



A Delaware Indian.  
*with his Tomohawk Scalping knife &c.*

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V O Y A G E  
T O  
N O R T H - A M E R I C A :

Undertaken by COMMAND of the present

K I N G of F R A N C E.

C O N T A I N I N G

The Geographical Description and Natural History

O F

C A N A D A and L O U I S I A N A.

W I T H

The C U S T O M S, M A N N E R S, T R A D E and R E L I G I O N  
of the I n h a b i t a n t s ; a D e s c r i p t i o n of the L A K E S and  
R I V E R S, with their N a v i g a t i o n and M a n n e r of p a s s i n g  
the G R E A T C A T A R A C T S.

By F A T H E R *C H A R L E V O I X*.

A L S O,

A D e s c r i p t i o n and N a t u r a l H i s t o r y of the I s l a n d s in the  
W E S T I N D I E S belonging to the different P o w e r s of  
E U R O P E. I l l u s t r a t e d with a N u m b e r of c u r i o u s P R I N T S  
and M A P S not in any other E d i t i o n.

V O L. II.

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LETTER SEVENTEENTH.

*Description of Lake ERIE. Voyage to DETROIT (the STRAIT): A Project of a Settlement in this Place: How it failed. The Commandant of the Fort de PONTCHARTRAIN holds a Council, and on what Occasion. The Games of the Savages.*

MADAM, *Fort de Pontchartrain at Detroit, June 8.*

I Departed the 27th from the Entrance of the Lake *Erië*, after I had closed my last Letter, and though it was very late, I went three Leagues that Day by the Favour of a good Wind, and of the finest Weather in the World: The Route is to keep to the North Coast, and it is a hundred Leagues. From *Niagara*, taking to the South, it is much more pleasant, but longer by half. Lake *Erië* is a hundred Leagues long from East to West: Its Breadth from North to South is thirty, or thereabouts. The Name it bears is that of a Nation of the *Huron* Language settled on its Border, and which the *Iroquois* have entirely destroyed. *Erië* means *Cat*, and the *Eriës* are

named in some Relations *the Nation of the Cat*. This Name comes probably from the great Number of these Animals that are found in this Country: They are bigger than our's, and their Skins are much valued. Some Modern Maps have given Lake *Erie* the Name of *Conti*; but this Name is disused, as well as those of *Condi*, *Tracy*, and *Orleans*, formerly given to Lake *Huron*, the *Upper Lake*, and Lake *Michigan*.

The 28th I went nineteen Leagues, and found myself over-against the *Great River*, which comes from the East, in forty two Degrees, fifteen Minutes. Nevertheless, the great Trees were not yet green. This Country appeared to me to be very fine. We made very little Way the 29th, and none at all the 30th. We embarked the next Day about Sun-rise, and went forward apace. The first of *June*, being *Whit-Sunday*, after going up a pretty River almost an Hour, which comes a great Way, and runs between two fine Meadows, we made a Portage about sixty Paces, to escape going round a Point which advances fifteen Leagues into the Lake; they call it the *Long Point*: It is very sandy, and produces naturally many Vines. The following Days I saw nothing remarkable; but I coasted a charming Country, that was hid from Time to Time by some disagreeable Skreens, but of little Depth. In every Place where I landed, I was enchanted with the Beauty and Variety of a Landscape, bounded by the finest Forest in the World: Besides this, Water-Fowl swarmed every where: I cannot say there is such Plenty of Game in the Woods; but I know that on the South Side there are vast Herds of wild Cattle.

If one always travelled, as I did then, with a clear Sky, and a charming Climate, on a Water as bright as the finest Fountain, and were to meet every where with safe and pleasant Encampings, where one might find all Manner of Game at little Cost, breathing at one's Ease a pure Air, and enjoying the Sight of the finest Countries, one would be tempted to travel all one's Life. It put me in Mind of those antient Patriarchs who had no fixed Abode, dwelt under Tents, were in some Manner Masters of all the Countries they travelled over, and peaceably enjoyed all their Productions, without having  
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the Trouble which is unavoidable in the Possession of a real Domain. How many Oaks represented to me that of *Mamré*? How many Fountains made me remember that of *Jacob*? Every Day a new Situation of my own chusing; a neat and convenient House set up and furnished with Necessaries in a Quarter of an Hour, spread with Flowers always fresh, on a fine green Carpet; and on every Side plain and natural Beauties, which Art had not altered, and which it cannot imitate. If these Pleasures suffer some Interruption, either by bad Weather, or some unforeseen Accident, they are the more relished when they re-appear.

If I had a Mind to moralize I should add, these Alternatives of Pleasures and Disappointments, which I have so often experienced since I have been travelling, are very proper to make us sensible that there is no Kind of Life more capable of representing to us continually that we are only on the Earth like Pilgrims; and that we can only use, as in passing, the Goods of this World; that a Man wants but few Things; and that we ought to take with Patience the Misfortunes that happen in our Journey, since they pass away equally, and with the same Celerity. In short, how many Things in travelling make us sensible of the Dependence in which we live upon Divine Providence, which does not make Use of, for this Mixture of Good and Evil, Mens Passions, but the Vicissitude of the Seasons which we may foresee, and of the Caprice of the Elements, which we may expect of Course. Of Consequence how easy is it, and how many Opportunities have we to merit by our Dependence on, and Resignation to the Will of God? They say commonly that long Voyages do not make People religious; but nothing, one would think, should be more capable of making them so, than the Scenes they go through.

The fourth we were stopped a good Part of the Day on a Point which runs three Leagues North and South, and which they call *Pointe Pelée* (*Bald Point*): It is, notwithstanding, pretty well wooded on the West Side; but on the East it is only a sandy Soil, with red Cedars, pretty small, and in no great Number. The white Cedar is

of more Use than the red, whose wood is brittle, and of which they can only make small Goods. They say here that Women with Child should not use it for Busks. The Leaves of this Cedar have no Smell, but the Wood has: This is quite the contrary of the white Cedar.—There are many Bears in this Country, and last Winter they killed on the *Point Pélee* alone above four hundred.

The fifth, about four o'clock in the Afternoon, we perceived Land to the South, and two little Islands which are near it: They call them the *Isles des Serpens a Sonnettes* (*Rattle-Snake Islands*); and it is said they are so full of them, that they infect the Air. We entered into the Strait an Hour before Sun-set, and we passed the Night under a very fine Island, called *Ile des Bois blanc* (*of White Wood*). From the *Long Point* to the Strait, the Course is near West; from the Entrance of the Strait to the *Ile St. Claire*, which is five or six Leagues, and from thence to Lake *Huron*, it is a little East by South: So that all the Strait, which is thirty-two Leagues long, is between forty-two Degrees twelve or fifteen Minutes, and forty-three and half North Latitude. Above the *Ile of St. Claire* the Strait grows wider, and forms a Lake, which has received its Name from the Island, or has given its own to it. It is about six Leagues long, and as many wide in some Places.

They say this is the finest Part of *Canada*, and indeed to judge of it by Appearances, Nature has denied it nothing that can render a Country beautiful: Hills, Meadows, Fields, fine Woods of Timber Trees, Brooks, Fountains, and Rivers, and all these of such a good Quality, and so happily intermixed, that one could scarce desire any Thing more. The Lands are not equally good for all Sorts of Grain; but the greatest Part are surprisngly fertile, and I have seen some that have produced Wheat eight Years together without being manured. However, they are all good for something. The *Isles* seem to have been placed on Purpose to please the Eye. The Rivers and the Lakes are full of Fish; the Air pure, and the Climate temperate, and very healthful.

Before

Before we arrive at the first Fort, which is on the left Hand, a League below the Isle of *St. Claire*, there are on the same Side two pretty populous Villages, and which are very near each other. The first is inhabited by some *Tionnontatez Hurons*, the same, who, after having a long Time wandered from Place to Place, fixed themselves first at the Fall of *St. Mary*, and afterwards at *Micbillimakinac*. The second is inhabited by some *Pouteouatamis*. On the Right, a little higher, there is a third Village of *Outacuais*, the inseparable Companions of the *Hurons*, since the *Iroquois* obliged them both to abandon their Country. There are no *Christians* among them, and if there are any among the *Pouteouatamis*, they are few in Number. The *Hurons* are all *Christians*, but they have no Missionaries: They say that they chuse to have none; but this is only the Choice of some of the Chiefs, who have not much Religion, and who hinder the others from being heard, who have a long Time desired to have one. •

It is a long Time since the Situation, still more than the Beauty of the Strait, has made us wish for a considerable Settlement here: It was pretty well begun fifteen Years ago, but some Reasons which are kept secret, have reduced it very low. Those who did not favour it said, first, that it brought the Peltry of the North too near the *English*, who selling their Merchandizes to the Savages cheaper than our's, would draw all the Trade to *New York*. Second, that the Lands of the *Strait* are not good, that the Surface to the Depth of nine or ten Inches is only Sand, and under this Sand there is a Clay so stiff, that Water cannot penetrate it: whence it happens that the Plains and the inner Parts of the Woods, are always covered with Water, and that you see in them only little Oaks badly grown, and hard Walnut-Trees; and that the Trees standing always in the Water, their Fruit ripens very late. But to these Reasons they reply, it is true, that in the Environs of Fort *Pontchartrain* the Lands are mixed with Sand, and that in the neighbouring Forests there are some Bottoms that are almost always

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full

\* They have at length given them one for some Years past.



full of Water. Nevertheless, these very Lands have yielded Wheat eighteen Years together without being manured, and one need not go far to find some that are excellent. As for the Woods, without going far from the Fort, I have seen some in my Walks, which are no ways inferior to our finest Forests.

As to what they say, that in making a Settlement at the Strait, we should bring the Fur Trade of the North nearer to the *Englisb*; there is no Person in *Canada* who does not own that we shall never succeed in hindering the Savages from carrying their Merchandize to them, in whatsoever Place we make our Settlements, and whatever Precautions we take, if they do not find the same Advantages with us as they find at *New York*.—I could say many Things to you, Madam, on this Subject; but these Discussions would carry me too far. We will talk of this some Day at our Leisure.

The 7th of *June*, which was the Day after my Arrival at the Fort, M. de *Tonti*, who is the Commandant, assembled the Chiefs of the three Villages I have before mentioned, to communicate to them the Orders he had just received from the Marquis de *Vaudreuil*. They heard him patiently, without interrupting him; and when he had finished, the *Huron* Orator told him in few Words, that they were going to deliberate on what he had proposed to them, and they would return him an Answer in a short Time.—It is the Custom of these People, never to give an Answer directly, when it concerns a Matter of some Importance. Two Days after, they re-assembled in a greater Number at the Commandant's who desired me to be present at this Council with the Officers of the Garrison. *Sagoyathi*, who is called by our *French* People, *the King of the Hurons*, and who is actually the hereditary Chief of the *Tionontatez*, who are the true *Hurons*, was present that Day: But as he is still under Age, he only came for Form: His Uncle, who governs for him, and who is called *the Regent*, was Spokesman, as being the Orator of the Nation: And the Honour of speaking for all, is commonly given by Preference to the *Hurons*, when there are any in a Council. At the first  
Sight

Sight of these Assemblies, one is apt to form a mean Idea of them.—Imagine that you see, Madam, a Dozen of Savages almost naked, their Hair set in as many different Forms, and all ridiculous ; some with lac'd Hats on, and every one a Pipe in his Mouth, and looking like People that have no Thought at all. It is much if any one drops a Word in a Quarter of an Hour, and if they answer him by so much as a Monosyllable : Neither are there any Marks of Distinction, or Precedency in their Seats. But we are quite of another Opinion, when we see the Result of their Deliberations.

Two Points were considered here, which the Governor had much at Heart. The first was, to make the three Villages be contented without any more Brandy, the Sale of which had been entirely prohibited by the Council of the Marine. The second was, to engage all the Nations to unite with the *French* to destroy the *Outagamis*, commonly called *les Resguards*, (*the Foxes*,) whom they had pardoned some Years before, and who were beginning to commit the same Outrages as before. *M. de Tonti* at first repeated in few Words, by his Interpreter, what he had more fully explained in the first Assembly ; and the *Huron* Orator replied in the Name of the three Villages : He made no Introduction, but went directly to the Business in Hand : He spoke a long Time, and leisurely, stopping at every Article, to give the Interpreter Time to explain in *French* what he had before spoken in his own Language. His Air, the sound of his Voice, and his Action, though he made no Gestures, appeared to me to have something noble and engaging ; and it is certain that what he said, must have been very eloquent ; since from the Mouth of the Interpreter, who was an ordinary Person, deprived of all the Ornaments of the Language, we were all charmed with it. I must own also, that if he had spoken two Hours, I should not have been tired a Moment. Another Proof that the Beauties of his Discourse did not come from the Interpreter, is, that this Man would never have dared to have said of himself all he said to us. I was even a little surpris'd that he had Courage to repeat so faithfully, as he did, certain Matters which must be displeasing to the Commandant.—When the

*Huron* had done speaking, *Onanguicé* the Chief and Orator of the *Pouteouatamis*, expressed in few Words, and very ingeniously, all that the first had explained more at Length, and ended in the same Manner. The *Outaouais* did not speak, and appeared to approve of what the others had spoken.

The Conclusion was, that the *French*, if they pleased, might refuse to sell any more Brandy to the Savages; that they would have done very well if they had never sold them any; and nothing could be imagined more forcible than what the *Huron* Orator said in exposing the Disorders occasioned by this Liquor, and the Injury it has done to all the Savage Nations. The most zealous Missionary could not have said more. But he added, that they were now so accustomed to it, that they could not live without it; from whence it was easy to judge, that if they could not have it of the *French*, they would apply to the *English*. As to what concerned the War of the *Outagamis*, he declared, that nothing could be resolved on but in a general Council of all the Nations who acknowledge *Ononbio* \* for their Father; that they would, without Doubt, acknowledge the Necessity of this War, but they could hardly trust the *French* a second Time; who having re-united them, to help them to extirpate the common Enemy, had granted him Peace without consulting their Allies, who could never discover the Reasons of such a Conduct.

The next Day I went to visit the two Savage Villages which are near the Fort; and I went first to the *Hurons*. I found all the Matrons, among whom was the Grandmother of *Sasteratsi*, much afflicted to see themselves so long deprived of Spiritual Helps. Many Things which I heard at the same Time, confirmed me in the Opinion I had before entertained, that some private Interests were the only Obstacles to the Desires of these good *Christians*. It is to be hoped that the last Orders of the Council of the Marine will remove these Oppositions. *M. de Tonti* assured me that he was going to labour at it effectually †.

Those

\* This is the Name the Savages give the Governor-General.

† The *Hurons* of the Strait have at last obtained a Missionary, who has revived among them their former Fervor.

Those who conducted me to this Village assured me, that without the *Hurons*, the other Savages would be starved. This is certainly not the Fault of the Land they possess: With very little Cultivation it would yield them Necessaries: Fishing alone would supply a good Part, and this requires little Labour. But since they have got a Relish for Brandy, they think of nothing but heaping up Skins, that they may have wherewithal to get drunk. The *Hurons*, more laborious, of more Foresight, and more used to cultivate the Earth, act with greater Prudence, and by their Labour are in a Condition not only to subsist without any Help, but also to feed others; but this indeed they will not do without some Recompence; for amongst their good Qualities we must not reckon Disinterestedness.

I was still better received by the Infidel *Pouteouatamis*, than by the *Christian Hurons*. These Savages are the finest Men of *Canada*: They are moreover of a very mild Disposition, and were always our Friends. Their Chief, *Onanguicé*, treated me with a Politeness which gave me as good an Opinion of his Understanding, as the Speech which he made in the Council: He is really a Man of Merit, and entirely in our Interest.

As I returned through a Quarter of the *Huron* Village; I saw a Company of these Savages, who appeared very eager at Play. I drew near and saw they were playing at the Game of *the Dish*. This is the Game of which these People are fondest. At this they sometimes lose their Rest, and in some Measure their Reason. At this Game they hazard all they possess, and many do not leave off till they are almost stripped quite naked, and till they have lost all they have in their Cabins. Some have been known to stake their Liberty for a Time, which fully proves their Passion for this Game; for there are no Men in the World more jealous of their Liberty than the Savages.

The Game of *the Dish*, which they also call the Game of *the little Bones*, is only play'd by two Persons: Each has six or eight little Bones, which at first I took  
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for Apricot Stones; they are of that Shape and Bigness: But upon viewing them closely, I perceived that they had six unequal Surfaces, the two principal of which are painted, one Black, and the other White, inclining to Yellow. They make them jump up, by striking the Ground, or the Table, with a round and hollow Dish, which contains them, and which they twirl round first. When they have no Dish, they throw the Bones up in the Air with their Hands: If in falling they come all of one Colour, he who plays wins five: The Game is forty up, and they subtract the Numbers gained by the adverse Party. Five Bones of the same Colour win but one for the first Time, but the second Time they win the Game: A less Number wins nothing.

He that wins the Game continues playing: The Loser gives his Place to another, who is named by the Markers of his Side; for they make Parties at first, and often the whole Village is concerned in the Game: Oftentimes also one Village plays against another. Each Party chuses a Marker; but he withdraws when he pleases, which never happens, but when his Party loses. At every Throw, especially if it happens to be decisive, they make great Shouts. The Players appear like People possessed, and the Spectators are not more calm. They all make a thousand Contortions, talk to the Bones, load the Spirits of the adverse Party with Imprecations, and the whole Village echoes with Howlings. If all this does not recover their Luck, the Losers may put off the Party till next Day: It costs them only a small Treat to the Company.

Then they prepare to return to the Engagement. Each invokes his Genius, and throws some Tobacco in the Fire to his Honour. They ask him above all Things for lucky Dreams. As soon as Day appears, they go again to play; but if the Losers fancy that the Goods in their Cabins made them unlucky, the first Thing they do is to change them all. The great Parties commonly last five or six Days, and often continue all Night. In the mean Time, as all the Persons present, at least those who are concerned in the Game, are in an Agitation that deprives them

of

of Reason, as they quarrel and fight, which never happens among the Savages, but on these Occasions, and in Drunkenness, one may judge, if when they have done playing they do not want Rest.

It happens sometimes that these Parties of Play are made by Order of the Physician, or at the Request of the Sick. There needs no more for this Purpose than a Dream of one or the other. This Dream is always taken for the Order of some Spirit; and then they prepare themselves for Play with a great deal of Care. They assemble for several Nights to try, and to see who has the luckiest Hand. They consult their Genii, they fast, the married Persons observe Continnence; and all to obtain a favourable Dream. Every Morning they relate what Dreams they have had, and of all the Things they have dreamt of, which they think lucky; and they make a Collection of all, and put them into little Bags which they carry about with them; and if any one has the Reputation of being lucky, *that is*, in the Opinion of these People, of having a familiar Spirit more powerful, or more inclined to do Good, they never fail to make him keep near him who holds the Dish: They even go a great Way sometimes to fetch him; and if through Age, or any Infirmitv he cannot walk, they will carry him on their Shoulders.

They have often pressed the Missionaries to be present at these Games, as they believe their Guardian Genii are the most powerful. It happened one Day in a *Huron* Village, that a sick Person having sent for a Juggler, this Quack prescribed the Game of *the Dish*, and appointed a Village at some Distance from the sick Person's, to play at. She immediately sent to ask Leave of the Chief of the Village: It was granted: They played; and when they had done playing, the sick Person gave a great many Thanks to the Players for having cured her, as she said. But there was nothing of Truth in all this: On the contrary, she was worse; but one must always appear satisfied, even when there is the least Cause to be so.

The ill Humour of this Woman and her Relations fell upon the Missionaries, who had refused to assist at the Game,

Game, notwithstanding all the Impertunities they used to engage them: And in their Anger for the little Complaisance they shewed on this Occasion, they told them, by Way of Reproach, that since their Arrival in this Country, the Geni of the Savages had lost their Power. These Fathers did not fail to take Advantage of this Confession, to make these Infidels sensible of the Weakness of their Deities, and of the Superiority of the God of the *Christians*. But besides that on these Occasions it is rare that they are well enough disposed to hear Reason, these Barbarians reply coldly, “ You have your Gods, “ and we have our’s: ’Tis a Misfortune for us that they “ are not so powerful as your’s.”

The Strait is one of the Countries of *Canada* where a Botanist might make the most Discoveries. I have already observed, that all *Canada* produces a great many Simples which have great Virtues. There is no Doubt that the Snow contributes greatly to it: But there is in this Place a Variety of Soils; which, joined to the Mildness of the Climate, and the Liberty which the Sun has to warm the Earth more than in other Places, because the Country is more open, gives Room to believe that the Plants have more Virtue here than in any other Place.

One of my Canoe Men lately proved the Force of a Plant, which we meet with every where, and the Knowledge of which is very necessary for Travellers; not for its good Qualities, for I never yet heard that it had any, but because we cannot take too much Care to shun it. They call it the *Plea-Plant*; but this Name does not sufficiently express the Effects it produces. Its Effects are more or less sensible, according to the Constitution of those who touch it. There are some Persons on whom it has no Effect at all; but others, only by looking on it, are seized with a violent Fever, which lasts above fifteen Days, and which is accompanied with a very troublesome Itch on the Hands, and a great Itching all over the Body. It has an Effect on others only when they touch it, and then the Party affected appears all over like a Leger. Some have been known to have lost the Use of their  
Hands

Hands by it. We know no other Remedy for it as yet but Patience. After some Time all the Symptoms disappear.

There grow also in the Strait Lemon-Trees in the natural Soil, the Fruit of which have the Shape and Colour of those of *Portugal*, but they are smaller and of a flat Taste. They are excellent in Conserve. The Root of this Tree is a deadly and very subtil Poision, and at the same Time a soveraign Antidote against the Bite of Serpents. It must be pounded, and applied directly to the Wound. This Remedy takes Effect instantly, and never fails. On both Sides of the Strait the Country, as they say, preserves all its Beauty for about ten Leagues within Land; after which they find fewer Fruit Trees, and not so many Meadows. But at the End of five or six Leagues, inclining towards the Lake *Eris* to the South West, one sees vast Meadows which extend above a hundred Leagues every Way, and which feed a prodigious Number of those Cattle which I have already mentioned several Times.

*I am, &c.*

L E T T E R





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## L E T T E R XVIII.

*Various Remarks on the Character, Customs, and Government of the Savages.*

MADAM, *At DETROIT (the STRAIT), June 14.*

**A**FTE R I had clos'd my last Letter, and given it to a Person who was going down to *Quebec*, I prepar'd myself to continue my Journey, and in Fact, I embark'd the next Day, but I did not go far, and by the Want of Precaution in my Conductors, I am return'd here to Fort *Pontchartrain*, where I fear I shall be oblig'd to stay yet several Days. These are Disappointments which we must expect with the *Canadian* Travellers, they are never in Haſte, and are very negligent in taking their Meaſures. But as we muſt make the beſt of every Thing, I ſhall take Advantage of this Delay, to begin to entertain you with the Government of the Savages, and of their Behaviour in public Affairs. By this Knowledge you will be better able to judge of what I ſhall have Occaſion to ſay to you hereafter; but I ſhall not ſpeak very largely on this Subject: Firſt, becauſe the Whole is not very intereſting: Secondly, becauſe I will write nothing to you but what is ſupported by good Teſtimony, and it is not eaſy to find Perſons whoſe Sincerity is entirely unſuſpected, at leaſt of Exaggeration; or who may not be ſuſpected of having given Credit too lightly to all they heard; or who have Diſcernment enough to take Things in a right View, which requires a long Acquaintance with the Country, and the Inhabitants. I ſhall ſay nothing of my own on this Article, and this will prevent me from following a regular Series in what I ſhall ſay. But it will not be difficult for you to collect and make a pretty regu-

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lar Whole of the Remarks which I shall interperse in my Letters, according as I receive them.

It must be acknowledged, Madam, that the nearer View we take of our Savages, the more we discover in them some valuable Qualities. The chief Part of the Principles by which they regulate their Conduct, the general Maxims by which they govern themselves, and the Bottom of their Character, have nothing which appears barbarous. Furthermore, the Ideas, though quite confused, which they have retained of a first Being; the Traces, tho' almost effaced, of a religious Worship, which they appear to have rendered formerly to this Supreme Deity; and the faint Marks, which we observe, even in their most indifferent Actions of the antient Belief, and the primitive Religion, may bring them more easily than we think, into the Way of Truth, and make their Conversion to *Christianity* to be more easily effected than that of more civilized Nations. In Fact, we learn from Experience, that Policy, Knowledge, and Maxims of State, create in the last an Attachment and a Prejudice for their false Belief, which all the Skill, and all the Zeal of the Labourers of the Gospel have much Pains to overcome. So that there is Need of Grace acting more powerfully on enlightened Infidels, who are almost always blinded by their Presumption, than on those who have nothing to oppose to it but a very limited Knowledge.

The greatest Part of the People of this Continent have a Kind of Aristocratic Government, which varies almost to Infinity. For altho' each Village has its Chief, who is independent of all the others of the same Nation, and on whom his Subjects depend in very few Things; nevertheless, no Affair of any Importance is concluded without the Advice of the Elders. Towards *Acadia* the Sachems were more absolute, and it does not appear that they were obliged as the Chiefs are in almost all other Places, to bestow Bounties on private Persons. On the contrary, they received a Kind of Tribute from their Subjects, and by no Means thought it a Part of their Grandeur to reserve nothing for themselves. But there

is Reason to think that the Dispersion of these Savages of *Acadia*, and perhaps also their Intercourse with the *French*, have occasioned many Changes in their old Form of Government, concerning which *Lescarbot* and *Champlain* are the only Authors who have given us any Particulars.

Many Nations have each three Families, or principal Tribes, as antient, in all Probability, as their Origin. They are nevertheless derived from the same Stock, and there is one, who is looked upon as the *first*, which has a Sort of Pre-eminence over the two others, who stile those of this Tribe *Brothers*, whereas between themselves they stile each other *Cousins*. These Tribes are mixed, without being confounded, each has its distinct Chief in every Village; and in the Affairs which concern the whole Nation, these Chiefs assemble to deliberate thereon. Each Tribe bears the Name of some Animal, and the whole Nation has also one, whose Name they take, and whose Figure is their Mark, or, as one may say, their Coat of Arms. They sign Treaties no otherwise than by tracing these Figures on it, unless some particular Reasons make them substitute others.

Thus the *Huron* Nation is the Nation of the *Porcupine*. Its first Tribe bears the Name of the *Bear*, or of the *Roe-Buck*. Authors differ about this. The two others have taken for their Animals, the *Wolf* and the *Tortoise*. In short, each Village has also its own Animal; and probably it is this Variety which has occasioned so many Mistakes in the Authors of Relations. Furthermore, it is proper to observe, that besides these Distinctions of Nations, Tribes, and Villages, by Animals, there are yet others which are founded upon some Custom, or on some particular Event. For Instance, the *Tionnontatez Hurons*, who are of the first Tribe, commonly call themselves the Nation of *Tobacco*; and we have a Treaty, in which these Savages, who were then at *Michillimakinac*, have put for their Mark the Figure of a Beaver.

The *Iroquois* Nation have the same Animals as the *Huron*, of which it appears to be a Colony; yet with this

Difference, that the Family of the Tortoise is divided into two, which they call the *great* and the *little Tortoise*. The Chief of each Family bears the Name of it, and in public Transactions they never give him any other. It is the same in Respect to the Chief of the Nation, and of each Village. But besides this Name, which is, as I may say, only a Representation, they have another which distinguishes them more particularly, and which is, as it were, a Title of Honour. Thus one is called *the most noble*, another *the most antient*, &c. Lastly they have a third Name which is personal; but I am apt to think that this is only used among the Nations, where the Rank of Chief is hereditary.

The conferring or giving these Titles, is always performed with great Ceremony. The new Chief, or if he is too young, he who represents him, must make a Feast and give Presents, speak the Eulogium of his Predecessor, and sing his Song. But there are some personal Names so famous, that no one dares to assume them; or which, at least, remain a long Time before they are re-assumed: When they do it, they call it, raising from the Dead the Person who formerly had that Name.

In the North, and in all Places where the *Algonquin* Language prevails, the Dignity of Chief is elective; all the Ceremony of the Election and Installation consists in Feasts, accompanied with Dances and Songs. The Chief elected never fails to make the Panegyrick of him whose Place he takes, and to invoke his Genius. Amongst the *Hurons*, where this Dignity is hereditary, the Succession is continued by the Woman's Side; so that at the Death of the Chief, it is not his Son that succeeds him, but his Sister's Son; or, in Case of Failure of such, the nearest Relation by the Female Line. If a whole Branch happens to be extinct, the noblest Matron of a Tribe chuses the Person she likes best, and declares him Chief.

They must be of an Age fit to govern; and if the hereditary Chief is not of Age, they chuse a Regent, who has all the Authority, but who exercises it in the Name of the Minor. In general, these Chiefs do not receive  
any

any great Marks of Respect; and if they are always obeyed, it is because they know how far their Commands will have Force. It is true also, that they entreat or propose, rather than Command, and that they never exceed the Bounds of the little Authority they have. Thus it is Reason that governs; and the Government is the more effectual, as the Obedience is more voluntary, and that there is no Fear of its degenerating into Tyranny.

Besides this, every Family has a Right to chuse themselves a Counsellor, or an Assistant to the Chief, who is to watch over their Interests, and without whose Advice the Chief can undertake nothing. These Counsellors are especially obliged to take Care of the public Treasure, and it belongs to them to direct how it is to be employed. The first Reception of them into this Office, is in a general Council; but they do not give Notice of this to their Allies, as they do in the Election or Installation of a Chief.—In the *Huron* Nations, the Women name the Counsellors, and they often chuse Persons of their own Sex.

This Body of Counsellors or Assistants, is the first of all: The second is that of the Elders; *that is to say*, of all who have attained the Age of Maturity. I could never learn exactly what this Age is. The last is that of the Warriors: It comprehends all that are able to bear Arms. This Body has often at its Head the Chief of the Nation, or of the Village; but he must have distinguished himself first by some brave Action, otherwise he is obliged to serve as a Subaltern; *that is to say*, as a common Soldier, for there is no other Rank in the Armies of the Savages.

A great Party may indeed have several Chiefs, because they give this Title to all those who have ever commanded; but they are not the less subject to the Commander of the Party, a Kind of General without Character, without real Authority, who can neither reward nor punish, whose Soldiers may leave him when they please, without his having a Right to say any Thing to them on that Account, and who nevertheless is scarce ever contradicted. So true is it, that amongst Men who govern themselves by

Reason, and are guided by Honour and a Zeal for their Country, Independence does not destroy Subordination; and that a free and voluntary Obedience is generally the most to be depended on. For the rest, the Qualities required in a War-Chief, are to be fortunate, brave, and disinterested. It is not strange, that they should obey without Difficulty a Man in whom these three Characters are known to be united.

The Women have the principal Authority among all the People of the *Huron* Language, if we except the *Iroquois* Canton of *Onneyouth*, where it is alternate between the Sexes. But if this is their Law, their Practice is seldom conformable to it. In Reality, the Men acquaint the Women only with what they please to let them know, and an important Affair is seldom communicated to them, though all is transacted in their Name, and the Chiefs are only their Lieutenants.

What I told you, Madam, of the Grandmother of the hereditary Chief of the *Hurons* of the Strait, who could never obtain a Missionary for her Village, is a good Proof that the real Authority of the Women is confined to very narrow Limits; yet I have been assured, that they deliberate first on what is proposed in the Council, and afterwards they give the Result of their Deliberation to the Chiefs, who make a Report of it to the general Council, composed of the Elders: But it seems very probable, that all this is done for Form, and with the Restrictions I have mentioned. The Warriors consult also among themselves on every Thing in their Department, but they can conclude nothing of Importance, or that concerns the Nation or the Village. Every Thing must be examined and determined in the Council of the Elders, who give the final Decree.

It must be acknowledged that they proceed in these Assemblies with such Prudence, Maturity, Ability, and, I will also say, for the most Part, such Probity, as would have done Honour to the Areopagus of *Athens*, and the Senate of *Rome*, in the most flourishing Times of those Republics. The Reason is, that they conclude nothing hastily, and that the strong Passions which have made such  
Alterations

Alterations in the Systems of Policy, even amongst *Christians*, have not yet prevailed in these Savages over the Public Good. The Parties concerned do not fail to employ secret Springs, and such Intrigue to accomplish their Designs, that one would scarce believe could enter into the Thoughts of such Barbarians. It is also true, that they possess, in the highest Degree, the great Art of concealing their Proceedings. For the most Part, the Glory of the Nation, and the Motives of Honour, are the chief Springs of all their Undertakings. What we cannot excuse in them, is, that generally they place all their Honour in revenging themselves, and give no Bounds to their Revenge: A Fault which *Christianity* alone can thoroughly reform, and which all our Politeness and our Religion does not always correct.

Each Tribe has its Orator in every Village, and there are few but these Orators who have a Right to speak in the public Councils, and in the general Assemblies. They always speak well, and to the Purpose. Besides that natural Eloquence, which none of those who have been acquainted with them will dispute, they have a perfect Knowledge of the Interests of those who employ them, and a Dexterity in placing their Rights in the fairest Light, that nothing can exceed. On some Occasions, the Women have an Orator, who speaks in their Name, and as if he was solely their Interpreter.

One would think that People, who we may say have no Possessions, either public or private, and who have no Ambition to extend themselves, should have very few Things to adjust with each other. But the Spirit of Man, naturally restless, cannot remain without Action, and is ingenious in finding itself Employment. This is certain, that our Savages negotiate continually, and have always some Affair on the Carpet. There are some Treaties to conclude, or to renew, Offers of Service, mutual Civilities, Alliances they court, Invitations to join in making War, Condolences on the Death of a Chief, or of some considerable Person. All this is done with a Dignity, an Attention, I will even venture to say with an Ability, worthy of the most important Affairs: And they are  
 B 3 sometimes.



sometimes more so than they seem to be; for those they depute for these Purposes, have almost always some secret Instructions, and the apparent Motive of their Deputation is only a Veil that hides another of more Consequence.

The *Iroquois* Nation has for the two last Ages made the greatest Figure in *Canada*. By their Successes in War they have gained over the greatest Part of the other Nations a Superiority, which none of them at present are in a Condition to dispute; and from a peaceable Nation, as they were formerly, they are become very restless and intriguing. But nothing has contributed more to render them formidable, than the Advantage of their Situation; which they soon discovered, and knew very well how to take Advantage of it. Placed between us and the *English*, they soon conceived that both Nations would be obliged to court them; and it is certain that the principal Attention of both Colonies, since their Settlement, has been to gain them, or at least to engage them to remain neuter: Being persuaded on their Part, that if one of these Nations should prevail over the other, they should soon be oppressed, they have found the Secret to balance their Successes; and if we consider that all their Forces joined together have never amounted to more than five or six thousand fighting Men, and that long ago they were diminished above half, one must acknowledge that they could not, with so small a Power, have supported themselves as they have done, but by great Skill and Address.

As to what relates to private Persons, and the particular Concerns of the Villages, these are reduced to a very small Compass, and are soon decided. The Authority of the Chiefs does not extend, or very rarely extends, so far; and generally those who have any Reputation, are employed only for the Public. A single Affair, however trifling it may be, is a long Time under Deliberation. Every Thing is treated of with a great deal of Circumspection, and nothing is decided till they have heard every one who desires it. If they have made a Present under Hand to an Elder, to secure his Vote, they are sure to obtain it when the Present is accepted. It was  
scarce

scarce ever heard that a Savage failed in an Engagement of this Kind; but he does not take it easily, and he never receives with both Hands. The young People enter early into the Knowledge of Business, which renders them serious and mature in an Age in which we are yet Children: This interests them in the Public Good from their early Youth, and inspires them with an Emulation, which is cherished with great Care, and from which there is Reason to expect the greatest Things.

The greatest Defect of this Government, is, that there is no Punishment for Crimes among these People. Indeed this Defect has not the same Consequences here, which it would have with us: The great Spring of our Passions, and the principal Source of the Disorders which most disturb civil Society, *that is to say*, Self-Interest, having scarce any Power over People, who never think of laying up Riches, and who take little Thought for the Morrow,

They may also justly be reproached with their Manner of bringing up their Children. They know not what it is to chastise them: Whilst they are little, they say they have no Reason; and the Savages are not of the Opinion, that Punishment promotes Understanding. When they are old enough to reason, they say that they are Masters of their own Actions, and that they are accountable to no Person for them. They carry these two Maxims so far, as to suffer themselves to be ill used by drunken People, without defending themselves, for Fear of hurting them. If you endeavour to shew them the Folly of this Conduct, they say, *Why should we hurt them? They know not what they do.*

In a Word, these *Americans* are entirely convinced that Man is born free, that no Power on Earth has any Right to make any Attempts against his Liberty, and that nothing can make him Amends for its Loss. We have even had much Pains to undeceive those converted to *Christianity* on this Head, and to make them understand, that in Consequence of the Corruption of our Nature, which is the Effect of Sin, an unrestrained Liberty of do-

ing Evil differs little from a Sort of Necessity of committing it, considering the Strength of the Inclination, which carries us to it; and that the Law which restrains us brings us nearer to our first Liberty, in seeming to deprive us of it. Happily for them, Experience does not make them feel in many material Articles all the Force of this Bias, which produces in other Countries so many Crimes. Their Knowledge being more confined than our's, their Desires are still more so. Being used only to the simple Necessaries of Life, which Providence has sufficiently provided for them, they have scarce any Idea of Superfluity.

After all, this Toleration, and this Impunity, is a great Disorder. There is also another, in the Defect of Subordination, which appears in the Public, and still more so in Domestic Concerns, where every one does what he pleases; where the Father, Mother, and Children, often live like People met together by Chance, and who are bound by no Obligations to each other; where the young People treat of the Affairs of the Family without communicating any Thing of it to their Parents, no more than if they were Strangers; where the Children are brought up in an entire Independence, and where they accustom themselves early not to hearken either to the Voice of Nature, or the most indispensable Duties of Society.

If in the Nations that are most prudently governed, and which are restrained by the Reins of a most holy Religion, we still see some of those Monsters which are a Disgrace to Human Nature, they at least create Horror, and the Laws suppress them: But what is only the Crime of a private Person, when it is attended with Punishment, becomes the Crime of the Nation that leaves it unpunished, as even Parricide itself is among the Savages. Were it still more uncommon than it is, this Impunity is a Blot which nothing can efface, and which appears entirely barbarous. There are, however, in all this, some Exceptions, which I shall mention presently; but, in general such is the Spirit that prevails among our Savages.

They are not only persuaded that a Person who is not in his right Senses is not to be reprimanded, or at least not

to be punished; but they imagine also, that it is unworthy of a Man to defend himself against a Woman or a Child; but it is always understood, where there is no Danger of Life, or of being maimed; yet in this Case, if it is possible, they get away. But if a Savage kills another belonging to his Cabin, if he is drunk, (and they often counterfeit Drunkenness when they intend to commit such Actions) all the Consequence is, that they pity and weep for the Dead. *It is a Misfortune, (they say) the Murderer knew not what he did.*

If he did it in cool Blood, they readily conclude that he had good Reasons for coming to this Extremity: If it is plain he had none, it belongs to those of his Cabin, as the only Persons concerned, to punish him: They may put him to Death, but they seldom do it; and if they do, it is without any Form of Justice; so that his Death has less the Appearance of a lawful Punishment than the Revenge of a private Person. Sometimes a Chief will be glad of the Opportunity to get rid of a bad Subject. In a Word, the Crime is not punished in a Manner that satisfies Justice, and which establishes the public Peace and Safety.

An Assassination which affects several Cabins, would always have bad Consequences. Oftentimes there needs no more to set a whole Village in a Flame, and even a whole Nation: For which Reason, on these Occasions, the Council of the Elders neglect no Means to reconcile the Parties betimes; and if they succeed, it is commonly the Public who make the Presents, and take all the Measures to appease the Family offended. The speedy Punishment of the Guilty, would at once put an End to the Affair; and if the Relations of the Dead can get the Murderer in their Power, they may punish him as they please; but the People of his Cabin think it is not for their Honour to sacrifice him; and often the Village, or the Nation, does not think it proper to constrain them to do it.

I have read in a Letter of Father *Brebeuf*, who lived amongst the *Hurons* that they used to punish Murder in this Manner. They laid the dead Body upon Poles, the

the Top of a Cabin, and the Murderer was obliged to remain several Days together, and to receive all that dropt from the Carcase, not only on himself, but also on his Food, which they set by him; unless by a considerable Present to the Cabin of the Deceased, he obtained the Favour of having his Food freed from this Poison; but the Missionary does not say, whether this was done by public Authority, or whether it was only done by Way of Reprisal by the Persons concerned, when they could get the Murderer in their Power. However this may be, the most common Means used by the Savages to make Amends to the Relations of a Person murdered, is to supply his Place by a Prisoner of War; in this Case the Captive is almost always adopted: He takes Possession of all the Rights of the Deceased, and soon makes them forget him whose Place he supplies. But there are some odious Crimes which are immediately punished with Death, at least among some Nations, amongst which are Sorceries.

Whoever is suspected of Sorcery is safe no where; they even make them undergo a Sort of Torture, to oblige them to discover their Accomplices, after which they are condemned to the Punishment of Prisoners of War; but the Consent of his Family is first asked, which they dare not refuse. Those who are least culpable are knocked on the Head before they are burnt. They treat much in the same Manner those that dishonour their Families, and commonly it is the Family that executes the Delinquent.

Among the *Hurons*, who were much inclined to steal, and who did it so dexterously, that our most skillful Pickpockets would think it an Honour to them, it was allowed when they found out the Thief, not only to take from him again what he had stolen, but also to carry away every Thing that was in his Cabin, and to strip him, his Wife and Children, quite naked, without his having the Liberty to make the least Resistance. And to prevent all the Disputes which might arise on this Subject, they agreed on certain Points which they have always observed. For Instance, every Thing found, tho' it had been lost but a Moment, belonged to the Person that found it, provided

vided the Lofer had not claimed it before. But if they discovered the least unfair Dealing on the Part of the Finders, they were obliged to restore it, which sometimes occasioned Disputes that were pretty difficult to decide: The following is a singular Instance of this Kind.

A good old Woman, whose whole Stock consisted in a Collar of Porcelain, or Shells, which was worth about fifty Crowns, carried it always with her in a little Bag, One Day as she was working in the Field, she hung her Bag upon a Tree; another Woman who perceived it, and who longed very much to snatch her out of her Collar, thought it a favourable Opportunity to get it without being accused of Theft: She never lost Sight of it, and in an Hour or two, the old Woman being gone into the next Field, she ran to the Tree and began to cry out, that she had made a good find. The old Woman at this Cry turned her Head, and said the Bag belonged to her; that it was she who hung it to the Tree, that she had neither lost nor forgot it, and that she intended to take it again when she had done her Work. The other Party replied, that there was no judging of Intentions, and that having quitted the Field without taking again her Bag, one might naturally conclude, she had forgot it.

