missionaries would be unable to live in a suitable manner, or would be compelled to leave some villages abandoned. I shall soon be unable to do anything more. Threatened beforehand, as I am, with being cast out when others come, I wish all the more ardently for them. I have always had the poor on my side. Priests Will be at least as charitable as they, and God Will assist me through them; or, if he prefer, — and that would be more advantageous for me, — he Will cause me to share his abandonment. If you deem advisable, you Will assign me a place or a corner in one of the clergy-houses of the country, for which I tender you in advance my most humble thanks, — happy if I can have the consolation of Christians, dying with Jesus Christ in the hands of one of his ministers. [Page 41]

This is on the supposition that the government would suffer my presence there; for Father harding, the superior in Philadelphia, wrote me last autumn that there were warnings and signs that the Jesuits were about to be treated in england as in france, Spain, Portugal, and prussia, and he bade me fare-well, fearing that he would have no other opportunity of doing so. Why am I not a great enough enemy of the devil to deserve such a treatment for the 3rd time? I forgot last year to ask you whether in the public prayers, at the benediction, etc., The orison *pro rege*, etc., is said, and the *Te deum*, if occasion arise. The question is asked Whether, — this has not hitherto happened, — when oaths are administered, roman catholics can swear on the protestant bible, owing to the falsities in it, etc. The protestants are often present at our holy mysteries, masses, and benedictions, standing during the time of the adoration, Elevation, and Benediction of the blessed sacrament, and also when it is carried to the sick, etc. The first two commandants, Messieurs Sterling and farmar, [*illegible word in MS.*] prayer, had forbidden their people to attend our prayers, — at least, unless they were willing to do as the roman catholics did. You can perhaps obtain the same order from the government. Our last two commandants in no wise resemble the first two. They forbade me to marry any one without a license, for which Mr. Reed charged 6 piasters, — five being for him, and one for his secretary. The present one charges only for

the secretary. Is it the custom in Canada not to marry Catholics without the permission of the magistrate, or of the commandant who fills his office?

Since the english have taken possession of this [Page 43] Country there has been as yet no procession of the blessed sacrament [*illegible word in MS.*] on the other side French Spanish, and english). This year, at the request of the habitants, I asked messieurs the commandants to allow the militia to turn out under arms as is the custom among roman catholics, to escort the blessed sacrament. This they refused. The weather was not settled; I was indisposed and fatigued, through having had a procession very early on the other Side, at ste. gennevieve, Here I had one only in the church, and likewise on the day of the octave. Is it the custom in canada to parade under arms for that feast, and could you obtain this for us? I have on several occasions been puzzled with reference to the Quebec calendar, and the transfer of feasts, as I have found no one who could instruct me on this point. The only answer Monsieur forget could give us in our difficulties was, that he knew nothing about it, and that Monseigneur the bishop had often been at fault in the matter. 1st. Do feasts transferred to a sunday retain a double, which is marked therefor? 2nd. Do those which have an octave retain it entire, commencing from the day to which the feast is transferred? or is The octave transferred with the feast? If the feast of st. john be transferred to the 27th of june, and its octave come concurrently with the octave of the apostles, which is to have the preference? There are several other difficulties, which I cannot recollect at the moment, but which, as they have been experienced in canada more than here, have already given you an opportunity to decide them. I beg You to communicate your decision to us. I am also ignorant in what Consists the solemnity of the feast [Page 45] whereof the office cannot be celebrated owing to another solemn feast. On a passion sunday can the White vestments be worn for st. Joseph? etc. In what does the solemnity of st. thomas consist, on the sunday before christmas? etc. Monsieur forget assured us that the solemnity consisted not only in abstaining from work, but perhaps also in the vestments lights, sermons, and other things which he did not know. I beg you to decide for us these matters explicitly; for I am very Obtuse and Short-sighted, to say the least, and am quite overcome by the too heavy burden that you have placed on my shoulders. I assure you that I am and will ever be, with the most profound Respect and devotedness, most dutifully of your lordship,

S. L. Meurin,
of the society of Jesus.

At Kaskias, June 11, 1768. [Page 47]