After many Disputes between these two Women, between whom there passed nevertheless not the least disobliging Word, the Affair was carried before an Arbitrator, who was the Chief of the Village, and this was his Decree: "To judge strictly, says he, the Bag belongs to her that found it; but the Circumstances are such, that if this Woman will not be taxed with Avarice, she must restore it to her that claims it, and be contented with a small Present, which the other is indispensibly obliged to make her:" The two Parties submitted to this Decision; and it is proper to observe, that the Fear of being noted for Avarice, has as much Influence on the Mind of the Savages, as the Fear of Punishment would have, and that in general these People are governed more by Principles of Honour than by any other Motive. What I have further to add, Madam, will give you another Proof of this: I have said before, that to hinder

der the Consequences of a Murder, the Public takes upon itself to make the Submissions for the Guilty, and to make Amends to the Parties concerned: Would you believe that even this has more Power to prevent these Disorders than the severest Laws? But this is certainly true: For as these Submissions are extremely mortifying to Men whose Pride surpasses all Description, the Criminal is more affected by the Trouble which he sees the Public suffer on his Account, than he would be for himself; and a Zeal for the Honour of the Nation restrains these Barbarians much more powerfully, than the Fear of Death or Punishments.

But it is very certain, that Impunity has not always prevailed amongst them as it has done in these latter Times, and our Missionaries have still found some Traces of the antient Rigour with which they used to suppress Crimes. Theft in particular was looked upon as a Blow which dishonoured a Family, and every one had a Right to wash away the Stain with the Blood of the Delinquent. Father *Brebeuf* one Day saw a young *Huron* who was killing a Woman with a Club; he ran to him to prevent it, and asked him why he committed such Violence, "She is my Sister, replied the Savage, she is guilty of Theft, and I will expiate by her Death, the Disgrace she has brought upon me and all my Family." My Letter is just now called for, and I conclude with my Assurances of being,

*Yours, &c.*

LETTER

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## L E T T E R   X I X .

*Voyage from DETROIT (the STRAIT) to MICHILLIMAKINAC. Description of the Country. Of the MARRIAGES of the SAVAGES.*

MADAM,                      MICHILLIMAKINAC, *June 30.*

**I**T was the 18th of this Month that I at length departed in good earnest from the Fort of *Pontchartrain* at *Detroit*, a little before Sun-set. I had scarce gone a League, when a Storm, accompanied with a Deluge of Rain, obliged me to go ashore very wet, and we passed the Night very unpleasantly. The next Day all I could do was to cross the Lake of *St. Claire*, though this Passage is but four Leagues. The Country appeared to me good on both Sides. At half Way we leave upon the left Hand a River which is at least a hundred Paces wide at its Mouth. They call it the *Huron's River*, because these Savages took Refuge here during the War with the *Iroquois*. On the Right, and almost opposite, there is another, the Entrance of which is twice as wide, and which they go up eighty Leagues without meeting any Fall, which is rare in the Rivers of this Country. I could not learn its Name.

The Route to Fort *Detroit*, from the End of the Traverse, is East North East; from thence we turn to the North by the East, even to the South for four Leagues, at the End of which on the Right hand we find a Village of *Missisaguez*, situate on a fruitful Soil at the Entrance of some very fine Meadows, and in the most agreeable Situation that can be seen. From thence to Lake *Huron* they reckon twelve Leagues, and the Country is all the  
Way



Way charming. It is a magnificent Canal as straight as a Line, bordered with lofty Woods, divided by fine Meadows, and sprinkled with Islands, some of which are pretty large. We steer here North North East, and at the Entrance of Lake *Huron*, the Course is North for twelve Leagues further.

In crossing Lake *St. Claire*, I had in my Canoe a young Savage strong and vigorous, and on the Strength of whose Arms I much depended, in granting him the Passage which he asked of me; but he gave me little Assistance. In Recompence he diverted me much, till a Storm which rose over our Heads, began to make me uneasy. This young Man had been at his Toilet before he embarked, and he did not give three Strokes with his Oar, but he took his Looking Glafs to see if the Motion of his Arms had not disordered the dressing of his Hair; or if the Sweat had not altered the Figures he had drawn on his Face with Red, and other Colours, with which he had painted himself.

I know not whether he did not hope to arrive at the Village of the *Missifaguez* before Night, to be present at some Feast, but we could not go so far. The Storm began just as we got to an Island at the End of the Traverse of the Lake, and we were forced to stay there. The young Savage however did not appear to be much disconcerted at this Disappointment, for these People are easily reconciled to every Accident: Perhaps also he only intended to shew himself to us in all his Finery; but if this was his Design he lost his Labour, I had seen him a few Days before in his natural Appearance, and liked him much better than with this odd Mixture of Colours, which had cost him so much Pains. We see few Women paint their Faces here, but the Men, and especially the young ones, are very curious in this Ornament: There are some who employ half a Day in painting themselves in this Manner only to go from Door to Door to be looked at, and who return mightily satisfied with themselves, tho' Nobody has said a Word to them.

We

We entered Lake *Huron* the twentieth, about ten in the Morning. And we presently had the Diversion of fishing for Sturgeon. The next Day, in Spite of the Thunder, which grumbled all the Day, but which was satisfied with threatening us, I advanced near twenty-five Leagues on the Lake, but the twenty-third a thick Fog, which hindered us from seeing four Paces before our Canoe, obliged us to go more slowly, because we failed on a rocky Bottom, which in many Places is not covered with half a Foot Water: It extends a great Way into the Lake, and is ten Leagues long: Our *Canadians* call it *les Pays Plats*, (*the flat Country.*)

The next Day we gained the Bay of *Saguinam*, which is five or six Leagues wide at the Mouth, and thirty deep. The *Outaouais* have a Village in the Bottom of this Bay, which they say is a very fine Country. From thence to *Michillimakinac* we see nothing fine, no more Vines, bad Woods, and very little Game. Ten Leagues above the Bay of *Saguinam*, we see two pretty large Rivers a League distant from each other, and four or five Leagues farther the Bay of *Tonnerre* (*Thunder Bay*,) which is three Leagues wide at its Entrance, and has but little Depth.

*Michillimakinac* † is 43° 30 Minutes North Latitude, and the Course which is a 100 Leagues from the Mouth of the Strait, coasting the West Side of Lake *Huron*, is almost North. I arrived the twenty-eighth at this Post, which is much declined since *M. de la Motte Cadillac* drew to *Detroit* the greatest Part of the Savages who were settled here, and especially the *Hurons*. Several *Outaouais* have followed them, others have dispersed themselves in the Isles of *Castor*; there is only here a middling Village, where there is still a great Trade for Peltry, because it is the Passage or the Rendezvous of many of the Savage Nations. The Fort is preserved, and the House of the Missionaries, who are not much employed

† Some pronounce it *Missillimakinac*, which deceived *M. de la Martiniere*, who has made it two different Places.

ployed at present, having never found much Docility among the *Outaouais* ; but the Court thinks their Presence necessary, in a Place where one must often treat with our Allies, to exercise their Ministry among the *French*, who come hither in great Numbers. I have been assured, that since the Settlement of *Detroit*, and the Dispersion of the Savages occasioned thereby, many Nations of the North who used to bring their Peltries hither, have taken the Route of *Hudson's Bay*, by the River *Bourbon*, and go there to trade with the *English* ; but *M. de la Motte* could by no Means foresee this Inconvenience, since we were then in Possession of *Hudson's Bay*.

The Situation of *Micbillimakinac* is very advantageous for Trade. This Post is between three great Lakes ; Lake *Michigan*, which is three Hundred Leagues in Compass, without mentioning the great Bay that comes into it ; Lake *Huron*, which is three Hundred and fifty Leagues in Circumference, and which is triangular ; and the Upper Lake, which is five Hundred Leagues. All three are navigable for the largest Barks, and the two first are only separated by a little Strait, which has also Water enough for some Barks, which may still sail without any Obstacle through all the Lake *Erie* till they come to *Niagara*. It is true there is no Communication between Lake *Huron* and the *Upper Lake*, but by a Canal of twenty-two Leagues, much encumbered with Falls or Torrents ; but these Torrents do not hinder the Canoes from coming to unload at *Micbillimakinac*, every Thing that can be got from the *Upper Lake*.

This Lake is two Hundred Leagues long from East to West, and in many Places eighty wide from North to South, all the Coast is sandy, and pretty straight ; it would be dangerous to be surpris'd here by a North Wind. The North Side is more convenient for sailing, because it is all along lined with Rocks, which form little Harbours, where it is very easy to take Refuge ; and nothing is more necessary when we sail in a Canoe on this Lake, in which Travellers have observed a pretty singular Phænomenon. They say, that when there will be a Storm they have Notice of it two Days before. At first, they  
perceive

perceive a little Trembling on the Surface of the Water, and that lasts all the Day, without any manifest Increase; the next Day the Lake is covered with pretty large Waves, but they do not break all the Day, so that one may sail without Danger, and may also make a great deal of Way if the Wind is fair; but the third Day, when it is least expected, the Lake is all on Fire; the Ocean, in its greatest Fury, is not more agitated, and one must have instantly some Asylum to fly to for Safety; which we are sure to find on the North Side, whereas on the South Coast, one must from the second Day encamp at a good Distance from Shore.

The Savages, by Way of Acknowledgment for the Quantity of Fish this Lake affords them, and through the Respect they are inspired with from its vast Extent, have made it a Kind of Deity, and offer Sacrifices to it after their Manner. But I think it is not to the Lake itself, but to the Genius which presides over it, that they offer up their Prayers: If we believe them, this Lake has a divine Origin: 'Twas *Michabou*, the God of the Waters, who made it to take Beavers. In the Canal by which it discharges itself into Lake *Huron*, there is a Torrent caused by some great Rocks; our Missionaries who once had here a very flourishing Church, called it *the Fall of St. Mary*. These Rocks according to the Tradition of the Barbarians are the Remains of a Causey or Bank, which the God built to stop the Waters of the Rivers, and of the Lake *Alimipegou*, which have filled this Great Lake.

On its Borders, in some Places, and about certain Islands, they find great Pieces of Copper, which are also the Object of the superstitious Worship of the Savages; they look upon them with Veneration, as a Present of the Gods who live under the Waters; they gather the smallest Bits of it, and preserve them with Care, but make no Use of them. They say, that formerly there was a great Rock that stood high above the Water all of the same Matter; and as it does not appear at present, they say that the Gods have carried it to another Place; but

it is very probable, that in Length of Time the Waves of the Lake have covered it with Sand and Mud; and it is certain, that there has been discovered in many Places, a pretty large Quantity of this Metal, without being obliged to dig deep for it. At my first Journey into this Country, I knew one of our Brethren, who was a Goldsmith by Trade, and who, whilst he was in the Mission of *St. Mary's* Fall, went thither to find Copper, and had made Candlesticks, Crosses, and Censers of it; for this Copper is often almost entirely pure.

The Savages add, that when *Michabou* made the Upper Lake, he dwelt at *Michillimakinac*, where he was born; this Name is properly that of a little Island, almost round, and very high, situate at the Extremity of Lake *Huron*, and by Custom it has given its Name to all the neighbouring Country. The Island may be about three or four Miles round, and one may see it at the Distance of twelve Leagues. There are two Islands to the South of it, the farthest of which is five or six Leagues long, the other is very small, and quite round. They are both well wooded, and the Lands are good; whereas that of *Michillimakinac* is only a barren Rock, and scarcely covered with a little Moss and Herbs. It is nevertheless, one of the most celebrated Places of *Canada*, and was a long Time, according to the antient Tradition of the Savages, the chief Abode of a Nation of the same Name, and of which they reckoned thirty Villages in the Environs of the Island. They say, that the *Iroquois* destroyed them, but they do not say at what Time, nor on what Occasion. This is certain, that there are no Marks of them remaining. I have somewhere read, that our old Missions have seen some Remains of these People\*.

The *Michillimakinacs* lived almost only by Fishing, and there is perhaps no Place in the World where there is such

\* The Word *Michillimakinac*, signifies a great Number of Tortoises; but I never heard they find more here at present than in other Places.

such a Plenty of Fish. The most common Fish in the three Lakes, and in the Rivers that flow into them, are the Herring, the Carp, the Gilt Fish, the Pike, the Sturgeon, the *Astikameguc*, or white Fish, and above all, the Trout. They take three Sorts of the last, among which some are of a monstrous Size, and in such Numbers, that a Savage with his Spear will sometimes strike fifty in three Hours Time. But the most famous of all is the White Fish; it is about the Bigness and Shape of a Mackerel; I know of no Kind of Fish that is better eating. The Savages say, that it was *Michabou*, who taught their Ancestors to Fish, that he invented Nets, and that he took the Notion of them from the Spider's Web. These People, as you see, Madam, do not give greater Honour to their God than he deserves, since they are not afraid of sending him to School to a vile Insect.

Whatever Lands appear in Sight hereabout, do not give an Idea of a good Country; but there is no Need of going far to find Soils fit for every Thing. We may say the same of the Isles of *Castor*, which we leave on the left Hand, a little after we enter into the Lake *Michigan*. The *Otaouais*, who are retired thither, sow here Maiz, and they have learnt this good Custom from the *Hurons*, with whom they have lived a long Time in these Parts. The *Amikoues* formerly dwelt in these Islands: This Nation is now reduced to a very small Number of Families, which have passed over to the Island *Manitoualin*, on the North Side of the Lake *Huron*. It is, nevertheless, one of the most noble of *Canada*, according to the Savages, who believe it to be descended from the *Great Castor*, which is, after *Michabou* or the *Great Hare*, their principal Deity, and whose Name it bears.

It was He, as they say further, that formed the Lake *Nipissing*; and all the Falls we meet with in the *Great River* of the *Otaouais*, which goes out of it, are the Remains of Banks he made to compass his Design. They add, that he died at the same Place, and that he is buried on a Mountain, which is seen on the North Side of Lake *Nipissing*. This Mountain represents naturally on one Side the Shape of a Beaver; and this is, no Doubt, what

has given Rise to all these Stories: But the Savages maintain, that it was the *Great Castor* who gave this Shape to the Mountain, after he had chosen it for his Burial-Place; and they never pass by this Place without paying their Homage to him, by offering him the Smoke of their Tobacco.

This is, Madam, what I thought worthy of Note in this Post, which is so famous in the Travels and Accounts of *Canada*.—I return to the Manners and Customs of the Savages; and after having mentioned what concerned their Wars, I am going to entertain you concerning their Marriages.

A Plurality of Wives is established in many Nations of the *Algonquin* Language, and it is common enough to marry all the Sisters; this Custom is founded on the Notion they have, that Sisters will agree together better than Strangers. In this Case all the Wives are upon an equal Footing; but among the true *Algonquins* they have two Sorts of Wives, and the second are Slaves to the first. Some Nations have Wives in all the Places where they stay any considerable Time for hunting; and I have been assured that this Abuse has been introduced lately among the People of the *Huron* Language, who in all former Times were satisfied with one Wife. But in the *Iroquois* Canton of *Tsonnontbouan* there prevails a much greater Disorder still, which is a Plurality of Husbands.

As to what concerns the Degrees of Kindred, with Respect to Marriage, the *Hurons* and the *Iroquois* are very scrupulous in this Matter: Among them there must be no Manner of Relation between the Parties to be married, and even Adoption is comprehended in this Law. But the Husband, if his Wife dies first, must marry her Sister, or in Default of such, the Woman which his Wife's Family shall chuse for him: The Woman, on her Side, is obliged to the same Thing with Respect to the Brothers, or the Relations of her Husband, if he dies without Children, and she is still of an Age to have any. The Reason they give for it, is the same that is mentioned in the 25th Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, verse 6. The  
Husband

Husband who should refuse to marry the Sitter, or the Relation of the deceased Wife, would expose himself to the greatest Outrages that the Person rejected can possibly do him, and would be obliged to suffer them without Complaint or Resistance. When for Want of any Relations, they permit a Widow to provide herself another Way, they are obliged to make her Presents: This is as a Testimony which they give of her good Conduct, and which she has a Right to demand, if she has really behaved well all the Time of her Marriage.

There are in all Nations some considerable Families, which cannot marry but among themselves, especially among the *Algonquins*. In general, the Stability of Marriages is sacred in this Country, and for the most Part they consider as a great Disorder those Agreements which some Persons make to live together as long as they like, and to separate when they are tired of each other. A Husband who should forsake his Wife without a lawful Cause, must expect many Insults from her Relations; and a Woman who should leave her Husband without being forced to it by his ill Conduct, would pass her Time still worse.

Among the *Miamis*, the Husband has a Right to cut off his Wife's Nose if she runs away from him; but among the *Iroquois* and the *Hurons* they may part by Consent. This is done without Noise, and the Parties thus separated may marry again. These Savages cannot even conceive that there can be any Crime in this. "My Wife and I cannot agree together," said one of them to a Missionary, who endeavoured to make him comprehend the Indecency of such a Separation, "my Neighbour's Case was the same, we changed Wives, and we are all four happy: What could be more reasonable than to make us mutually happy, when it is so cheaply done, without wronging any Body." Nevertheless, this Custom, as I have already observed, is looked upon as an Abuse, and is not antient, at least among the *Iroquois*.

What most commonly disturbs domestic Peace among the People of *Canada*, is Jealousy, which is equal both



both Sides. The *Iroquois* boast that they are never troubled with it : but those who are most acquainted with them, affirm that they are jealous to Excess. When a Woman has discovered that her Husband has a Mistress, her Rival ought to be well on her Guard, inasmuch as the unfaithful Husband cannot defend her, nor in any Manner take her Part. A Man who should use his Wife ill on this Account, would be disgraced.

Treaties of Marriage are entirely carried on by the Parents : The Parties interested do not appear at all, and give themselves up entirely to the Will of those on whom they depend. But is it not Matter of Surprise in the Whimsicalness of these Savages, who do not make themselves dependent on their Parents but in that Matter only, where there is the most Reason to use their own Choice? However, the Parents do not conclude any Thing without their Consent ; but this is only a Formality. The first Advances must be made by the Matrons, but there are seldom any made on the Woman's Side : Not but if any Girl was to continue too long without being sued for, her Family would act under-hand to find her a Suitor ; but this is done with a great deal of Precaution. In some Places the Women are not in haste to be married, because they are allowed to make what Trials of it they please, and the Ceremony of Marriage only changes their Condition for the worse.

In general, there is observed a great deal of Modesty in the Behaviour of the young People whilst they treat of their Marriage ; and they say that it was quite otherwise in the ancient Times. But what is almost incredible, and which is nevertheless attested by good Authors, is, that in many Places the new married Couple are together a whole Year, living in a perfect Continence : This is, they say, to shew that they married for Friendship, and not to gratify a sensual Passion. A young Woman would even be pointed at that should happen to be with Child the first Year of her Marriage.

After this it will be easier to believe what is said of the young People's Behaviour, during their Courtship in the Place:

Places where they are allowed to see one another in private. For though Custom allows them to have very private Meetings, yet in the greatest Danger that Chastity can be exposed to, and even under the Veil of Night, they say, that nothing passes against the Rules of the strictest Decorum, and that not even a Word is spoken that can give the least Offence to Modesty. I make Account, Madam, that you will approve my not entering into a Detail on this Subject, which some Authors have done; it would make the Thing appear still more improbable.

I find in all that has been written of the Preliminaries and Ceremonies of the Marriages of these People various Accounts, proceeding either from the different Customs of divers Nations, or from the little Care the Authors of Relations took to be well informed: Furthermore, the whole appeared to me to be so little worthy your Curiosity, that I thought it not worth my while to enquire a great deal about it. The Husband that is to be, must make Presents, and in this, as in every Thing else, nothing can exceed the Discretion with which he behaves, and the respectful Behaviour which he shews to his future Spouse. In some Places the young Man is contented to go and sit by the Side of the young Woman in her Cabin, and if she suffers it, and continues in her Place, it is taken for her Consent, and the Marriage is concluded. But in the midst of all this Deference and Respect, he gives some Tokens that he will soon be Master. In Fact, among the Presents she receives, there are some which ought less to be regarded as Marks of Friendship, than as Symbols and Notices of the Slavery to which she is going to be reduced: Such are the Collar\*, the Kettle, and a Billet, which are carried to her Cabin. This is to let her know, that she is to carry the Burdens, dress the Provisions, and get Wood for Firing. The Custom is

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\* This Collar is that which I have mentioned before: *that is to say*, long and broad Band of Leather which serves to draw Burdens.

also in some Places for her to bring before-hand into the Cabin where she is to dwell after Marriage, all the Wood that will be wanted for the next Winter. And it is to be observed, that in all I have just said, there is no Difference between the Nations, where the Women have all the Authority, and those where they have nothing to do with the Affairs of Government. These same Women, who are in some Degree the Mistresses of the State, at least for Form, and who make the principal Body of it, when they have attained a certain Age, and have Children in a Condition to make them respected, are not at all respected before this, and are in their domestic Affairs the Slaves of the Husbands.

In general there are perhaps no People in the World who more despise the Sex. To call a Savage a Woman, is the greatest Affront that can be given him. Notwithstanding, the Children belong only to the Mother, and acknowledge her alone. The Father is always as a Stranger with Respect to them; in such a Manner, however, that if he is not regarded as a Father, he is always respected as the Master of the Cabin. I know not, however, if all this is universal amongst all the People of *Canada* that we are acquainted with; no more than what I have found in some good Memoirs, that the young Wives, besides what their Husbands have a Right to require of them for the Service of the Cabin, are obliged to supply all the Wants of their own Parents; which probably must be understood of those who have no longer any Person to render them these Services, and who are not, by Reason of their Age or Infirmities, in a Condition to help themselves.

However this may be, the new married Man is not without Employment. Besides Hunting and Fishing, which he is obliged to follow all his Life, he must at first make a Mat for his Wife, build her a Cabin, or repair that they are to live in; and as long as he lives with his Wife's Parents, he must carry to their Cabin all that he gets by Hunting and Fishing. Among the *Iroquois*, the Woman never leaves her Cabin, because she is judged the

the Mistress, or at least the Heiress of it. Among other Nations, after a Year or two, she goes to live with her Mother-in-law.

The Savage Women in general are brought to Bed without any Pain, and without any Assistance ; but there are some who are a long Time in Labour, and suffer much. When this happens, they give Notice of it to the young People, who all on a sudden, and when the Patient least expects it, come and make great Noises at the Door of the Cabin, the Surprise of which has such an Effect upon her, as instantly to procure her Delivery. The Women never lie-in in their own Cabins ; many are taken suddenly, and bring forth their Children as they are at Work, or on a Journey : For others, when they find themselves near their Time, they make a little Hut without the Village, and they remain there forty Days, after they are delivered. But I think I have heard say that this is only done for the first Child.

This Time being expired, they extinguish all the Fires of the Cabin to which she is to return ; they shake all the Clothes, and at her Return they light a new Fire : They observe pretty nearly the same Formalities with Regard to all Persons of the Sex in the Time of their Terms, and not only whilst these last, but also whilst a Woman is with Child, or gives Suck, (and they commonly suckle their Children three Years) the Husband never approaches them. Nothing would be more Praise-worthy than this Custom, if both Parties preserved the Fidelity they owe to each other ; but there is often a Failure on one Side or other. Such is the Corruption of the human Heart, that the wisest Regulations often produce the greatest Disorders. It is even said, that the Use of some Simples, which have the Power to prevent the Consequences of the Woman's Infidelity, is pretty common in this Country.

Nothing can exceed the Care which the Mothers take of their Children while they are in the Cradle ; but as  
soon

soon as they are out of it, they leave them entirely to themselves; not through Want of Affection or Indifference, for they never lose the Tenderness they have for them, but with their Lives, but because they are persuaded it is best to leave Nature to herself, without any Restraint. The Act which terminates the first Stage of Infancy, is giving a Name, which among these People is an Affair of Importance.

This Ceremony is performed in a Feast, where no Persons are Present but of the same Sex, with the Child that is to be named. While they are eating the Child is upon the Knees of the Father or Mother, who continually recommend it to the Spirits, especially to that which is to be its Guardian Genius; for every Person has his own, but not at their Birth. They never make new Names, each Family has a certain Number, which they take by Turns. Sometimes also they change their Names as they grow up, and there are some Names which they cannot go by after a certain Age; but I do not think this is the Custom every where: And as among some People in taking a Name they take the Place of the Person that bore it last, it sometimes happens that a Child is called Grandfather, and treated as such by one who might really be so to the Child.

They never call a Man by his proper Name, when they talk to him in common Discourse, this would be unpolite; they always give him the Quality he has with Respect to the Person that speaks to him; but when there is between them no Relation or Affinity, they use the Term of Brother, Uncle, Nephew, or Cousin, according to each other's Age, or according to the Value they have for the Person they address.

Further, it is not so much to render Names immortal, if I may use the Expression, that they revive them, as to engage those to whom they are given either to imitate the brave Actions of their Predecessors, or to revenge them if they have been killed or burnt, or lastly

to comfort and help their Families. Thus a Woman who has lost her Husband, or her Son, and finds herself without the Support of any Person, delays as little as she can to transfer the Name of him she mourns for to some Person capable of supplying his Place. They change their Names on many other Occasions, to give the Particulars of which would take up too much Time : There needs no more for this Purpose than a Dream, or the Order of a Physician, or some such trifling Cause. But I have said enough on this Head, and here is a Traveller waiting to know if I have any Commission for him to *Quebec*. I shall therefore close my Letter and give it him.

*I am, &c.*

L E T T E R



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## L E T T E R XX.

*Voyage to the Bay. Description of the Route, and of the Bay. Irruption of the SPANIARDS against the MISSOURIS, and their Defeat. The Dances of the SAVAGES.*

MADAM,                      MICHILLIMAKINAC, July 21.

SINCE writing my last Letter, I have made a Voyage to the Bay eighty Leagues distant from this Post. I took Advantage of the Opportunity of going with M. de Montigny, Captain of a Company of the Troops which the King maintains in *Canada*, Knt. of *St. Louis*, and whose Name is famous in the Annals of this Colony; but he is at least as valuable for his Probity and his Character full of Equity and Sincerity, as for his Courage and warlike Exploits.

We embarked the second of *July* in the Afternoon, we coasted for thirty Leagues a Cape which separates Lake *Michigan* from the *Upper Lake*; it is in some Places only a few Leagues wide, and it is scarce possible to see a worse Country; but it is terminated by a pretty River called the *Manistie*, full of Fish, and especially of Sturgeons. A little further, going to the South West, we enter into a great Gulf, the Entrance of which is bordered with Islands; they call it the *Gulf*, or the *Bay of the Noquets*. This is a very small Nation which came from the Borders of the *Upper Lake*, and of which there remains only a few Families dispersed here and there, without any fixed Abode.

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The *Bay of the Noquets* is separated from the Great Bay only by the Isles of the *Pouteouatamis*, and I have already observed that they were the antient Abode of these Savages. The greatest Part of them are very well wooded; but the only one which is still peopled is not the largest nor the best, there remains in it now only one indifferent Village, where we were obliged to pass the Night, though very much against our Inclinations: We could not refuse the pressing Intreaties of the Inhabitants; and indeed there is no Nation in *Canada* that hath always been more sincerely attached to the *French*.

The 6th we were stopped almost the whole Day by contrary Winds; but it proving calm at Night, we embarked a little after Sun-set by a fine Moon-light, and we kept going forwards twenty-four Hours together, making only a very short Stop to say Mass, and to dine. The Sun shone so hot, and the Water of the Bay was so warm, that the Gum of our Canoe melted in several Places. To compleat our Misfortune, the Place where we stopped to encamp, was so full of Gnats and Musketoos, that we could not close our Eyes, though we had not slept for two Days before; and as the Weather was fine, and we had Moon-light, we embarked again on our Route at Three o'clock in the Morning.

After we had gone five or six Leagues, we found ourselves over-against a little Isle, which is not far from the West Side of the Bay, and which hid from us the Entrance of a River, upon which is the Village of the *Mal-bomines*, which the *French* call *folles Avoines*, (*wild Oats*), probably because they make their common Food of this Grain. The whole Nation consists of no more than this Village, which is not very populous. This is to be regretted, for they are very fine Men, and the best shaped of all *Canada*: They are even taller than the *Pouteouatamis*. I am assured that they have the same Origin, and nearly the same Language as the *Noquets* and the *Sauteurs*, (*Leapers*); but they add, that they have also a particular Language which they keep to themselves. They have likewise told me some odd Stories of them,

as of a Serpent which goes every Year into the Village, and is received by them with great Ceremonies, which makes me believe that they are inclined to Sorcery.

A little beyond the Island I just mentioned, the Country changes its Appearance all at once; and from being wild enough, as it is to this Place, it becomes the most charming in the World. It has even something more smiling than the Strait; but though it is every where covered with very fine Trees, it is much more sandy, and not so fertile. The *Otchagras*, who are commonly called the *Puans*, dwelt formerly on the Borders of the Bay, in a very delightful Situation. They were attacked here by the *Illinois*, who killed a great Number of them: the Remainder took Refuge in the River of *Outagamis*, which runs into the Bottom of the Bay. They seated themselves on the Borders of a Kind of Lake; and I judge it was there, that living on Fish which they got in the Lake in great Plenty, they gave them the Name of *Puans*; because all along the Shore where their Cabins were built, one saw nothing but stinking Fish, which infected the Air. It appears at least that this is the Origin of the Name which the other Savages had given them before us, and which has communicated itself to the Bay, far from which they never removed. Some Time after they had quitted their antient Post, they endeavoured to revenge the Blow they had received from the *Illinois*; but this Enterprize caused them a new Loss, which they never recovered. Six hundred of their best Men were embarked to go in Search of the Enemy; but as they were crossing Lake *Michigan*, they were surpris'd by a violent Gust of Wind, which drowned them all.

We have in the Bay a Fort which stands on the West Side of the River of the *Outagamis*. half a League from its Mouth; and before we arrive at it, we leave on the Left Hand a Village of *Sakis*. The *Otchagras* have lately come and seated themselves near us, and have built their Cabins about the Fort. The Missionary, who is lodged pretty near the Commandant, hopes when he has learnt their Language, to find them more docible than the *Sakis*, among whom he labours with very little Success.

cefs. Both of them appear to be a good Sort of People, especially the first; whose greatest Fault is, that they are a little given to thieving. Their Language is very different from all the others, which makes me believe that it is not derived from any of *Canada*; and indeed they have always had more Intercourse with the People of the West, than with those we are acquainted with in this Country.

The *Sakis*, though they are but a small Number, are divided into two Factions, one of which side with the *Ou-tagamis*, and the other with the *Pouteouatamis*. Those who are settled in this Post, are for the most Part of the last Party, and of Consequence in our Interest. They received the new Commandant with great Demonstrations of Joy. As soon as they knew he was near arriving, they ranged themselves with their Arms on the Bank of the River; and the Moment they saw him appear, they saluted him with a Discharge of their Muskets, which they accompanied with great Shouts of Joy. Then four of the chief Men went into the River, where they were soon up to their Waist; but they waded quite to his Canoe, and took him up in a great Robe made of many Roe-Buck Skins, well sewed together, of which each of them held a Corner. They carried him thus to his Apartment, where they complimented him, and said many Things to him which were extremely flattering.

The next Day the Chiefs of the two Nations paid me a Visit, and one of the *Otcbagras* shewed me a *Catalan* Pistol, a Pair of *Spanish* Shoes, and I know not what Drug, which seemed to be a Sort of Ointment. He had received these Things from an *Ajouez*, and they came into his Hands by the following Means.

About two Years ago, some *Spaniards*, who came (as they say) from *New Mexico*, intending to get into the Country of the *Illinois*, and drive the *French* from thence, whom they saw with extreme Jealousy approach so near the *Missouri*, came down this River and attacked two Villages of the *Otchetas*, who are Allies of the *Ajouez*; from whom it is also said they are derived. As these Sa-  
vages

vages had no Fire-Arms, and were surpris'd, the *Spaniards* made an easy Conquest, and killed a great many of them. A third Village, which was not far off the other two, being informed of what had pass'd, and not doubting but that these Conquerors would attack them, laid an Ambush, into which the *Spaniards* heedlessly fell. Others say, that the Savages having heard that the Enemy were almost all drunk, and fast asleep, fell upon them in the Night. However it was, it is certain that they killed the greatest Part of them.

There were in this Party two Chaplains, one of whom was kill'd directly, and the other got away to the *Missourites*, who took him Prisoner, but he escaped from them very dexterously: He had a very fine Horse, and the *Missourites* took Pleasure to see him ride it, which he did very skilfully. He took Advantage of their Curiosity to get out of their Hands. One Day, as he was prancing and exercising his Horse before them, he got a little Distance from them insensibly; then suddenly clapping Spurs to his Horse, he was soon out of Sight. As they had taken no other Prisoner, it was not certainly known from what Part of *New Mexico* these *Spaniards* came, nor what was their Design: For what I have already said of it, is only founded on the Report of the Savages, who perhaps intended to make their Court to us, in publishing that by this Defeat they had done us a great Service.

All that they brought me, was of the Spoils of the Chaplain that was killed; and they took from him also a Book of Prayers, which I did not see: It was probably his Breviary. I bought the Pistol: The Shoes were worth nothing; and the Savage would not part with his Ointment, fancying that it was a Sovereign Remedy for all Diseases. I had the Curiosity to ask how he intended to use it; he replied, it was sufficient to swallow a little; and with what Disease soever one was attacked, it effected an immediate Cure: But he did not tell me that he had as yet made a Trial of it, and I advis'd him to the contrary. We begin here to find the Savages very igno-

rant; they are far from being so ingenious, or so at least apt to learn, as those who are more conversant with us.

The next Day several *Sakis* came to the Missionary, with whom I lodged, and invited me to come to a Kind of Council, which they proposed to hold. I consented; and when every one had taken his Place, the Chief laid a Collar on the Ground before me; and the Orator beginning his Speech, prayed me in the Name of all the rest to engage the King \* to take them under his Protection, and to purify the Air, which for some Time they said had been infected, which appeared by the Number of sick Persons then in their Villages, and to defend them from their Enemies. I replied, that the King was very powerful, and perhaps more so than they imagined; but that his Power did not extend over the Elements; and that when Diseases, and other like fatal Casualties, afflicted his Provinces, he addressed himself, that an End might be put to them, to the Great Spirit that created Heaven and Earth, and who is alone the sovereign Lord of Nature: That they should do the same, and they would find the Benefit of it. But to prevail with him to hear their Prayers, they must first acknowledge him, and render him the Worship and Homage which he has a Right to expect from all reasonable Creatures: That they could do nothing better, nor more agreeable to the King, than to listen to the Father † which his Majesty had sent them, and to be docible to his Instructions: That he was a Man beloved by Heaven: That the Manner in which he lived among them, could not fail of making him very much esteemed; and that his Charity towards the Sick, and all those who wanted his Assistance, ought to have convinced them of the tender and sincere Affection he had for them; and lastly, that I would not receive their Collar, till they had promised me to behave with Regard to this Missionary, in quite another Manner than they had done hitherto, and to give him no Cause for the future to complain of their Untowardness.

“ As

\* These Savages always speak the Title of the King (*le Roy*) in *French*.

† Father *Peter Chardon*, a *Jesuit*.

“ As to the Protection of the King, which you ask,  
 “ and the Request you make me to engage him to defend  
 “ you against your Enemies; this great Prince has pre-  
 “ vented your Wishes, he has given good Orders on this  
 “ Head to *Onontbio* \*, who is already inclined to execute  
 “ them with the Zeal and Affection of a Father †. You  
 “ can make no Doubt of this, if you consider the Com-  
 “ mandant he sends you. You must certainly know,  
 “ and you seem in Fact to have been well informed, that  
 “ among the *French* Captains there are few that equal  
 “ him in Valour, and you will soon love him more than  
 “ you esteem him already.”

They seemed to be satisfied with this Answer, and they promised me much more than they will perform, in all Probability: However, I took their Collar, and the Missionary flattered himself that this Action would have a good Effect.

In the Afternoon of the same Day, the two Nations gave us one after the other, the Diversion of the Dance of the Calumet in a great *Esplanade*, which is before the Lodgings of the Commandant. There was some Difference in their Way of performing this Dance; but it was not considerable. However, I learnt by it that these Feasts vary much; so that it is impossible to give a Description that agrees with them all. The *Otcbagras* varied the Dance something more than the other, and shewed an extraordinary Agility; they are also better made, and more active than the *Sakis*.

This Ceremony is properly a military Feast. The Warriors are the Actors, and one would say, that it was instituted only to give them an Opportunity of publishing their great Achievements in War. I am not the Author of this Opinion, which does not agree well with  
 D 2 their's,

\* This is the Name the Savages give the Governor-General. It means *Great Mountain*, and comes from the Chevalier *de Montmagny*, who was the second Governor of *Canada*.

† They always call the Governors, and the Commandants, their Fathers.

their's, who have maintained that the Calumet took its Origin from the *Caduceus* of *Mercury*, and that in its Institution it was esteemed as a Symbol of Peace. All those I saw Dance, sing, shake the *Chichicous*, and beat the Drum, were young People equipped, as when they prepare for the March; they had painted their Faces with all Sorts of Colours, their Heads were adorned with Feathers, and they held some in their Hands like Fans. The Calumet was also adorned with Feathers, and was set up in the most conspicuous Place. The Band of Music, and the Dancers were round about it, the Spectators divided here and there in little Companies, the Women separate from the Men, all seated on the Ground, and dressed in their finest Robes, which at some Distance made a pretty Show.

Between the Music and the Commandant, who sat before the Door of his Lodging, they had set up a Post, on which at the End of every Dance a Warrior came and gave a Stroke with his Hatchet; at this Signal there was a great Silence, and this Man repeated with a loud Voice some of his great Feats, and then received the Applauses of the Spectators, and after went to his Place, and the Sport began again. This lasted two Hours for each of the Nations; and I acknowledge to you, Madam, that I took no great Pleasure in it, not only on Account of the same Tone, and the Unpleasantness of the Music, but because all the Dances consisted in Contortions, which seemed to me to express nothing, and were no Way entertaining.

This Feast was made in Honour of the new Commandant; yet they did him none of the Honours which are mentioned in some Relations. They did not take him and place him on a new Mat; they made him no Present, at least that I know of; they did not pass any Feathers over his Head; I did not see the Calumet presented to him; and there were no Men quite naked, painted all over their Bodies, adorned with Plumes of Feathers, and Beads, and holding a Calumet in their Hands. Perhaps it is not the Custom of these People, or *M. de Montigny* had exempted

emped them from these Ceremonies. I observed only, that from Time to Time all the Assembly set up great Shouts to applaud the Dancers, chiefly during the dancing of the *Otchagras*, who, in the Opinion of the *French*, bore away all the Honour of the Day.

I should probably have had more Pleasure in seeing the Dance of the *Discovery*: It has more Action, and expresses better than the foregoing the Subject it represents. It is a natural Representation of all that passes in an Expedition of War; and, as I have before observed, that the Savages for the greatest Part only endeavour to surprize their Enemies, this is no Doubt the Reason why they have given this Dance the Name of the *Discovery*.

However that may be, only one single Man performs this Dance: At first he advances slowly into the midst of the Place, where he remains for some Time motionless, after which he represents one after another, the Setting out of the Warriors, the March, the Encamping; he goes upon the *Discovery*, he makes his Approach, he stops as to take Breath, then all on a sudden he grows furious, and one would imagine he was going to kill every Body; then he appears more calm, and takes one of the Company as if he had made him a Prisoner of War; he makes a Show of knocking another's Brains out; he levels his Gun at another; and lastly, he sets up a running with all his Might; then he stops and recovers himself: This is to represent a Retreat, at first precipitate, and afterwards less so. Then he expresses by different Cries the various Affections of his Mind during his last Campaign, and finishes by reciting all the brave Actions he has performed in the War.

When the Dance of the *Calumet* is intended, as it generally is, to conclude a Peace, or a Treaty of Alliance against a common Enemy, they grave a Serpent on the Tube of the Pipe, and set on one Side of it a Board, on which is represented two Men of the two confederate Nations, with the Enemy under their Feet, distinguished by the Mark of his Nation. Sometimes instead of a Ca-



lumet, they set up a Fighting-Club. But if it concerns only a single Alliance, they represent two Men joining one Hand, and holding in the other a Calumet of Peace, and having each at his Side the Mark of his Nation. In all these Treaties they give mutual Pledges, Necklaces, Calumets, Slaves; sometimes Elks, and Deer Skins well dressed, and ornamented with Figures made with Porcupines Hair; and then they represent on these Skins the Things I have mentioned, either with Porcupines Hair, or plain Colours.

There are other Dances less compounded, the only Design of which is to give the Warriors an Opportunity of relating all their brave Actions. This is what the Savages are most ready to do, and they are never tired of it. He that gives the Feast invites all the Village by beating a Drum, and they meet in his Cabin, if it can contain all the Guests. The Warriors dance one after another, then striking on a Post, Silence is made: They say what they please, and they stop from Time to Time to receive the Applauses of the Auditors, who are not sparing of them. But if any one boasts falsely, any Person is allowed to take Dirt or Ashes and rub his Head with them, or play him any other Trick he thinks proper. Commonly they black his Face, saying, "What I do is to hide your Shame, for the first Time you see the Enemy you will turn pale." He who has thus punished the Bragadocio, takes his Place, and if he commits the same Fault, the other never fails to return the Compliment. The greatest chiefs have no Privilege in this Matter, and they must not be affronted at it.—This Dance is always performed in the Night.

In the Western Parts there is another Dance used, which is called the *Dance of the Bull*. The Dancers form several Circles or Rings, and the Music, which is always the Drum and the *Chibicoué*, is in the midst of the Place. They never separate those of the same Family: They do not join Hands, and every one carries in his Hand his Arms and his Buckler. All the Circles do not turn the same Way; and tho' they caper much, and very high, they always keep Time and Measure.

From

From Time to Time a Chief of the Family presents his Shield: They all strike upon it, and at every Stroke he repeats some of his Exploits. Then he goes and cuts a Piece of Tobacco at a Post, where they have fastened a certain Quantity, and gives it to one of his Friends. If any one can prove that he has done greater Exploits, or had a Share in those the other boasts of, he has a Right to take the Piece of Tobacco that was presented, and give it to another. This Dance is followed by a Feast; but I do not well see from whence it derives its Name, unless it be from the Shields, on which they strike, which are covered with Bulls Hides.

There are Dances prescribed by their Physicians for the Cure of the Sick, but they are generally very lascivious. There are some that are entirely for Diversion, that have no Relation to any Thing. They are almost always in Circles, to the Sound of the Drum and the *Chibicoué*, the Men apart from the Women. The Men dance with their Arms in their Hands, and tho' they never take hold of each other, they never break the Circle. As to what I said before, that they are always in Time, it is no difficult Thing to believe, because the Music of the Savages has but two or three Notes, which are repeated continually. This makes their Feasts very tiresome to an *European* after he has seen them once, because they last a long Time, and you hear always the same Thing.

As the Nations near the Bay, if we except the *Poute-outamis*, are much more rude and ignorant than the others, they are also more given to Superstition. The Sun and Thunder are their principal Deities, and they seem to be more strongly persuaded than those we are conversant with, that every Species of Animals has a Guardian Genius, who watches for its Preservation. A *Frenchman* having one Day thrown away a Mouse he had just caught, a little Girl took it up to eat it: The Father of the Child, who saw it, snatched it from her, and began to make great Careless to the dead Animal. The *Frenchman* asked him the Reason, he replied, “ *It is to appease the Genius of the Mice, that he may not torment my Daughter* ”

“ *after ſhe has eaten this.*” After which he returned the Animal to the Child, who eat it.

They have above all much Veneration for Bears: As ſoon as they have killed one, they have a Feaſt, accompanied with ſome odd Ceremonies. The Head of the Bear, painted with all Sorts of Colours, is placed during the Repaſt on an elevated Place, and there receives the Homage of all the Gueſts, who celebrate by Songs the Praiſes of the Animal, while they cut his Body in Pieces, and feaſt upon it. Theſe Savages have not only, like the reſt, the Cuſtom of preparing themſelves for their great Hunting Matches by Faſting, which the *Outagamis* extend even to ten Days together, but alſo while the Hunters are in the Field, they often oblige their Children to faſt. They obſerve their Dreams while they faſt, and draw from thence good and ill Prefages of the Succeſs of the Chaſe. The Intention of theſe Faſts is to appeaſe the Guardian Genii of the Animals which they are to hunt; and they pretend that they inform them by Dreams, whether they will hinder or favour the Hunters.

The Nation which for twenty Years laſt has been the moſt talked of in theſe weſtern Parts, is the *Outagamis*. The natural Fierceneſs of theſe Savages, ſour'd by the ill Treatment they have ſeveral Times met with, ſometimes without Cauſe, and their Alliance with the *Iroquois*, who are always diſpoſed to create us new Enemies, have rendered them formidable. They have ſince made a ſtriſt Alliance with the *Sioux*, a numerous Nation, which has injured itſelf to War by Degrees; and this Union has rendered all the Navigation of the upper Part of the *Miſſiſſippi* almoſt impracticable to us. It is not quite ſafe to navigate the River of the *Illinois*, unleſs we are in a Condition to prevent a Surpriſe which is a great Injury to the Trade between the two Colonies.

I met in the Bay ſome *Sioux*, of whom I made many Enquiries about the Countries, which are to the Weſt and North Weſt of *Canada*; and tho' I know we muſt not entirely depend on what the Savages ſay; yet by comparing what I have heard from them, with that which I

have heard from many others, I have great Reason to believe that there are on this Continent some *Spaniards* or other *European* Colonies, much more North than any we know of *New Mexico* and *California*, and that in going up the *Missouri* as far as it is navigable, we come to a great River that runs to the West, and discharges itself into the *South Sea*. Independent of such Discovery, which I believe more easy this Way than by the North, I can make no Doubt, on weighing the Information I have had from many Places, and which agree pretty well together, that by endeavouring to penetrate to the Source of the *Missouri*, one should find wherewithal to make Amends for the Charges and Fatigues of such an Enterprize.

*I am, &c.*

LETTER



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## L E T T E R    X X I .

*Departure from MICHILLIMAKINAC. Remarks on the  
Currents of the Lake. Portrait of the SAVAGES of  
CANADA. Their good and bad Qualities.*

MADAM,

LAKE MICHIGAN, July 31.

**I** Departed from *Michillimakinac* the Day before Yesterday at Noon, and I am detained here in a little Island that has no Name; a Canoe that came from the River *St. Joseph*, whither I am going, cannot go out, no more than our's, though they have the Wind favourable for them; but they say it is too stormy, and the Lake too rough, which gives me a fresh Opportunity of writing to you.

Though the Wind was against me, when I embarked the 29th, I went eight good Leagues that Day, which proves that I was driven by the Currents. I had already observed the same Thing upon entering the Bay, and was surpris'd at it. It is certain that this Bay, having no other Outlet, discharges itself into Lake *Michigan*; and Lake *Michigan*, for the same Reason, must discharge its Waters into Lake *Huron*, and the rather, because both the Bay and Lake *Michigan* receives several Rivers; Lake *Michigan* especially, which receives a great Number, some of which are little inferior to the *Seine*: these great Currents are not perceivable but in the midst of the Channel, and produce Eddies or counter Currents, of which we take Advantage when we go along Shore, as they are obliged to do who go in Canoes of Bark.

I went

I went at first five Leagues to the West, to get into Lake *Michigan*, I then turned to the South, and this is the only Route we have to take for a hundred Leagues to the River *St. Joseph*. Nothing is finer than the Country which separates the Lakes *Michigan* and *Huron*: Yesterday I went three Leagues further, and a high Wind obliged me to stop at this Island. I shall shun the Irksomeness of waiting here, by employing myself in finishing my Account of the natural Inhabitants of this vast Country, a great Part of which I have already travelled over.

The Savages of *Canada* are generally well made, and of a lofty Stature; but it is not unusual in some Nations to see some of only a middle Stature; but it is very uncommon to see any that are deformed, or that have any outward Blemish. They are robust, and of a healthy Constitution: They would be very long lived, if they spared themselves a little more; but the greatest Part ruin their Constitutions by forced Marches, by desperate Fastings, and by great Excesses in eating: Besides that, during their Childhood, they have often their naked Feet in the Water, on the Snow and Ice. The Brandy which the *Europeans* have supplied them with, and for which they have such a strong Inclination that exceeds all that can be said of it, and which they always drink till they are drunk, has compleated their Ruin, and has not a little contributed to the Destruction of all these Nations, which are at present reduced to less than the twentieth Part of what they were a hundred and fifty Years ago. If this continues they will become entirely extinct.

Their Bodies are not confined in their Infancy like our's, and nothing is more proper to make their Joints free, and to give them that Suppleness in all their Limbs, which we so much admire in them, than this Liberty, and the Exercises to which the Children there are accustomed very early. The Mothers suckle them a long Time, and there are some that at six or seven Years old still take the Breast. Nevertheless, this does not hinder them from taking all Kinds of Food the first Year: In short, the open Air to which they are exposed, the Fatigues

figures they make them suffer, but by little and little, and in a Manner proportioned to their Age, with plain and natural Food ; all this forms Bodies capable of performing and suffering incredible Things ; the Excess of which, as I have already observed, destroys many before they arrive at an Age of Maturity. We have seen some, after their Stomachs were swelled four Inches, still continue eating as heartily as if they had just begun : When they find themselves overcharged they smoke, then they sleep, and when they wake the Digestion is generally perfected. Sometimes they take an Emetic, after which they begin to eat again.

In the Southern Countries they have but little Restraint in the Article of Women ; who, on their Side, are very lascivious. From hence arises the Corruption of Manners, which for some Years past has infected the Northern Nations. The *Iroquois* in particular were chaste enough, till they were conversant with the *Illinois*, and other neighbouring People of *Louisiana* : They have gained nothing by their Acquaintance with them, but adopting their Vices. It is certain that Effeminacy and Lust were carried in these Parts to the greatest Excess. There were amongst them some Men who were not ashamed to dress themselves like Women, and to submit to all the Employments that belonged to the Women ; from whence there followed a Corruption that cannot be expressed. Some have pretended, that this Custom came from I know not what Principle of Religion : But this Religion, like many others, has taken its Rise from the Depravation of the Heart ; or if this Custom took its Rise from the Spirit, it ended in the Flesh. These effeminate Persons never marry, and abandon themselves to the most infamous Passions ; they are also treated with the greatest Contempt.

On the other Hand, though the Women are strong and lusty, they are unfruitful. Besides the Reasons I have already mentioned, *that is to say*, the Time they take to suckle their Children, their Custom of Continnence all this Time, and the excessive Labours they are obliged to undergo, in whatsoever Condition they find themselves,

this



this Barrenness proceeds also from the Custom established in many Places, which permits young Women to prostitute themselves before they are married; add to this, the extreme Necessity to which these People are often reduced, and which takes away their Desire of having Children.

For the rest, it is certain, that they have great Advantages over us; and I consider, as the chief of all, the Perfection of their Senses, either internal or external. In spite of the Snow, which dazzles their Eyes, and the Smoke, which almost smothers them for six Months in the Year, their Sight never decays: Their Hearing is extremely quick, and their Smelling so exquisite, that they smell Fire a long Time before they can discover it. On Account of the Exquifiteness of their Smell, they can't bear the Scent of Musk, nor any strong Smell. They say also, that they like no Odours, but those of Edibles.

Their Apprehension is very wonderful: It is enough for them to have been but once in a Place, to have an exact Idea of it, which is never effaced. If a Forest is ever so large and pathless, they cross it without wandering, when they have well considered certain Marks, by which they guide themselves.

The Inhabitants of *Acadia*, and of the Environs of the Gulf of *St. Laurence*, in their Canoes of Bark (to pass over to *Terre de Labrador (New Britain)* to seek out the *Esquimaux*, with whom they were at War) would go thirty or forty Leagues on the main Sea without Compass, and make the Land exactly at the Place they proposed. In the most cloudy Weather they will follow the Sun many Days, without making any Mistake: The best Clock cannot give us better Information of the Progress of the Sun, than they can, only by viewing the Sky; so that do what you can to put them out of their Way, 'tis very rare that they lose their Route. They are born with this Talent: It is not the Fruit of their Observations, nor of long Custom: Youth, who never before went out

out of their Village, travel as securely as those who have been most used to range the Country.

The Beauty of their Imagination is equal to its Vivacity, and this appears in all their Discourse. They are quick at Repartee, and their Speeches are full of shining Passages, that would have been applauded in the public Assemblies at *Rome* and *Athens*. Their Eloquence has something in it so strong, so natural, so pathetic, that Art cannot attain, and which the *Greeks* admired in the Barbarians: And though it does not appear to be supported by Action, though they make no Gestures, and do not raise their Voice, we feel that they are thoroughly affected with what they say, and their Eloquence is persuasive.

It would be strange, that with such a fine Imagination, they should not have an excellent Memory. They are destitute of all the Helps we have invented to assist ours, or to supply its Defect. Nevertheless, it is scarcely credible of how many Matters, with what particular Circumstances, and with how much Order, they treat in their Councils. On some Occasions, however, they use little Sticks, to recollect the Articles they are to discuss; and by this they form a Sort of local Memory so certain, that they will speak four or five Hours together, will display twenty Presents, each of which requires an entire Discourse, without forgetting any Thing, or even without Hesitation. Their Narration is clear and exact; and though they use many Allegories, and other Figures, it is animated, and has all the pleasing Turns which their Language affords.

They have a true and solid Judgment, and go directly to the Mark in View, without stopping, without wandering, and without being put on a wrong Scent. They readily conceive all that is within the Compass of their Knowledge; but to put them in a Way of succeeding in the Arts, without which they have lived hitherto, as they have not the least Idea of them, it would require a great deal of Labour; and the more so, as they have the highest Contempt for every Thing which they do not find necessary, *that is to*  
*say,*

*say*, for what we value most. It would also be no small Difficulty to make them capable of Restraint and Application in Things merely speculative, or which they should look upon as useless. As to what relates to their own Concerns, they neglect nothing, nor do any Thing precipitately: and though they are so slow in taking their Resolutions, yet they are as warm and active in putting them in Execution: This is observed especially of the *Hurons* and the *Iroquois*. They are not only ready at Repartee, but also witty.

An *Outaouais*, named *John le Blanc*, a bad *Christian*, and a great Drunkard, being asked by *Comte de Frontenac*, what he thought Brandy was made of, which he loved so well, said it was an Extract of Tongues and Hearts; for (added he) when I have drank it, I fear nothing, and I talk to Admiration.

The greatest Part of them have truly a Nobleness and an Equality of Soul, to which we seldom arrive, with all the Helps we can obtain from Philosophy and Religion. Always Masters of themselves, in the most sudden Misfortunes, we can't perceive the least Alteration in their Countenances. A Prisoner, who knows in what his Captivity will end, or, which is perhaps more surprising, who is still uncertain of his Fate, does not lose on this Account a Quarter of an Hour's Sleep: Even the first Emotions do not find them at a Fault.

A *Huron* Captain was one Day insulted and struck by a young Man. Those who were present, would have punished this Audaciousness on the Spot. "Let him alone, (said the Captain) Did not you feel the Earth tremble? He is sufficiently informed of his Folly."

Their Constancy in suffering Pain, is beyond all Expression. A young Woman shall be a whole Day in Labour, without making one Cry: If she shewed the least Weakness, they would esteem her unworthy to be a Mother; because, as they say, she could only breed Cowards. Nothing is more common, than to see Persons of all Ages, and of both Sexes, suffer for many Hours, and sometimes

sometimes many Days together, the sharpest Effects of Fire, and all that the most industrious Fury can invent to make it most painful, without letting a Sigh escape. They are employed for the most Part, during their Sufferings, in encouraging their Tormentors by the most insulting Reproaches.

An *Outagami*, who was burnt by the *Illinois* with the utmost Cruelty, perceiving a *Frenchman* among the Spectators, begged of him that he would help his Enemies to torment him ; and upon his asking why he made this Request, he replied, “ *Because I should have the Comfort of dying by the Hands of a Man. My greatest Grief*” (adds he) *is, that I never killed a Man.*” But (said an *ILLINOIS*) *you have killed such and such a Person.*” “ *As for the ILLINOIS, (replied the Prisoner) I have killed enough of them, but they are no Men.*”

What I have observed in another Place, Madam, to lessen the Astonishment which such an Insensibility fills one with, does not hinder us from allowing that such a Behaviour shews a great deal of Bravery. There must always be, to elevate the Soul above the Sense of Pain to such a Degree, an Effort which common Souls are not capable of. The Savages exercise themselves in this all their Lives, and accustom their Children to it from their tenderest Years. We have seen little Boys and Girls tie themselves together by one Arm, and put a lighted Coal between them, to see which would shake it off first. In short, we must also allow, that, according to *Cicero's* Remark, an Habit of Labour makes us bear Pain more easily †. But there are perhaps no Men in the World who fatigue themselves more than the Savages, either in their Huntings, or in their Journeys. Lastly, what proves that this Kind of Insensibility is in these Barbarians the Effect of a true Courage, is, that it is not found in all of them.

It is not surprising that with this greatness of Soul, and these elevated Sentiments, the Savages should be intrepid

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† *Consuetudo enim laborum perfectionem dolorum efficit faciliorem.* 2 *Tusc.* 15.

in Danger, and of a Courage Proof againſt every Thing It is true that in their Wars they expoſe themſelves as little as may be, becauſe they make it their Chief Glory never to buy the Victory at a dear Rate; and becauſe of their Nations not being numerous, they have made it a Maxim not to weaken them: But when they muſt fight, they do it like Lions, and the Sight of their Blood does but encreaſe their Strength and Courage. They have been in many AÆtions with our brave Men, who have ſeen them perform Things almoſt incredible.

A Miſſionary having accompanied ſome *Abenakis* in an Expedition againſt *New England*, and knowing that a great Party of the *Engliſh* were purſuing them in their Retreat, endeavoured all he could to make them make Haſte forward, but without Effect. All the Answer he received, was that they were not afraid of thoſe People. At laſt all the *Engliſh* came in Sight, and they were at leaſt twenty to one. The Savages, without ſeeming at all ſurpriſed, firſt conducted the Father to a Place of Safety, then went and waited boldly for the Enemy in a Place where there were only ſome Stumps of Trees. The Engagement laſted almoſt the whole Day. The *Abenakis* did not loſe a Man, and put the *Engliſh* to Flight, after having covered the Field of Battle with the Dead.—I had this Account from the Miſſionary himſelf\*.

But what ſurpriſes infinitely in Men whoſe whole outward Appearance proclaims nothing but Barbarity, is to ſee them behave to each other with ſuch Kindneſs and Regard, that are not to be found among the moſt civilized Nations. Doubtleſs this proceeds in ſome Meaſure from the Words MINE and THINE being as yet unknown to theſe Savages. Thoſe cold Words as *St. Chryſoſtom* calls them, which, extinguſhing in our Hearts the Fire of Charity, light up that of Covetouſneſs. We are equally charmed with that natural and unaffected Gravity which reigns in all their Behaviour, in all their AÆtions, and in the greateſt Part of their Diverſions; as likewiſe  
with

\* *Father Vincent Bigot*.— This ſeems to be apocryphal.

with the Civility and Deference they shew to their Equals, and the Respect of young People to the Aged; and lastly, never to see them quarrel among themselves with those indecent Expressions, and the Oaths and Curfes so common amongst us. All which are Proofs of good Sense, and a great Command of Temper.

I have already said that one of their Principles, and that of which they are the most jealous, is, that one Man owes nothing to another: But from this bad Maxim they draw a good Inference, *that is to say*, that we must never do an Injury to any Person from whom we have received no Wrong. There is nothing wanting to their Happiness, but to behave between Nation and Nation, as they do between private Persons, and never to attack any People of whom they have no Cause to complain, and not to carry their Revenge so far.

On the other Hand, we must allow that what we most admire in the Savages, is not always pure Virtue; that Confitution and Vanity have a great Share in it, and that their best Qualities are tarnished by great Vices. These Men, who at first View appeared to us so contemptible, of all Mankind have the greatest Contempt for all others, and the highest Opinion of themselves. The proudest of all were the *Hurons*, before Successes had lifted up the Hearts of the *Iroquois*, and grafted in them an Haughtiness, which nothing can yet suppress, on a fierce Rudeness, which before was their distinguishing Character.

On the other Side, these People, so proud and jealous of their Liberty, are beyond all Imagination Slaves to human Respect: They are accused of being light and inconstant; but they are so, rather through a Spirit of Independence, than by Character, as I have observed of the *Canadians*. They are distrustful and suspicious, especially towards us; treacherous, when their Interest is concerned; Dissemblers, and revengeful to Excess. Time does not abate in them their Desire of Revenge: It is the most precious Inheritance which they leave to their Children, and which is transmitted from Generation to Generation, till they find an Opportunity to execute it.

As to what we call more particularly the Qualities of the Heart, the Savages do not value themselves much on them; or, to speak more properly, they are not Virtues in them. Friendship, Compassion, Gratitude, Attachment, they have something of all this, but it is not in the Heart; and in them it is less the Effect of a good Disposition, than of Reflexion, or Instinct. The Care they take of Orphans, Widows, and the Infirm, and the Hospitality they exercise in such an admirable Manner, are to them only the Consequence of their Persuasion, that all Things ought to be in common among men. Fathers and Mothers have a Fondness for their Children, which rises even to Weakness; but which does not incline them to make them virtuous, and which appears to be purely Animal. Children, on their Side, have no natural Gratitude for their Parents, and they even treat them sometimes with Indignity, especially their Fathers. I have heard some Examples of this Sort, that are horrible, and which cannot be related: But here follows one Instance that was public.

An *Iroquois*, who served a long Time in our Troops against his own Nation, and even as an Officer, met his Father in an Engagement, and was going to kill him. When he discovered who he was, he held his Hand, and said to him, “*You have once given me Life, and now I give it to you. Let me meet with you no more; for I have paid the Debt I ow’d you.*” Nothing can better prove the necessity of Education, and that Nature alone does not sufficiently instruct us in our most essential Duties. And what demonstrates more evidently the Advantages of the *Christian* Religion, is, that it has produced in the Hearts of these Barbarians, in all these Respects, a Change which appears wonderful.

But if the Savages know not how to taste the Sweets of Friendship, they have at least discovered its Usefulness. Every one amongst them has a Friend nearly of his own Age, between whom there is a mutual Engagement, which is indissoluble. Two men thus united for their common Interest, are obliged to do every Thing, and to run all Hazards to assist and succour each other. Death  
itself,

itself, as they believe, separates them only for a Time: They depend on meeting again in the other World, never to part more, being persuaded that they shall still want each other's Assistance.

I have heard it reported on this Occasion, that a *Christian* Savage, but one who did not pursue the Maxims of the Gospel, being threatened with Hell by a *Jesuit*, asked this Missionary, if he thought his Friend, who was lately dead, was gone to that Place of Punishment? The Father replied, that he had Reason to judge that he had found Mercy with GOD. "*I won't go to Hell neither,*" said the Savage; and this Motive engaged him to do all we required, *that is to say*, that he was as willing to go to Hell as to Heaven, to meet with his Companion: But GOD makes Use of all Means to save his Elect. They add, that these Friends, when they are at a Distance from each other, use mutual Invocations in any Dangers they meet with; which is to be understood, without Doubt, of their Guardian Deities. These Associations are bound by Presents, and strengthened by Interest and Necessity. This is a Support on which they can almost always depend. Some report, that there is something unnatural in these Associations; but I have Reason to believe at least it is not general.

The Colour of the Savages does not prove a third Species between the White and the Black, as some People have imagined. They are very swarthy, and of a dirty dark Red, which appears more in *Florida*, of which *Louisiana* is a Part: but this is not their natural Complexion. The frequent Frictions they use, gives them this Red; and it is surprizing that they are not blacker, being continually exposed to the Smoke in Winter, to the great Heats of the Sun in Summer, and in all Seasons to all the Inclemencies of the Air.

It is not so easy to give a Reason why they have not a Hair on their whole Body, excepting the Hairs of their Head, which they have all very black, the Eye Lashes, and Eyebrows, which some also pluck off; and 'tis the same Case with almost all the *Americans*. What makes



it still more surprizing, is, that their Children are born with a thin Hair, and pretty long, all over their Bodies, but which disappears after eight Days. The old Men have asse some Hairs on the Chin, as we see some old Women have with us. I have known some who attribute this Singularity to the constant Custom the *Americians* have of smoking, and which is common to both Sexes. Others think it more natural to say, that this proceeds from the Quality of their Blood; which being more pure, because of the Plainness of their Aliments, produces less of those Superfluities, which our's, being more gross, supplies so plentifully; or that having fewer Salts, it is less fit for these Sorts of Productions. There is no Doubt that it is at least this Plainness of Food which renders the Savages so swift of Foot. I have seen a Man who came from an Island not far from *Japan*, who, before he had eat any Bread, assured me that he could travel on Foot thirty Leagues a Day, commonly without Fatigue; but that since he had been used to Bread, he could not travel with the same Ease.

This is certain, that our Savages think it a very great Beauty to have no Hair but on the Head; that if they have any on their Chin; they pluck it off directly; that the *Europeans*, the first Time they saw them, appeared frightful to them with their long Beards, as was then the Fashion; that they do not think our white Colour handsome; and that they found the Flesh of the *English* and *French*, when they eat it, of a bad Taste, because it was salt.

Thus, Madam, the Idea which we formerly had in *Europe* of Savages, which were represented as hairy Men, is not only entirely the Reverse of the *Americians*, but it is exactly that which they at first had of us, because they thought all our Bodies were like our Breasts and Chins.

*I am, &c.*

LETTER

## L E T T E R XXII.

*Journey to the River ST. JOSEPH. Remarks on the Rivers which run into Lake MICHIGAN from the East. Of Father MARQUETTE'S River, and the Origin of its Name. Two Games of the SAVAGES. Some Remarks on the Character of these People.*

MADAM,

ST. JOSEPH, August 16.

IT is eight Days since I arrived at this Post, where we have a Mission, and where there is a Commandant with a small Garrison. The House of the Commandant which is a trifling Thing, is called the Fort, because it is surrounded with a poor Palisade, and it is much the same Thing in all other Places, excepting the Forts of *Chambly* and *Cataracoui*, which are real Fortresses. There are however in all of them some Pieces of Cannon or Patteraroes, which, in Case of Need, are sufficient to prevent a *Coup de Main*, and to keep the Savages in Awe.

We have here two Villages of Savages, one of *Milamis* and the other of *Pouteouatamies*, they are both for the most Part *Christians*, but they have been a long Time without Pastors, and the Missionary that was lately sent hither, will have no little Trouble to restore the Exercise of Religion. The River *St. Joseph* comes from the South East to discharge itself into the Bottom of Lake *Michigan*, the East Coast of which we must range, which is a hundred Leagues long, before we enter this River. Then we go up it two hundred Leagues to arrive at the Fort: This Navigation requires much Care, because when the Wind comes from the open Lake, *that is*, the West, the Waves are the whole Length of the Lake; and the

West Winds are very common here. It is also very probable that the Number of Rivers which run into the Lake on the West Side, contribute by the Shock of their Currents with the Waves, to render the Navigation more dangerous: It is certain that there are few Places in *Canada* where there are more Wrecks.—But I take up my Journal again where I left off.

The first of *August*, after having failed cross a Bay that is thirty Leagues deep, I left on the Right the Isles of *Castor*, which appeared to be very well wooded; and some Leagues further, on the Left, I perceived on an Eminence of Sand a Kind of Bush, which, when we are over-against it, has the Shape of an Animal lying down. The *French* call it *L'ours qui dort* (*the sleeping Bear*), and the Savages the *Bear lying down*. I went twenty Leagues that Day, and encamped in a little Island,  $44^{\circ} 30'$  North Latitude; this is nearly the Latitude of *Montreal*. From the Entrance of Lake *Michigan* to this Island, the Coast is very sandy, but if we go a little Way into the Country it appears to be very good, at least to judge of it by the fine Forests with which it is covered. On the other Hand, it is well watered, for we went not a League without discovering either some large Brook, or some pretty River, and the farther we go South, the Rivers grow larger, and have a longer Course, the *Peninsula*, which separates Lake *Michigan* from Lake *Huron*, growing wider as it advances to the South. Nevertheless, the greatest Part of these Rivers are but narrow, and shallow at their Mouths; but they have this Singularity, that they form Lakes near their Entrance of two, three, or four Leagues round. This proceeds, no Doubt, from the Quantity of Sand which they bring down: These Sands being driven back by the Waves of the Lake, which almost always come from the West, gather at the Mouths of the Rivers, whose Waters being stoppt by these Banks, which they pass over with Difficulty, have made themselves by Degrees these Lakes, or Ponds, which prevent the Inundation of the whole Country when the Snows melt.

On the third I entered Father *Marquette's* River to examine if what I had heard of it was true. It is at first only

only a Brook, but fifteen Paces higher, which is near two Leagues round, to make a Passage for it into the *Michigan*, one would think they had dug away with Pick-axes, a great Hill, which we leave to the Left at the Entrance, and on the Right the Coast is very low for the length of a good Musket-Shot; then all at once it rises very high. It had been thus represented to me; concerning which, this is the constant Tradition of all our Travellers, and what I have heard from some antient Missionaries.

Father *Joseph Marquette*, a Native of *Laon* in *Picardy*, where his Family still holds a distinguished Rank, was one of the most illustrious Missionaries of *New France*; he travelled over almost all Parts of it, and made many Discoveries; the last of which was the *Mississippi*, which he entered with the *Sieur Joliet* in 1673. Two Years after this Discovery, of which he published an Account, as he was going from *Chicagou*, which is at the Bottom of Lake *Michigan*, to *Michillimakinac*, he entered the River I am speaking of; the Entrance of which was then at the Extremity of the low Land, which I have said we leave to the Right at entering it. He set up his Altar here, and said Mass. After this, he went a little Distance to return Thanks, and prayed the two Men who managed his Canoe, to leave him alone for half an Hour. This Time being expired, they went to seek him, and were greatly surpris'd to find him dead; but they recollected, that upon entering the River, he had said that he should finish his Journey there. Nevertheless, as it was too far from thence to *Michillimakinac*, to carry his Body thither, they buried him pretty near the Side of the River; which from that Time has retired, as out of Respect, to the Cape, at the Foot of which it now runs, and where it has made a new Passage. The Year following, one of the two Men who had performed the last Duties to this Servant of GOD, returned to the Place where he had buried him, took up his Remains and carried them to *Michillimakinac*. I could not learn, or I have forgot, what Name this River had before; but at present the Savages  
always

always called it the River of the *Black Gown* \*. The *French* have given it the Name of *Father Marquette*; and never fail to invoke him, when they find themselves in any Danger on the Lake *Michigan*. Many have affirmed, that they believe it was owing to his Intercession, that they have escaped very great Dangers.

I went three Leagues further that Day, and encamped at the Entrance of the River *St. Nicholas*, on the Side of a pretty Lake, that is longer, but not so wide as the former. I found here a great Number of red and white Pines, the last have the hardest Bark, but the best Wood, and shed a Gum which is pretty fine; the first have the softest Bark, but the Wood is heavier. They draw from these the Tar of which the best Pitch is made. I sailed thus pleasantly to the River *St. Joseph*, which I entered the 6th, very late, or on the 7th very early in the Morning, for it was about Midnight when we arrived here, having rested ourselves above two Hours at the Side of the Lake of *La Riviere Noire* (*the Black River*;) which is eight Leagues distant, and where there is a great deal of *Gin-seng*.

The River *St. Joseph* is above a hundred Leagues long, and its Source is not far from Lake *Erié*: It is navigable eighty Leagues, and in the twenty-five Leagues which I went up to arrive at the Fort, I saw none but good Lands, covered with Trees of a prodigious Height, under which there grow in some Places very fine *Capillaire*, (*Maiden Hair*.) I was two Days making this Way, but the Night of the first was very near putting an End to my Journey. I was taken for a Bear, and was within a Hair's Breadth of being killed under this Denomination, by one of my Canoe Men in the following Manner.

After Supper and Prayer, as it was very hot, I went to take a Walk, keeping always by the Side of the River. A Spaniel that followed me every where, took a Fancy to jump into the River, to fetch I know not what, which I had

\* Thus the Savages call the Jesuits. They call the Priests, the *White Capes*; and the Recollets, the *Grey Gowns*.

had thrown in without Thought. My People, who thought I was gone to Rest, especially as it was late, and the Night dark, hearing the Noise this Creature made, thought it was a Roe-Buck that was crossing the River; and two of them immediately set out with their Guns charged. Luckily for me, one of the two, who was a blundering Fellow, was called back by the rest, for Fear he should occasion the Loss of their Game; otherwise it might have happened, that by his blundering I should have been shot.

The other advancing slowly, perceived me about twenty Paces from him, and made no Doubt that it was a Bear standing upon his hind Feet; as these Animals always do when they hear a Noise. At this Sight he cocks his Gun, which he had loaded with three Balls; and stooping down almost to the Ground, made his Approaches as silently as possible. He was going to fire, when on my Side I thought I saw something, without being able to distinguish what it was; but as I could not doubt but that it was one of my People, I thought proper to ask him if by Chance he did not take me for a Bear: He made me no Answer, and when I came up to him, I found him like one Thunder-struck and as it were seized with Horror at the Blow he was just going to give. It was his Comrades who told me what had passed.

The River *St. Joseph* is so convenient for the Trade of all Parts of *Canada*, that it is no Wonder it has always been much frequented by the Savages. Furthermore, it waters a very fertile Country: But this is not what these People value most. It is even a great Loss to give them good Lands: Either they make no Use of them, or they soon make them poor by sowing their Maiz.

The *Mascoutins* had, not long since, a Settlement on this River; but they are returned to their own Country, which is, as they say, still finer. The *Poutouatamies* have successively occupied here several Posts, and remain here still. Their Village is on the same Side as the Fort, a little lower, and on a very fine Spot. The Village of the *Miamies* is on the other Side of the River.

These

These Savages who have at all Times applied themselves more than the others to Physic, set a high Value on *Gin-feng*, and are persuaded that this Plant has the Virtue to render Women fruitful. But I do not think that it was for this Reason they called it *Absoutbenza*, which means a Child: It owes this Name to the Shape of its Root, at least among the *Iroquois*. You have seen without Doubt, Madam, what Father *Laffitau*, who brought it first to *France*, has wrote of it under the Name of *Aurelia Canadensis*: It is at least for Shape absolutely the same as that which comes to us from *China*, and which the *Chinese* get from *Corea* and *Tartary*. The Name they give it, which signifies *the Likeness of a Man*; the Virtues they attribute to it, and which have been experienced in *Canada* by those who have used it, and the Conformity of the Climate\*, are great Reasons to think, that if we took it as coming from *China*, it would be as much esteemed as that the *Chinese* sell us; perhaps it is so little esteemed by us, because it grows in a Country that belongs to us, and that it has not the Recommendation of being entirely Foreign.

In going up the River *St. Joseph*, I observed several Trees, which I had not seen in any other Place. The most remarkable, and which I took at first for an Ash by its Leaves, grows very large, and bears Beans which appear very good to the Eye; but the more they are boiled the harder they grow, so that they could never be used. The Fields which surround the Fort are so full of *Saffras*, that it perfumes the Air; but it is not a great Tree as in *Carolina*: They are little Shrubs which grow near the Ground; perhaps also they are but Shoots of the Trees that were cut down to clear the Environs of the Fort, and of the Savage Villages.

There

\* The *Black River (la Riviere Noire)* is in 41 Deg. 50 Min. it is in the same Latitude they get the *Gin-feng* of *Corea* for the Emperor of *China*. Some of ours has been carried to *China*, and being prepared by the *Chinese*, they have sold it as coming from *Corea* or *Tartary*. For the rest, this preparation adds nothing to it.

There are here many Simples, which they say the Savages make Use of a little at a Venture, without any other Principle than a slight Experiment made by Chance, and which sometimes deceives them ; for the same Remedies do not act equally on all Sorts of Subjects, attacked with the same Distempers ; but these People know not how to make all these Distinctions. One Thing which much surpriseth me, is the impenetrable Secrecy they keep concerning their Simples, or the little Curiosity of the *French* to get the Knowledge of them. If the last are not in Fault, nothing makes it appear more, in my Opinion, that the Savages are not pleased to see us in their Country : And we have other Proofs, which are as clear as this. It is very likely also that they are of the same Opinion with Regard to their Simples, as they are about their Mines ; *that is to say*, that they would soon die, if they discovered any of them to Strangers.

The Savages of these Parts are naturally Thieves, and think all good Prizes that they can catch. It is true, that if we soon discover that we have lost any Thing, it is sufficient to inform the Chief of it, and we are sure to recover it ; but we must give the Chief more than the Value of the Thing, and he requires further some Trifle for the Person that found it, and who is probably the Thief himself : I happened to be in this Case the Day after my Arrival, and they shewed me no Favour. These Barbarians would sooner engage in a War than make the least Concessions in this Point.

Some Days after I paid a Visit to the Chief of the *Miamies*, who had got the Start of me : He is a tall Man, well shaped, but much disfigured, for he has no Nose : I was told that this Misfortune happened to him in a drunken Bout. When he heard I was coming to see him, he went and placed himself at the Bottom of his Cabin, on a Sort of an Alcove, where I found him sitting with his Legs across, after the Eastern Manner. He said very little to me, and seemed to assume a proud Gravity, which he did not maintain well : This is the first Savage Chief that I saw, who observed this Ceremony ; but I was told beforehand



forehand that he must be treated in the same Way, if you would not be despised by him.

That Day the *Pouteouatamis* were come to play at the *Game of Straws* with the *Miamis*: They played in the Cabin of the Chief, and on an open Place before the Cabin. These Straws are small Reeds about the Bigness of a Wheat Straw, and about six Inches long. They take a Parcel, which are commonly two hundred and one, and always an odd Number. After having shuffled them well together, making a thousand Contorsions, and invoking the Genii, they separate them with a Kind of an Awl, or a pointed Bone, into Parcels of ten each: Every one takes his own at a Venture and he that happens to get the Parcel with eleven, gains a certain Number of Points that are agreed on. The whole Game is sixty or eighty.

There are other Ways of playing this Game, and they would have explained them to me, but I did not comprehend it, only that sometimes the Number Nine wins the Game. They added, that there was as much Skill as Hazard in this Game, and that the Savages are great Sharpers in this as well as in all other Games; and that they are so eager at it, that they play whole Days and Nights, and sometimes do not leave off playing till they are quite naked, and have nothing more to lose. They have another Game, at which they do not play for any Thing, but merely for Diverfion; but it has almost always bad Consequences with Respect to their Manners.

As soon as it is Night, they set up in the Middle of a great Cabin several Posts in a Ring, in the Midst are their Instruments of Music: They place on each Post a Packet of Down, and which must be each of a different Colour. The young People of both Sexes, mingled together, dance round about these Posts: The young Women have also down of the Colour they like. From Time to Time a young Man steps out of the Ring, and goes to take from a Post some Down of the Colour which he knows his Mistress likes, and putting it upon his Head, he dances round her, and by a Sign appoints her a Place of Rendezvous.

dezvous. When the Dance is over, the Feast begins, and lasts all Day: At Night every one retires, and the young Women manage Matters so well, that in Spite of the Vigilance of their Mothers, they go to the Place of Affignation.

The *Miamis* have two Games more, the first of which is called the *Game of the Bat*. They play at it with a Ball and Sticks bent and ending in a Kind of Racket. They set up two Posts, which serve for Bounds, and which are distant from each other according to the Number of Players. For Instance, if they are eighty, there is half a League Distance between the Posts. The Players are divided into two Bands, which have each their Post: Their Business is to strike the Ball to the Post of the adverse Party without letting it fall to the Ground, and without touching it with the Hand, for in either of these Cases they lose the Game, unless he who makes the Fault repairs it by striking the Ball at one Blow to the Post, which is often impossible. These Savages are so dextrous at catching the Ball with their Bats, that sometimes one Game will last many Days together.

The second Game is much like the former, but is not so dangerous. They mark out two Bounds, as in the first, and the Players occupy all the Space between. He that is to begin, throws a Ball up in the Air as perpendicularly as possible, that he may catch it the better, and throw it towards the Bounds. All the others have their Hands lifted up, and he that catches the Ball repeats the same, or throws the Ball to one of his Band that he judges more nimble and dexterous than himself; for to win the Game, the Ball must never have been in the Hands of the adverse Party before it comes to the Bound. The Women also play at this Game, but it is but seldom: Their Bands consist of four or five, and the first that lets the Ball fall, loses the Game.

The *Pouteouatamis* have here a Chief, and an Orator, who are Persons of Merit. The first, named *Pirmon*, is a Man upwards of sixty, very sober and prudent. The second, named *Ouilamek*, is younger: He is a *Christian*, and well instructed, but he makes no Exercise of his Religion.

igion. One Day as I was making him some Reproaches on this Account, he left me suddenly, went into the Chapel, and said his Prayers aloud, so that we heard him at the Missionary's Lodging. It is difficult to find a Man that speaks better, and who has more Sense. On the other Hand, he is of a very amiable Character, and sincerely attached to the *French*. *Piremon* is not inferior in any Respekt, and I have heard them both in a Council at the Commandant's, where they spoke with a great deal of Eloquence.

Many Savages of the two Nations which are settled on this River, are just returned from the *English* Colonies, whither they went to sell their Peltry, and from whence they have brought back a great deal of Brandy. It has been divided according to Custom; *that is to say*, every Day they distribute to a certain Number of Persons as much as is necessary for each to get drunk, and the whole was drank in eight Days. They began to drink in the two Villages as soon as the Sun was set, and every Night the Country resounded with frightful Cries and Howlings. One would have said that a Flight of Devils had escaped from Hell, or that the two Villages were cutting one another's Throats. Two Men were lamed: I met one of them who broke his Arm with a Fall, and I said to him, that certainly another Time he would be wiser: He replied, that this Accident was Nothing, that he should soon be cured, and that he would begin to drink again as soon as he had got a fresh Stock of Brandy.

Judge, Madam, what a Missionary can do in the midst of such a Disorder, and how greatly it must affect an honest Man, who has quitted his own Country to gain Souls to God, to be obliged to be a Witness of it, without having it in his Power to remedy it. These Barbarians are sensible that Drunkenness ruins and destroys them; but when one strives to persuade them that they should be the first to ask that we should hinder them of a Liquor that is attended with such fatal Consequences, they are satisfied with replying, "It is you that have accustomed us to it, we can no longer do without it, and if you refuse to supply us, we will get it of the *English*." This  
 "Liquor

“Liquor strips us naked, and kills us, it is true, but it is  
 “you who have done the Mischief, and there is now no  
 “Remedy.” Nevertheless they are in the Wrong to  
 blame us alone; had it not been for the *English* I believe  
 we could have put a Stop to this Trade in the Colony, or  
 reduced it within proper Bounds.—But we shall perhaps  
 be soon obliged to give Permission to supply them with  
 it from *France*, taking Measures to prevent its Abuse, in-  
 asmuch as the *English* Brandy is more hurtful than our’s.

A Disorder that corrupts the Manners of a People never comes alone; it is always the Principle, or the Rise of many others. The Savages, before they fell into this I am speaking of, excepting War, which they always made in a barbarous and inhuman Manner, had nothing to disturb their Happiness: Drunkenness hath rendered them interested, and has disturbed the Peace they enjoyed in their Families, and in the Commerce of Life. Notwithstanding, as they are only struck with the present Object, the Evils, which this Passion has caused them, have not yet become a Habit: They are Storms which pass over, and which they almost forget when they are past, thro’ the Goodness of their Character, and the great Fund of Calmness of Soul, which they have received from Nature.

We must acknowledge that at first Sight, the Life they lead appears very hard; but besides that in this nothing gives Uneasiness but by Comparison, and that Custom is a second Nature, the Liberty they enjoy, sufficiently compensates the Loss of those Conveniencies they are deprived of. What we see every Day in some Beggars by Profession, and in several Persons in the Country, gives us a sensible Proof that we may be happy in the midst of Indigence. But the Savages are still more happy: First, because they think themselves so: Secondly, because they are in the peaceable Possession of the most precious of all the Gifts of Nature: And lastly, because they are entirely ignorant of, and have not even a Desire to know those false Advantages which we so much esteem, and which we purchase at the Expence of real Good; and of which we have so little Enjoyment.

In Fact, what they are most valuable for, and for which they ought to be looked upon as true Philosophers, is, that the Sight of our Conveniencies, our Riches, our Magnificence, have little moved them, and that they are pleased with themselves that they can do without them. Some *Iroquois*, who went to *Paris* in 1666, and who were shewed all the Royal Houses, and all the Beauties of that great City, admired nothing in it, and would have preferred their Villages to the Capital of the most flourishing Kingdom of *Europe*, if they had not seen the Street of *la Huchette*, where the Shops of the roasting Cooks, which they always found furnished with all Kinds of Meat, charmed them greatly.

We cannot even say that they are so highly delighted with their Way of living, only because they are not acquainted with the Sweetness of our's. A good Number of the *French* have lived like them, and have been so well pleased with it, that many Persons could never prevail with them to return, though they might have been very much at their Ease in the Colony. On the contrary, it was never possible for a single Savage to conform to our Way of living. We have taken Children from the Cradle, and brought them up with much Care, and omitted nothing to hinder their knowing any Thing of what passed amongst their Parents. All these Precautions were useless: The Force of Blood prevailed over Education. As soon as they found themselves at Liberty, they have torn their Garments to Pieces, and went through the Woods to seek their Countrymen, whose Life appeared to them more pleasing than that they led with us.

An *Iroquois*, named *la Plaque*, lived many Years with the *French*; the same who, as I have told you, Madam, in saving his Father's Life in an Engagement, thought he had fully satisfied all the Debt he owed him: He was also made a Lieutenant in our Troops to fix him, because he was a very brave Man; but he could not continue in our Way of living: He returned to his Nation, only carrying from us our Vices, without correcting any of those he brought with him. He loved Women to Excess: He was well shaped: His Valour and his brave Actions gave him  
him

him a great Reputation : He had a great deal of Wit, and very amiable Manners : He had many Intrigues with other Men's Wives ; and his Disorders went so far, that it was debated in the Council of his Canton, whether they should not take him off. It was however concluded, by the Majority of Votes to spare his Life ; because, as he was extremely courageous, he would people the Country with good Warriors.

The Care which the Mothers take of their Children, whilst they are yet in the Cradle, is beyond all Expression, and proves very clearly that we often spoil all, when we exceed the Limits which Nature has taught us. They never leave them : They carry them every where with them ; and when they seem ready to sink under the Burdens they load themselves with, the Cradle of their Child is reckoned as nothing. One would even say, that this additional Weight is an Easement that renders the rest lighter.

Nothing can be neater than these Cradles : The Child lies very conveniently, and very easy in them ; but it is bound only as high as the Waist ; so that when the Cradle is upright, these little Creatures have their Heads and half their Bodies hanging down. In *Europe* they would fancy that a Child that was left in this Condition, would grow quite deformed ; but it happens directly contrary : This renders their Bodies supple ; and they are all, in Fact, of a Stature and Port, that the best shaped among us would envy. What can we say against such a general Experience ? but what I am going to mention, cannot be so easily justified.

There are on this Continent some Nations which they call *flat Heads*, which have in Fact their Foreheads very flat, and the Top of their Heads something lengthened. This Shape is not the Work of Nature ; it is the Mothers who give it to their Children as soon as they are born. For this End they apply to their Foreheads, and the back Part of their Heads, two Masses of Clay, or of some other heavy Matter, which they bind by little and little, till the Skull has taken the Shape they desire to give it.

It appears that this Operation is very painful to the Children, whose Nostrils shed a whitish Matter, pretty thick. But neither this Circumstance, nor the Cries of these little Innocents, alarm their Mothers, jealous of procuring them a handsome Appearance, without which they can't conceive how others can be satisfied. It is quite the reverse with certain *Algonquins* amongst us, named *Round Heads*, or *Bowl Heads*, whom I have mentioned before; for they make their Beauty consist in having their Heads perfectly round, and Mothers take Care also very early to give them this Shape.

I would willingly, Madam, take Advantage of the Leisure I have in this Place, and which perhaps will be longer than I desire, to finish what I have to say to you on this Subject; but some Troubles which have happened to me, and the approaching Departure of a Traveller, who is returning to the Colony, oblige me to interrupt this Recital, which I shall resume the first Opportunity.

*I am, &c.*

LETTER

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## LETTER XXIII.

*Sequel of the Character of the Savages, and their Way of living.*

MADAM, ST. JOSEPH'S RIVER, August 8.

I Resume the Course of my Memoirs, where I broke it off. You will think, perhaps, that I do not observe a sufficient Regularity: But we excuse, at least in a Relation, what we admire in an Ode: What in a *Lyrick* Poet is an Effect of Art, is a Matter of Necessity in a Traveller, who cannot relate Things but as he gets Information, and who is obliged to write what he sees, for fear of forgetting it.

The Children of the Savages, when they leave the Cradle, are not confined in any Manner; and as soon as they can crawl upon their Hands and Feet, they let them go where they will quite naked, into the Water, into the Woods, into the Dirt, and into the Snow, which makes their Bodies strong, their Limbs very supple, and hardens them against the Injuries of the Air; but also, as I observed before, it makes them subject to Distempers of the Stomach and Lungs, which destroy them early. In Summer they run, as soon as they are up, to the River, or in the Lake, and continue there a Part of the Day, playing like Fish when it is fine Weather at the Surface of the Water \*. It is certain that nothing is better than this Exercise to make their Joints free, and to render them nimble.

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They

\* It is very probable that this is the Reason why the Small-Pox is so fatal to the Savages. Much Bathing hardens the Skin, and prevents the Eruption of the Pustules.



They put a Bow and Arrows into their Hands betimes, and to excite in them that Emulation, which is the best Teacher of the Arts, there is no Need to set their Breakfast on the Top of a Tree, as they did by the young *Lacedæmonians*: They are all born with that Passion for Glory, that has no Need of a Spur; and indeed they shoot with a surprizing Exactness, and with a little Practice, they acquire the same Dexterity in the Use of our Fire Arms. They make them also wrestle, and they pursue this Exercise so eagerly, that they would often kill one another if they were not parted: Those who are worsted are so enraged at it, that they do not take the least Repose, till they have their Revenge.

In general one may say, that the Fathers and Mothers neglect nothing to inspire their Children with certain Principles of Honour, which they preserve all their Lives, but of which they often make a bad Application; and in this their whole Education consists. When they give them Instructions on this Head, it is always in an indirect Way; the most common is to relate to them the brave Actions of their Ancestors, or of their Countrymen. These young People are fired at these Stories, and are never easy till they find an Opportunity of imitating the Examples they have made them admire. Sometimes, to correct them for their Faults, they use Prayers and Tears, but never Menaces. They would make no Impression on Spirits, prepossessed with an Opinion that no Person has a Right to use Compulsion.

A Mother, who sees her Daughter behave ill, falls a crying: On the Daughter's asking the Cause, she is satisfied with saying, *You disgrace me*. It seldom happens that this Way of reproving is not effectual: Nevertheless, since they have conversed more with the *French*, some of them begin to chastise their Children; but this is scarcely amongst any but the *Christians*, or those that are settled in the Colony. Generally the greatest Punishment they use to correct their Children, is to throw a little Water in their Faces. The Children are much affected by it, and by every Thing that favours of Reproof; the Cause  
of

of which is, that Resentment is their strongest Passion, even at that Age.

We have known some Girls hang themselves, for having only received a slight Reprimand from their Mothers, or a few Drops of Water in their Faces; and who have given Notice of it, by saying, *You shall lose your Daughter.* The greatest Misfortune is, that it is not to Virtue that they exhort these young People; or, which is the same Thing, that they do not always give them true Notions of Virtue. In Reality, they recommend nothing to them so much as Revenge, and 'tis THIS of which they shew them the most frequent Examples.

One would expect, Madam, that a Childhood so badly disciplined, should be followed by a Youth of Turbulence and Corruption: But on one Hand, the Savages are naturally calm, and early Masters of themselves; Reason also guides them rather more than other Men: And on the other Hand, their Constitution, especially in the Northern Countries, does not incline them to Debauchery; yet we find some Customs among them, in which Chastity is entirely disregarded; but it appears that this proceeds more from Superstition, than the Depravation of the Heart.

The *Hurons*, when they first began to converse with them, were more lascivious, and very brutal in their Pleasures. The young Persons of both Sexes abandoned themselves without Shame to all Manner of Dissoluteness; and it was chiefly among them, that it was not esteemed a Crime for a Girl to prostitute herself. Their Parents were the first to engage them in this Way, and many did the same by their Wives, for a base Interest. Many never married, but took young Women to serve them, as they said for Companions; and all the Difference they made between these Concubines and their lawful Wives, was, that with the first there was no Agreement made: For the rest, their Children were on the same Foot as the others; which produced no Inconvenience, in a Country where there are no Estates to inherit.

One does not distinguish Nations here by their Dress. The Men, when it is hot, have often only something of an Apron to cover their Nakedness. In Winter they clothe themselves more or less, according to the Climate. They wear on their Feet a Sort of Sandals, made of Roe-Buck Skins smoked: Their Stockings are also Skins, or Bits of Stuffs, which they rap round their Legs. A Waistcoat, made of Skin, covers them to the Waist, and they wear over that a Rug or Blanket, when they can have it; if not, they make themselves a Robe with a Bear's Skin, or of several Beaver or other like Skins, or Furs, with the Hair inwards. The Women's Waistcoats reach just below their Knees; and when it is very cold, or when they travel, they cover their Heads with their Blanket, or their Robe. I have seen several who had little Caps, like Skull Caps; others have a Sort of Capuchin, fastened to their Waistcoats; and they have besides a Piece of Stuff which serves them for a Petticoat, which covers them from the Waist down to the Middle of the Leg.

They are all very desirous of having Shirts and Shifts; but they never put them under their Waistcoats, till they are dirty, and then they wear them till they drop to Pieces, for they never take the Trouble to wash them. Their Waistcoats are generally dressed in the Smoke, like their Sandals; *that is to say*, after they have hung a proper Time in it, they rub them a little, and then they may be washed like Linen: They prepare them also by soaking them in Water, then rubbing them with their Hands till they are dry and pliable; but the Savages think our Stuffs and Blankets are much more convenient.

Many make various Figures all over their Bodies by pricking themselves, others only in some Parts. They don't do this merely for Ornament: They find also, as it is said, great Advantages by this Custom. It serves greatly to defend them from the Cold, renders them less sensible of the other Injuries of the Air, and frees them from the Persecution of the Gnats. But it is only in the Countries possessed by the English, especially in *Virginia*, that the Custom of pricking themselves all over the Body is  
very

very common. In *New France*, the greatest Part is fastidied with some Figures of Birds, Serpents, or other Animals, and even of Leaves, and such-like Figures, without Order or Symmetry, but according to every one's Fancy, often in the Face, and sometimes even on the Eye-lids. Many Women are marked in the Parts of the Face that answers to the Jaw Bones, to prevent the Tooth-ach.

This Operation is not painful in itself. It is performed in this Manner: They begin by tracing on the Skin, drawn very tight, the Figures they intend to make; then they prick little Holes close together with the Fins of a Fish, or with Needles, all over these Traces, so as to draw Blood: Then they rub them over with Charcoal Dust, and other Colours well ground and powdered. These Powders sink into the Skin, and the Colours are never effaced: But soon after the Skin swells, and forms a Kind of Scab, accompanied with Inflammation. It commonly excites a Fever; and if the Weather is too hot, or the Operation has been carried too far, there is Hazard of Life.

The Colours with which they paint their Faces, and the Grease they rub themselves with all over their Bodies, produce the same Advantages, and, as these People fancy, give the same good Appearance, as pricking. The Warriors paint themselves, when they take the Field, to intimidate their Enemies, perhaps also to hide their Fear; for we must not think they are all exempt from it. The young People do it to conceal an Air of Youth, which would make them less taken for old Soldiers, or a Pale-ness remaining after some Distemper, and which they are apprehensive might be taken for the Effect of Want of Courage: They do it also to make them look handsome; but then the Colours are more lively, and more varied. They paint the Prisoners that are going to die; but I don't know why: Perhaps it is to adorn the Victim, who is to be sacrificed to the God of War. Lastly, they paint the Dead, to expose them dressed in their finest Robes; and this is, without Doubt, to hide the Paleness of Death, which disfigures them.

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The Colours they use on these Occasions are the same they employ to dye Skins, and they make them from certain Earths, and the Bark of some Trees. They are not very lively, but they do not very easily wear out. The Men add to this Ornament the Down of Swans or other Birds, which they strew upon their Hair after it has been greased, like Powder. They add to this Feathers of all Colours, and Bunches of the Hair of divers Animals, all placed in an odd Manner. The Placing of their Hair, sometimes standing up like Bristles on one Side, and flattened on the other, or dressed in a thousand different Fashions, Pendants in their Ears, and sometimes in their Nostrils, a great Shell of Porcelain hanging about their Neck, or on their Breast, some Crowns made of the Plumage of scarce Birds, the Claws, Feet, or Heads of Birds of Prey, little Horns of Roe-Bucks, all these Things make up their Finery. But whatever they have most precious is always employed to adorn the Captives when these Wretches make their first Entry into the Village of their Conquerors.

It is observable that the Men take very little Pains to adorn any Part but their Heads. It is just the Reverse with the Women; They wear scarcely any Thing on it, they are only fond of their Hair, and they would think themselves disgraced if it was cut off; therefore, when at the Death of a Relation they cut off Part of it, they pretend by this to shew the greatest Grief for their Loss. To preserve their Hair they grease it often, and powder it with the Dust of Spruce Bark, and sometimes with Vermilion, then they wrap it up in the Skin of an Eel or a Serpent, in the Fashion of Whiskers, which hang down to their Waist. As to their Faces, they are satisfied with tracing some Lines on them with Vermilion, or other Colours.

Their Nostrils are never bored, and it is only among some Nations that they bore their Ears; then they wear in them Pendants, as do also the Men, made of Beads of Porcelain. When they are dressed in their greatest Finery, they have Robes painted with all Sorts of Figures,  
with

with little Collars of Porcelain set on them without much Order or Symmetry, with a Kind of Border tolerably worked with Porcupine's Hair, which they paint also of various Colours. They adorn in the same Manner the Cradles of their Children, and they load them with all Sorts of Trinkets. These Cradles are made of light Wood and have at the upper End one or two Semicircles of Cedar, that they may cover them without touching the Head of the Child.

Besides the Household Work, and providing Wood for Fuel, the Women have almost always the sole Trouble of cultivating the Lands: As soon as the Snow is melted, and the Waters sufficiently drained, they begin to prepare the Earth, which consists in stirring it lightly with a Piece of Wood bent, the Handle of which is very long, having first set Fire to the dry Stalks of the Maiz and other Herbs that remained after the last Harvest. Besides that the Grain these People make Use of is Summer Grain, they pretend that the Nature of the Soil of this Country will not allow of sowing any Thing before Winter. But I believe the true Reason why Seeds would not grow if they were sowed in Autumn is, that they would be destroyed by the Winter, or rot at the melting of the Snow. It may also be, and this is the Opinion of many Persons, that the Wheat they cultivate in *Canada* though originally brought from *France*, has in Process of Time contracted the Property of Summer Seeds, which have not Strength enough to shoot several Times as those do which we sow in *September* and *October*.

Beans or rather Kidney-Beans, are sowed along with the Maiz, the Stalks of which serve to support them: I think I have heard that the Savages received this Seed from us, on which they set a high Value, and it differs nothing from our's. But I was surpris'd that they make little or no Use of our Peas, which have acquired in the Soil of *Canada*, a Degree of Goodness much superior to what they have in *Europe*. Sun-Flowers, Water-Melons, and Pomkins are set by themselves; and before they sow the Seed, they make it shoot in Smoke, in Night and black Earth.

For

For the most Part the Women help one another in the Work of the Field, and when it is Time to gather the Harvest, they have sometimes Recourse to the Men, who do not disdain to assist in it. It Ends in a Festival and Feast, which is made in the Night: Grain, and other Fruits of the Earth, are kept in Holes, which they dig in the Earth, and which are lined with large Pieces of Bark. Many leave the Maiz in the Ear as it grows, made up in Ropes as we do Onions, and spread them on great Poles over the Entrance of the Cabins. Others get out the Grain, and fill great Baskets with it made of Bark, full of Holes to hinder it from heating. But when they are obliged to be absent some Time, or are afraid of some Irruption of an Enemy, they make great Holes in the Earth to hide it, where this Grain keeps very well.

In the northern Parts they sow little, and in many Places none at all; but they purchase the Maiz by Exchange. This Grain is very wholesome, it is nourishing, and light of Digestion. The most common Way of preparing it among our *French* Travellers is by Lixivating, *that is to say*, by boiling it some Time in a Sort of Lie. This Way keeps it a long Time; they make Provision of it for long Journeys, and as they want it, they boil it again in Water, or in Broth, if they have any Thing to make it of, and they put a little Salt to it.

It is not an unpleasent Food, but many People are persuaded that too frequent Use of it is prejudicial to Health, because the Lie gives it a corrosive Quality, the Effects of which are felt in Time. When the Maiz is in the Ear, and still green, some broil it on the Coals, and it has a very good Taste. Our *Canadians* call it *Bled groule*. There is a particular Sort that opens as soon as it is laid on the Fire, they call it *Bled fleuri*, and it is very delicate. This is what they treat Strangers with. They carry it in some Places to Persons of Distinction, who arrive in a Village, much in the same Manner as they do in *France* the Present of a Town.

Lastly,

Lastly, it is of this Grain they make the *Sagamitty*, which is the most common Food of the Savages. For this Purpose they begin by broiling it, then they pound it, and take off the Husk, then they make a Sort of Broth with it, which is insipid enough when they have no Meat, or Prunes to give it a Relish. They sometimes reduce it to Flour, which they call here *Farine froide* (*cold Flour*;) and this is the best Provision that can be made for Travelers. Those who travel on Foot cannot carry any other. They also boil the Maiz in the Ear, while it is still soft, then they broil it a little, they get out the Grain, and dry it in the Sun; this they keep a long Time, and the *Sagamitty* they make of it has a very good Taste.

You will perceive, Madam, by the Detail of these Messes, that the Savages are not nice in their eating. We should think that they have a very depraved Taste, if it was possible to make a fixed Rule for Taste. They love Grease, and it predominates in all their Dishes, if they can get it. A few Pounds of Candles in a Kettle of *Sagamitty* makes them think it excellent. They even sometimes put Things into it which cannot be mentioned, and they are surpris'd to see our Stomachs turn at them.

The Nations of the South had only Vessels of baked Earth to dress their Meat. In the North they used Kettles of Wood, and they made the Water boil by throwing in Flints made red hot. They found our Iron and Tin Kettles much more convenient, and this is the Merchandize we are sure to find a Vent for when we trade with them. In the Nations of the West, the wild Oats supply the Want of Maiz: It is quite as wholesome, and if they are not so nourishing, the Flesh of the Buffalo, which abounds in these Parts, makes amends for it.

Among the wandering Savages who never cultivate the Earth, when the Chase and the Fishery fail, their only Resource is a Kind of Moss, which grows on certain Rocks, and which our *French* People call *Tripe of the Rocks*. Nothing is more insipid than this Moss, which  
has



has but little Substance: This is being reduced to what is just sufficient to keep them from starving. I still find it harder to conceive, which yet I have heard affirmed by Persons of Credit, that some Savages eat by Way of Dainty a Sort of Maiz, which they leave to rot in a standing Water, as we do Hemp, and they take it out all black and stinking. They add also, that those who have a Liking to such a strange Mefs as this is, will not lose any of the Water, or rather Mud, that drops from it, the Smell of which alone would make the Heart heave of any other People. It was probably Necessity that discovered this Secret, and if this does not give it all its Relish, nothing proves more clearly that there is no disputing about Tastes.

The Savage Women make Bread of Maiz, and tho' it is only a Mass of Paste ill wrought, without Leaven, and baked under the Ashes, these People find it very good, and treat their Friends with it; but it must be eaten hot: It will not keep when it is cold. Sometimes they mix with it Beans, various Fruits, Oil, and Grease. They must have good Stomachs that can digest such Hotch-potch.

The Sun-Flowers only serve the Savages for an Oil, which they rub themselves with. They get it more commonly from the Seed than from the Root of this Plant. This Root differs but little from a Sort of Potatoes, which we call in *France Topinambours*. The Potatoes which are so common in the *West-Indian* Islands, and in the Continent of *South America*, have been planted with Success in *Louisiana*. The continual Use which all the Nations of *Canada* made of a Sort of *Petun*, or wild Tobacco, which grows every where in this Country, have made some Travellers say that they swallowed the Smoke; and that it served them for Food; but this is not found true, and was founded only on observing them often remain a long Time without eating. Since they have tasted our Tobacco, they can scarcely bear their *Petun*, and it is very easy to satisfy them on this Head, for Tobacco grows very well here; and they say also, that by  
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chusing proper Soils, we might have a most excellent Sort.

The little Works of the Women, and which are their common Employment in the Cabins, are to make Thread of the inner Membranes of the Bark of a Tree, which they call the *white Wood*, and they work it pretty nearly as we do Hemp. The Women also dye every Thing: They make also several Works with Bark, on which they work small Figures with Porcupines Hair: They make little Cups, or other Utensils of Wood; they paint and embroider Roe-Buck Skins; they knit Girdles and Garters with the Wool of the Buffaloes.

As for the Men, they glory in their Idleness, and in Reality they pass above half their Lives in doing nothing, in the Persuasion that daily Labour disgraces a Man, and is only the Duty of the Women. Man, they say, is only made for War, Hunting, and Fishing. Nevertheless, it belongs to them to make all Things necessary for these three Exercises: Therefore making Arms, Nets, and all the Equiage of the Hunters and Fishers, chiefly belong to them, as well as the Canoes, and their Rigging, the Raquets, or Snow Shoes, the building and repairing the Cabins, but they often oblige the Women to assist them. The *Christians* employ themselves something more, but they only do it by Way of Penance.

These People, before we had furnished them with Hatchets, and other Tools, were greatly embarrassed to cut down their Trees, and fit them for Use. They burnt them at the Foot, and to split and cut them, they used Hatchets made of Flints, which did not break, but took up a great deal of Time to sharpen. To fix them in the Handle, they cut off the Head of a young Tree, and as if they would have grafted it, they made a Notch in it, in which they thrust the Head of the Hatchet. After some Time, the Tree, by growing together, kept the Hatchet so fixed that it could not come out; then they cut the Tree to such a Length as they would have the Handle.

Their

Their Villages have generally no regular Form. The greatest Part of our antient Relations represent them of a round Form, and perhaps their Authors had not seen but of this Sort. For the rest, imagine you see, Madam, a Heap of Cabins without Order, or being set on a Line: Some like Cart-Houfes, others like Tunnels built of Bark, supported by some Posts, sometimes plastered on the Outside with Mud, in a coarse Manner: In a Word, built with less Art, Neatness, and Solidity, than the Cabins of the Beavers. These Cabins are about fifteen or twenty Feet in Breadth, and sometimes a hundred in Length. Then they contain several Fires, for a Fire never takes up more than 30 Feet.

When the Floor is not sufficient for all the Inhabitants to sleep on, the young People lay on a wide Bench, or a Kind of Stage, about five or six Feet high, that runs the whole Length of the Cabin. The Furniture and the Provisions are over this, placed on Pieces of Wood put across under the Roof. For the most Part, there is before the Door a Sort of Porch, where the young People sleep in the Summer, and which serves for a Wood-House in the Winter. The Doors are nothing but Bark, fixed up like the Umbrella of a Window, and they never shut close. These Cabins have neither Chimnies nor Windows, but they leave an Opening in the Middle of the Roof, by which Part of the Smoke goes out, which they are obliged to shut when it rains or snows; and then they must put out the Fire, if they will not be blinded with the Smoke.

The Savages fortify themselves better than they lodge: We see some Villages pretty well palisadoed with Redoubts, where they always take Care to make a good Provision of Water and Stones. The Palisadoes are even double, and sometimes treble, and have commonly Battlements at the last Enclosure. The Posts they are composed of are interwoven with Branches of Trees that leave no Place open. This was sufficient to support a long Siege, before these People knew the Use of Fire-Arms. Every Village has a pretty large open Place, but it is seldom of a regular Figure.

Formerly

Formerly the *Iroquois* built their Cabins much better than the other Nations, and than they do themselves at present: They sometimes wrought Figures in Relief on their Cabins, tho' the Work was very rude; but since in several Incurfions their Enemies have burnt almost all their Villages, they have not taken the Pains to re-establish them in their first State. But if these People take so little Pains to procure the Conveniencies of Life in the Places of their ordinary Residence, what can we think of their Encampings in their Travels, and their Winter Quarters. An antient Missionary \*, who to lay himself under a Necessity of learning the Language of the *Montagnais*, would accompany them in their Hunting during the Winter, has given us an Account of it, which I shall transcribe almost Word for Word.

These Savages inhabit a Country very wild and uncultivated, but not not so much as THAT which they chuse for their Hunting. You must march a long Time before you come to it, and you must carry on your Back all you want for five or six Months, through Ways sometimes so frightful, that one can't conceive how the wild Creatures can come here. If they had not the Precaution to furnish themselves with the Bark of Trees, they would have nothing to defend them from the Snow and Rain during the Journey. As soon as they arrive at the Place proposed, they accommodate themselves a little better; but this consists only in not being exposed continually to all the Injuries of the Air.

Every Body is employed for this End; and the Missionaries, who at first had no Body to serve them, and for whom the Savages had no Regard, were not spared any more than the rest; they did not even allow them a separate Cabin, and they were obliged to lodge in the first that would receive them. These Cabins among the greatest Part of the *Algonquin* Nations, are much in the Shape of our Ice-houses, round, and ending in a Cone: They have no other Support but Poles, fixed in the Snow, tied together at the Ends, and covered with Pieces of Bark, all joined together, and not well fastened to the Poles; so that the Wind comes through on every Side.

VOL. II.

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\* Father *Paul le Jeune*.

The setting up these Cabins is but the Work of half an Hour at most. Some Branches of Pine serve for Mats, and there are no other Beds. The only Convenience attending this is, that they may be changed every Day. The Snow, which is heaped up round about them, forms a Sort of a Parapet, which has its Use, for the Winds do not pierce through it. By the Side and under the Shelter of this Parapet, they sleep as quietly on these Branches, covered with a poor Skin, as on the softest Bed. The Missionaries have some Difficulty to accustom themselves to this Lodging, but Fatigue and Necessity soon reconcile them to it. They cannot so well reconcile themselves to the Smoke, which almost always fills the Tops of the Cabins in such a Manner, that one cannot stand upright in them without having one's Head in a Sort of a Cloud. This is no trouble to the Savages, accustomed from their Childhood to sit or lie on the Ground all the Time they are in their Cabins: but it is a great Punishment to the *French*, who can't reconcile themselves to this Inaction.

On the other Hand, the Wind which enters as I before observed, on all Sides, blows in a Cold that chills one Part, whilst a Person is smothered and broil'd on the other. Often one cannot distinguish any Thing at two or three Feet Distance; and our Eyes water so, that we are blinded: Sometimes, to get a little Breath, we are forced to lie on our Bellies, with our Mouths almost close to the Ground. The shortest Way would be to go out; but the greatest Part of the Time this is not to be done; sometimes because of a Snow so thick, that it darkens the Day; and sometimes because there blows a dry Wind, that cuts the Face, and even shivers the Trees in the Forests. Nevertheless, a Missionary is obliged to say his Office, to sing Mass, and to perform all the other Duties of his Ministry.

To all these Inconveniencies we must add another, which at first will seem a Trifle to you, but which is really very considerable; it is the Troublesomeness of the Dogs. The Savages have always a great Number that follow them every where, and which are very much attached to them; they are not fawning because they are never fondled, but they are bold and skilful Hunters.

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I have already said that the Savages break their Dogs very early to that Sort of Hunting they are intended for; I add, that every Man must have many, because a great Number are destroyed by the Teeth or the Horns of the wild Creatures, which they attack with a Courage that nothing can daunt. Their Masters take little Care to feed them: They live by what they can catch, and this is not much, so they are always very lean: On the other Hand, they have little Hair, which makes them very sensible of the Cold. To keep themselves warm, if they can't come to the Fire, where it would be difficult for them all to find Room, though there should be no Person in the Cabin, they go and lie down on the first they meet with; and often one wakes in the Night in a Surprise, almost stifled by two or three Dogs. If they were a little more discreet in placing themselves, their Company would not be very troublesome; one could put up with it well enough; but they lie where they can: Drive them away as often as you please, they return directly. 'Tis much worse in the Day-time; as soon as any Meat appears, you are incommoded with the Bustle they make to have their Share.

A poor Missionary is lying on the Ground leaning on his Elbow near the Fire, to say his Breviary, or to read a Book, striving as well as he can to endure the Smoke; and he must also bear the Persecution of a Dozen Dogs, which do nothing but run over him backwards and forwards after a Piece of Meat they have discovered. If he has Need of a little Rest, it is hard for him to find a little Nook, where he may be free from this Vexation. If they bring him any Thing to eat, the Dogs get their Noses in his Dish before he can have his Hand in it; and often while he is employed in defending his Portion against those that attack him in Front, there comes one behind that carries off half of it, or by running against him, beats the Dish out of his Hands, and spills the Sagamitty in the Ashes.

Oftentimes the Evils I have mentioned, are effaced by a greater; in Comparison of which the others are nothing, *viz.* Hunger. The Provisions they carry with

them do not last long: They depend on the Chase; and that fails sometimes. It is true, that the Savages can bear Hunger with as much Patience as they take little Precaution to prevent it; but they are sometimes reduced to such Extremity, that they sink under it.

The Missionary, from whom I took this Account, was obliged, in his first Winter encamping, to eat the Eel Skins and Elk Skins, with which he had patched his Cassock; after which he was forced to eat young Branches, and the softest Bark of Trees. Nevertheless, he stood this Trial, without losing his Health; but all Persons have not his Strength.

The Nastiness alone of the Cabins, and the Stench which naturally arises from it, is a real Punishment to any one but a Savage. It is easy to judge how far both must go among People who never change their Linen or Clothes but when they drop to Pieces, and who take no Care to wash them. In Summer they bathe every Day; but they rub themselves directly with Oil or Grease of a strong Scent. In Winter they continue in their Filth, and in all Seasons one cannot enter into their Cabins without being almost poisoned.

All they eat is not only without any Seasoning, and commonly very insipid, but there reigns in their Meals a Slovenliness which exceeds all Description. What I have seen, and what I have heard, would frighten you. There are few Animals who do not feed cleaner. And after we have seen what passes among these People in this Article, one can no longer doubt that Fancy has a great Share in our Antipathies; and that many Messes, which really hurt our Health, do not produce this Effect but by the Power of these Antipathies, and by the little Courage we have to conquer them.

We must nevertheless acknowledge, that Things are a little changed in all these Articles since our Arrival in this Country. I have seen some who have endeavoured to procure themselves some Conveniencies, which perhaps they

they will soon find it hard to be deprived of. Some begin also to take a little more Precaution not to find themselves unprovided, when the Chase fails; and among those who dwell in the Colony, there is little to add to make them arrive at the Point of having tolerable Necessaries: But it is to be feared, when they are got so far, they will soon go further, and seek for Superfluities, which will make them more unhappy still, than they are at present in the midst of the greatest Indigence.

However, it will not be the Missionaries who will expose them to this Danger. Being persuaded that it is morally impossible to take the exact Medium, and keep within it, they much rather chuse to partake with these People of what is most troublesome in their way of living, than to open their Eyes on the Means of finding out Conveniences: And indeed those who are Witnesses of their Sufferings, can hardly conceive how they can support them; and the rather, because they have no Relaxation, and that all the Seasons have their particular Inconveniences.

As their Villages are always situated near Woods, or on the Side of some Water, and often between both. As soon as the Air begins to grow warm, the Musketoes, and an infinite Number of other small Flies, begin a Persecution more grievous than the Smoke, which we are often obliged to call to our Assistance; for there is scarce any other Remedy against the Stings of these little Insects, which set all Parts of the Body in a Flame, and do not suffer you to sleep in Quiet. Add to this, the frequent forced Marches, and always very fatiguing ones, which one must make to follow these Barbarians; sometimes in Water up to the Waist, and sometimes in Mud up to the Knees; in the Woods, through Brambles and Thorns, in Danger of being blinded; in the open Country, where there is no Shelter from the Heat of the Sun, which is as violent in Summer as the Wind is piercing in Winter.

If one travels in Canoes, the confined Posture which one must keep, and the Apprehensions we are under at first from the extreme Weakness of these Vehicles, the Inaction which can't be avoided, the slow Progress they



make, which is retarded by the least Rain, or a little too much Wind, the little Society one can have with People who know nothing, and who never speak when they are about any Thing, who offend you with their ill Smell, and who fill you with Filth and Vermin; the Caprices and rough Behaviour which must be borne with from these People; the Affronts to which one is exposed from a Drunkard, or a Man who is put out of Humour by an unforeseen Accident, a Dream, or the Remembrance of some Misfortune; the Coveting, which is easily produced in the Hearts of these Barbarians, at the Sight of an Object capable of tempting them, and which has cost the Lives of several Missionaries; and if War is declared between the Nations where they happen to be, the continual Danger they run, of being suddenly reduced either to the hardest Servitude, or to perish in the most horrible Torments: This is, Madam, the Life which the Missionaries (especially the first) have led. If for some Time past it has been less severe in some Respects, it has had for the Labourers of the Gospel other inward Troubles, and of Consequence more grievous; which far from being lessened by Time, encrease in the same Measure as the Colony encreases, and as the natural Inhabitants of the Country have more Communication with all Sorts of People.

In short, to make a brief Portrait of these People: With a savage Appearance, and Manners and Customs which are entirely barbarous, there is observable amongst them a social Kindness, free from almost all the Imperfections which so often disturb the Peace of Society amongst us. They appear to be without Passion; but they do that in cold Blood, and sometimes through Principle, which the most violent and unbridled Passion produces in those who give no Ear to Reason. They seem to lead the most wretched Life in the World; and they were perhaps the only happy People on Earth, before the Knowledge of the Objects, which so much work upon and seduce us, had excited in them Desires which Ignorance kept in Supineness; and which have not as yet made any great Ravages amongst them. We discover in them a  
Mixture

Mixture of the fiercest and the most gentle Manners, the Imperfections of wild Beasts, and Virtues and Qualities of the Heart and Mind, which do the greatest Honour to Human Nature. One would think at first that they have no Form of Government, that they acknowledge neither Laws nor Subordination; and that living in an entire Independence, they suffer themselves to be solely guided by Chance, and the wildest Caprice; Nevertheless, they enjoy almost all the Advantages that a well regulated Authority can procure for the best governed Nations. Born free and independent, they look with Horror even on the Shadow of a despotic Power; but they seldom depart from certain Principles and Customs, founded on good Sense, which are to them instead of Laws, and which in some Measure supply the Place of a lawful Authority. They will not bear the least Restraint; but Reason alone keeps them in a Kind of Subordination; which, for being voluntary, is not the less effectual to obtain the End intended.

A Man who should be highly esteemed by them, would find them docible enough, and would make them do almost what he pleased; but it is not easy to obtain their Esteem to such a Degree: They never give it but to Merit, and to superior Merit; of which they are as good Judges as those amongst us, who think they have the most Discernment.

They rely much on Physiognomy, and perhaps there are no Men in the World who are better Judges of it. The Reason is, that they have none of that Respect for any Person whatsoever, which seduces us: And studying only pure Nature, they have a perfect Knowledge of it. As they are not Slaves to Ambition and Interest, and that there is scarce any Thing but these two Passions which has weakened in us that Sense of Humanity which the Author of Nature had graved in our Hearts, the Inequality of Conditions is no Way necessary to them for the Support of Society.

Therefore, Madam, we do not see here, at least we seldom meet with those haughty Spirits, who, full of their

own Grandeur, or their Merit, almost fancy they are a different Species, disdain the rest of Mankind, by whom of Consequence they are never trusted nor beloved; who think none like themselves, because the Jealousy which reigns among the Great, does not permit them to see each other near enough; who do not know themselves, because they never study their own Hearts, but always flatter themselves; who do not consider that to win the Hearts of Men, we must in some Measure make ourselves their Equals: So that with this pretended Superiority of Knowledge, which they look upon as the essential Property of the eminent Rank they possess, the greatest Part of them live in a proud and incurable Ignorance of what concerns them the most to know, and never enjoy the true Pleasures of Life.

In this Country all Men think themselves equally Men; and in Man what they esteem most, is the Man. Here is no Distinction of Birth; no Prerogative allowed to Rank, which hurts the Rights of private Persons; no Preheminence given to merit, that inspires pride, and which makes other People feel too much their Inferiority. There is perhaps less Delicacy of Sentiments than among us, but more Justness; less of Ceremonies, and of what may render them equivocal; less of Consideration to ourselves.

Religion alone can bring to Perfection the good Qualities of these People, and correct their evil ones; this is common to them with others, but what is peculiar in them is, that they start fewer Obstacles when they begin to believe, which can only be the Work of special Grace. It is also true, that to establish perfectly the Empire of Religion over them, they ought to see it practised in all its Purity by those who profess it; they are very apt to be scandalized at the Behaviour of bad *Christians*, as all those are, who are instructed for the first Time in the Principles of the Gospel Morality.

You will ask me, Madam, if they have any Religion? to this I reply, that we cannot say they have none, but that

that it is pretty hard to define what they have. I will entertain you more fully on this Article, at my first Leisure ; for though I am not much employed here, I am so often interrupted, that I scarce get two Hours in the Day to myself. This Letter, as well as most of the preceding, will inform you, that I do not write regularly. I content myself at present with adding, to finish the Portrait of the Savages, that even in the most indifferent Actions, we find some Traces of the primitive Religion, but which escape the Observation of those, who do not consider them with Attention, because they are still more effaced through the Want of Instruction, than altered by the Mixture of a superstitious Worship, or fabulous Traditions.

*I am, &c.*

L E T T E R



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## LETTER XXIV.

*Of the Traditions, and of the Religion of the SAVAGES  
of CANADA.*

MADAM, *Fort of the River ST. JOSEPH, Sept. 8.*

**T**HIS Letter will be very long, if some unforeseen Accident does not oblige me to put off to another Opportunity, what I have to entertain you with concerning the Belief, the Traditions, and the Religion of our Savages.

Nothing is more certain, than that the Savages of this Continent have an Idea of a first Being, but at the same Time nothing is more obscure. They agree, in general, in making him the first Spirit, the Lord and Creator of the World; but when we press them a little on this Article, to know what they mean by the FIRST SPIRIT, we find nothing but odd Fancies, Fables so ill conceived, Systems so little digested, and so little Uniformity, that one can say nothing regular on this Subject. They say that the *Sioux* come much nearer than the rest to what we ought to think of this first Principle. But the little Intercourse we have had with them hitherto, has not afforded me an Opportunity of learning their Traditions, as far as I could have wished, to speak of them with any Certainty.

Almost all the *Algonquin* Nations have given the Name of the *Great Hare* to the first Spirit; some call him *Michabou*, others *Atabocan*. The greatest Part say, that being supported on the Waters with all his Court, all composed of four-footed Creatures like himself, he formed

ed the Earth out of a Grain of Sand, taken from the Bottom of the Ocean; and created Men of the dead Bodies of Animals. There are some also that speak of a God of the Waters who opposed the Design of the *Great Hare*, or at least refused to favour it. This God is, according to some, the great Tiger, but it is to be observed, that there are no true Tigers in *Canada*; therefore this Tradition might probably be derived from some other Country. Lastly, they have a third God named *Matcomek*, whom they invoke during the Winter, and of whom I could learn nothing particular.

The *Areskoui* of the *Hurons*, and the *Agreskoué* of the *Iroquois*, is in the Opinion of these People the Supreme Being, and the God of War. These People do not give the same Origin to Men as the *Algonquins*, and they do not go so far back as the Creation of the World. They say there were six Men in the World at first; and when we ask them who placed them there, they answer, that they know not. They add, that one of these Men went up into Heaven to seek a woman there named *Atabensic*, with whom he lived, and who soon appeared to be with Child; that the Lord of Heaven perceiving it, threw her down from the highest Part of Heaven, and she was received on the Back of a Tortoise. That she brought forth two Children, one of which killed the other.

They have no Tradition after this, either of the other five Men, or even of the Husband of *Atabensic*, who according to some had but one Daughter, who was Mother of *Tbaouitsaron*, and of *Jouskeka*. The latter who was the Eldest killed his Brother, and soon after his Grandmother left the Care of governing the World to him. They say farther, that *Atabensic* is the Moon, and *Jouskeka* is the Sun. There is, as you see, Madam, nothing regular in all this; for the Sun is often taken for *Areskoui*, as being a great Spirit: But is there less Contradiction in the Theology of the *Egyptians* and the *Greeks*, who are the first Sages of the *Pagan* Antiquity? It is the Nature of Falseness to contradict itself, and to have no Principle.

The

The Gods of the Savages have, according to their Notion, Bodies, and live much in the same Manner as we do, but without any of the Inconveniencies which we are subject to. The Term *Spirit* signifies among them only a Being of a more excellent Nature than the rest. They have no Terms to express what exceeds the Limits of their Understanding, which is extremely confined in every Thing that is not the Object of their Senses, or in common Use: But they give nevertheless to their pretended Spirits a Kind of Immensity, which renders them present in all Places; for wherever they happen to be, they invoke them, they speak to them, and they suppose that the Spirits hear what they say to them, and that they act in Consequence thereof. To all the Questions we ask these Barbarians, to know more, they answer this is all they have been taught; and it is only some old Men who have been initiated in their Mysteries who know so much.

According to the *Iroquois*, the Posterity of *Jouskeka* went no farther than the third Generation; there came then a Deluge, from which no Person escaped, and to re-people the Earth Beasts were changed to Men. For the rest, Madam, that the Notion of an universal Deluge is generally received among the *Americans* one can scarce doubt; but that there has been one of a much fresher Date, which was confined to *America*. I should never make an End, was I to mention all the Stories the Savages tell about their principal Deities, and the Origin of the World: But besides the first Being, or the Great Spirit, and the other Gods which are confounded with him, they have an infinite Number of Genii, or subaltern Spirits, good and evil, which have their particular Worship.

The *Iroquois* place *Atabentfic* at the Head of the evil Spirits, and make *Jouskeka* the Chief of the Good. They even confound him sometimes with the God who expelled his Grandmother from Heaven, for suffering herself to be seduced by a Man. They address themselves to the evil Genii, only to beg that they would do them no Harm; but they suppose that the others watch over  
Men



Men for their Good, and that every Man has his own Genius. In the *Huron* Language they call them OKKIS, and in the *Algonquin*, MANITOUS. They have Recourse to them when they are in any Danger, when they go on any Enterprize, and when they would obtain some extraordinary Favour. They think they may ask any Thing of them, however unreasonablc it may be, or however contrary even to good Behaviour and Honefty. But Children, they suppose are not born under their Protection. They must first know how to handle a Bow and Arrows, to merit this Favour. There must also be some Preparations to receive it. This is the most important Affair of Life. These are its principal Ceremonies.

They begin by blacking the Face of the Child; then it must fast for eight Days, without having the least Nourishment; and during this Time his future Guardian Genius must appear to him in his Dreams. The empty Brain of a poor Child, just entering on the first Stage of Youth, can't fail of furnishing him with Dreams; and every Morning they take great Care to make him relate them. However, the fasting often ends before the Time appointed, as few Children have Strength to bear it so long; but that creates no Difficulty. They are acquainted here, as in other Places, with the convenient Use of Dispensations. The Thing which the Child dreams of most frequently, is supposed to be his Genius; but no doubt this Thing was considered at first only as a Symbol, or Shape under which the Spirit manifests himself: But the same has happened to these People, as to all those who have erred from the primitive Religion: They have attached themselves to the Representation, and have lost Sight of the Reality.

Nevertheless, these Symbols signify nothing of themselves: Sometimes it is the Head of a Bird, sometimes the Foot of an Animal, or a Piece of Wood: In a Word, the most ordinary Things, and the least valued. They preserve them, however, with as much Care as the Antients did their *Penates*. There is even nothing in Nature that hath not its Spirit, if we believe the Savages; but they are of all Degrees, and have not the same Power.

When

When they do not comprehend a Thing, they assign to it a superior Genius, and their Way of Expression in this Case is to say, *It is a Spirit*. It is the same for stronger Reasons with Respect to Men. those who have singular Talents, or who do extraordinary Things, they say are Spirits; *that is to say*, they have a Guardian Genius of a more exalted Degree than Men in general.

Some, especially the Jugglers, endeavour to persuade the Multitude that they are sometimes in a Trance. This Madness has existed at all Times, and among all Nations, and has given Birth to all the false Religions. The Vanity, which is so natural to Mankind, has never imagined a more effectual Method to rule over the Weak: The Multitude at last draw after them those who pride themselves most in their Wisdom. The *American* Impostors are not behind-hand with any in this Point, and they know how to obtain all the Advantages from it which they propose. The Jugglers never fail to publish, that during their pretended Extacies, their Genii give them great Informations of Things done at the greatest Distance, and of future Events; and as by Chance, if we will not allow the Devil any Share in it, they sometimes happen to divine or guess pretty right, they acquire by this a great Reputation: They are reckoned Genii of the first Order.

As soon as they have declared to a Child what he must for the Time to come look upon as his Guardian Genius, they instruct him carefully of the Obligation he is under to honour him, to follow the Council he shall receive from him in his Sleep, to merit his Favours, to put all his Trust in him, and to dread the Effects of his Anger if he neglects his Duty towards him. The Festival terminates in a Feast, and the Custom is also to prick on the Body of the Child, the Figure of his *Okki*, or his *Manitou*. One would imagine that such a solemn Engagement, the Mark of which can never be effaced, should be inviolable; nevertheless, there needs only a Trifle to break it.

The Savages do not easily acknowledge themselves in the Wrong, even with their Gods, and make no Difficulty

culty to justify themselves at their Expence: Therefore, the first Time they have Occasion to condemn themselves, or to lay the Blame on their Guardian Genius, the Fault always falls on the latter. They seek another without any Ceremony, and this is done with the same Precautions as at first. The Women have also their *Manitous*, or their *Okkis*, but they do not so much regard them as the Men; perhaps, because they do not find them so much Employment.

They make to all these Spirits different Sorts of Offerings, which you may call if you please, Sacrifices. They throw into the Rivers and the Lakes *Petun*, Tobacco, or Birds that have had their Throats cut, to render the God of the Waters propitious to them. In Honour of the Sun, and sometimes also of the inferior Spirits, they throw into the Fire Part of every Thing they use, and which they acknowledge to hold from them. It is sometimes out of Gratitude, but oftener through Interest: Their Acknowledgment also is interested; for these People have no Sentiments of the Heart towards their Deities. We have observed also on some Occasions a Kind of Libations, and all this is accompanied with Invocations in mysterious Terms, which the Savages could never explain to the *Europeans*, either that in Fact they have no Meaning, or that the Sense of them has not been transmitted by Tradition with the Words; perhaps also they keep it as a Secret from us.

We find also Collars of Porcelain, Tobacco, Ears of Maiz, Skins, and whole Animals, especially Dogs, on the Sides of difficult and dangerous Ways, on Rocks, or by the Side of the Falls; and these are so many Offerings made to the Spirits which preside in these Places. I have already said that a Dog is the most common Victim that they sacrifice to them: Sometimes they hang him up alive on a Tree by the hind Feet, and let him die there raving mad. The War Feast, which is always of Dogs, may very well also pass for a Sacrifice. In short, they render much the same Honours to the mischievous Spirits, as to those that are beneficent, when they have any Thing to fear from their Malice.

Thus

Thus, Madam, among these People, whom some have represented as having no Idea of Religion, or a Deity, almost every Thing appears to be the Object of a Religious Worship, or at least to have some Relation to it. Some have fancied that their Fasts were only intended to accustom them to bear Hunger, and I agree that they may be partly designed for this End; but all the Circumstances which accompany them, leave no Room to doubt that Religion is the principal Motive; was it only their Attention, which I have spoken of, to observe their Dreams during that Time; for it is certain that these Dreams are esteemed as real Oracles, and Notices from Heaven.

There is still less Room to doubt that Vows are among these People pure Acts of Religion, and the Custom of them is absolutely the same as with us. For Instance, when they are out of Provisions, as it often happens in their Journies and in their Huntings, they promise their Genii to give in Honour of them a Portion of the first Beast they shall kill to one of their Chiefs, and not to eat till they have performed their Promise. If the Thing becomes impossible, because the Chief is at a great Distance, they burn what was designed for him, and make a Sort of Sacrifice.

Formerly the Savages in the Neighbourhood of *Acadia* had in their Country, on the Side of the Sea, a very old Tree of which they used to tell many wonderful Stories, and which was always loaded with Offerings. The Sea having laid all its Roots bare, it supported itself still a long Time against the Violence of the Winds and Waves, which confirmed the Savages in their Notion, that it was the Seat of some great Spirit: Its fall was not even capable of undeceiving them, and as long as there appeared some Ends of the Branches out of the Water, they paid it the same Honours as the whole Tree had received while it was standing.

The greatest Part of their Feasts, their Songs, and their Dances appear to me to have had their Rise from Religion, and still to preserve some Traces of it; but

one must have good Eyes, or rather a very lively Imagination, to perceive in them all that some Travellers have pretended to discover. I have met with some who could not help thinking that our Savages were descended from the *Jews*, and found in every Thing some Affinity between these Barbarians and the People of God. There is indeed a Resemblance in some Things, as not to use Knives in certain Meals, and not to break the Bones of the Beast they eat at those Times, and the Separation of the Women during the Time of their usual Infirmities. Some Persons, they say, have heard them, or thought they heard them, pronounce the Word *Hallelujah* in their Songs: But who can believe, that when they pierce their Ears and Noses, they do it in Pursuance of the Law of Circumcision? On the other Hand, don't we know that the Custom of Circumcision is more antient than the Law that was given to *Abram* and his Posterity? The Feast they make at the Return of the Hunters, and of which they must leave nothing, has also been taken for a Kind of Burnt-Offering, or for a Remain of the Passover of the *Israelites*; and the rather, they say, because when any one cannot compass his Portion, he may get the Assistance of his Neighbours, as was practised by the People of God, when a Family was not sufficient to eat the whole Paschal Lamb.

An antient Missionary\*, who lived a long Time with the *Outaouais*, has written, that among these Savages an old Man performs the Office of a Priest at the Feasts, which I have just mentioned; that they begin by giving Thanks to the Spirits for the Success of the Chase; afterwards another takes a Loaf of *Petun*, breaks it in two, and throws it into the Fire. This is certain, that those who have mentioned them as a Proof of the Possibility of *Atheism*, properly so called, are not acquainted with them. It's true that they never discourse about Religion, and that their extreme Indolence on this Point has always been the greatest Obstacle we have met with in converting them to *Christianity*. But however little they discourse about

\* Father *Claude Allouez*, a *Jesuit*.

about it, we should do wrong to conclude from thence that they have no Idea of GOD.

Indolence is their prevailing Character : It appears even in the Affairs which concern them most : But in Spite of this Fault, in Spite even of that Spirit of Independence in which they are bred, no People in the World have a greater Dependence on the confused Ideas they have preserved of the Deity ; even to that Degree, that they attribute nothing to Chance, and that they draw Omens from every Thing ; which they believe, as I have said before, are Notices from Heaven.

I have read in some Memoirs, that many Nations of this Continent have formerly had young Maids, who never had any Conversation with Man, and never married. I can neither warrant, nor contradict this Fact. Virginity is of itself a State so perfect, that it is no Wonder it has been respected in all the Countries of the World : But our oldest Missionaries have said nothing, that I know of, of these Vestals ; though many agree concerning the Esteem they had for Celibacy in some Countries. I find also, that among the *Hurons* and the *Iroquois* there were, not long since, a Kind of Hermits, who observed Continence ; and they shew us some very salutary Plants, which the Savages say have no Virtue, if they are not administered by Virgin Hands.

The Belief the best established amongst our *Americans*, is that of the Immortality of the Soul. Nevertheless, they do not believe it purely spiritual, no more than their *Gennii* ; and to speak the Truth, they cannot well define either one or the other. When we ask what they think of their Souls, they answer, they are as it were the Shadows, and the animated Images of the Body : And 'tis in Consequence of this Principle, that they believe every Thing is animated in the Universe. Therefore it is entirely by Tradition that they hold that our Souls do not die. In the different Expressions they use to explain themselves, on this Subject, they often confound the Soul with its Faculties, and the Faculties with their Operati-

ons, though they know very well how to make the Distinction, when they chuse to speak correctly.

They say also that the Soul, separated from the Body, has still the same Inclinations it had before ; and this is the Reason why they bury with the Dead every Thing they used when living. They are also persuaded, that the Soul remains near the Corpse till the Festival of the Dead, which I shall presently mention ; that afterwards it goes into the Country of Souls, where, according to some, it is transformed into a Dove.

Others think there are two Souls in every Man : They attribute to one all I have just mentioned : They say that the other never leaves the Body, but to go into another ; which nevertheless seldom happens, they say, but to the Souls of Children ; which having little enjoyed Life, are allowed to begin a new one. For this Reason they bury Children by the Sides of Highways, that the Women, as they pass by, may gather their Souls. Now these Souls, which so faithfully keep Company with their Bodies, must be fed ; and it is to fulfil this Duty, that they carry Provisions to the Tombs : But this does not last long, and these Souls must accustom themselves in Time to fast. It is hard enough sometimes to get a Subsistence for the Living, without burthening themselves farther with providing Food for the Dead.

But one Thing which these People never fail to perform, in whatsoever Extremity they find themselves, is, that as among us the Spoils of the Dead enrich the Living, among them they not only carry to the Grave all that the Deceased possessed, but also presents from their Friends and Relations. ——— They were highly provoked, when they saw some *French* open the Graves, to get the Gowns of Beaver Skins in which the Dead were buried. The Graves are so sacred in this Country, that to profane them is the greatest Hostility that can be committed against a Nation, and the greatest Sign that they will come to no Terms with them.

I have

I have mentioned that the Souls, when the Time is come that they are to part for ever from their Bodies, go to a Region which is appointed to be their everlasting Abode. This Country, say the Savages, is very far to the West, and the Souls are several Months travelling thither. They have also great Difficulties to surmount, and they run through great Dangers before they arrive there. They speak especially of a River they have to pass, where many have been wrecked ; of a Dog, from which they find it hard to defend themselves ; of a Place of Torment, where they expiate their Faults ; of another, where the Souls of the Prisoners of War that have been burnt are tormented.

This Notion is the Reason why, after the Death of these Wretches, for fear their Souls should stay about the Cabins, to revenge their Sufferings, they very carefully visit all Places, striking continually with a Stick, and sending forth hideous Cries, to drive away these Souls.

The *Iroquois* say, that ATAHENTSIC makes her ordinary Residence in this *Tartarus*, and that she is solely employed in deceiving Souls, to destroy them. But JOUSKEKA omits nothing to defend them against the evil Designs of his Grandmother. Among the fabulous Stories which they tell of what passes in this Hell, which so much resembles those of *Homer* and *Virgil*, there is one that seems to be copied from the Adventure of *Orpheus* and *Eurydice*. There is scarce any Thing in it to change but the Names.

For the rest, Madam, the Happiness which the Savages hope to enjoy in their fancied *Elysium*, they do not regard precisely as the Reward of Virtue. To have been a good Hunter, a gallant Warrior, fortunate in all his Enterprizes, to have killed and burnt a great Number of Enemies ; these are the only Titles which give them a Right to their Paradise: All the Happiness of which consists in finding a hunting and fishing Place that never fails, an eternal Spring, great Plenty of all Things, without being obliged to labour, and all the Pleasures of Sense :



And this is all they ask of their Gods in their Life. All their Songs, which are originally their Prayers, run only on the present Good. There is no Mention made, no more than in their Vows, of a future Life. They think themselves sure of being happy in the other World, in Proportion to what they have been in this.

The Souls of Beasts have also their Place in the Country of Souls; for, according to the Savages, they are no less immortal than our's. They also allow them a Sort of Reason; and not only each Species, but also each Animal, if we may believe them, has also its Guardian Genius. In a Word, they make no Difference between us and Brutes, but that our Souls are something of a better Sort. Man, they say, is the King of Animals, which have all the same Attributes; but Man possesses them in a much higher Degree. They believe also that in the other World there are Models of all Sorts of Souls; but they don't trouble themselves much to explain the Idea; and in general they are little concerned about those that are purely speculative. And have the wisest Philosophers of *Pagan* Antiquity, who have taken such immense Pains to explain them, have they made a much greater Progress than the Savages? We must always lose ourselves in these dark Ways, unless we are guided by the Light of Faith.

There is nothing in which the Savages have shewn more Superstition and Extravagance, than in what regards their Dreams; but they differ much in the Manner of explaining their Thoughts on this Matter. Sometimes it is the reasonable Soul that wanders out, while the sensitive Soul continues to animate the Body. Sometimes it is the familiar Genius that gives good Advice about future Events. Sometimes it is a Visit they receive from the Soul of the Object they dream of. But in whatsoever Manner they conceive of a Dream, it is always regarded as a sacred Thing, and as the Means which the Gods most usually employ to declare their Will to Men.

Prepossessed with this Idea, they can't conceive that we should take no Notice of them. For the most Part  
they

they look upon them as desires of the Soul, inspired by some Spirit, or an Order from it. And in Consequence of this Principle, they make it a Duty of Religion to obey these Commands.—A Savage having dreamt that his Finger was cut off, really had it cut off when he awoke, after he had prepared himself for this important Action by a Feast. Another dreaming that he was a Prisoner in the Hands of his Enemies, was greatly embarrassed. He consulted the Jugglers, and by their Advice he got himself tied to a Post and burnt in several Parts of the Body.

There are some Dreams lucky, and some unfortunate : For Instance, to dream they see many Elks, is, they say, a Sign of Life : To dream of Bears, is a Sign they will die soon. I have observed before, that we must except those Times when they prepare for hunting those Animals. But to let you see, Madam, to what an Extravagance these Savages carry this Matter of Dreams, I will relate to you a Fact, attested by two undeniable Witnesses, who saw the Thing with their own Eyes.

Two Missionaries were travelling with some Savages ; and one Night, when all their Conductors were fast asleep, one of them started up in a Fright, quite out of Breath, trembling, striving to cry out, and beating himself as if he had been possessed with a Devil. At the Noise he made, every Body was soon up. At first they thought the Man was seized with a Fit of Madness : They took hold of him, and did all they could to quiet him, but to no Purpose : His Fury still increased ; and as they could not hold him any longer, they hid all the Arms for Fear of some Accident. Some thought it proper to prepare a Draught for him, made of certain Herbs of great Virtue ; but, when they least expected it, the pretended Madman jump'd into the River.

He was taken out immediately, and he complained of Cold ; yet he would not come near a good Fire that was presently made : He sat down at the Foot of a Tree ; and as he seemed more calm, they brought him the Drink they

had prepared for him. “ *You must give it to this Child,*” (said he) and what he called a Child, was the Skin of a Bear stuffed with Straw : He was obeyed, and they poured all the Drink into the Jaws of this Figure : Then they asked him, what it was that troubled him ? “ *I have dreamt* (replied he) *that a Huart* (a Kind of Cormorant) *is got into my Stomach.*” Then they all fell a laughing : But something was to be done to cure his Imagination ; and the Method they took for it, was as follows :

They all began to counterfeit themselves mad, and to cry out as loud as they could, that they had also an Animal in their Stomachs : but they did not chuse to jump into the River to drive them out, as it was very cold ; they had rather sweat themselves. The whimsical Person liked this Advice very well. They presently made a Stove, and they entered into it, crying out as loud as they could bawl : Then they all began to counterfeit the Cry of the Animal, which they pretended was in their Stomachs ; one a Goose, another a Duck, another a Bustard, another a Frog : The Dreamer also counterfeited his *Huart*. But the Joke was, that all the rest beat Time, by striking upon him with all their Strength, with Design to tire him and make him sleep. For any but a Savage, there was Beating enough to hinder him from closing his Eyes for many Days ; nevertheless, they obtained what they desired. The Patient slept a long Time, and when he awoke he was cured ; feeling no Effects of the Sweating, which was enough to have weakened him greatly, nor of the Blows with which he was bruised all over : having lost even the Remembrance of a Dream, for which he had paid so dear.

But it is not the Person alone, who has had a Dream, that must satisfy the Obligations that he imagines are imposed on by it ; but it would also be a Crime in any Person that he addresses himself to, to refuse him any Thing he desires in dreaming. And you must perceive, Madam, that this may have disagreeable Consequences. But as the Savages are not Self-interested, they abuse

abuse this Principle much less than they would in other Places. If the Thing desired is of such a Nature that it cannot be supplied by a private Person, the Public take Care of the Matter; and if it must be sought for five hundred Leagues off, it must be found at any Rate; and it is not to be expressed with how much Care, they keep it when they have got it. If it is an inanimate Thing, they are more easy, but if it is an Animal, its Death causes surprizing Uneasiness.

The Affair is more serious still, if any one takes it into his Head to dream that he knocks another's Brains out, for he does it in Fact if he can; but he must expect the same if any other takes a Fancy in his Turn to dream that he revenges the dead. On the other Hand, with a little Presence of Mind, it is easy to get out of this Trouble: It is only knowing how to oppose immediately such a Dream with another that contradicts it. "Then says the first Dreamer, I see plainly that your Spirit is stronger than mine, therefore let us talk no more about it." Nevertheless, they are not all so easily quieted; but there are few that are not satisfied, or whose Genius is not appeased by some Present.

I know not if Religion has ever any Share in what they generally call *the Festival of Dreams*, and which the *Iroquois*, and some others, have more properly called *the turning of the Brain*. This is a Kind of *Bacchanal*, which commonly lasts fifteen Days, and is celebrated about the End of Winter.

They act at this Time all Kinds of Fooleries, and every one runs from Cabin to Cabin, disguised in a thousand ridiculous Ways: They break and overset every Thing, and no Body dares to contradict it. Whoever chuses not to be present in such a Confusion, nor to be exposed to all the Tricks they play, must keep out of the Way. If they meet any one, they desire him to guess their Dream, and if they guess, it is at their Expence, he must give the Thing they dreamt of. When it ends, they return every Thing, they make a great Feast, and they only think how to repair the sad Effects of the Masquerade,

rade, for moſt commonly it is no trifling Buſineſs: For this is alſo one of thoſe Opportunities which they wait for, without ſaying any Thing, to give thoſe a good Drubbing who they think have done them any Wrong. But when the Feſtival is over, every Thing muſt be forgot.

I find the Deſcription of one of theſe Feſtivals in the Journal of a Miſſionary \*, who was forced to be a Spectator of it much againſt his Will, at *Onnontague*. It was thus obſerved: It was proclaimed the 22d of *February*, and it was done by the Elders, with as much Gravity as if it had been a weighty Affair of State. They had no ſooner re-entered their Cabins, but inſtantly there came forth Men, Women, and Children, almoſt quite naked, though the Weather was exceſſive cold. They entered directly into all the Cabins, then they went raving about on every Side, without knowing whither they went, or what they would have: One would have taken them for People drunk, or ſtark mad.

Many carried their mad Freaks no further and appeared no more: Others were reſolved to make Uſe of the Privilege of the Feſtival, during which they are reputed to be out of their Senſes, and of Conſequence not reſponſible for what they do, and ſo revenge their private Quarrels. They did ſo to ſome Purpoſe: on ſome they threw whole Pails full of Water, and this Water, which froze immediately, was enough to chill them with Cold who were thus uſed. Others they covered with hot Aſhes, or all Sorts of Filth: Others took lighted Coals, or Firebrands, and threw them at the Head of the firſt they met: Others broke every Thing in the Cabins, falling upon thoſe they bore a Grudge to, and beating them unmercifully. To be freed from this Perſecution, one muſt gueſs Dreams, which often one can form no Conception of.

The Miſſionary and his Companion were often on the Point of being more than Witneſſes of theſe Extravagancies:

\* Father *Claude Dablon*.

cies: One of these Madmen went into a Cabin, where he had seen them take Shelter at the first. Happy for them, they were just gone out; for there was great Reason to think this furious Fellow intended them some Harm. Being disappointed by their Flight, he cried out, that they must guess his Dream, and satisfy it immediately: As they were too long about it, he said, *I must kill a FRENCHMAN*: Immediately the Master of the Cabin threw him a *French Coat*, to which this Madman gave several Stabs.

Then he that had thrown the Coat, growing furious in his Turn, said he would revenge the *Frenchman*, and burn the whole Village to the Ground. He began in Fact by setting Fire to his own Cabin, where the Scene was first acted; and when all the rest were gone out, he shut himself up in it. The Fire, which he had lighted in several Places, did not yet appear on the Outside, when one of the Missionaries came to the Door: He was told what had happened, and was afraid that his Host could not get out, tho' he might be willing: He broke open the Door, laid hold of the Savage, turned him out, put out the Fire, and shut himself up in the Cabin. His Host nevertheless ran through the Village, crying out that he would burn it: They threw a Dog to him, in Hopes that he would glut his Fury on that Animal; he said it was not enough to repair the Affront he had received by the killing of the *Frenchman* in his Cabin: They threw him a second Dog, he cut it in Pieces, and instantly all his Fury was over.

This Man had a Brother, who would also play his Part: He dressed himself up, nearly as Painters represent the *Satyrs*, covering himself from Head to Foot with the Leaves of Maiz: He equipped two Women like real *Megaras*, their Faces blacked, their Hair dishevelled, a Wolf's Skin over their Bodies, and a Club in their Hands. Thus attended, he goes into all the Cabins, yelling and howling with all his Strength: He climbs upon the Roof, and plays as many Tricks there as the most skilful Rope-Dancer could perform; then he made most terrible Outcries, as if he had got some great Hurt; then he came  
down,

down, and marched on gravely, preceded by his two *Bacchantes*, who growing furious in their Turn, overfet with their Clubs every Thing they met in their Way. They were no fooner out of this Frenzy, or tired with acting their Parts, than another Woman took their Place, entered the Cabin, in which were the two *Jesuits*, and, armed with a Blunderbufs, which ſhe had juſt before got by having her Dream gueſſed, ſhe fung the War-Song, making a thouſand Imprecations on herſelf if ſhe did not bring home ſome Priſoners.

A Warrior followed cloſe after this *Amazon*, with a Bow and Arrows in one Hand, and a Bayonet in the other. After he had made himſelf hoarſe with bawling, he threw himſelf all at once on a Woman, who was ſtanding quietly by, not expecting it, and liſting up his Bayonet to her Throat, took her by the Hair, cut off a Handful, and went away. Then a Juggler appeared, holding a Stick in his Hand adorned with Feathers, by Means of which he boaſted that he could reveal the moſt ſecret Things. A Savage accompanied him, carrying a Veſſel full of I know not what Liquor, which from Time to Time he gave him to drink: The Juggler had no ſooner taken it in his Mouth, than he ſpit it out again, blowing upon his Hands, and on his Stick, and at every Time he explained all the *Ænigmas* that were propoſed to him.

Two Women came afterwards, and gave to underſtand that they had ſome Deſires: One directly ſpread a Mat on the Ground: They gueſſed that ſhe deſired ſome Fiſh, which was given her. The other had a Hoe in her Hand, and they judged that ſhe deſired to have a Field to cultivate: They carried her out of the Village, and ſet her to Work. A Chief had dreamt, as he ſaid, that he ſaw two human Hearts: They could not explain his Dream, and at this every Body was greatly concerned. It made a great Noiſe, they even prolonged the Feſtival for a Day, but all was in vain, and he was obliged to make himſelf eaſy without. Sometimes there were Troops of People that made Sham-Fights; ſometimes

times Companies of Dancers, who acted all Sorts of Farces. This Madness lasted four Days, and it appeared that it was out of Respect to the two *Jesuits* that they had thus shortened the Time: But there were as many Disorders committed in this Space of Time, as they used to do in fifteen Days. Nevertheless, they had this further Regard for the Missionaries, that they did not disturb them in their Functions, and did not hinder the *Christians* from acquitting themselves of their religious Duties. But I have said enough on this Article. I close my Letter to give it to a Traveller, who is returning to the Colony, assuring you that

*I am, &c.*

LETTER





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## L E T T E R XXV.

*Sequel of the Traditions of the SAVAGES.*

MADAM, *Fort of the River St. JOSEPH, Sept. 14.*

**T**HREE Days ago I left this Place, to go to *Chicagou*, by coasting the South shore of Lake *Michigan*; but we found the Lake so rough, that we thought it better to return hither; and take another Route to get to *Louisiana*. Our Departure is fixed for the 16th, and I shall take Advantage of these two Days Delay, to proceed in my Account of the Customs and Traditions of our *Americans*.

The Savages, in what I said to you in my former Letter, acknowledge only the Operations of the Good Genii. The Wizards alone, and those who use Enchantments, are reputed to hold any Correspondence with the Evil; and 'tis Women most commonly that follow this detestable Trade. The Jugglers by Profession not only forbear it, at least openly, but they make it a particular Study, to know how to discover Enchantments, and to hinder their pernicious Effects. At the Bottom, in all the Stories I have heard on this Matter, there is scarce any Thing but juggling. They use on these Occasions either Serpents, out of which they take the Venom; or Herbs, gathered at certain Seasons; or pronounce certain Words; or use Animals whose Throats they have cut, and some Parts of which are thrown into the Fire.

Among the *Illinois*, and some other Nations, they make little *Marmosets* to represent those whose Days they would shorten, and which they stab to the Heart. At  
other

other Times they take a Stone, and by the Means of some Invocations they pretend to form one like it, in the Heart of their Enemy. I am persuaded this seldom happens, unless the Devil is concerned in it; however, they are so afraid of Magicians, that the least Suspicion is enough to cause whoever is the least suspected of being such, to be cut to Pieces. Yet though this Profession is so dangerous, there are People to be found every where, who have no other. It is also true that the most sensible, and the least credulous of those who have been most conversant with the Savages; do allow that there is sometimes some Reality in their Magic.

Why should these Infidels, Madam, be the only People in whom we should not discover the Operation of the Devil? and what other Master but this mischievous Spirit, *who was a Murderer from the Beginning*\*, could have taught so many People, who have had no Correspondence with each other, an Art, which we cannot look upon as absolutely trifling, without contradicting the sacred Writings? We must therefore acknowledge, that the Infernal Powers have some Agents upon Earth, but that God has confined their Malignity within very narrow Limits; and permits but seldom, that we should feel the Effects of the Power he has thought fit to leave to them only to make it subservie, sometimes to his Justice, and sometimes to his Mercy.

We may say much the same of the Jugglers of *Canada*, who make a Profession of corresponding only with what they call the beneficial Genii, and who boast of knowing by their Means whatever passes in the most distant Countries, and whatever shall come to pass in the most distant Ages; and who pretend to discover the Rise and Nature of the most hidden Diseases, and to have the Secret of curing them; to discern in the most intricate Affairs what Resolution it is best to take; to explain the most obscure Dreams, to obtain Success to the most difficult Undertakings; to render the Gods propitious to Warriors and Hunters. These pretended good Genii, are like all the *Pagan* Deities, real Devils, who receive Homages that are due only to the true God, and whose Deceits are still more dangerous than those of the evil Genii, because they contribute

\* *John* viii. 44.

contribute more to keep their Worshippers in Blindness.

It is certain, that amongst their Agents the boldest are the most respected ; and with a little Artifice, they easily persuade People who are brought up in Superstition. Though they have seen the Birth of these Impostors, if they take a Fancy to give themselves a supernatural Birth, they find People, who believe them on their Word, as much as if they had seen them come down from Heaven, and who take it for a Kind of Enchantment and Illusion, that they thought them born at first like other Men : Their Artifices are nevertheless, in general, so gross, and so common, that there are none but Fools, and Children, that are imposed upon by them ; unless it is when they act as Physicians : For every one knows, that in what concerns the Recovery of Health, the greatest Credulity is to be found in all Countries as well among those who value themselves most on their Wisdom, as among the Weaker Sort.

After all, Madam, I repeat it, it is difficult not to acknowledge that among these Infidels there sometimes pass Things that are very capable of deceiving, at least the Multitude, not to say more. I have heard some Persons say, whose Truth and Judgment I could no Way suspect, that when these Impostors shut themselves up in their Stoves to sweat, and this is one of their most common Preparations to perform their Tricks, they differ in nothing from the *Pythonesse*s, as the Poets have represented them on the *Tripod* : That they are seen to become convulsed, and possessed with Enthusiasm, to acquire Tones of the Voice, and to do Actions which appear to be beyond the Strength of Nature, and which seize the most unprejudiced Spectators with a Horror, and a Disorder of Spirits, that they cannot overcome.

It is also asserted, that they suffer much on these Occasions ; and that there are some who do not readily engage, even when they are well paid, to give themselves up in this Manner to the Spirit that agitates them. But we need not believe that there is any Thing supernatural

in this, that after coming out of these violent Sweats, they go and throw themselves into cold Water, and sometimes when it is frozen, without receiving any Damage. This is common to them with the other Savages, and even with other People of the North †. This is a Matter which Physic cannot easily account for, but in which 'tis certain the Devil has no Share.

It is also true, that the Jugglers are too often right in their Predictions, to make it believed that they always speak at a Venture; and that there passes on these Occasions Things that is scarce possible to attribute to any natural Secret. Some Persons have seen the Posts which inclosed these Stoves, bend down quite to the Earth, whilst the Juggler was very tranquil, without any Motion, and without touching them, singing and foretelling Things that should come to pass. The Letters of the antient Missionaries are full of Facts, which leave no Room to doubt that these Seducers have a real Correspondence with the Father of Deceit and Lies. Many of the *French* have talked to me in the same Manner. I will only relate to you one Story which I have from its Source.

You have seen at *Paris* Madam de Marson, and she is there still. This is what the Marquis de Vaudreuil, her Son-in-Law, at present our Governor-General, told me this Winter, and which he learnt of this Lady, who is very far from being suspected of Weakness and Credulity. She was one Day very uneasy about her Husband, M. de Marson, who was Commandant of a Post which we have in *Acadia*: He was absent, and the Time was past which he had set for his Return. A Woman Savage, who saw Madam de Marson was troubled, asked her the Cause of it; and being told it, she said, after pausing a little on the Matter, “ Don't trouble yourself any longer; your Husband will come back on such a Day, and at such an Hour, (which she named) wearing a grey Hat.” As she perceived that the Lady gave no Heed to her Prediction, on the Day and at the Hour she had foretold, she  
came

† The Poet *Regnard* assures us, in his Voyage to *Lapland*, that he saw the same Thing done in *Botnia*.

came again to the Lady, and asked her if she would come and see her Husband arrive, and pressed her in such a Manner to follow her, that she drew her to the Side of the River. They had hardly got thither, when M. *de Marfon* appeared in a Canoe, wearing a grey Hat; and being informed of what had passed, he declared that he could not conceive how the Savage could have foreknown the Hour and Day of his Arrival.

This Example, Madam, and many others that I know, which are equally certain, prove that the Devil is sometimes concerned in the Magic of the Savages; but it belongs only, they say, to the Jugglers to raise up Spirits, when public Affairs are concerned. It is said that all the *Algonquins* and *Abenakis* formerly practised a Kind of Pyromancy, of which this was the whole Mystery: They reduced to a very fine Powder some Coals of Cedar Wood; they placed this Powder after a particular Manner, then they set Fire to it, and by the Turn the Fire took in running on this Powder, they discovered, as it is said, what they sought for. They add, that the *Abenakis*, on their Conversion to *Christianity*, could hardly be brought to forsake a Custom, which they looked upon as a very innocent Means of knowing what passed at a Distance from them.

I never heard that private Persons, who desired to be acquainted with these Secrets, were obliged, for that Purpose, to go through any Ceremony; but the Jugglers by Profession are never invested with this Character, which makes them contract a Kind of League with the Genii, and which procures them Respect, till they have prepared themselves for it by Fastings, which they carry to an uncommon Length; and during which they do nothing but beat a Drum, cry, howl, sing, and smoke. The Infalment is afterwards made in a Kind of *Bacchanal*, with Ceremonies so extravagant, and accompanied with so many furious Actions, that one would say that the Devil then takes Possession of their Persons.

But they are not, nevertheless, the Ministers of these pretended Deities, but only to declare their Will to Men,

and to be their Interpreters; for if we may give the Name of Sacrifices to the Offerings which these People make to their Deities, the Jugglers are never their Priests. In the public Ceremonies, they are the Chiefs; and in private Ceremonies it is generally the Father of the Family, or the Chief Person of the Cabin. The chief Employment of the Jugglers or at least that by which they get most, is Physick: They practise this Art on Principles founded on the Knowledge of Simples, on Experience, and on Circumstances, as they do in other Places; but they most commonly also join with these Principles, Superstition and Imposture, of which the Vulgar are always the Dupes.

There are perhaps no Men in the World who are more the Dupes of such Impostors than the Savages, though there are few who have less Need of Physick. They are not only almost all of a healthy and strong Constitution, but they have never known the greatest Part of the Distempers which we are subject to, but since they conversed with us. They knew not what the Small-Pox was, when they took it from us; and we must attribute the great Ravages it has made amongst them to this Ignorance. The Gout, the Gravel, the Stone, the Apoplexy, and many other Diseases, so common in *Europe*, have not reached this Part of the New World, among the natural Inhabitants of the Country.

'Tis true, that their Excesses in their Feasts, and their immoderate Fasts, make them subject to Pains and Weaknesses of the Stomach and Breast, which destroy a great Number of them: Also, many young Persons die of the Phthisick; and they say that this is the Effect of the great Fatigues and violent Exercises to which they expose themselves from their Childhood, before they are strong enough to support them. 'Tis a Folly to believe, as some do, that their Blood is colder than our's, and to attribute to this Cause their Insensibility in Torments; but their Blood is extremely balsamic; and this arises, without Doubt, from their using no Salt nor any of those Things we use, to give a higher Relish to our Meats.

They

They seldom look upon a Disease as merely natural, or among the common Remedies they use, allow any to have in themselves the Virtue of healing. The great Use they make of their Simples, is for Wounds, Fractures, Dislocations, Luxations, and Ruptures. They blame the great Incisions which our Surgeons make to cleanse Wounds: they squeeze out the Juice of many Plants, and with this Composition they draw out all the Corruption, and even the Splinters of broken Bones, Stones, Iron, and in general all the foreign Matter that remains in the wounded Part. These same Juices are all the Food of the Patient, till the Wound is closed. The Person that dresses the Wound, takes also some of these Juices before he sucks it, if he finds it necessary to use that Method. But there is seldom a necessity to do this; most commonly they find it sufficient to syringe the Wound with these Juices.

All this is according to Rule; but as these People must have something supernatural in all their Transactions, the Juggler often tears the Wound with his Teeth, and afterwards shewing a Bit of Wood, or some such Thing, that he had the Precaution to put before-hand in his Mouth, he makes the Patient believe that he drew it out of the Wound, and that this was the Charm which caused all the Danger, of his Malady. This is certain, that they have wonderful Secrets and Remedies. A broken Bone is well united, and grows solid in eight Days. A *French* Soldier, who was in Garrison in a Fort of *Acadia*, was troubled with the Falling-Sickness; and his Fits were grown so frequent, as to attack him almost every Day with great Violence. A Woman Savage, who happened to be present at one of his Fits, went and made him two Boluses of a powdered Root, the Name of which she concealed, and desired that he would take one at the End of his next Fit, giving Notice that he would sweat much, and have great Evacuations both upwards and downwards; and added, that if the first Bolus did not carry off all the Complaint, the second would entirely cure it. The Thing happened as the Woman had said. The Patient had another Fit after the first Dose, but it



was the last. He enjoyed afterwards a perfect State of Health.

These People have also quick and sovereign Remedies against the Palsy, the Dropsy, and the Venereal Disease. The Shavings of Guaiacum Wood, and of Saffras, are their common Specifics in the two last Diseases: They make a Drink of these Woods which cures and prevents these Diseases, if it is constantly used\*.

In acute Diseases, as in the Pleurisy, they work on the Side opposite the Pain: They apply Cataplasms, which draw, and prevent the Humours from settling. In the Fever they use cold Lotions, with a Decoction of Herbs, and by this prevent Inflammations and Delirium. They boast especially of the Effects of Diet, but they make it consist only in abstaining from certain Aliments, which they esteem hurtful.

Formerly, they had not the Use of Blood-letting, and instead of it, they used Scarifications in the Places where they felt Pain: Then they applied a Sort of Cupping-Vessel made of Gourds, which they filled with combustible Matter, which they set on Fire. They very commonly used several Kinds of real Caustics; but as they were not acquainted with the *Lapis infernalis* (*the Blue Stone*), they used instead of it rotten Wood. At present Bleeding supplies the Place of these Operations. In the Northern Parts, they frequently use Clysters; a Bladder serves them for a Syringe. They have a Remedy against the Dysentery, which is almost always effectual: This is a Juice they squeeze out of the Extremities of the Branches of the Cedar-Tree, after they have been well boiled.

But their great Remedy, and their great Preservative against all Diseases, is Sweating. I have before told you, Madam, that at their coming out of the Stove, and while the Sweat runs down from all Parts of their Bodies, they

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\* They have since talked of a Powder composed of three Simples, which a Savage gave to one of our Missionaries, and which radically cures in a few Days the most inveterate *French* Disease.

go and plunge into a River; if there is not any near enough, they get some Body to throw the coldest Water over them. They frequently Sweat only to recover the Fatigue of a Journey, to calm their Spirits, and to enable them the better to discourse on Affairs. As soon as a Stranger comes into a Cabin, they make a Fire for him, they rub his Feet with Oil, and then they conduct him to a Stove, where his Host keeps him Company. They have also another Manner of promoting Sweats, which they use in certain Distempers: It consists in laying the Patient along upon a Kind of Couch, a little elevated, under which they boil, in a Kettle, some Wood of white Fir, and Branches of Pine. The Vapour which arises from it, causes a most plentiful Sweat \*: They say also that the Smell is very wholesome. The Sweat of the Stoves, that is procured only by the Vapour of Water poured upon hot Flints has not this Advantage.

In *Acadia*, a Distemper was never considered to be of much Consequence, but when the Patient refused all Kind of Nourishment, and many Nations are still in the same Error: Let a Person have any Kind of Fever, if they can eat, they eat of every Thing like other People. But as soon as the Distemper appears dangerous, *that is to say*, when the Patient refuses all Kinds of Food, they employ all their Attention. It is true that the Principles on which all the Physic of the Savages is founded, are very extraordinary: They refuse the Patient nothing that he asks, because, say they, his Desires in this State are the Orders of the Genius, that presides over his Preservation †: And when they call in the Jugglers, 'tis less on Account of their Skill, than because they suppose they are better informed by the Genii of the Cause of the Distemper, and of the Remedies for the Cure.

Furthermore, they will have nothing to reproach themselves with: One would imagine that Death loses something

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\* This seems to deserve the Attention of the *European* Physicians.

† This seems to deserve to be attended to, as Experience has often proved that the Indulgence of the Desires of the Sick has been salutary.

thing of its Terror when it follows after a Course of Physic, though this Physic might be the Cause of it. Our Savages are with regard to this Notion under the general Law, and the common Prejudice of all Nations, and all Ages; and they are the more excusable for carrying their Credulity so far, as they acknowledge something supernatural in all Distempers; and as they make Religion share in the Art of healing them, they think themselves the less obliged to be guided by Reason, and make it a Duty to suffer themselves to be led blindfold.

Oftentimes the Patient takes it into his Head that his Distemper is the Effect of Witchcraft: Then all their Care is to discover it, and this is the Duty of the Juggler. He begins by sweating himself, and when he has thoroughly tired himself, with bawling, beating himself, and invoking his Genius, the first extraordinary Thing that comes into his Thought, he ascribes as the Cause of the Distemper. Many, before they enter into the Stove, take a compound Potion, very proper, as they say, to make them receive the heavenly Impression; and they pretend that the Presence of the Spirit is manifested by a strong Wind that rises on a sudden, or by a Bellowing which they hear under Ground, or by the Agitation or shaking of the Stove. Then full of his pretended Deity, and more like one possessed with the Devil, than a Man inspired by Heaven, he pronounces his Decision in a magisterial Tone on the State of the Patient, and sometimes hits pretty right.

But these Quacks have found out a pretty singular Way of not being answerable for Events. As soon as they perceive a Patient has the Symptoms of Death, they never fail to give Orders, that are so difficult to be put in Execution, that they are always sure of an Excuse, on Account of their Orders not having been punctually followed. It is not to be conceived to what Extravagancies they go on these Occasions: They order some Patients to counterfeit themselves mad: In some Distempers they order Dances, which are generally very lascivious. One would think for the most Part that they have the cure of the Patient less in View, than to hasten his Death. But what

what shews the Force of Imagination is, that these Doctors, with all their Follies, perform as many Cures as our's.

In some Nations when the Distemper is desperate, they kill the Patients to put them out of their Pain. In the Canton of *Onnontague*, they destroy young Children that lose their Mothers at their Birth, or bury them alive with them, because they are persuaded that another Woman cannot nurse them, and that they would pine to Death. But I think however that lately they have laid aside this barbarous Custom. Some others forsake the Diseased when the Doctors give them over, and let them die with Hunger and Thirst. There are some, who to hinder the Distortion of the Features in dying Persons, close their Eyes and Mouth, when they see them in the Agony of Death.

In *Acadia*, the Jugglers are called *Autmoins*, and it is generally the Chief of the Village who is invested with this Dignity; therefore they have more Authority than the other Jugglers, though they have not more Skill, nor less of Imposture. When they are called to a Patient, the first Thing they do is to view him attentively for some Time, then they blow upon him: If this has no Effect, "The Reason is, that the Devil is within him, say they, "but however he must come out; yet let every one be "upon his Guard, for this evil Spirit out of Spite may "fall upon one of the Company." Then they enter into a Kind of Madness, they make strange Postures, they cry out, they threaten the pretended Devil, they speak to him as if they had seen him, and they make passes at him: But all this is only a Farce to hide their Imposture.

When they enter the Cabin, they always have the Precaution to thrust into the Earth a Piece of Wood, fastened to a String: Afterwards they offer the End of the String to all the Company present, desiring them to pull up this Piece of Wood; and as no Person can scarce ever accomplish it, they never fail to say it is the Devil that holds it; then, feigning to stab this pretended Devil, they loose the Wood by little and little, by raking the Earth round about it; after which they draw it up with Ease,  
and

and all present cry out, *Victory!* To this Wood there is fastened underneath a little Bone, or some such Thing, which they did not see at first; and the Quacks making the People present observe it, cry out, "*This was the Cause of the Distemper; it was necessary to kill the Devil to get it.*"

This Farce lasteth four or five Hours, at the End of which the Doctor wants Rest and Refreshment: He goes away, assuring the Patient that he will infallibly recover, if the Distemper has not got the upper Hand; *that is to say*, if the Devil, before his Retreat, has not already given him a mortal Wound. But how is the Doctor to know this? He pretends to know it by Dreams; but he takes a special Care not to speak plainly till he sees what Turn the Distemper is like to take. When he judgeth it is incurable, he retires, and after his Example every Body forsakes the sick Person. If after three Days he is still alive, "*the Devil* (saith the Doctor) *is resolved he shall not recover, and will not let him die: We must out of Charity put an End to his Sufferings.*" Immediately the dearest Friends of the Patient fetch cold Water, and pour it on his Face till he expireth.— The Delusion is such, that many Thanks are returned to the Doctor, with a considerable Reward.

Some Nations of the South have Maxims that are entirely the Reverse: They never pay the Doctor till after the Cure. If the Patient dies, the Doctor is in Danger of his Life. According to the *Iroquois*, every Distemper is a Desire of the Soul, and Death is the Consequence of not accomplishing the Desire.

I make an End, Madam, because the Article of the Dead would carry me too far, and every Thing is getting ready for my Journey. In all Probability I shall soon have Leisure to write to you again; but you will not hear from me the sooner on this Account; for from hence to the *Illinois* there is no likelihood that I shall find any Opportunity of sending you my Letters; so that if I write any before I arrive there, you will receive them as late as if I wrote them from that Country.

*I am, &c.*  
LETTER

## L E T T E R XXVI.

*Departure from the Fort of the River St. JOSEPH. The Sources of the THEAKIKI. What passes at the Death of the Savages: Of their Funerals; of their Tombs; of their Mourning; of Widowhood; of the Festival of the Dead.*

MADAM, *From the Source of the Theakiki, Sept. 17.*

I Did not expect to take up my Pen to write to you so soon; but my Conductors have just now broke their Canoe, and here I am detained the whole Day in a Place where I can find nothing that can excite the Curiosity of a Traveller; therefore I can do nothing better than employ my Time in entertaining you.

I think I informed you in my last, that I had the Choice of two Ways to go to the *Illinois*: The first was to return to Lake *Michigan*, to coast all the South Shore, and to enter into the little River *Chicagou*. After going up it five or six Leagues, they pass into that of the *Illinois*, by the Means of two Portages, the longest of which is but a League and a Quarter. But as this River is but a Brook in this Place, I was informed that at that Time of the Year I should not find Water enough for my Canoe; therefore I took the other Route, which has also its Inconveniencies, and is not near so pleasant, but it is the surest.

I departed Yesterday from the Fort of the River *St. Joseph*, and I went up that River about six Leagues. I landed on the Right, and I walked a League and a Quarter; at first by the Bank of the River, then cross the Country in a vast Meadow, interspersed all over with lit-  
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tle Clusters of Trees, that have a very fine Effect. They call it the Meadow *de la Tête de Bœuf*, (*the Buffalo's Head*) because they found here a Buffalo's Head of a monstrous Size. Why should there not be Giants among these Animals? — I encamped in a very fine Place, which they call the Fort *des Renards*, (*of the Foxes*), because the *Renards*, THAT IS TO SAY, the *Outagamis*, had here, and not long since, a Village fortified after their Manner. This Morning I walked a League further in the Meadow, having almost all the Way my Feet in Water. Then I met with a little Pool, which communicates with several others of different Bigness, the largest of which is not one hundred Paces in Compass. These are the Sources of a River called *Theakiki*, and which our *Canadians* by Corruption call *Kiakiki*. *Theak* signifies a Wolf, I forget in what Language; but this River is so called, because the *Mabingans*, which are also called *the Wolves*, formerly took Refuge here.

We put our Canoe, which was brought hither by two Men, into the second of these Springs, or Pools, and we embarked; but we found scarce Water enough to keep it afloat: Ten Men, in two Days, might make a straight and navigable Canal, which would save much Trouble, and ten or twelve Leagues Way; for the River, at the first coming out from its Spring, is so narrow, and we are continually obliged to turn so short, that every Moment one is in Danger of breaking the Canoe, as it has just now happened to us.—But let us return to the Savages; and after having seen in what Manner they are treated in their Distempers, let us see them die, and what passes after their Death.

In general, when they think themselves past Recovery, they meet their Fate with a Resolution truly *stoical*, and they often see their Days shortened by the Persons that are most dear to them, without shewing the least Chagrin. The Declaration of the Sentence of the Doctor is scarcely finished to a dying Man, before he makes an Effort to harangue those that are about him. If it is the Chief of a Family, he first makes his Funeral Oration, which he finishes by giving very good Counsel to his Children. After this, he takes Leave of every Body, gives Orders for  
a Feast,

a Feast, in which they must use all the Provisions that remain in the Cabin, and then he receives the Presents of his Family.

During this Time they cut the Throats of all the Dogs they can catch, that the Souls of these Animals may go into the other World, and give Notice that such a Person will arrive there soon; and all the Bodies are put into the Kettle, to enlarge the Feast. After the Feast is over, they begin to weep: Their Tears are interrupted to bid the last Farewel to the dying Person, to wish him a good Journey, to comfort him on his being separated from his Relations and Friends, and to assure him that his Children will maintain all the Glory he has acquired.

We must acknowledge, Madam, that the Calmness with which these People look Death in the Face, has something in it very admirable; and this is so universal, that perhaps there never was an Instance of a Savage shewing any Concern, upon hearing that he had but a few Hours to live. The same Principle, and the same Spirit, prevails every where, though the Customs vary much in all that I have just mentioned, according to the different Nations. In most Places there are Dances, Songs, Invocations, and Feasts ordered by the Doctors, which are almost always Remedies more fit, according to our Notions, to kill a Man that was well, than to cure a sick Person. In some Places they use no Means at all: They are satisfied with having Recourse to the Spirits; and if the sick Person recovers his Health, they have all the Honour: But the dying Person is always the least concerned about his Fate.

It may further be added, that if these People shew so little Judgment in their Manner of treating the Sick, we must acknowledge that they behave towards the Dead with a Generosity and an Affection that cannot be too much admired. Some Mothers have been known to have kept the dead Bodies of their Children whole Years, and would never go from them; others draw Milk from their Breasts, and pour it upon the Tombs of these little Creatures. If a Village happens to take Fire, in which  
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there are any dead Bodies, this is the first Thing they take Care to preserve: They strip themselves of every Thing that is most valuable, to adorn the Dead: From Time to Time they open their Coffins to change their Drefs; and they deprive themselves of Food to carry it to the Sepulchres, and to the Places where they fancy their Souls walk. In a Word, they are at much greater Expences for the Dead, than for the Living.

As soon as the sick Person expires, the Place is filled with mournful Cries; and this lasts as long as the Family is able to defray the Expence, for they must keep open Table all this Time. The dead Body, dressed in the finest Robe, with the Face painted, the Arms and all that belonged to the Deceased by his Side, is exposed at the Door of the Cabin in the Posture it is to be laid in the Tomb; and this Posture is the same, in many Places, as that of the Child in the Mother's Womb. The Custom of some Nations is for the Relations of the Deceased to fast to the End of the Funeral; and all this Interval is passed in Tears and Cries, in treating their Visitors, in praising the Dead, and in mutual Compliments. In other Places they hire Women to weep, who perform their Duty punctually: They sing, they dance, they weep without ceasing, always keeping Time: But these Demonstrations of a borrowed Sorrow do not prevent what Nature requires from the Relations of the Deceased.

It appears to me that they carry the Body without Ceremony to the Place of Interment; at least I find no Mention about it in any Relation: But when it is in the Grave, they take Care to cover it in such a Manner, that the Earth does not touch it: It lies as in a little Cave lined with Skin, much richer and better adorned than their Cabins. Then they set up a Post on the Grave, and fix on it every Thing that may shew the Esteem they had for the Deceased. They sometimes put on it his Portrait, and every Thing that may serve to shew to Passengers who he was, and the finest Actions of his Life. They carry fresh Provisions to the Tomb every Morning; and as the Dogs and other Beasts do not fail to reap the Benefit

nefit of it, they are willing to persuade themselves that these Things have been eaten by the Souls of the Dead.

It is not strange after this, that the Savages believe in Apparitions: And in Fa&t they tell Stories of this Sort all Manner of Ways. I knew a poor Man, who, by continually hearing these Stories, fancied that he had always a Troop of Ghosts at his Heels; and as People took a Pleasure to encrease his Fears, it made him grow foolish. —Nevertheless, at the End of a certain Number of Years, they take as much Care to efface out of their Minds the Remembrance of those they have lost, as they did before to preserve it; and this solely to put an End to the Grief they felt for their Loss.

Some Missionaries one Day asking their new Converts, why they deprived themselves of their most necessary Things in Favour of the Dead? they replied, “ It is not only “ to shew the Love we bore to our Relations, but also “ that we may not have before our Eyes, in the Things “ they used, Objects which would continually renew our “ Grief.” It is also for this Reason that they forbear, for some Time, to pronounce their Names; and if any other of the Family bears the same Name, he quits it all the Time of Mourning. This is probably also the Reason why the greatest Outrage you can do to any Person, is to say to them, *Your Father is dead*, or, *Your Mother is dead*.

When any one dies in the Time of Hunting, they expose his Body on a very high Scaffold, and it remains there till the Departure of the Troop, who carry it with them to the Village. There are some Nations who practise the same with Regard to all their Dead; and I have seen it practised by the *Missisaguez of Detroit*. The Bodies of those who die in War are burnt, and their Ashes brought back to be laid in the Burying-Place of their Fathers. These Burying-Places, among the most settled Nations, are Places like our Church-Yards, near the Village. Others bury their Dead in the Woods, at the Foot of a Tree; or dry them, and keep them in Chests till the Festival of the Dead, which I shall presently

sently describe: But in some Places they observe an odd Ceremony for those that are drowned, or are frozen to Death.

Before I describe it, it is proper, Madam, to tell you that the Savages believe, when these Accidents happen, that the Spirits are incensed, and that their Anger is not appeas'd till the Body is found. When the Preliminaries of Tears, Dances, Songs, and Feasts, being ended, they carry the Body to the usual Burying-Place; or, if they are too far off, to the Place where it is to remain till the Festival of the Dead. They dig there a very large Pit, and they make a Fire in it: Then some young Persons approach the Corpse, cut out the Flesh in the Parts which had been marked out by a Master of the Ceremonies, and throw them into the Fire with the Bowels: Then they place the Corpse, thus mangled, in the Place destined for it. During the whole Operation, the Women, especially the Relations of the Deceased, go continually round those that are at it, exhorting them to acquit themselves well of their Employment, and put Beads of Porcelain in their Mouths, as we would give Sugar-Plums to Children to entice them to do what we desire.

The Interment is followed by Presents, which they make to the afflicted Family; and this is called *covering the Dead*. These Presents are made in the Name of the Village, and sometimes in the Name of the Nation. Allies also make some Presents at the Death of considerable Persons: But first the Family of the Deceased makes a great Feast in his Name, and this Feast is accompanied with Games, for which they propose Prizes, which are performed in this Manner: A Chief throws on the Tomb three Sticks about a Foot long: A young Man, a Woman, and a Maiden, take each of them one; and those of their Age, their Sex, and their Condition, strive to wrest them out of their Hands. Those with whom the Sticks remain, are Conquerors. There are also Races, and they sometimes shoot at a Mark. In short, by a Custom which we find established in all the Times of *Pagan* Antiquity, a Ceremony entirely mournful is terminated by Songs, and Shouts of Victory.

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It is true, that the Family of the Deceased take no Part in these Rejoicings : They observe even in his Cabin, after the Obsequies, a Mourning, the Laws of which are very severe : They must have their Hair cut off, and their Faces blacked : They must stand with their Heads wrapped in a Blanket : They must not look at any Person, nor make any Visit, nor eat any Thing hot : They must deprive themselves of all Pleasures, wear scarce any Thing on their Bodies, and never warm themselves at the Fire, even in the Depth of Winter.

After this deep Mourning, which lasts two Years, they begin a second more moderate, which lasts two or three Years longer, and which may be softened by little and little ; but they dispense with nothing that is prescribed, without the Consent of the Cabin to which the Widower or the Widow belongs. These Permissions, as well as the End of the Mourning, always cost a Feast.

Widows cannot contract a second Marriage without the Consent of those on whom they depend, in Virtue of the Laws of Widowhood. If they can find no Husband for the Widow, she finds herself under no Difficulties : If she has any Sons of an Age to support her, she may continue in a State of Widowhood, without Danger of ever wanting any Thing : If she is willing to marry again, she may chuse, and the Man she marries becomes the Father of her Children : He enters into all the Rights, and all the Obligations of the first Husband.

The Husband does not weep for his Wife ; because, according to the Savages, Tears do not become Men ; but this is not general among all Nations. The Women weep for their Husbands a Year : They call him without ceasing, and fill their Village with Cries and Lamentations, especially at the rising and setting of the Sun, at Noon, and in some Places when they go out to Work, and when they return. Mothers do much the same for their Children. The Chiefs mourn only six Months, and may afterwards marry again.

The first, and often the only Compliment they make to a Friend, and even to a Stranger they receive in their  
 VOL. II. K Cabin,

Cabins, is to weep for those of his near Relations, whom he has lost since they saw him last. They put their Hands on his Head, and they give him to understand who it is they weep for, without mentioning his Name. All this is founded in Nature, and has nothing in it of Barbarity. But what I am going to speak of, does not appear to be any Way excusable; *that is*, the Behaviour of these People towards those who die by a violent Death, even though it is in War, and for the Service of their Country.

They have got a Notion that their Souls, in the other World, have no Communication with the others; and on this Principle they burn them, or bury them directly, sometimes even before they expire. They never lay them in the common Burying Place, and they give them no Part in the great Ceremony, which is renewed every eight Years among some Nations, and every ten Years among the *Hurons* and the *Iroquois*.

They call it the *Festival of the Dead, or the Feast of Souls*: And here follows what I could collect that was most uniform and remarkable concerning this Ceremony, which is the most singular and the most celebrated of the Religion of the Savages. They begin by fixing a Place for the Assembly to meet in: Then they chuse the King of the Feast, whose Duty it is to give Orders for every Thing, and to invite the neighbouring Villages. The Day appointed being come, all the Savages assemble, and go in Procession two and two to the Burying-Place. There every one labours to uncover the Bodies; then they continue some Time contemplating in Silence a Spectacle so capable of exciting the most serious Reflexions. The Women first interrupt this religious Silence, by sending forth mournful Cries, which encrease the Horror with which every one is filled.

This first Act being ended, they take up the Carcasses, and pick up the dry and separated Bones, and put them in Parcels; and those who are ordered to carry them, take them on their Shoulders. If there are any Bodies not entirely decayed, they wash them; they clean  
away

away the corrupted Fleſh, and all the Filth, and wrap them in new Robes of Beaver Skins: Then they return in the ſame Order as they came; and when the Proceſſion is come into the Village, every one lays in his Cabin the Burden he was charged with. During the March, the Women continue their Lamentations, and the Men ſhew the ſame Signs of Grief as they did on the Day of the Death of thoſe whoſe Remains they have been taking up. And this ſecond Act is followed by a Feaſt in each Cabin, in Honour of the Dead of the Family.

The following Days they make public Feaſts; and they are accompanied, as on the Day of the Funeral, with Dances, Games, and Combats, for which there are alſo Prizes propoſed. From Time to Time they make certain Cries, which they call *the Cries of the Souls*. They make Preſents to Strangers, among whom there are ſometimes ſome who come an hundred and Fifty Leagues, and they receive Preſents from them. They alſo take Advantage of theſe Opportunities to treat of common Affairs, or for the Election of a Chief. Every Thing paſſes with a great deal of Order, Decency, and Modeſty; and every one appears to entertain Sentiments ſuitable to the principal Action. Every Thing, even in the Dances and Songs, carries an Air of Sadneſs and Mourning; and one can ſee in all, Hearts pierced with the ſharpeſt Sorrow. The moſt Inſenſible would be affected at the Sight of this Spectacle. After ſome Days are paſt, they go again in Proceſſion to a great Council-Room built for the Purpose: They hang up againſt the Walls the Bones and the Carcaſſes in the ſame Condition they took them from the Burying-Place, and they lay forth the Preſents deſigned for the Dead. If among theſe ſad Remains there happens to be thoſe of a Chief, his Succeſſor gives a great Feaſt in his Name, and ſings his Song. In many Places the Bones are carried from Village to Village, are received every where with great Demonſtrations of Grief and Tenderneſs, and every where they make them Preſents: Laſtly, they carry them to the Place where they are to remain always. But I had forgot to tell you, that all theſe marches are made to the Sound of their Inſtruments,

accompanied with their best Voices, and that every one in these Marches keeps Time to the Music.

This last and common Burial-Place is a great Pit, which they line with their finest Furs, and the best Things they have. The Presents designed for the Dead, are set by themselves. By Degrees, as the Procession arrives, each Family range themselves on a Kind of Scaffolds set up round the Pit; and the Moment the Bones are laid in, the Women renew their weeping and wailing. Then all present go down into the Pit, and every one takes a little of the Earth, which they keep carefully. They fancy it procures Luck at Play. The Bodies and the Bones, ranged in Order, are covered with entire new Furs, and over that with Bark, on which they throw Stones, Wood, and Earth. Every one returns to his own Cabin; but the Women come for several Days after, and pour *Sagamitty* on the Place.

*I am, &c.*

LETTER

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## L E T T E R   X X V I I .

*Journey to PIMITEOUY. Of the River of the ILLINOIS. Reception of the Prisoners among these People. Their Manner of burning them. Some Things peculiar in their Way of living.*

MADAM,

PIMITEOUY, October 5.

**T**HE Night of the 17th of this Month, the Frost, which for eight Days past was perceivable every Morning, encreased considerably. This was early for this Climate, for we were in  $41^{\circ} 40$  Lat. The following Days we went forward from Morning to Night, favoured by the Current, which is pretty strong, and sometimes by the Wind: In Fact, we made a great deal of Way, but we advanced very little on our Journey: After having gone ten or twelve Leagues, we found ourselves so near our last Encampment, that Persons in both Places might have seen each other, and even have talked together, at least with a Speaking-Trumpet. But it was some Consolation to us, that the River and its Borders were covered with Wild-Fowl, fattened with wild Oats, which were then ripe. I also gathered some ripe Grapes, which were of the Shape and Bigness of a Musket-Ball, and soft enough, but of a bad Taste. This is probably the same that they call in LOUISIANA *Raisin Prune* (the *Plum Grape*.) The River by Degrees grows less winding; but its Borders are not pleasant till we are fifty Leagues from its Source. It is also for all this Space very narrow; and as it is bordered with Trees, whose Roots are in the Water, when one falls it bars up the whole

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River,



Then I went up the Rock by a tolerably easy Way but very narrow. I found a very smooth Terrace, of a great Extent ; and where all the Savages of *Canada* could not force two hundred Men, who had Fire-Arms, if they could have Water, which they can get only from the River ; and to do this they must expose themselves. All the Recourse of those who should happen to be besieged here, would be the natural Impatience of these Barbarians. In small Parties they will wait without Uneasiness eight or ten Days behind a Bush, in Hopes that some Body will pass by, whom they may kill or take Prisoner : But when they are a numerous Body of Warriors, if they do not presently succeed, they soon grow weary, and take the first Excuse to retreat. This they never want ; for there needs only for this Purpose a Dream, real or feigned.

The Rain, and still more a Spectacle, which filled me with Horror, hindered me from making the Tour of these Rocks, from whence I hoped to discover a great Country. I perceived at the End, and just above the Village, the Bodies of two Savages that had been burnt a few Days before, and which were abandoned according to Custom, to the Birds of Prey, in the same Posture, in which they were executed. The Way of burning the Prisoners among these southern Nations, is something singular ; and they have also some Customs different from the others in their Manner of behaving towards these unhappy Wretches.

When they have made a military Expedition, which has succeeded, the Warriors order their March so, that they never arrive at the Village till Night. As soon as they are near it, they halt ; and when it is Night, they depute two or three young People to the Chief, to acquaint him with the principal Adventures of the Campaign. Next Day, at the Appearance of the Dawn they dress their Prisoners in new Robes, adorn their Hair with Down, paint their Faces with various Colours, and put a white Stick in their Hands, which is set round with the Tails of Roe-Bucks. At the same Time the War-Chief makes a Cry, and all the Village assembles at the Water-side, if they are near a River.

As

As soon as the Warriors appear, four young Men in their finest Drefs embark in a *Pettiaugre* \*, the two first carry a Calumet, and go singing all the Way, to fetch the Prisoners, which they bring as in Triumph to the Cabin, where they are to be sentenced. The Master of the Cabin, to whom it belongs to decide their Fate, first gives them something to eat, and during this Meal he holds a Council. If they give his Life to any one, two young Men go and untie him, take him each by one Hand and make him run full Speed to the River, where they throw him in Head-foremost. They throw themselves in after him, wash him well, and lead him to the Person whose Slave he is to be.

As to those who are condemned to die, as soon as the Sentence is pronounced, the Cry is made to assemble the Village ; and the Execution is deferred, only just Time enough to make the Preparations for it. They begin by stripping the Sufferer quite naked : They fix in the Earth two Posts, to which they fasten two cross Pieces, one about two Feet from the Ground, and the other six or seven Feet higher, and this is what they call a Frame. They make the Sufferer get upon the first cross Piece, to which they fasten his Feet, at a little Distance from each other : Then they tie his Hands to the upper Angles of the Frame ; and in this Posture they burn him in all Parts of the Body.

All the Village, Men, Women, and Children, gather round him ; and every one has a Right to torture him as they please. If no one present has any particular Reason to prolong his Sufferings, his Punishment is soon over ; and commonly they dispatch him with their Arrows, or else they cover him with the Bark of Trees, which they set on Fire. Then they leave him in his Frame, and towards Night they run through all the Cabins, striking with little Sticks on the Furniture, on the Walls, and on the Roofs, to hinder his Soul from staying there to revenge

\* This is a long Boat, made of the single Trunk of a Tree. They use but few Canoes of Bark in these Parts.

venge the Injuries they have done to his Body. The rest of the Night is passed in Rejoicings.

If the Party has met no Enemy, or if it has been obliged to fly, it enters the Village by Day, keeping a profound Silence; but if it has been beaten, it enters by Night, after having given Notice of their Return by a Cry of Death, and named all those they have lost, either by Distempers, or by the Sword of the Enemy. Sometimes the Prisoners are condemned and executed before they arrive at the Village; especially when they have any Room to fear they will be rescued. Some Time since a *Frenchman* being taken by the *Outagamis*, these Barbarians held a Council on their Route, to know how they should dispose of him. The Result of the Deliberation was to throw a Stick up in the Tree, and if it lodged there, to burn their Prisoner; but to throw it only a certain Number of Times. By good Fortune for the Prisoner, though the Tree was very thick of Branches, the Stick always fell to the Ground.

I stayed twenty-four Hours at the Rock, and to please the Savages, and to shew my entire Confidence in them, though all my Conductors were encamped on the other Side of the River, I lay in a Cabin in the midst of the Village. I past the Night quiet enough; but I was waked very early by a Woman, who lived in the next Cabin; when she awoke, the Remembrance of her Son, whom she had lost some Years before, came into her Mind, and immediately she began to weep, and to sing in a very doleful Tone.

The *Illinois* have the Character of being cunning Thieves, for this Reason I caused all my Baggage to be carried over to the other Side; but in spite of this Precaution, and the Vigilance of my People, at our Departure we missed a Gun, and some Trifles, which we could never recover. The same Evening we passed the last Place of the River, where one is obliged to drag the Canoe; afterwards the River has every where a Breadth and Depth, that makes it equal to most of the largest Rivers of *Europe*.

I fav

I saw also this Day, for the first Time, some Parrots: There are some on the Sides of the *Theakiki*, but in Summer only. These were some Stragglers that are going to the *Mississippi*, where there are some in all Seasons: They are but a little bigger than a Black-bird, their Head is yellow, with a red Spot in the Middle, Green prevails in all the rest of their Plumage. The two following Days we traversed a charming Country, and the third of *October* about Noon we found ourselves at the Entrance of the Lake *Pimiteouy*; It is the River which grows wider here, and which for three Leagues is one League in Breadth. At the End of these three Leagues, we find on the Right a second Village of *Illinois*, distant about fifteen Leagues from that of the Rock.

Nothing can be more pleasant than the Situation; it has over against it, as in Perspective, a very fine Forest, which was then of all Colours, and behind it a Plain of an immense Extent, bordered with Woods. The Lake and the River swarm with Fish, and their Sides with Wild-Fowl. I met also in this Village four *French Canadians*, who informed me that I was between four Parties of Enemies, and that it was not safe for me either to go forward, or to return; they told me further, that on the Route which I had travelled, there were thirty *Outagamis* in Ambush; that the like Number of the same Savages were ranging round the Village of *Pimiteouy*, and others to the Number of eighty kept at the Bottom of the River, divided into two Bands.

This Account made me recollect what had happened to us the Evening before; we had stopt at the End of the Island, to look for some Bustards, at which some of my People had fired; and we heard somebody cutting of Wood in the Middle of the Island. The Nearer of the Village of *Pimiteouy*, made us judge that it was some *Illinois*, and we held in that Opinion; but it is very likely that they were *Outagamis*, who having discovered us, and not daring to attack us, because I had twelve Men well armed, thought to draw some of us into the Woods, judging that they should have an easy Conquest of the rest; but our little Curiosity kept us from this Misfortune,

tune, which I should certainly not have escaped, if I had not had an Escort commanded by a Man, who was not of a Humour to stop where there was no real Occasion.

What further confirmed the Account of the four *Frenchmen* was, that thirty Warriors of *Pimiteouy*, commanded by the Chief of the Village, were in the Field, to endeavour to get more certain News of the Enemy; and that a few Days before their Departure, there had been an Action in the Neighbourhood, in which the two Parties had each made one Prisoner: The *Outagami* had been burnt about a Musket-Shot from the Village, and he was still in his Frame. The *Canadians*, who assisted in his Punishment, told me that it lasted five Hours, and that this unfortunate Wretch had maintained till his Death that he was an *Illinois*, and that he had been taken in his Childhood by the *Outagamis*, who had adopted him.

However he had fought very well, and had it not been for a Wound received in the Leg, he had not been taken. But as he could give no Proofs of what he had alledged, and had been very near making his Escape, they would not believe him on his Word. He made it appear in the midst of his Torments, that Bravery, and Courage in bearing Pain, are very different Virtues, and that they do not always go together, for he made most lamentable Cries, which only served to animate his Executioners. It is true that an old Woman, whose Son had been formerly killed by the *Outagamis*, made him suffer all the Pains that Fury inspired by Revenge could invent. However, at last they took Pity on his Cries, they covered him with Straw, which they set on Fire; and as he had still some Life in him after it was burnt out, the Children killed him with their Arrows. Generally, when a Sufferer does not die bravely, it is a Woman, or Children, that give him his Death's Wound: He does not deserve, they say, to die by the Hand of a Man.

I found myself, Madam, greatly embarrassed. On one Side, my Conductors did not think it prudent to go forward;

ward; on the other, it was very inconvenient for my Affairs to winter at *Pimiteouy*: I should then have even been obliged to follow the Savages in their Winter-Quarters, and this would have made me lose a whole Year. At last the two *Canadians*, of the four which I found at *Pimiteouy*, offered to encrease my Escort, and they all took Heart. I would have departed the next Day, the fourth of *October*, but the Rain, and some other Difficulties which we met with, stopt me the whole Day.

The Warriors, who had been out on the Discovery, came back in the Afternoon, without making any Cry, because they had seen nothing. They all filed off before me with a proud Sort of an Air: They were only armed with Arrows, and a round Shield of Buffalo's Hides, and they did not seem to take any Notice of me. It is the Custom of the Warriors to salute no Person when they are in a Body for War: But almost as soon as they had got into their Cabins, the Chief having dressed himself, came and paid me a Visit of Ceremony. He is about forty Years old, pretty tall, and something lean, of a mild Character, and very rational. He is also the bravest Soldier of his Nation, and there is no *Illinois* that deserves better than he the Surname \* that *Homer* gives by Way of Preference to the Hero of his *Iliad*. This is saying a great deal, for the *Illinois* are perhaps the swiftest Runners in the World: The *Missourites* are the only People that can dispute this Glory with them.

As I perceived a Cross of Copper, and a little Figure of the Virgin hanging about the Neck of this Savage, I thought he had been a *Cbristian*; but they assured me that he had only put himself in this Equipage out of Respect to me. They told me farther what I am going to relate, without requiring you to believe more of it, than the Credit of my Authors deserve: They are *Canadian* Travellers, who certainly did not invent what they told me, but who heard it reported as a certain Fact. This is the Story.

The

\* Swift-footed.

The Image of the Virgin, which the Chief wore, having fallen into his Hands, I know not how, he was curious to know who it represented: They told him it was the Mother of God, and that the Child which she held in her Arms, was God himself, who made himself Man for the Salvation of Mankind. They explained to him in few Words the Myſtery of this ineffable Incarnation; and farther told him, that the *Chriſtians* always addreſſed themſelves to this divine Mother when they were in any Danger, and that they ſeldom did it in vain. The Savage liſtened to this Diſcourſe with much Attention; and ſome Time after, as he was hunting alone in the Woods, an *Outagami*, who had laid in Ambuſh, ſhewed himſelf the Moment after he had diſcharged his Gun at ſome Game, and took Aim at him. Then he remembered what had been told him of the Mother of God: He invoked her, and the *Outagami* attempting to ſhoot, his Gun miſſed Fire: He cocked it again, and the ſame Thing happened five Times together. During this Time, the *Illinois* charged his own, and in his Turn took Aim at his Enemy, who choſe rather to ſurrender than be ſhot. Since this Adventure, the Chief never goes out of the Village without carrying his Safeguard with him, with which he thinks himſelf invulnerable. If the Story is true, it is very probable that it was the Fault of the Miſſionary alone that has hindered him from becoming a *Chriſtian*, and that the Mother of God, after having preſerved him from a temporal Death, will obtain for him the Grace of a ſincere Converſion\*.

As ſoon as the Chief had left me, I went out to viſit the Environs of the Village, and I perceived two Savages, who went from Cabin to Cabin, wailing much in the ſame Tone as the Woman of the *Rock*, I mentioned before. One had loſt his Friend in the laſt Battle, the other was the Father of him that had been ſlain. They walked a great Pace, and put their Hands on the Heads of all they met; probably to invite them to ſhare in their Grief. Thoſe who have ſought Reſemblances between the *Hebrews* and the *Americans*, would not have failed

to

\* He is in Fact converted ſince.

to have taken particular Notice of this Manner of Mourning, which some Expressions of Scripture might give Room to these Conjectures to judge, might have been in Use among the People of God.

About Evening, the Chief desired me to come to a House where one of our Missionaries had lodged some Years before, and where probably they used to hold the Council : I went thither, and found him there with two or three Elders. He began by saying that he was desirous of informing me of the great Danger to which I was going to expose myself, by continuing my Route : That upon thoroughly considering all Circumstances, he advised me to put off my Departure till the Season was a little more advanced ; that he hoped then the Enemy's Parties would be retired, and leave me a free Passage. As he might have his Views in detaining me at *Pimiteouy*, I let him know that I was not much affected with his Reasons, and added, that I had some more prevailing ones to hasten my Departure. He seemed to be concerned at my Answer, and I soon found that it proceeded from his Affection for me, and his Zeal for our Nation.

“ Since your Resolution is taken, said he, I am of Opinion, that all the *French* who are here, should join themselves to you to strengthen your Escort : I have also already declared my Thoughts to them on this Matter, and have strongly represented to them, that they would be for ever lost to all Honour, if they should leave their Father in Danger, without sharing it with him. I should be very glad to accompany you myself at the Head of all my Soldiers, but you know my Village is in Danger of being attacked every Day, and it is not proper for me to be absent, and to leave it unguarded in such Circumstances. As for the *French*, nothing can detain them here, but an Interest, which they ought to sacrifice to your Preservation. This is what I have given them to understand, and have farther told them, that if any one of them fell into the Hands of the Enemy, it would only be the Loss of a Man, whereas a Father was alone to be esteemed as  
“ many,



“ many, and that they ought to run all Hazards, to prevent fo great a Misfortune.”

I was charmed, Madam, with the Wisdom of this Man, and more ftill with his Generofity, which inclined him, out of his Regard for me, to deprive himfelf of four Men, whofe Affiftance was a Matter of Confequence, in his prefent Situation. I made no Doubt before, that in his Willingnefs to detain me, he had a View of making Ufe of my Efcort in Cafe of Need. I gave him many Thanks for his Good-will and his Care, and I affured him that I was very well fatisfied with the *French*, that I would divide them with him, and leave him two for his Defence, in Cafe he fhould be attacked ; that the other two fhould accompany me till I was in a Place of Safety, and with this Reinforcement I fhould think myfelf in a Condition to go any where without Fear. He preffed me no further to ftay, and I retired.

This Morning he came to pay me a fecond Vifit, accompanied by his Mother-in-Law, who carried a young Child in her Arms : “ You fee, faid he, addreffing himfelf to me, a Father in great Affliction. This is my Daughter, who is dying, her Mother died in bringing her into the World, and no Woman could fucceed in nurfing her. She throws up all fhe takes, and has perhaps but a few Hours to live : You will do me a Pleafure to baptize her, that fhe may go to fee God after her Death.” The Child was really very ill, and paff all Hopes of Recovery, fo I made no Scruple to baptize it.

Should my Travels have been ufelefs in all other Refpects, I acknowledge to you, Madam, I fhould not regret all the Fatigues and Dangers of them, fince, in all Probability, if I had not come to *Pimiteouy*, this Child had never gone to Heaven, where I make no Doubt fhe willfoon arrive. I hope alfo, that this little Angel will obtain for her Father the fame Grace he has procured for her. I depart an Hour hence, and I truft this Letter with the two *Frenchmen* I leave here, and who intend to take the firft Opportunity to return to *Canada*.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R

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## L E T T E R   X X V I I I .

*Journey from PIMITEOUY to the KASKASQUIAS. Of the Course of the River of the ILLINOIS. Of the Copper-Mines. Of the MISSOURI. Of the Mines of the River MARAMEG. Description of Fort de CHAR-TRES, and of the Mission of the KASKASQUIAS. Of the Fruit-Trees of LOUISIANA. Description of the MISSISSIPPI above the ILLINOIS. Different Tribes of that Nation. Some Traditions of the Savages. Their Notions of the Stars and Planets, Eclipses, and Thunder: Their Manner of computing Time.*

MADAM,

KASKASQUIAS, *October 20.*

**I** Confess very sincerely, that I was not so easy at leaving *Pimiteouy*, as I feigned myself to be, as well for my own Credit, as not intirely to discourage those who accompanied me, some of whom concealed their Fear but very indifferently. The Alarms in which I had found the *Illinois*, their doleful Songs, the Sight of the Carcasses exposed in their Frames, horrible Objects, which continually represented to me what I was to expect, if I should have the Misfortune to fall into the Hands of these Barbarians: All this made an Impression upon me which I could not overcome, and for seven or eight Days I could not sleep very found.

I was not apprehensive indeed that the Enemy would attack us openly, because I had fourteen Men well armed, and well commanded \*: but we had every Thing to fear from Surprifes, as the Savages use all Manner of Artifices to draw their Enemies into the Snares they lay for

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them.

\* M. de *St. Ange*, who has since very much distinguished himself against the *Renards*, commanded my Escort.

them. One of the most common is to counterfeit the Cry of some Animal, or the Note of a Bird, which they imitate so perfectly, that every Day some are brought into an Ambush by it. One happens to be encamped at the Entrance of a Wood, we think we hear a Buffalo, a Deer, or a Duck, two or three Men run that Way in Hopes of getting something, and frequently they never return.

They reckon 70 Leagues from *Pimiteouy* to the *Mississippi*: I have already said that it was 15 from the Rock to *Pimeteouy*; the first of these two Villages is in 41 Degrees Lat. the Entrance of the River of the *Illinois* is in 40 Degrees; so that from the Rock this River runs West, inclining a little to the South, but it makes many Windings. From Time to Time we meet with Islands, some of which are pretty large: Its Banks are but low in many Places: In the Spring it overflows the greatest Part of the Meadows, which are on the Right and Left, and which are afterwards covered with Grass and Herbs, that grow very high. They say it abounds with Fish every where, but we had no Time to fish, nor any Nets that were fit for its Depth. Our Business was sooner done by killing a Buffalo, or a Roe-Buck, and of these we had the Choice.

The 6th we saw a great Number of Buffaloes crossing the River in a great Hurry, and we scarce doubted but that they were hunted by one of the Parties of the Enemy, which they had spoken of: This obliged us to sail all Night, to get out of such a dangerous Neighbourhood. The next Day before it was Light we passed the *Sagui-mont*, a great River that comes from the South: Five or six Leagues lower we left on the same Hand another smaller, called the River of the *Macopines*: These are great Roots, which eaten raw, are Poison, but being roasted by a small Fire for five or six Days or more, have no longer any hurtful Quality. Between these two Rivers, at an equal Distance from both we find a Marsh called *Macboutin*, which is exactly half-way from *Pimiteouy* to the *Mississippi*.

Soon

Soon after we had passed the River of the *Macopinnes*, we perceived the Banks of the *Mississippi*, which are very high. We rowed however about twenty-four Hours longer, and often with our Sail up, before we entered it; because the River of the *Illinois* changes its Course in this Place from the West to the South and by East. One might say, that out of Resentment at being obliged to pay the Homage of its Waters to another River, it fought to return back to its Spring.

Its Entrance into the *Mississippi* is East South East. It was the 10th, about half past two in the Morning, that we found ourselves in this River, which at that Time made so much Noise in *France*, leaving on the Right Hand a great Meadow, out of which there rises a little River, in which there is a great deal of Copper. Nothing can be more charming than all this Side; but it is not quite the same on the Left Hand. We see there only very high Mountains interspersed with Rocks, between which there grow some Cedars; but this is only a Screen that has little Depth, and which hides some very fine Meadows.

The 10th, about Nine in the Morning, after we had gone five Leagues on the *Mississippi*, we arrived at the Mouth of the *Missouri*, which is North North West, and South South East. I believe this is the finest Confluence in the World. The two Rivers are much of the same Breadth, each about half a League; but the *Missouri* is by far the most rapid, and seems to enter the *Mississippi* like a Conqueror, through which it carries its white Waters to the opposite Shore, without mixing them; afterwards it gives its Colour to the *Mississippi*, which it never loses again, but carries it quite down to the Sea.

The same Day we went to lie in a Village of the *Casiquias* and the *Tamarouas*: These are two Nations of *Illinois*, which are united, and who do not together make a very numerous Village. It is situated on a little River, which comes from the East, and which has no Water but in the Spring Season; so that we were forced to walk a

good half League to the Cabins. I was surpris'd that they had chofen fuch an inconvenient Situation, as they might have found a much better; but they told me that the *Missiffippi* washed the Foot of the Village when it was built, and that in three Years it had loft half a League of Ground, and that they were thinking of looking out for another Settlement.

I paffed the Night in the Houfe of the Miffionaries, which are two Ecclefiaftics of the Seminary of *Quebec*, formerly my Difciples, but who might be now my Mafters. The elder of the two \* was abfent; I found the younger † fuch as he had been reported to me, fevere to himfelf, full of Charity for others, and making Virtue amiable in his own Perfon. But he has fo little Health, that I think he cannot long fupport the Way of Life, which they are obliged to lead in thefe Miffions.

The eleventh, after having gone five Leagues, we left on our Right the River of *Marameg*, where fome Perfons are aétually employed in feeking Silver Mines. Perhaps you will be pleas'd, Madam, to know what Succels there is to be expected from thefe Searches. This is what I have heard concerning them, from an intelligent Perfon, who has been here many Years. In 1719 the *Sieur de Lochon*, fent by the Weftern Company in the Capacity of a Founder, having dug in a Place that was fhewed him, took up a pretty large Quantity of the Mineral, a Pound of which, that took up four Days to melt, produced, as they fay, two Drachms of Silver; but fome Perfons fufpect he put in the Silver. Some Months after he returned again, and without thinking any more of Silver, from two or three thousand Weight of the Mineral he extract'd fourteen Pounds of very bad Lead, which coft him 1400 Livres: Being difheartened with this bad Succels, he returned to *France*.

The Company, being perfuaded of the Certainty of the Signs which had been reported to them, thought the Unfkillfulnefs of the Founder was the only Caufe of this ill Succels, and fent in his Stead a *Spaniard*, named *Anthony*,

\* M. *Taumur*.† M. *Le Mercier*.

*thony*, taken at the Siege of *Pensacola*, and who had been a Slave in the Gallies, but who boasted of having worked at a Mine in *Mexico*. He was allowed a considerable Salary, but he succeeded little better than the *Sieur de Lachon*. He was not disheartened however, and People were willing to believe he failed only through Want of Skill to build Furnaces. He gave up the Lead, and undertook to get Silver; he found Means to open the Rock, which was eight or ten Feet thick, and he blew up several Pieces of it, which he put into melting Pots; 'twas reported that he got two or three Drachms of Silver, but many Persons still doubt of it.

During these Transactions, there arrived a Company of the King's Miners, the Chief of which was one *Renaudiere*, who determining to begin with the Lead Mine, did nothing at all, because neither he nor any of his Company understood the Construction of Furnaces. 'Twas very surprizing, to see the Easiness of the Company in advancing large Sums, and the little Precaution they took to be assured of the Capacity of those they employed. *La Renaudiere* and his Miners not being able to accomplish the making of Lead, a particular Company undertook the Mines of *Marameg*, and the *Sieur Renaud*, one of the Directors, surveyed them very carefully. He found here in the Month of *June* last a Bed of Lead at only the Depth of two Feet through the whole Length of a Mountain, which extends a great Way, and he is actually at Work upon it. He flatters himself also that there is Silver under the Lead; but every Body is not of his Opinion: Time will discover what there is in it.

I arrived the next Day at the *Kaskasquias* at Nine in the Morning. The *Jesuits* had here a very flourishing Mission, which has lately been divided into two, because it was thought proper to form two Villages of Savages instead of one. The most populous is on the Side of the *Mississippi*; two *Jesuits* \* have the Government of it in spiritual Affairs. Half a League lower is the Fort *de Chartres*, about a Musket-Shot from the River. M.

\* Father *Le Baulanger*, and Father *de Kereben*.

*Dugué de Boisbrilland*, a *Canadian Gentleman*, commands here for the Company, to which this Place belongs; and all the Space between these two Places begins to be peopled with *French*. Four Leagues farther, and a League from the River, there is a large Village of *French*, almost all *Canadians*, who have a *Jesuit* for their Priest \*. The second Village of the *Illinois* is two Leagues distant from it, and farther up in the Country. A fourth *Jesuit* has the Care of it †.

The *French* are here pretty much at their Ease. A *Fleming*, a Servant of the *Jesuits*, has taught them how to sow Wheat, and it thrives very well. They have some horned Cattle and Fowls. The *Illinois*, on their Side, cultivate the Lands after their Manner, and are very laborious. They also breed Fowls, which they sell to the *French*. Their Wives are sufficiently dexterous: They spin the Buffalo's Wool, and make it as fine as that of the *English* Sheep. Sometimes one would even take it for Silk. They make Stuffs of it, which they dye black, yellow, and a dark red. They make Gowns of it, which they sew with the Thread made of the Sinews of Roe-Bucks. Their Method of making this Thread is very easy. When the Sinew is well cleaned from the Flesh, they expose it in the Sun two Days: When it is dry, they beat it, and get out of it without any Trouble, a Thread as white and as fine as that of *Malines*, and much stronger.

The *French* Village is bounded on the North by a River; the Banks of which are so high, that although the Waters sometimes rise twenty-five Feet, it seldom runs out of its Bed. All this Country is open: It consists of vast Meadows, which extend for twenty-five Leagues, and which are separated only by little Groves, which are all of good Wood. There are especially some white Mulberry-Trees; but I was surprized that they suffer the Inhabitants to cut them down to build their Houses; and the rather, because they do not want other Trees fit for that Use.

Among

\* Father *Debeaubois*.

† Father *Guymanneau*.

Among the Fruit-Trees, which are peculiar to this Country, the most remarkable are those which bear the Fruits called the *Pacane*, the *Acimine*, and the *Piakimine*. The *Pacane* is a Nut of the Length and Shape of a large Acorn. There are some which have a very thin Shell, some have a harder and thicker one, and this is so much taken from the Fruit: They are also something smaller. They are all of a very fine and delicate Taste. The Tree that bears them grows very high: Its Wood and Bark, its Smell, and the Shape of its Leaves, appeared to me to be much like the Walnut-Trees of *Europe*.

The *Acimine* is a Fruit of the Length of three or four Inches, and an Inch Diameter: Its Pulp is tender, something sweetish, and full of a Seed like that of the Water Melon. The *Acimine* Tree does not grow large, nor very high. All those I have seen, are little more than Shrubs of a brittle Wood. Its Bark is thin: The Leaves are as long and large as those of the Chestnut-Tree, but of a darker Green.

The *Piakimine* is of the Shape, and a little bigger than a Damson: Its Skin is tender, its Substance watery, its Colour red; and it has a very delicate Taste. It has Seeds which differ in nothing from those of the *Acimine*, but in being smaller. The Savages make a Paste of this Fruit, and Form little Loaves of it about an Inch thick, and of the Consistence of a dry'd Pear. The Taste at first seems a little insipid, but one grows easily us'd to it. They are very nourishing, and a sovereign Remedy, it is said, against a Looseness and the Bloody-Flux. The *Piakimine* Tree is a fine Tree, as high as our common Plum-Trees: Its Leaves have five Points: Its Wood is tolerably hard, and its Bark very rough.

The *Ofages*, a pretty numerous Nation, settled on the Side of a River that bears their Name, and which runs into the *Missouri*, about forty Leagues from its Junction with the *Mississippi*, send once or twice a Year to sing the Calumet amongst the *Kaskaskias*, and are actually there at present. I have also just now seen a *Missourite* Woman, who told me that her Nation is the first we



meet with going up the *Missouri*, from which she has the Name we have given her, for want of knowing her true Name. It is situated 80 Leagues from the Confluence of that River with the *Mississippi*.

Higher up we find the *Cansez*; then the *Oclotatas*, which some call *Muclotatas*; then the *Ajouez*, and then the *Panis*, a very populous Nation, divided into several Cantons, which have Names very different from each other. This Woman has confirmed to me what I had heard from the *Sioux*, that the *Missouri* rises out of some naked Mountains, very high, behind which there is a great River, which probably rises from them also, and which runs to the West. This Testimony carries some Weight, because of all the Savages which we know, none travel farther than the *Missourites*.

All the People I have mentioned, inhabit the West Side of the *Missouri*, except the *Ajouez*, which are on the East Side, Neighbours of the *Sioux*, and their Allies. Among the Rivers which run into the *Mississippi*, above the River of the *Illinois*, one of the most considerable is the River of *Bulls*, which is twenty Leagues distant from the River of the *Illinois*, and which comes from the West. They have discovered in its Neighbourhood a very fine Salt-Pit. They have also found several such on the Sides of the *Marames*, about twenty Leagues from hence. About forty Leagues further, we leave the *Af-senesipi*, or the *River of the Rock*; so called, because it is over-against a Mountain which is in the Bed of the *Mississippi*, and where some Travellers have affirmed there was Rock Chrystal.

Twenty-five Leagues higher, we find the River *Ouisconsin*, on the Right Hand, by which Father *Marquette*, and the *Sieur Joliet*, entered the *Mississippi*, when they first discovered it. The *Ajouez*, who are in this Latitude, that is to say, in about  $43^{\circ} 30'$ , who travel much, and who go, we are assured, from twenty-five to thirty Leagues a Day, when they have not their Families with them, say that setting out from their Habitations, they come in three Days to a People called *Omans*; who are  
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of a fair Complexion, with light Hair, especially the Women. They add, that this Nation is continually at War with the *Panis*, and other Savages further to the West; and that they have heard them speak of a great Lake, very distant from them, in the Environs of which there are People like the *French*, who have Buttons to their Clothes, who build Towns, who use Horses for hunting the Buffaloes, which they cover with Buffaloes Skins; but who have no Arms but Bows and Arrows.

On the Left, about sixty Leagues above the River of *Bulls*, we see the *Moingona* come out of the Midst of an immense and magnificent Meadow, which is quite covered with Buffaloes and other wild Creatures. At its Entrance into the *Mississippi*, it has a little Water, and it is also but narrow: It has nevertheless a Course, as they say, of two hundred and fifty Leagues, winding from the North to the West. They add, that its Source is in a Lake, and that it forms a second fifty Leagues from the first.

From this second Lake it inclines to the Left, and enters the *Blue River*; thus named, because of its Bottom, which is an Earth of this Colour. It discharges itself into the River *St. Peter*. In going up the *Moingona*, they find a great deal of Coal; and when they have gone up it one hundred and fifty Leagues, they perceive a great Cape, which makes the River wind; the Water of which, in this Part, is red and stinking. It is assured, that many Mineral Stones have been gathered on this Cape, and that Antimony has been brought hither from thence.

A League above the Mouth of the *Moingona*, there are two Falls in the *Mississippi*, which are pretty long, where they are obliged to unload and tow the Pettiaugre: And above the second Fall, *that is to say*, twenty-one Leagues from the *Moingona*, they find on both Sides the River Lead Mines, discovered formerly by a famous Traveller of *Canada*, named *Nicolas Perrot*, and which bear his Name. Ten Leagues above the *Ouisconsing*, on the same Side, begins a Meadow sixty Leagues long, bordered

dered by Mountains, which make a charming Prospect. There is another Meadow on the West Side, but not so long. Twenty Leagues higher than the Extremity of the first, the River grows wider, and they have named the Place the Lake *de bon Secours*, (*of good Succour.*) It is a League wide, and seven Leagues in Compass, and it is also environed with Meadows. *Nicholas Perrot* built a Fort on the Right.

At coming out of the Lake, we meet with *L'Isle Peleé*, (*the bald Island*;) so called, because there is not one Tree in it; but it is a very fine Meadow. The *French of Canada* have often made it the Centre of their Trade in these Western Parts; and many have wintered here, because all the Country is very fit for Hunting. Three Leagues below *L'Isle Peleé*, we leave on the Right Hand the River of *St. Croix*, (*the Holy Cross*;) which comes from the Environs of the *Upper Lake*. They say that Copper has been found pretty near its Mouth. Some Leagues further, we leave on the Left Hand the River of *St. Pierre*, (*St. Peter*;) the Sides of which are peopled with *Sioux*, and the Mouth of which is not far from the Fall of *St. Anthony*. The *Mississippi* is little known above this great Cascade.

To return to the *Illinois*.——If it is true which I have been assured of in many Places, and which the *Misfourite* Woman I mentioned before confirmed to me, that they and the *Miamis* come from the Borders of a Sea very distant to the West\*, it appears that their first Station, when they came down into this Country, was the *Moingona*: At least it is certain that one of their Tribes bears that Name. The others are known by the Names of the *Peorias*, the *Tamarouas*, the *Caoquias*, and the *Kaskaskias*: But these Tribes are now much intermixed, and reduced to be very inconsiderable. There remains

\* A Woman of the *Miamis*, Prisoner of the *Sioux*, assured Father *St. Pe*, at present Superior of the Missions of *New France*, that she was carried by the *Sioux* to a Village of her own Nation, that was very near the Sea.

remains at present but very few of the *Kaskasquias*; and the two Villages that bear their Name, are almost wholly composed of *Tamarouas*, and of *Metchigamias*, a strange Nation, who came from the Borders of a little River, which we shall meet with going down the *Mississippi*, and whom the *Kaskasquias* have adopted.

This is, Madam, all that I can at present inform you of, concerning *Louisiana*, into which I am but newly come. But before I finish this Letter, I must communicate to you some Accounts, which will serve as a Supplement to what I have already said of the Savages in general, and which I learnt on my Route from the River *St. Joseph* to this Place.

You may have observed in the Fable of *Atabentisc* driven from Heaven, some Traces of the Story of the first Woman, banished from the terrestrial Paradise, in Punishment of her Disobedience; and the Tradition of the Deluge, as well as of the Ark, in which *Noah* saved himself with his Family. This Circumstance does not hinder me from adhering to the Opinion of *F. de Acofta*, who thinks that this Tradition does not relate to the universal Deluge, but a particular Deluge in *America*. In Fact, the *Algonquins*, and almost all the People who speak their Language, taking for granted the Creation of the first Man, say that his Posterity being almost all entirely destroyed by a general Inundation, one named *Messou*, others call him *Saketchak*, who saw all the Earth deeply covered with Waters by the overflowing of a Lake, sent a Raven to the Bottom of this Abyss, to fetch him some Earth: That this Raven not having well executed his Commission, he sent a Musk Rat on the same Errand, who succeeded better: That out of this little Earth, which the Animal brought him, he restored the World to its first State. That he shot Arrows into the Trunks of the Trees which still appeared, and that these Arrows turned into Branches. That he wrought many other Miracles; and that, in Acknowledgment of the Service which the Musk Rat had done him, he married a Female of that Species, by which he had Children, which re-peopled the World: That he communicated his Immortality;

tality to a certain Savage, and gave it him in a little Pacquet, with Orders not to open it, on the Penalty of losing such a precious Gift.

The *Hurons* and the *Iroquois* say that *Taronbiaouagon*, the King of Heaven, gave his Wife a Kick, so violent, that it threw her from Heaven to the Earth: That this Woman fell upon the Back of a Tortoise; which beating off the Waters of the Deluge with his Feet, he at last discovered the Earth, and carried the Woman to the Foot of a Tree, where she lay-in of Twins; and that the Elder killed the Younger.

It is not surprizing that these People, who are so indifferent about Things past, and who are very little concerned about Things to come, should have no Knowledge of the Heavens, and should make no Difference between the Planets and fixed Stars; unless it be that they divide the last, as we do, into Constellations. They call the *Pleiades*, the *Male* and *Female Dancers*. They give the Name of the *Bear* to the four first of those we call the *Great Bear*; the three others, which make its Tail, are, according to them, three Hunters, who pursue the Bear; and the little Star that accompanies the middle one, is the Kettle, which the second carries with him. The Savages of *Acadia* call this Constellation and the following, simply the *Great* and the *Little Bear*: But may we not judge, that when they talked in this Manner to the *Sieur Lescarbot*, they only repeated what they had heard from several of the *French*?

The greatest Part of the Savages call the Pole Star, the Star that never moves. It is this that guides them in their Travels by Night, as the Sun serves them for a Compass in the Day. They have also other Marks to distinguish the North. They pretend to have observed that the Tops of the Trees always lean a little that Way, and that the inward Skin of their Bark is always thicker on that Side: But they do not trust so entirely to these Observations, as not to take other Precautions not to go wrong, and to find their Way back when they return.

As to what regards the Course of the Stars and Planets, the Causes of the Celestial Pæhnomena, the Nature of Meteors, and such-like Things, they are in all these Respects, as in every Thing else that does not affect them sensibly, in a most profound Ignorance, and a perfect Indifference. If an Eclipse happens, they imagine there is some great Combat in the Heavens; and they shoot many Arrows into the Air, to drive away the pretended Enemies of the Sun and Moon. The *Hurons*, when the Moon is eclipsed, fancy that she is sick; and to recover her from this Sickness, they make a great Noise, and accompany this Noise with many Ceremonies and Prayers; and they never fail to fall upon the Dogs with Sticks and Stones, to set them a yelping, because they believe the Moon loves these Animals.

These Savages, and many others, could never be brought to believe that an Eclipse is an indifferent Thing, and purely natural. They expect Good or Evil from it, according to the Place of the Heavens where the Planet is darkened. Nothing surprized them more, than to see how exactly the Missionaries foretold these Pæhnomena; and they concluded that they must also foresee their Consequences.

These People are not better acquainted with the Nature of Thunder: Some take it for a Voice of a particular Species of Men, who fly in the Air. Others say, the Noise comes from certain Birds, that are unknown to them. According to the *Montagnais*, it is the Effort which a Genius makes to bring up a Snake which he hath swallowed, and they found this Nation on observing, that when the Thunder falls upon a Tree, it leaves a Mark something like the Shape of a Snake.

They all reckon the Months by the Moons; the greatest Number reckon but twelve in the Year, and some thirteen. The Inconveniencies, which may arise from this Diversity, are not of any great Consequence among People, who have no Annals, and whose Affairs do not depend on Annual Epochas. There is also among them a great Variety in the Names of the Seasons and of the Moons, because in all the different Nations, these are distinguished

tinguished or marked out by their Hunting and Fishing, their Sowing and Harvest, the first Appearance and the Fall of the Leaves, the Passage of certain Beasts and Birds, the Time when the Roe-Bucks shed their Hair, and the Rutting Time of various Animals; and these Things vary much according to the different Cantons.

There are some Nations, where they reckon the Years by the twelve Signs, unless when they speak of their Age, and on some other Occasions, in Regard to which they use the Lunar Years. They have not among any of them any Distinction of Weeks, and the Days have no particular Names in any of their Languages. They have four fixed Points in the Day, *viz.* the rising and setting of the Sun, Noon and Midnight, and whatever Weather they happen to have, they are never mistaken in these. For the rest, that astronomical Exactness in adjusting the Lunar with the Solar Years, Baron *la Fontaine* does them the Honour of attributing to them, is a meer invention of this Writer.

They have no chronological Computation, and if they preserve the Epochas of certain remarkable Events, they do not comprehend exactly the Time that is past since: They are satisfied with remembering the Facts, and they have invented several Ways of preserving the Remembrance of them. For Instance, the *Hurons* and the *Iroquois* have in their public Treasuries Belts of Porcelain, in which are wrought Figures, that revive the Memory of Transactions. Others make use of Knots of a particular Form, and if in these Things their Imagination labours, yet it always leads them to the Point proposed. Lastly, they all reckon from one to ten, the tens by ten to a hundred, the hundreds by ten to a thousand, and they go no farther in their Calculations.

*I am, &c.*

LETTER

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## L E T T E R XXIX.

*Of the Colony of the ILLINOIS. Journey to the AKANSAS.  
Description of the Country.*

MADAM,

KASKASQUIAS, Nov. 8.

MY last Letter is gone for *Canada*, from whence I am assured that it will go sooner to *France* by *L'Isle Royal*. And indeed, if it should happen to miscarry by the Way, the Loss would not be great. I begin this again at the *Kaskasquias*, but according to all Appearances, I shall not finish it here. I have been here above a Month, and I am hastening my Departure as much as possible.

As I have as yet seen in *Louisiana* only this Post, the first of all by Right of Antiquity, I cannot judge of it by Comparison with others. But it appears certain to me, that it has two Advantages, one of which can never be disputed, and the other renders it at present necessary to the whole Province. The first arises from its Situation, which is near *Canada*, with which it will always have a Communication equally useful to the two Colonies. The second is, that it may be made the Granary of *Louisiana*, which it can supply with Plenty of Wheat, though it should be quite peopled down to the Sea.

The Land is not only fit to bear Wheat, but has hitherto refused nothing that is necessary for the Food of Man. The Climate is very mild, in thirty-eight Degrees, thirty-nine Minutes North Latitude: It would be very easy to encrease Flocks here. They might also tame the wild Buffaloes, from which they would obtain a great Benefit in the Trade of their Wool and Hides, and for the Sustenance of the Inhabitants.

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The Air is good here, and if we see some Distempers, we may attribute them only to Poverty and Dissoluteness, and perhaps in some small Degree to the Lands newly turned up; but this last Inconvenience will not continue always, and the Climate will not at all affect those who hereafter shall be born here. Lastly we are assured of the *Illinois*, more than of any Nation of Savages in *Canada*, if we except the *Abenakis*. They are almost all *Christians*, of a mild Disposition, and at all Times very affectionate to the *French*.

I am here, Madam, one hundred and fifty Leagues from the Place where I began this Letter: I am going to finish it here, and trust it with a Traveller, who reckons to be at *New Orleans* much sooner than I, because he will stop no where, and I must make some Stay at the *Natchez*. I had depended on two Things on leaving the *Illinois*; the first, that as I was going down a very rapid River, and on which I was in no Danger of being stopped by those Falls and Torrents so frequent in the Rivers of *Canada*, I should not be long in my Journey, though I had near four hundred Leagues to go, because of the Windings which the River makes. The second was, that my Route being all the Way to the South, it would be quite unnecessary to take any Precautions against the Cold; but I was mistaken in both. I found myself obliged to sail still slower than I had done on the Lakes, which I was obliged to cross, and I suffer'd a Cold as piercing as any I had ever felt at *Quebec*.

It is true, that it was still quite another Thing at the *Kaskasquias*, which I had left a few Days before; for the River, as I heard on my Route, was soon frozen in such a Manner that they went upon it in Carriages. It is notwithstanding a good half League wide at that Place, and more rapid than the *Rhone*. This is the more surprizing, as generally excepting some slight Frosts, caused by the North and North West Winds, the Winter in this Country is scarcely perceivable. The River was not frozen where I was, but I was all Day in an open Pettiaugre, and by Consequence expos'd to all the Injuries of the  
Air,

Air, and as I had taken no Precaution against the Cold which I did not expect, I found it very severe\*.

If I could have made more Way, I should have found every Day a sensible Decrease of the Cold; but we must navigate the *Mississippi* with Prudence. We do not readily hazard ourselves upon it in Canoes of Bark, because the River always bringing down a great Number of Trees, which fall from it's Sides, or which are brought into it by the Rivers it receives; many of these Trees are stop't in passing by a Point, or on a Shoal; so that every Moment one is expos'd to run upon a Branch or against a Root hidden under the Water, and there needs no more to split these brittle Carriages; especially when to shun an Enemy's Party, and for any other Reason, we proceed in the Night, and set out before Day.

Therefore one is oblig'd to use Pettiaugres instead of Canoes of Bark, *that is to say*, Trunks of Trees made hollow, which are not subject to the same inconveniences, but which are very clumsy, and are not managed as we please. I am in one which is made of a Walnut-Tree, so narrow that it will not bear a Sail; and my Conductors accustomed to the little Paddles, which they use in the Canoes, find it difficult to manage the Oars. Add to this, if the Wind is a little fresh, the Water comes into the Pettiaugre, and this frequently happens at this Season of the Year.

It was the tenth of *November*, at Sun-set, that I embarked on the little River of *Kaskaskias*; I had but two Leagues to the *Missippi*, nevertheless I was oblig'd to encamp at about half Way, and the next Day I could make but six Leagues on the River. The Leaves fall sooner in this Country than in *France*, and new ones do not appear till the End of *May*; and yet it very seldom snows here, and I have already observ'd that the Winters here are generally very mild. What then can be the

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\* This lasted two Months.

Reason of this Backwardness? I can see no other than the Thickness of the Forests, which hinders the Earth from being so soon warmed, to make the Sap rise.

The 12th, after having gone two Leagues, I left Cape *St. Anthony* on the left Hand. It is here that we begin to see Canes or Reeds: They are much like those which grow in many Places of *Europe*, but they are higher and fronger. It is said that they are never seen but in a good Soil; but the Lands where they grow must be moist, and of Consequence fitter for Rice than Wheat. They do not take the Pains to pull them up, when they would clear the Land where they grow; and indeed it would not be very easy to do it, their knotty Roots being very long, and joined together by a great Number of Filaments, which extend a great Way. These Roots have naturally a pretty fine Polish, and come near to those of the Bamboos of *Japan*; of which they make the fine Canes which the *Dutch* sell by the Name of *Rottangs*.

They content themselves therefore when they would cultivate a Field covered with these Reeds, to cut them down at the Foot; and then leave them to dry, and afterwards burn them: The Ashes serve them for Manure, and the Fire opens the Pores of the Earth, which they stir lightly, and then sow what they please; Rice, Maiz, Water-Melons, in a Word all Sorts of Grain and Pulse, except Wheat, which in these rich Soils shoots into Straw and produces no Ears. This Defect might be remedied by throwing Sand on this Soil, and by sowing Maiz on it for some Years.

As for the high Grounds, and others, which are not exposed to the Inundations of the River, they are very fit at present to bear Wheat, and if the Trials which they have made in some Places have not succeeded, because the Grain grew smutty, it was because the Country not being open enough, the Air is too much confined to disperse the Mists that breed the Smut. The Proof of this is, that among the *Illinois*, where there are more Meadows than Woods, Wheat grows up and ripens as well as in *France*.

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The 13th, after a very hot Night, we went about three Leagues in Spite of a South Wind, which was continually blowing stronger and stronger, and which became at last so violent, that it obliged us to stop. A great Rain made it fall in the Evening, and about Midnight there arose a North West Wind, which began the extreme Cold I have mentioned. To compleat our ill Luck, an Accident stopt us all the next Day, though it was not safe for us to remain where we were. It is not long since that the *Cherokees* killed forty *Frenchmen* here, at whose Head was a Son of *M. de Ramezai*, Governor of *Montreal*, and one of the *Baron de Longueuil's*, the King's Lieutenant for the same Town. Besides these Savages, who are not yet reconciled to us, the *Outagamis*, the *Sioux*, and the *Chicabas*, kept us in great Uneasiness, and I had with me only three Men.

The 15th, the Wind changed to the North, and the Cold encreased. We went four Leagues to the South, then we found that the River turned four Leagues to the North. Immediately after this Reach, we passed on the Left by the fine River *Ouabache* (*Wabache*.) by which one may go quite up to the *Iroquois*, when the Waters are high. Its Entrance into the *Mississippi* is little less than a Quarter of a League wide. There is no Place in *Louisiana* more fit, in my Opinion, for a Settlement than this, nor where it is of more Consequence to have one. All the Country that is watered by the *Ouabache*, and by the *Ohio* that runs into it, is very fruitful: It consists of vast Meadows, well watered, where the wild Buffaloes feed by Thousands. Furthermore, the Communication with *Canada* is as easy as by the River of the *Illinois*, and the Way much shorter. A Fort, with a good Garrison, would keep the Savages in Awe, especially the *Cherokees*, who are at present the most numerous Nation of this Continent.

Six Leagues below the Mouth of the *Ouabache*, we find on the same Side, a very high Coast, on which they say there are Iron Mines. We went a great Way this

Day, which was the 16th; but we suffered much by the Cold: It still encreased the following Days, though the Wind was changed to South South West. We were also obliged to break the Ice, though it was indeed but thin, to get forward. The 19th, we went four Leagues, after which a South Wind stopt us short. I never felt a North East Wind sharper than this from the South. It is very probable, that it was still the North East Wind that blew, but which the Land reflected sometimes one Way, and sometimes another, as we turned with the River.

We meet on this Route with a Kind of wild Cats, called *Pijoix*, which are very much like our's, but larger. I observed some that had shorter Tails, and others that had much longer, and bigger: They also look very wild, and I am assured, that they are very carnivorous and good Hunters. The Forests are full of Walnut-Trees, like those of *Canada*, and their Roots have several Properties, which I have not heard remarked of the others. They are very soft, and their Bark dyes a black Colour; but their principal Use is for Physic. They stop the Flux of the Belly, and are an excellent Emetic.

The twentieth it snowed all Day, and we never stirred: The Weather grew milder, but the next Night the South West Wind cleared the Sky, and the Cold began again with the greatest Severity. The next Morning some Brandy, which we had left all Night in the *Pettiaugre* was found thick like frozen Oil; and some *Spanish* Wine which I had for the *Mafs* was frozen. The farther we went down it, the more we found that the River winded; the Wind followed all these Turnings, and which Way soever it came the Cold was still excessive. They had never known any Thing like it in this Country in the Memory of Man.

The same Day we perceived on the right Side of the River a Post set up: We went near it, and we found it was a Monument set up by the *Illinois*, for an Expedition they had lately made against the *Chicacbas*. There were

two Figures of Men without Heads, and some entire. The first denoted the Dead, and the second the Prisoners. One of my Conductors told me on this Occasion, that when there are any *French* among either, they set their Arms a-kimbo, or their Hands upon their Hips, to distinguish them from the Savages, whom they represent with their Arms hanging down. This Distinction is not purely arbitrary; it proceeds from these People having observed that the *French* often put themselves in this Posture, which is not used among them.

*Garcilasso de la Vega* speaks of the *Chicachas* in his History of the Conquest of *Florida*, and places them nearly in the same Place where they are at present. He reckons them among the People of *Florida* who submitted to the *Spaniards*: But this pretended Submission lasted no longer than the *Spaniards* continued in their Neighbourhood; and it is certain that the *Spaniards* bought the Victory dear which they gained over them. They are still the bravest Soldiers of *Louisiana*. They were much more numerous in the Time of *Ferdinand de Soto* than they are at present; but for the Riches, which this Historian gives them, I do not easily conceive neither from whence they could get them, nor what could dry up the Source from whence they derived them; for they are now neither more wealthy, nor less savage, than their Neighbour Nations.

It was our Alliance with the *Illinois*, which set us at War with the *Chicachas*, and the *English* of *Carolina* blow up the Fire. Our Settlement in *Louisiana* makes them very uneasy: It is a Barrier, which we set between their powerful Colonies of *North America* and *Mexico*, and we must expect they will employ all Sorts of Means to break it. The *Spaniards*, who are so jealous of seeing us fortify ourselves in this Country, are not yet sensible of the Importance of the Service we do them.—A few Days after I had passed by the Place where we saw the Post of the *Illinois*, the *Chicachas* had their Revenge on two *Frenchmen*, who followed me in a *Pettiaugre*. These

Savages lay in Ambush in the Reeds, by the Side of the River, and when they saw the *Frenchmen* over against them, they moved the Reeds, without discovering themselves; the *Frenchmen* thought that it was a Bear, or some other Beast, and they approached, thinking to kill it; but the Moment they prepared to land, the *Chicachas* fired upon them, and laid them dead in their Pettiaugre. I was very fortunate in not being seen by them, for my People would lose no Opportunity of going after Game.

The 23d, after a very cold Night, we had a very fine Day; for though the Earth was covered with Snow, the Cold was to be borne. The next Day we passed before the Mouth of the River of the *Chicachas*, which is but narrow, but it comes a great Way. Its mouth is North and South. They reckon from thence to the *Kaskasquias* eighty six Leagues; but the Way would not be half so much by Land. Nothing would be more pleasant than this Navigation, if the Season was milder: The Country is charming, and in the Forests there are a Number of Trees always green; the few Meadows we meet with, also preserve their Verdure, and a considerable Number of Islands well wooded, some of which are pretty large, form very agreeable Canals, where the largest Ships may pass: For they say, that at above a hundred and fifty Leagues from the Sea, they find in this River even to sixty Fathom Water.

As to what concerns the Forests, which cover almost all this great Country, there are perhaps none in the World that are comparable to them, if we consider either the Bigness and Height of the Trees, or the Variety, and the Uses that may be made of them; for, excepting Woods for dying, which require a warmer Sun, and which are found only between the Tropicks, we cannot say that there is any Kind of Wood wanting here. There are Woods of Cypress that extend eight or ten Leagues. All the Cypress Trees here are of a Bigness proportionable to their Height, which exceeds that of the Highest Trees in *France*. We begin to be acquainted in *Europe* with  
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that Species of Ever-Green Laurel, which we call the *Tulip Tree*, from the Shape of its Flowers. It grow higher than our Horse-Chestnut Trees, and has a finer Leaf. The *Copalme* is still bigger and higher, and there distills from it a Balsam, which perhaps is not much inferior to that of *Peru*. All the known Species of Walnuts are here very numerous, and also all the Woods that are fit for Building, and the Carpenter's Use, that can be desired: But in using them, Care must be taken not to fix upon those which grow on the Side of the River, nor where the Inundation of the River reaches, because having their Roots continually in the Water, they will be too heavy, and will soon rot.

At length, I arrived Yesterday, *December* the 2d, at the first Village of the *Akansas*, or *Akanseas*, about ten in the Morning. This Village is built in a little Meadow, on the West Side of the *Mississippi*. There are three others in the Space of eight Leagues, and each makes a Nation, or particular Tribe: There is also one of the four which unites two Tribes; but they are all comprised under the Name of *Akansas*. They call the Savages which inhabit the Village from whence I write, *Ouyapes*. The Western Company have a Magazine here which expects some Merchandizes, and a Clerk, who fares but poorly in the mean Time, and who is heartily weary of living here.

The River of the *Akansas*, which they say comes a great Way, runs into the *Mississippi* by two Channels, four Leagues distant from each other. The first is eight Leagues from hence. This River comes, as they say, from the Country of certain Savages, whom they call the *Black Panis*, and I think they are the same which are more commonly known by the Name of *Panis Ricaras*. I have with me a Slave of this Nation. One goes up the River of the *Akansas* with Difficulty, because there are many Falls or Torrents in it, and in many Places the Waters are often so low, that there is a Necessity to tow the Petiaugres.



The Separation of its two Branches is made at seven Leagues above the second, and the smallest of its two Mouths, but only at two Leagues above the first. It receives a Side River that comes from the Country of the *Ojages*, and which they call *La Riviere blanche* (the white River). Two Leagues higher are the *Torimas*, and the *Topingas*, who make but one Village. Two Leagues higher are the *Sotbouis*. The *Coppas* are a little farther. This Nation was very numerous in the Time of *Ferdinand de Soto*, and even when *M. de la Sale* finished the Discovery of the *Mississippi*. Over against their Village, we see the sad Ruins of Mr. *Law's* Grant, of which the Company remain the Proprietors.

It was here that the nine thousand *Germans* were to be sent, which were raised in the *Palatinate*, and it is a great Pity they never came here. There is not perhaps in all *Louisiana* a Country more fit, after that of the *Illinois*, to produce all Sorts of Grain, and to feed Cattle. But Mr. *Law* was ill-used, as well as the greatest Part of the other Grantees. It is very probable, that in a long Time they will not again make the like Levies of Men; they have Need of them in the Kingdom, and indeed it is pretty common among us to square our Measures according to the Success of such Enterprizes, instead of observing what their Miscarriage was owing to, in order to correct what was before done amiss.

I found the Village of the *Ouyapes*, in the greatest Desolation. Not long since, a *Frenchman* passing this Way was attacked with the Small-Pox: The Distemper was communicated presently to some Savages, and soon after to the whole Village. The Burying-Place appears like a Forest of Poles and Posts newly set up, and on which there hang all Manner of Things: There is every Thing which the Savages use.

I had set up my Tent pretty near the Village, and all the Night I heard weeping; the Men do this as well as  
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the Women : They repeated without ceasing *Nibabani*, as the *Illinois* do, and in the same Tone. I also saw in the Evening a Woman, who wept over the Grave of her Son, and who poured upon it a great Quantity of Sagamitty. Another had made a Fire by a neighbouring Tomb, in all Appearance to warm the Dead. The *Akanfas* are reckoned to be the tallest and best shaped of all the Savages of this Continent, and they are called by Way of Distinction *the fine Men*. It is thought, and perhaps for this Reason, that they have the same Origin as the *Cansez* of the *Missouri*, and the *Poutcouatamis* of *Canada*. But my Pettiaugre is loaded, and I have only Time to close my Letter, after having assured you, that

*I am, &c.*

L E T T E R



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## LETTER XXX.

*Journey from the AKANSAS to the NATCHEZ. Description of the Country: Of the River of the YASOUS: Of the Manners, Customs, and Religion of the NATCHEZ.*

MADAM,

*At the NATCHEZ, Dec. 25.*

I Departed the 3d of *December* something late from the Village of the *Ouyapes*; nevertheless I went to encamp a little below the first Mouth of the River of the *Akansas*, which appeared to me to be at most but five hundred Paces wide. The next Day I passed by the second, which is very narrow, and the 3th we pushed on to *La Point coupée* (*the Point cut off.*) This was a pretty high Point, which advanced into the River on the West Side: The River has cut it off, and made it an Island, but the new Channel is not yet passable, but in the Time of the Floods. They reckon from this Place to the principal Branch of the River of the *Akansas* twenty-two Leagues, but it is not perhaps ten in a straight Line; for the River winds much in the seventy Leagues we make to go from the Village of the *Ouyapes* to the River of the *Yafous* or *Yachoux*, which I entered the 9th in the Afternoon. It has not snowed here, as in the Country of the *Illinois*, and at the River *Ouyabache*, but there has fallen a hoar Frost, which has broke all the tender Trees, with which the low Points and the wet Lands are covered; one would think that some one had broken all their Branches with a Stick.

The Entrance of the River of the *Yafous* is North West, and South West, and is about a hundred Perches wide:

wide: Its Waters are reddish, and they say, they give the Bloody-Flux to those who drink them: And besides this, the Air is very unwholesome. I was obliged to go up it three Leagues to get to the Fort, which I found all in Mourning for the Death of *M. Bizart*, who commanded here. Every where that I met with any *Frenchmen* in *Louisiana*, I had heard very high Elogiums of this Officer, who was born in *Canada*: His Father was a *Swiss*, and a Major at *Montreal*. At the *Tafous* they told me extraordinary Things of his Religion, his Piety, and his Zeal, of which he was the Victim. Every Body regretted him as their Father, and every one agrees, that this Colony in losing him has had an irreparable Loss.

He had chosen a bad Situation for his Fort, and he was preparing, when he died, to remove it a League higher in a very fine Meadow, where the Air is more healthy, and where there is a Village of *Tafous*, mixed with *Couroas* and *Ofogoulas*, which altogether may have at most two hundred Men fit to bear Arms. We live pretty well with them, but do not put too much Confidence in them, on Account of the Connections which the *Tafous* have always had with the *English*.

There are many Caimans in this River, and I saw two, which were at least from twelve to fifteen Feet long. We hear them seldom but in the Night, and their Cry so much resembles the Bellowing of Bulls, that it deceives one. Our *French* People nevertheless bathe in it as freely as they would in the *Seine*. As I declared my Surprise at it, they replied, that there was no Cause to fear; that indeed when they were in the Water, they saw themselves almost always surrounded with Caimans, but they never came near them, that they seemed only to watch to seize upon them at the Moment of their coming out of the River; and that then to drive them away, they stirred the Water with a Stick, which they always had the Precaution to carry with them, and that this made these Animals run away far enough to give them Time to get out of Danger.

The Company has in this Post a Magazine of Expectation, as at the *Akerfas*; but the Fort and the Land belong

long to a Society composed of M. *le Blanc*, Secretary of State, of M. *le Comte de Belle-Isle*, of M. *le Marquis d'Affeld*, and M. *le Blond*, Brigadier Engineer. The last is in the Colony with the Title of Director General of the Company. I can see no Reason why they chose the River of the *Yafous* for the Place of their Grant. There was certainly Choice of better Lands, and a better Situation. It is true, that it is of Importance to secure this River, the Source of which is not far from *Carolina*; but a Fort with a good Garrison to keep under the *Yafous*, who are Allies to the *Chicachar*, would be sufficient for that Purpose. It is not the Way to settle a Colony on a solid Foundation, to be obliged always to be on their Guard against the Savages who are Neighbours of the *English*.

I departed from the *Yafous* the 10th; and the 13th, had it not been for a *Natché* Savage, who had asked his Passage of me to return home, I had been lost in a Gulf, which none of my Conductors knew, and which one does not discover till one is so far engaged in it, that it is impossible to get out. It is on the Left Hand, at the Foot of a great Cape, where they affirm there is a Quarry of very good Stone: This is what they are most afraid of wanting in this Colony; but in Recompence, they may make as many Bricks as they please.

The 15th we arrived at the *Natchez*. This Canton, the finest, the most fertile, and the most populous of all *Louisiana*, is forty Leagues distant from the *Yafous*, and on the same Hand. The Landing Place is over-against a pretty high Hill, and very steep; at the Foot of which runs a little Brook, that can receive only Boats and Pettiangres. From this first Hill we ascend a second smaller one, and not so steep, at the Top of which they have built a Kind of Redoubt, inclosed with a single Palisade. They have given this Intrenchment the Name of a Fort.

Several little Hills rise above this Hill, and when we have passed them, we see on every Side great Meadows, divided by little Clumps of Trees, which have a very fine Effect. The Trees most common in these Woods are the Walnut and the Oak; and all about the Lands  
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are excellent. The late *M. d' Iberville*, who was the first that entered the *Mississippi* by its Mouth, being come as high as the *Natchez*, found this country so charming, and so advantageously situated, that he thought he could find no better Situation for the Metropolis of the new Colony. He traced out the Plan of it, and intended to call it *Rosalie*, which was the Name of Madam, the Chancellor's Lady of *Pontchartrain*. But this Project is not likely to be soon executed, though our Geographers have always roundly set down in their Maps, the Town of *Rosalie* at the *Natchez*.

It is certain that we must begin by a Settlement nearer the Sea : But if *Louisiana* ever becomes a flourishing Colony, as may very well happen, I am of Opinion that they cannot find a better Situation for the Capital than in this Place. It is not subject to the Inundation of the River, the Air is pure, and the Country very extensive, the Soil is fit for every Thing, and well watered, it is not too far from the Sea, and nothing hinders Ships from coming hither. Lastly, it is near all the Places where, according to Appearance, there is any Design to make Settlements. The Company have a Ware-houfe, and keep a Clerk here, who has not as yet much Employment.

Among a great Number of particular Grants, which are already in a Condition of producing something, there are two of the first Magnitude; *that is to say*, four Leagues square : One belongs to a Society of *St. Malo*, who bought it of *M. Hubert*, governing Commissary, and President of the Council of *Louisiana* : The other belongs to the Company, who have sent hither some Workmen from *Clerac* to make Tobacco here. These two Grants are so situated, that they make an exact Triangle with the Fort, and the Distance of one Angle from the other is a League. Half Way between the two Grants, is the great Village of the *Natchez*. I have carefully visited all these Places : And here follows an Account of what I found most remarkable.

The Grant of the *Maloins* is well situated ; it wants nothing to make an Improvement of the Land but Negroes,

groes, or hired Servants. I should prefer the last : When the Time of their Service is expired, they become Inhabitants, and encrease the Number of the King's natural Subjects; whereas the first are always Strangers: And who can be assured, that by continually encreasing in our Colonies, they will not one Day become formidable Enemies? Can we depend upon Slaves, who are only attached to us by Fear, and for whom the very Land where they are born has not the dear Name of *Mother Country*?

The first Night I lay in this Habitation, there was a great Alarm about Night. I enquired the Cause of it, and they told me that there was in the Neighbourhood a Beast of an unknown Species, of a monstrous Size, and the Cry of which resembled no Animal that we know. However no Person affirmed that he had seen it, and they only guessed at its Size by its Strength. It had already carried off some Sheep and Calves, and killed some Cows. I said to those who told me this Story, that a mad Wolf might have done all this; and as to the Cry, People were mistaken every Day. I could bring no Body to be of my Opinion; they would have it, that it was a monstrous Beast: They had just then heard it, and they ran out armed with the first Thing they could find, but all to no Purpose.

The Grant of the Company is still more advantageously situated than that of the *Malsins*. The same River waters both, and afterwards discharges itself into the *Mississippi*, two Leagues from the Grant of the *Malsins*, to which a magnificent Cypress Wood, of six Leagues Extent, makes a Screen, that covers all the back Parts. Tobacco has succeeded very well here, but the Workmen of *Clerac* are almost all returned to *France*.

I saw in the Garden of the *Sieur le Noir*, chief Clerk very fine Cotton on the Tree, and a little lower we began to see some wild Indigo. They have not yet made a Trial of it; but it is very likely that it will turn out as well as that they found in the Island of *St. Domingo* which is as much esteemed there as that which is brought from



from other Places. And furthermore, Experience teaches us that the Soil which naturally produces Indigo, is very fit to bear any foreign Sort that one chuses to sow in it.

The great Village of the *Natchez* is at present reduced to a very few Cabins. The Reason which I heard for it is, that the Savages, from whom the great Chief has a Right to take all they have, get as far from him as they can; and therefore many Villages of this Nation have been formed at some Distance from this. The *Tioux*, their Allies and our's, have also settled a Village in their Neighbourhood.

The Cabins of the great Village of the *Natchez*, the only one I saw, are in the Shape of a square Pavillion, very low and without Windows; the Top is rounded much like an Oven: The greatest Part are covered with the Leaves and Stalks of Maiz; some are built of Clay mixed with cut Straw, which seemed to me to be tolerably strong, and which were covered within and without with very thin Mats. That of the great Chief is very neatly plastered in the Inside: It is also larger and higher than the rest, placed on a Spot something elevated, and stands alone, no other Building adjoining to it on any Side. It fronts the North, with a large open Place before it, which is not of the most regular Figure. All the Furniture I found in it was a narrow Couch of Boards, raised about two or three Feet from the Ground. Probably when the Great Chief wants to lie down, he spreads a Mat upon it, or some Skin.

There was not a Soul in the Village: All the People were gone to a neighbouring Village, where there was a Feast, and all the Doors were open; but there was nothing to fear from Thieves, for there was nothing to be seen any where but the bare Walls. These Cabins have no Vent for the Smoke, nevertheless, all those which I entered, were white enough. The Temple is very near the Great Chief's Cabin, turned towards the East, and at the End of the open Place. It is composed of the same Materials as the Cabins, but its Shape is different; it is a long Square, about forty Feet by twenty wide, with a  
common

common Roof, in Shape like our's. At the two Ends there is the Likeness of two Weather-cocks of Wood, which represent very indifferently two Eagles.

The Door is in the midst of the Length of the Building, which has no other Opening: On each Side there are Benches of Stones. The Inside answers perfectly this rustick Outside. Three Pieces of Wood, which touch at the Ends, and which are placed in a Triangle, or rather equally distant from each other, take up almost all the Midst of the Temple. These Pieces are on Fire, and burn slowly. A Savage, whom they call the Keeper of the Temple, is obliged to tend the Fire, and prevent its going out. If it is cold, he may have his Fire apart, but he is not allowed to warm himself at that which burns in Honour of the *Sun*. This Keeper was also at the Feast, at least I saw him not; and his Brands made such a Smoke that it blinded us.

As to Ornaments, I saw none, nor absolutely any Thing that could make me know that I was in a Temple. I saw only three or four Chests placed irregularly, in which there were some dry Bones, and upon the Ground some wooden Heads, a little better wrought than the two Eagles on the Roof. In short, if I had not found a Fire here, I should have thought that this Temple had been a long Time abandoned, or that it had been plundered. Those Cones wrapped up in Skins, which some Relations speak of; those Bodies of the Chiefs ranged in a Circle in a round Temple, terminating in a Kind of Dome; that Altar, &c. I saw nothing of all this. If Things were thus in Times past, they are very much changed since.

Perhaps also, for we ought to condemn no Body, but when there is no Way to excuse them; perhaps, I say, that the Neighbourhood of the *French* made the *Natchez* fear that the Bodies of their Chiefs, and every Thing that was most precious in their Temple, were in some Danger, if they did not convey them to another Place; and that the little Attention they have at present to guard this Temple, proceeds from its being deprived of what it contained most sacred in the Opinion of these People. It is true, notwithstanding, that against the Wall, over-against

the Door, there was a Table, the Dimensions of which I did not take the Pains to measure, because I did not suspect it to be an Altar. I have been assured since, that it is three Feet high, five long, and four wide.

I have been further informed that they make a little Fire on it with the Bark of Oak, and that it never goes out; which is false, for there was then no Fire on it, nor any Appearance of there ever having been any made. They say also, that four old Men lay by Turns in the Temple, to keep in this Fire; that he who is on Duty, must not go out for the eight Days of his Watch; that they carefully take the burning Ashes of the Pieces that burn in the midst of the Temple, to put upon the Altar; that twelve Men are kept to furnish the Bark; that there are Marmosets of Wood, and a Figure of a Rattle-Snake likewise of Wood, which they set upon the Altar, and to which they pay great Honours. That when the Chief dies, they bury him directly; that when they judge his Flesh is consumed, the Keeper of the Temple takes the Bones up, washes them clean, wraps them in whatever they have most valuable, and puts them in great Baskets made of Canes, which shut very close; that he covers these Baskets with Skins of Roe-Bucks very neatly, and places them before the Altar, where they remain till the Death of the reigning Chief; that then he encloses these Bones in the Altar itself, to make Room for the last dead.

I can say nothing on this last Article, only that I saw some Bones in one or two Chests, but they made not half a Human Body: that they appear to be very old, and that they were not on the Table which they say is the Altar. As to the other Articles, 1st. As I was in the Temple only by Day, I know not what passes in it at Night. 2d. There was no Keeper in the Temple when I visited it. I very well saw, as I said before, that there were some Marmosets, or grotesque Figures; but I observed no Figure of a Serpent.

As to what I have seen in some Relations, that this Temple is hung with Tapestry, and the Floor covered with

with Cane Mats ; that they put in it whatever they have that is handfomeft, and that they bring every Year hither the firft Fruits of their Harveft, we muft certainly abate a great deal of all this. I never faw any Thing more flovenly and dirty, nor more in Diforder. The Billets burnt upon the bare Ground ; and I faw no Mats on it, no more than on the Walls. *M. le Noir*, who was with me, only told me that every Day they put a new Billet on the Fire, and that at the Beginning of every Moon they made a Provision for the whole Month. But he knew this only by Report ; for it was the firft Time he had feen this Temple, as well as myfelf.

As to what regards the Nation of the *Natchez* in general, here follows what I could learn of it. We fee nothing in their outward Appearance that diftinguiſhes them from the other Savages of *Canada* and *Louifiana*. They feldom make War, not placing their Glory in deftroying Men. What diftinguiſhes them more particularly, is the Form of their Government, entirely defpotic ; a great Dependence, which extends even to a Kind of Slavery, in the Subjects ; more Pride and Grandeur in the Chiefs, and their pacific Spirit, which, however, they have not entirely preferved for ſome Years paſt.

The *Hurons* believe, as well as they, that their hereditary Chiefs are deſcended from the Sun ; but there is not one that would be his Servant, nor follow him into the other World for the Honour of ſerving him there, as it often happens among the *Natchez*.

*Garcilaffo de la Vega* ſpeaks of this Nation as of a powerful People, and about fix Years ago they reckoned among them four thouſand Warriors. It appears that they were more numerous in the Time of *M. de la Sale*, and even when *M. d'Iberville* diſcovered the Mouth of the *Miſſiſſippi*. At preſent the *Natchez* cannot raiſe two thouſand fighting Men. They attribute this Decreafe to ſome contagious Diſeaſes, which in theſe laſt Years have made a great Ravage among them.

The Great Chief of the *Natchez* bears the Name of THE SUN ; and it is always, as among the *Hurons*, the

Son of the Woman, who is nearest related to him, that succeeds him. They give this Woman the Title of *Woman Chief*; and though in general she does not meddle with the Government, they pay her great Honours. She has also, as well as the Great Chief, the Power of Life and Death. As soon as any one has had the Misfortune to displease either of them, they order their Guards, whom they call *Allouez*, to kill him. "Go and rid me of that Dog," say they; and they are immediately obeyed. Their Subjects, and even the Chiefs of the Villages, never approach them, but they salute them three Times, setting up a Cry, which is a Kind of Howling. They do the same when they retire, and they retire walking backwards. When they meet them, they must stop, and range themselves on both Sides of the Way, and make the same Cries till they are gone past. Their Subjects are also obliged to carry them the best of their Harvest, and of their Hunting and Fishing. Lastly, no Person, not even their nearest Relations, and those who are of noble Families, when they have the Honour to eat with them, have a Right to put their Hand to the Dish, or to drink out of the same Vessel.

Every Morning, as soon as the Sun appears, the Great Chief comes to the Door of his Cabin, turns himself to the East, and howls three Times, bowing down to the Earth. Then they bring him a Calumet, which serves only for this Purpose, he smokes, and blows the smoke of his Tobacco towards the Sun; then he does the same Thing towards the other three Parts of the World. He acknowledges no Superior but the Sun, from which he pretends to derive his Origin. He exercises an unlimited Power over his Subjects, can dispose of their Goods and Lives, and for whatever Labours he requires of them, they cannot demand any Recompence.

When this Great Chief, or the Woman Chief dies, all their *Allouez*, or Guards, are obliged to follow them into the other World: But they are not the only Persons who have this Honour; for so it is reckoned among them, and is greatly sought after.——The Death of a Chief sometimes costs the Lives of more than a hundred Persons;

sons ; and I have been assured that very few principal Persons of the *Natchez* die, without being escorted to the Country of Souls by some of their Relations, their Friends, or their Servants. It appears by the various Relations which I have seen of these horrible Ceremonies, that they differ greatly.—I shall here describe the Obsequies of a Woman-Chief, as I had it from a Traveller, who was a Witness of them, and on whose Sincerity I have good Reason to depend.

The Husband of this Woman not being noble, *that is to say*, of the Family of the Great Chief, his eldest Son strangled him, according to Custom : Then they cleared the Cabin of all it contained, and they erected in it a Kind of Triumphal Car, in which the Body of the deceased Woman, and that of her Husband, were placed. A Moment after they ranged round these Carcasses, twelve little Children, which their Parents had strangled by Order of the eldest Daughter of the Woman-Chief, and who succeeded to the Dignity of her Mother. This being done, they erected in the public Place fourteen Scaffolds, adorned with Branches of Trees, and Cloths on which they had painted various Figures. These Scaffolds were designed for as many Persons, who were to accompany the Woman-Chief into the other World. Their Relations were all round them, and esteemed as a great Honour for their Families the Permission that they had obtained to sacrifice themselves in this Manner. They apply sometimes ten Years before-hand to obtain this Favour ; and the Persons that have obtained it, must themselves make Cord with which they are to be strangled.

They appear on their Scaffolds dressed in their richest Habits, holding in their Right Hand a great Shell. Their nearest Relation is on their Right Hand, having under his Left Arm the Cord which is to serve for the Execution, and in his Right Hand a fighting Club. From Time to Time their nearest Relation makes the Cry of Death ; and at this Cry the fourteen Victims descend from their Scaffolds, and go and dance altogether in the Middle of the open Place that is before the Temple, and before the Cabin of the Woman-Chief.

That Day and the following ones they shew them great Respect : They have each five Servants, and their Faces are painted red. Some add, that during the eight Days that precede their Death, they wear a red Ribbon round one of their Legs ; and that during this Time, every Body strives who shall be the first to feast them. However that may be, on the Occasion I am speaking of, the Fathers and Mothers who had strangled their Children, took them up in their Hands and ranged themselves on both Sides the Cabin : The fourteen Persons, who were also destined to die, placed themselves in the same Manner, and were followed by the Relations and Friends of the Deceased, all in Mourning ; *that is to say*, their Hair cut off : They all made the Air resound with such frightful Cries, that one would have said that all the Devils in Hell were come to howl in the Place. This was followed by the Dances of those who were to die, and by the Songs of the Relations of the Woman-Chief.

At last they began the Procession. The Fathers and Mothers, who carried the dead Children, appeared the first, marching two and two, and came immediately before the Bier on which was the Body of the Woman-Chief, which four Men carried on their Shoulders. All the others came after in the same Order as the first. At every ten Paces, the Fathers and Mothers let their Children fall upon the Ground : These who carried the Bier, walked upon them, then turned quite round them ; so that when the Procession arrived at the Temple, these little Bodies were all in Pieces.

While they buried the Body of the Woman-Chief in the Temple, they undressed the fourteen Persons who were to die : They made them sit on the Ground before the Door, each having two Savages by him ; one of whom sat on his Knees, and the other held his Arms behind. Then they put a Cord about his Neck, and covered his Head with a Roe-buck's Skin : They made him swallow three Pills of Tobacco, and drink a Glass of Water ; and the Relations of the Woman-Chief drew the two Ends of the Cord, singing, till he was strangled. After  
which,

which, they threw all the Carcasses into the same Pit, which they covered with Earth.

When the Great Chief dies, if his Nurse is living, she must die also.—The *French* not being able to hinder this Barbarity, have often obtained Leave to baptize the young Children that were to be strangled ; and who of Consequence did not accompany those, in whose Honour they were sacrificed, in their pretended Paradise.

We know no Nation on this Continent, where the Female Sex are more irregular, than in this. They are even forced by the Great Chief and his Subalterns to prostitute themselves to all Comers : And a Woman, for being common, is not the less esteemed. Although Polygamy is permitted, and the Number of Women they may have is unlimited, commonly each has only one, but he may put her away when he pleases ; a Licence which few but the Chiefs make Use of.—The Women are pretty well shaped for Savages, and neat enough in their Dress, and in every Thing they do. The Daughters of the Noble Families can marry none but obscure Persons ; but they have a Right to turn away their Husbands when they please, and to take another, provided there is no Relationship between them.

If their Husbands are unfaithful to them, they can order them to be knocked on the Head, but they are not subject to the same Law themselves. They may also have as many Gallants as they think fit, and the Husband is not to take it amiss. This is a Privilege belonging to the Blood of the Great Chief. The Husband of any one of these must stand in the Presence of his Wife in a respectful Posture ; he does not eat with her ; he salutes her in the same Tone as her Domesticks. The only Privilege which such a burthensome Alliance procures him, is to be exempt from Labour, and to have Authority over those who serve his Wife.

The *Natchez* have two War Chiefs, two Masters of the Ceremonies for the Temple, two Officers to regulate



what is done in Treaties of Peace or War, one that has the Inspection of Works, and four others who are employed to order every Thing in the public Feasts. It is the Great Chief who appoints Persons to these Offices, and those who hold them are respected and obeyed as he would be himself.—The Harvest among the *Natchez* is in common. The Great Chief sets the Day for it, and calls the Village together. Towards the End of *July* he appoints another Day for the Beginning of a Festival, which lasts three Days, which are spent in Sports and Feasting.

Each private Person contributes something of his Hunting, his Fishing, and his other Provisions, which consist in Maiz, Beans, and Melons. The Great Chief and the Woman Chief preside at the Feast, sitting in a Cabin raised above the Ground, and covered with Boughs: They are carried to it in a Litter, and the Great Chief holds in his Hand a Kind of Sceptre, adorned with Feathers of various Colours. All the Nobles are round him in a respectful Posture. The last Day the Great Chief makes a Speech to the Assembly: He exhorts every Body to be exact in the Performance of their Duties, especially to have a great Veneration for the Spirits which reside in the Temple, and to be careful in instructing their Children. If any one has distinguished himself by some Action of Note, he makes his Elogium. Twenty Years ago, the Temple was reduced to Ashes by Lightning. Seven or eight Women threw their Children into the midst of the Flames to appease the Genii. The Great Chief immediately sent for these Heroines, gave them publicly great Praises, and finished his Discourse by exhorting the other Women to follow their great Example on a like Occasion.

The Fathers of Families never fail to bring to the Temple the first Fruits of every Thing they gather; and they do the same by all the Presents that are made to the Nation. They expose them at the Door of the Temple, the Keeper of which, after having presented them to the Spirits, carries them to the Great Chief who distributes them to whom he pleases. The Seeds are in like Manner offered

offered before the Temple with great Ceremony: But the Offerings which are made there of Bread and Flour every new Moon, are for the Use of the Keepers of the Temple.

The Marriages of the *Natchez* are very little different from those of the Savages of *Canada*: The principal Difference we find in them consists in that here the future Spouse begins by making, to the Relations of the Woman, such Presents as have been agreed upon; and that the Wedding is followed by a great Feast. The Reason why there are few but the Chiefs who have several Wives, is, that as they can get their Fields cultivated by the People without any Charge, their Wives are no Burthen to them. The Chiefs marry with less Ceremony still than the others. It is enough for them to give Notice to the Relations of the Woman on whom they have cast their Eyes, that they place her in the Number of their Wives. But they keep but one or two in their Cabins; the others remain with their Relations, where their Husbands visit them when they please. No Jealousy reigns in these Marriages: The *Natchez* lend one another their Wives without any Difficulty; and 'tis probably from hence proceeds the Readiness with which they part with them to take others.

When a War Chief wants to levy a Party of Soldiers, he plants, in a Place marked out for that Purpose, two Trees adorned with Feathers, Arrows, and Fighting-Clubs, all painted red, as well as the Trees, which are also pricked on that Side which is towards the Place whither they intend to carry the War. Those who would enlist, present themselves to the Chief, well dressed, their Faces smeared with various Colours, and declare to him the Desire they have to learn the Art of War under his Orders; that they are disposed to endure all the Fatigues of War, and ready to die, if needful, for their Country.

When the Chief has got the Number of Soldiers that the Expedition requires, which he intends to make, he causes a Drink to be prepared at his Cabin, which is called  
*ibe*

*the Medicine of War.* This is a Vomit made with a Root boiled in Water : They give to each Man two Pots of it, which they must drink all at once, and which they throw up again almost as soon as they have drank it, with most violent Retchings. Afterwards they labour in making the necessary Preparations ; and till the Day settled for their Departure, the Warriors meet every Evening and Morning in an open Place, where after much dancing, and telling their great Feats of War, every one sings his Song of Death.—These People are not less superstitious about their Dreams, than the Savages of *Canada* : There needs only a bad Omen to cause them to return when they are on a March.

The Warriors march with a great deal of Order, and take great Precautions to encamp, and to rally. They often send out Scouts, but they never set Centinels at Night : They put out all the Fires, they recommend themselves to the Spirits, and they sleep in Security, after the Chief has exhorted every one not to snore too loud, and to keep always their Arms near them in good Condition. Their Idols are exposed on a Pole leaning towards the Enemy, and all the Warriors, before they lie down, pass one after another, with their Fighting Clubs in their Hands, before these pretended Deities : Then they turn towards the Enemy's Country, and make great Threatnings, which the Wind often carries another Way.

It does not appear that the *Natchez* exercise on their Prisoners, during the March the Cruelties which are used in *Canada*. When these Wretches are arrived at the Great Village, they make them sing and dance several Days together before the Temple. After which they are delivered to the Relations of those who have been killed during the Campaign. They on receiving them burst into Tears, then after having wiped their Eyes with the Scalps which the Warriors have brought home, they join together to reward those who have made them the Present of their Captives, whose Fate is always to be burnt.

The Warriors change their Names as often as they perform new Exploits : they receive them from the  
antient

antient War Chief, and these Names have always some Relation to the Action by which they have merited this Distinction. Those who for the first Time have made a Prisoner or taken off a Scalp, must, for a Month, abstain from seeing their Wives, and from eating Flesh. They imagine, that if they should fail in this, that the Souls of those whom they have killed or burnt, would effect their Death, or that the first Wound they should receive would be mortal; or at least, that they should never after gain any Advantage over their Enemies. If the Great Chief, called THE SUN, commands his Subjects in Person, they take great Care that he should not expose himself too much; less perhaps through Zeal for his Preservation, than because the other War Chiefs, and the Heads of the Party would be put to Death for their Want of Care in guarding him.

The Jugglers, or Doctors of the *Natchez*, pretty much resemble those of *Canada*, and treat their Patients much after the same Manner. They are well paid when the Patient recovers; but if he happens to die, it often costs them their Lives. There is in this Nation another set of Jugglers, who run no less Risque than these Doctors. They are certain lazy old Fellows, who, to maintain their Families without being obliged to work, undertake to procure Rain, or fine Weather, according as they are wanted. About the Spring Time they make a Collection to buy of these pretended Magicians a favourable Season for the Fruits of the Earth. If it is Rain they require, they fill their Mouths with Water, and with a Reed, the End of which is pierced with several Holes, like a Funnel, they blow into the Air, towards the Side where they perceive some Clouds, whilst holding their *Cbicbicoué* in one Hand, and their *Manitou* in the other, they play upon one, and hold the other up in the Air, inviting, by frightful Cries, the Clouds to water the Fields of those who have set them to Work.

If the Business is to obtain fine Weather, they mount on the Roof of their Cabins, make Signs to the Clouds to pass away; and if the Clouds pass away, and are dispersed, they dance and sing round about their Idols; then they

they swallow the Smoke of Tobacco, and present their Calumets to the Sky. All the Time these Operations last, they observe a strict Fast, and do nothing but dance and sing. If they obtain what they have promised, they are well rewarded; if they do not succeed, they are put to Death without Mercy. But they are not the same who undertake to procure Rain and fine Weather: The Genius of one Person cannot, as they say, give both.

Mourning among these Savages consists in cutting off their Hair, and in not painting their Faces, and in absenting themselves from public Assemblies: But I know not how long it lasts. I know not neither, whether they celebrate the grand Festival of the Dead, which I have before described. It appears as if in this Nation, where every Body is in some Sort the Slave of those who command, all the Honours of the Dead are for those who do so, especially for the Great Chief, and the Woman Chief.

Treaties of Peace and Alliances are made with great Pomp, and the Great Chief on these Occasions always supports his Dignity like a true Sovereign. As soon as he is informed of the Day of the Arrival of the Ambassadors, he gives his Orders to the Masters of the Ceremonies, for the Preparations for their Reception, and names those who are by Turns to maintain these Envoys; for it is at the cost of his Subjects, that he defrays the Expences of the Embassage. The Day of the Entry of the Ambassadors, every one has his Place assigned him according to his Rank; and when the Ambassadors are come within five hundred Paces of the Great Chief, they stop, and sing the Song of Peace.

Commonly the Embassy is composed of thirty Men and six Women. Six of the best Voices march at the Head of this Train and sing aloud, the rest follow, and the *Chibicoué* serves to regulate the Time. When the Great Chief makes Signs to the Ambassadors to approach, they renew their March: Those who carry the Calumet, dance as they sing, and turn themselves on every Side, with many Motions, and make a great many Grimaces and Contorsions. They renew the same Tricks round  
about

about the Great Chief when they are come near him ; then they rub him with their Calumet from Head to Foot, and afterwards go and rejoin their Company.

Then they fill a Calumet with Tobacco, and holding Fire in one Hand, they advance all together towards the Great Chief, and present him the Calumet lighted. They smoke with him, and blow towards the Sky the first Whiff of their Tobacco, the second towards the Earth, and the third round about the Horizon. When they have done this, they present their Calumets to the Relations of the Great Chief, and the Subaltern Chiefs. Then they go and rub with their Hands the Stomach of the Great Chief, after which they rub themselves all over the Body ; and lastly, they lay their Calumets on Forks over-against the Great Chief, and the Orator of the Embassy begins his Speech, which lasts an Hour.

When he has finished, they make Signs to the Ambassadors, who till now were standing, to sit down on Benches placed for them near the Great Chief, who answers their Discourse, and speaks also a whole Hour. Then a Master of the Ceremonies lights a great Calumet of Peace, and makes the Ambassadors smoke in it, who swallow the first Mouthful. Then the Great Chief enquires after their Health, and all those who are present at the Audience make them the same Compliment ; then they conduct them to the Cabin that is appointed for them, and where they give them a great Feast. The Evening of the same Day the Great Chief makes them a Visit ; but when they know he is ready to do them this Honour, they go to seek him, and carry him on their Shoulders to their Lodging, and make him sit on a great Skin. One of them places himself behind him, leans his Hands on his Shoulders, and shakes him a pretty long Time, whilst the rest, sitting round on the Earth, sing their great Actions in the Wars.

These Visits are renewed every Morning and Evening ; but in the last the Ceremonial varies. The Ambassadors set up a Post in the midst of their Cabin, and sit all round it : The Warriors who accompany the Great Chief, or

as they call him, *the Sun*, dressed in their finest Robes, dance, and one by one strike the Post, and relate their bravest Feats of Arms; after which they make Presents to the Ambassadors. The next Day they are permitted for the first Time to walk about the Village, and every Night they make them Entertainments, which consist only in Dances. When they are on their Departure, the Master of the Ceremonies supplies them with all the Provisions they may want for their Journey, and this is always at the Expence of private Persons.

The greatest Part of the Nations of *Louisiana* had formerly their Temples, as well as the *Natchez*, and in all these Temples there was a perpetual Fire. It seems also probable, that the *Maubilens* had over all the People of this Part of *Florida*, a Kind of Primacy of Religion; for it was at their Fire they were obliged to kindle that, which by Negligence or Accident had been suffered to go out. But at present the Temple of the *Natchez* is the only one that subsists, and it is held in great Veneration among all the Savages which inhabit this vast Continent, the Decrease of which Nation is as considerable, and has been still more sudden, than that of the Savages of *Canada*, without its being possible to discover the true Cause of it. Whole Nations have entirely disappeared within forty Years at most. Those which are still subsisting, are but the Shadow of what they were when *M. de la Sale* discovered this Country. I take my Leave of you, Madam, for Reasons which I shall have the Honour to explain to you soon.

*I am, &c.*

LETTER

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## LETTER XXXI.

*Journey from the NATCHEZ to NEW ORLEANS. Description of the Country, and of several Villages of the SAVAGES, and of the Capital of LOUISIANA.*

MADAM,

NEW ORLEANS, Jan. 10.

**I** Am at length arrived in this famous City, which they have called *la nouvelle Orleans*. Those who have given it this Name, thought that *Orleans* was of the feminine Gender: But what signifies that? Custom has established it, and that is above the Rules of Grammar.

This City is the first, which one of the greatest Rivers in the World has seen raised on its Banks. If the eight Hundred fine Houses, and the five Parishes, which the News-Papers gave it some Time ago, are reduced at present to an hundred Barracks, placed in no very great Order; to a great Store-House, built of Wood; to two or three Houses, which would be no Ornament to a Village of *France*; and to the half of a forty Store-House, which they agree to lend to the Lord of the Place, and which he had no sooner taken Possession of, but they turned him out to dwell under a Tent; what Pleasure, on the other Side, to see insensibly encreasing this future Capital of a fine and vast Country, and to be able to say, not with a Sigh, like the Hero of *Virgil*, speaking of his dear native Place consumed by the Flames, and the Fields where *Troy* Town had been \*, but full of a well grounded Hope, this wild and desert Place which the Reeds and  
Trees

\* *Et Campos, ubi Troja fuit.*



Trees do yet almost wholly cover, will be one Day, and perhaps that Day is not far off, an opulent City, and the Metropolis of a great and rich Colony.

You will ask me, Madam, on what I found this Hope? I found it on the Situation of this City, at thirty-three Leagues from the Sea, and on the Side of a navigable River, that one may come up to this Place in twenty-four Hours: On the Fruitfulness of the Soil; on the Mildness and Goodness of its Climate, in  $30^{\circ}$  North Latitude; on the Industry of its Inhabitants; on the Neighbourhood of *Mexico*, to which we may go in fifteen Days by Sea; on that of the *Havannab*, which is still nearer; and of the finest Islands of *America*, and of the *English* Colonies. Need there any Thing more to render a City flourishing? *Rome* and *Paris* had not such considerable Beginnings, were not built under such happy Auspices, and their Founders did not find on the *Seine* and the *Tyber* the Advantages we have found on the *Mississippi*, in Comparison of which, those two Rivers are but little Brooks.— But before I undertake to mention what there is here worthy your Curiosity, that I may proceed according to Order, I shall take up my Journal again where I broke it off.

I stayed at the *Natchez* much longer than I expected, and it was the abandoned Condition in which I found the *French*, with Respect to spiritual Aids, that kept me there till after *Christmas*. The Dew of Heaven hath not yet fallen on this fine Country, which above all others may boast of its Portion of the Fatness of the Earth. The late M. *d'Iberville* had destined a *Jesuit* \* for this Purpose, who accompanied him in the second Voyage he made to *Louisiana*, with a Design to establish *Christianity* in a Nation, whose Conversion, he made no Doubt, would be followed by that of all the rest. But this Missionary passing by the Village of the *Bayagoulas*, thought he found there more favourable Dispositions for Religion, and while he was thinking to fix his Abode amongst them, he was called to *France* by superior Orders.

After

\* Father *Paul Du Ru*.

After this, an Ecclesiastic of *Canada* \* was sent to the *Natchez*, and remained there a pretty long Time, but he made no Profelytes, though he had gained the good Graces of the Woman Chief, who out of Respect to him, gave his Name to one of her Sons. This Missionary having been obliged to make a Journey to *Maubille*, was killed on the Way by Savages, who probably only wanted his Baggage, as it had happened before to another Priest † on the Side of the *Akanfas*. Since that Time all *Louisiana*, above the *Illinois*, has remained without any Priest, except the *Tonicas*, who have had for several Years an Ecclesiastic ‡, whom they loved and esteemed, and whom they would have made their Chief, and who, notwithstanding, could never persuade one of them to embrace *Christianity*.

But it is something preposterous to think of taking Measures for the Conversion of Infidels, whilst the Household even of the Faith are almost all without Pastors. I have already had the Honour of telling you, Madam, that the Canton of the *Natchez* is the most populous of the Colony; nevertheless it is five Years since any *Frenchman* has heard Mass here, or even seen a Priest. I soon saw that the Privation of the Sacraments had produced in the greatest Part of them that Indifference for the Exercises of Religion, which is the common Effect of such Privation: Yet many shewed a great desire to take Advantage of my Presence, for regulating the Affairs of their Consciences; and I thought it was my Duty to help them to this Comfort without much Solicitation.

The first Proposal that they made to me was, that I would agree to marry in the Presence of the Church, some Inhabitants, who by Virtue of a civil Contract, drawn up in the Presence of the Commandant and the principal Clerk, lived together without any Scruple, alleging, as well as they who had authorized this Concubinage, the Necessity of peopling the Country, and the Impossibility of having a Priest. I represented to them, that there was one at the *Tasous*, and at *New Orleans*, and that the Matter was worth the Pains of taking the

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Journey :

\* M. de S. Cosme. † M. Foucault. ‡ M. Davion.

Journey: They replied, that the contracting Parties were not in a Condition to take long Journies, nor to be at the Expence of bringing a Priest hither. In short, the Evil was done, and there remained nothing but to remedy it, which I did. Then I confessed all who presented themselves, but the Number of these was not so great as I had hoped.

Nothing more detaining me at the *Natchez*, I departed from thence the 26th of *December*, pretty late, accompanied by *M. de Pauger*, the King's Engineer, who was visiting the Colony, to examine the Places where it was fit to build Forts. We went four Leagues and encamped at the Side of a little River, which we found on the Left. We re-embarked the next Day two Hours before it was light, with the Wind pretty high, and against us. The River in this Place makes a Circuit of fourteen Leagues; and as we turned, the Wind turned with us, being beaten back by the Land, and by the Islands, which we found in great Numbers, so that it was always in our Faces. Notwithstanding which, we went ten Leagues farther, and entered into another little River on the Left Hand. All Night we heard a great Noise, and I thought it was the Effect of the Wind, that was grown stronger; but they assured me that the River had been very quiet, and that the Noise which had waked me, was made by the Fish, that dashed about the Water with their Tails.

The 28th, after having gone two Leagues, we arrived at the River of the *Tonicas*, which appeared to me at first to be but a Brook; but at a Musket-Shot Distance from its Mouth it forms a very pretty Lake. If the *Mississippi* continues to throw itself as it does on the other Side, all this Place will become inaccessible. The River of the *Tonicas* has its Source in the Country of the *Tchactas*, and its Course is very much obstructed with Falls. The Village is beyond the Lake, on a pretty high Ground; yet they say that the Air here is bad, which they attribute to the Quality of the Waters of the River; but I should rather judge that it proceeds from the Stagnation of the Waters in the Lake.—This Village is built in a Circle,  
round

round a very large open Space, without any Inclosure, and moderately peopled.

The Cabin of the Chief is very much adorned on the Outside for the Cabin of a Savage. We see on it some Figures in Relievo, which are not so ill done as one expects to find them. The Inside is dark, and I observed nothing in it but some Boxes, which they assured me were full of Clothes and Money. The Chief received us very politely; he was dressed in the *French* Fashion, and seemed to be not at all uneasy in that habit. Of all the Savages of *Canada*, there is none so much depended on by our Commandants as this Chief. He loves our Nation, and has no Cause to repent of the Services he has rendered it. He trades with the *French*, whom he supplies with Horses and Fowls, and he understands his Trade very well. He has learnt of us to hoard up Money, and he is reckoned very rich. He has a long Time left off the Drefs of a Savage, and he takes a Pride in appearing always well dressed, according to our Mode.

The other Cabins of the Village are partly square, as that of the Chief, and partly round, like those of the *Natchez*. The Place round which they all stand, is about a hundred Paces Diameter; and notwithstanding the Heat of the Weather was that Day suffocating, the young People were diverting themselves at a Kind of *Truck*, much like our's.

There are two other Villages of this Nation at a little Distance from this; and this is all that remains of a People formerly very numerous.—I said before, that they had a Missionary whom they greatly loved: I have learnt that they drove him away not long since, because he had burnt their Temple; which nevertheless they have not rebuilt, nor lighted their Fire again; a certain Proof of their little Attachment to their false Religion! They even soon recalled the Missionary; but they heard all he could say to them with an Indifference, which he could never conquer, and he has forsaken them in his Turn.

From the Bottom of the Lake, or the Bay of the *Tonicas*, if we used Canoes of Bark, we might make a Portage of two Leagues, which would save ten on the *Mississippi*; but this is not practicable with Pettiaugres. Two Leagues lower than the River of the *Tonicas*, we leave on the Right Hand the *Red River*, or *Rio Colorado*; at the Entrance of which, the famous *Ferdinand de Soto*, the Conqueror of *Florida*; ended his Days and his Exploits, or rather his Rambles. This River runs East and West some Time, then turns to the South. It is scarcely navigable for Pettiaugres, and that for no more than forty Leagues; after which we meet with unpassable Marshes. Its Mouth appeared to me to be about two hundred Fathom wide. Ten Leagues higher, it receives on the Right Hand the *Black River*, otherwise called the River of the *Ouatchitas*; which comes from the North, and has Water only for seven Months in the Year.

Nevertheless there are several Grants situated here, which in all Appearance will not grow very rich. The Motive of this Settlement is the Neighbourhood of the *Spaniards*, which at all Times has been a fatal Enticement to this Colony. In Hopes of trading with them, they leave the best Lands in the World uncultivated. The *Natchitoches* are settled on the *Red River*, and we have judged it convenient to build a Fort among them, to hinder the *Spaniards* from settling nearer us. We encamped the twenty-ninth, a little below the Mouth of the *Red River*, in a very fine Bay.

The 30th, after having gone five Leagues, we passed a second Point cut off. The *Mississippi*, in this Place, makes a great Winding. Some *Canadians*, by Dint of hollowing a little Brook, which was behind the Point, brought the Waters of the River into it; which spreading themselves impetuously in this new Channel, completely cut off the Point, and hath saved Travellers fourteen Leagues of Way. The old Bed of the River is actually dry, and has no Water in it but in the Season of the Floods; an evident Proof that the *Mississippi* casts itself here towards the East; and this deserves to be

be confidered with the greateft Attention, in making Settlements on either Side of the River. The Depth of this new Channel has been lately founded, and they have let out a line in it of thirty Fathom long, without finding any Bottom.

Just below, and on the same Hand, we saw the weak Beginnings of a Grant, which bears the Name of *St. Reyne*, and at the Head of which are Messrs. *de Coetlogon* and *Kolli*. It is situated on a very fertile Soil, and there is nothing to fear from the overflowing of the River: But with Nothing, Nothing can be done, especially when they want Men for Labour, and Men want an Inclination for Labour; and this seemed to us to be the Condition of this Grant. We went a League further this Day, and came to the Grant of Madam *de Mezieres*, where the Rain stopped us all the next Day. Some Huts, covered with the Leaves of the *Lattanier* and a great Tent of Cloth at present form all this Grant. They wait for Men and Goods from the *Black River*, where the Magazines are, and which they are not willing to leave. I am afraid that by endeavouring to make two Settlements at once, both will fail.

The Soil on which they have begun this, is very good; but they must build a Quarter of a League from the River, behind a Cypress Wood, which is a marshy Ground, and of which they might make Advantage in sowing Rice, and making Gardens. Two Leagues further in the Wood, there is a Lake two Leagues in Compass, the Sides of which are covered with wild Fowl, and which perhaps may supply them with Fish, when they have destroyed the *Caimans*, which swarm in it. I have learnt in this Place some Secrets; which you shall have, Madam, at the same Rate they cost me; for I have no Time to make Trial of them.

The Male Cypress bears in this Country a Pod; which must be gathered green, and then they find it a sovereign Balm for Cuts. That which is distilled from the *Copalme*, has, among other Virtues, that of curing the Dropsy.

fy. The Root of those great Cotton Trees I mentioned in another Plaec, and which we find continually on all the Route which I have made from the Lake *Ontario*, is a certain Remedy against all Hurts of the Skin. You must take the Inside of the Bark, boil it in Water, bathe the Wound with this Water, and then lay on the Ashes of the Bark itself.

On *New-Year's-Day* we went to say Mass three Leagues from *Madan de Mezieres*, in a Grant very well situated, and which belongs to M. *Diron d'Artaguette*, Inspector General of the Troops of *Louisiana* \*. They brought us here a monstrous Tortoise, and they assured us that these Animals were capable of breaking a large Iron Bar. If the Fact is true, for I should be willing to see it before I believe it, the Saliva of these Animals must be a very powerful Dissolvent. As for the Leg of a Man, I would not trust it in their Jaws. This is certain, that the Meat of that which I saw, was enough to satisfy ten Persons who had good Stomachs. We staid all the Day in this Grant, which is not much forwarder than the rest, and which they call *le Bâton rouge*, (*the red Stick*.)

The next Day we made eleven Leagues, and we encamped a little below the *Bayagoulas*, which we had left on the Right Hand, after having visited here the Ruins of the antient Village I mentioned before. It was very populous about twenty Years since. The Small-Pox has destroyed a Part of its Inhabitants, the rest are gone away and dispersed: They have not so much as even heard any News of them for several Years, and 'tis a Doubt whether there is a single Family remaining. The Land they possessed is very rich. *Messrs. Paris* have a Grant here, where they have planted in Rows a great Number of white Mulberry-Trees, and they make very fine Silk here already. They also begin to cultivate here, with much Success, Indigo and Tobacco. If they laboured the same in all other Places, the Proprietors of Grants would soon be indemnified for all their Expenses.

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\* He died lately the King's Lieutenant at Cape *Francois*, in *St. Domingo*

The 3d of *January* we arrived about Ten o'Clock in the Morning at the little Village of the *Oumas*, which is on the Left, and where there are some *French* Houses. A Quarter of a League higher up in the Country, is the great Village. This Nation is very well affected to us. The *Mississippi* begins to fork, or to divide into two Branches, two Leagues higher. It has hollowed itself on the Right, to which it always inclines, a Channel, which they call the *Fork* of the *Cbetimachas*, or *Sitimachas*; and which, before it carries its Waters to the Sea, forms a pretty large Lake. The Nation of the *Cbetimachas*, is almost entirely destroyed; the few that remain are Slaves in the Colony.

We went that Day six Leagues beyond the *Oumas*, and we passed the Night on the fine Spot where they had settled the Grant of *M. le Marquis D' Ancenis*, at present *Duke de Beibune*; which, by a Fire happening in the great Magazine, and by several other Accidents one after another, is reduced to nothing. The *Colapiffas* had here formed a little Village, which did not subsist long.

The 4th we arrived before Noon at the great Village of the *Colapiffas*. It is the finest Village of *Louisiana*, yet they reckon in it but two hundred Warriors, who have the Character of being very brave. Their Cabins are in the Shape of a Pavilion, like those of the *Sioux*, and they seldom make any Fire in them. They have a double Roof; that in the Inside is made of the Leaves of the *Lattenier*, interwoven together, that in the Outside is made of Mats.

The Cabin of the Chief is thirty-six Feet Diameter: I had not before seen one so large; for that of the Great Chief of the *Natchez* is but thirty Feet. As soon as we appeared in Sight of this Village, they beat a Drum; and we were scarcely landed, before the Chief sent his Compliments to me. I was surpris'd, in advancing towards the Village, to see the Drummer dressed in a long Gown, half white and half red, with white Sleeves on the red Side, and red Sleeves on the white. I enquired into the



Origin of this Custom, and they told me it was not ancient; that a Governor of *Louisiana* had made a Present of a Drum to these Savages, who have always been our faithful Allies, and that this Kind of Beadle's Habit was their own Invention.—The Women are better shaped here than in *Canada*, and their Way of dressing themselves is also something more becoming.

After Dinner, we went five Leagues further, and we stopped at *Cannes brûlées*, (*the burnt Reeds*,) where the Grant of *M. le Comte D' Artagnan* has an Habitation on it, which is also to serve him for a Store-House, if it has not the Fate of almost all the rest. This House is on the Left; and the first Object that presented itself to my Sight, was a great Cross set up on the Bank of the River, about which they actually sing Vespers. This is the first Place of the Colony, from the *Illinois*, where I found this Mark of our Religion. Two Mousquetaires, *M. D' Arziguiere*, and *de Benac* \* are the Directors of this Grant; and it was *M. de Benac* who had the Direction of the House of *Cannes brûlées*, together with *M. Chevalier*, Nephew to the Master of the Mathematics to the King's Pages. They have no Priest, but it is not their Fault: They had one whom they were obliged to get rid of, because he was a Drunkard; and they judged rightly, that a bad Priest is likely to do more Harm in a new Settlement, where he has no Superior that watches over his Conduct, than his Services are worth.

Between the *Colapiffas* and the *Cannes brûlées*, we leave on the Right Hand the Spot which was formerly possessed by the *Taensas*; who, in the Time of *M. de la Sale*, made a great Figure in this Country, but who have entirely disappeared for some Years. This is the finest Piece, and the best Soil of *Louisiana*. *M. de Meuse*, to whom it was granted, has done nothing here yet: Nevertheless he keeps here a Director, who has neither Men nor Merchandize.

The

\* The last is now Captain in the Troops of *Louisiana*.

The 5th, we stopped to dine at a Place which they call the *Chapitoulas*, and which is but three Leagues distant from *New Orleans*, where we arrived at five in the Evening. The *Chapitoulas*, and some neighbouring Habitations, are in a very good Condition. The Soil is fruitful, and it is fallen into the Hands of People that are skilful and laborious. They are the *Sieur du Breuil* and three *Canadian* Brothers, named *Chawvins*. The last have contributed nothing but their Industry, which was performed by the Necessity of labouring for a Subsistence. They have lost no Time, they have spared no Pains, and their Example is a Lesson for those lazy People, whose Poverty very unjustly disparages a Country which will render a hundred-fold of whatever is sowed in it.

*I am, &c.*

L E T T E R



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## LETTER XXXII.

*Journey from NEW ORLEANS to the Mouth of the MISSISSIPPI: Description of this River quite to the Sea. Reflexions on the Grants.*

TOULOUSE ISLAND, or LABALISE (*the BUOY, or SEA MARK*) January 26.

MADAM,

THE Environs of *New Orleans* have nothing very remarkable. I did not find this City so well situated as I had been told. Others are not of the same Opinion. These are the Reasons on which their Opinion is founded: I will afterwards explain mine. The first is, that about a League from hence, inclining to the North East, they have found a little River, which they have called the *Bayouc of St. John* \*, which at the End of two Leagues discharges itself into the Lake *Pontchartrain*, which communicates with the Sea: By this they say, it is easy to keep up a certain Commerce between the Capital and *la Maubile, Biloxi*, and all the other Posts which we possess near the Sea. The second is, that below this City, the River makes a great Turn, which they have called *le Detour aux Anglois* (*the English Reach*,) which may cause a Retardment, which they judge very advantageous to prevent a Surprise. These Reasons are specious, but they don't appear to me to be solid; for in the first Place, those who have reasoned in this Manner, have supposed that the Entrance of the River could receive none but small Vessels; therefore in this

Case,

\* *Bayouc* in the Savage Language signifies a Rivulet.

Cafe, what is there to be feared from a Surprise, if the Town is ever so little fortified, as I suppose in my Turn it will be soon? Will they come to attack it with Boats, or with Vessels which cannot carry Guns? On the other Hand, in whatever Place the City is situated, must not the Mouth of the River be defended by good Batteries, and by a Fort, which will at least give Time to receive Intelligence, and to keep themselves ready to receive the Enemy? In the second Place, what Necessity is there for this Communication, which cannot be carried on but by Boats, and with Posts, which they cannot succour if they were attacked; and from which consequently they can receive but weak Succours, which for the most Part are good for nothing: I add, that when a Vessel must go up the *English Reach*, they must change their Wind every Moment, which may detain them whole Weeks to make seven or eight Leagues.

A little below *New Orleans*, the Land begins to have but little Depth on both Sides the *Mississippi*, and this goes on diminishing quite to the Sea. It is a Point of Land, which does not appear very antient; for if we dig ever so little in it we find Water; and the Number of Shoals and little Islands, which we have seen formed within twenty years past in all the Mouths of the River, leave no Room to doubt that this Slip of Land was formed in the same Manner. It appears certain, that when *M. de la Sale* came down the *Mississippi* quite to the Sea, the Mouth of this River was not the same as it is at present.

The more we approach the Sea, the more what I say appears evident: The Bar has scarce any Water in the greatest Part of those little Outlets, which the River has opened for itself, and which are so much increased only by the Means of the Trees, which are brought down with the Current, one of which being stopt by its Branches, or by its Roots, in a Place where there is little Depth, stops a thousand others. I have seen Heaps of these 200 Leagues from hence, one of which alone would have filled all the Wood-Yards of *Paris*. Nothing is capable of removing them, the Mud which the River brings down serves them for a Cement, and covers them by Degrees;  
every

every Inundation leaves a new Layer, and in ten Years at moſt the Reeds and Shrubs begin to grow upon them. Thus have been formed the greateſt Part of the Points and Iſlands, which make the River ſo often change its Courſe.

I have nothing to add to what I ſaid in the Beginning of the former Letter concerning the preſent State of *New Orleans*. The trueſt Idea that you can form of it, is to repreſent to yourſelf two hundred Perſons that are ſent to build a City, and who are encamped on the Side of a great River, where they have thought of nothing but to ſhelter themſelves from the Injuries of the Air, whiſt they wait for a Plan, and have built themſelves Houſes. *M. de Pauger*, whom I have ſtill the Honour to accompany, has juſt now ſhewed me one of his drawing. It is very fine and very regular; but it will not be ſo eaſy to execute it, as it was to trace it on Paper. We ſet out the 22d of *July* for *Biloxi*, which is the Head-Quarters. Between *New Orleans* and the Sea there are no Grants; they would have too little Depth; there are only ſome ſmall private Habitations, and ſome Magazines for the great Grants.

Behind one of theſe Habitations, which is on the Right, immediately below the *Engliſh* Reach, there was not long ſince a Village of the *Cbaouachas*, the Ruins of which I viſited. I found nothing enire but the Cabin of the Chief, which was pretty much like the Houſe of one of our Peaſants in *France*, only with this Difference, that it had no Windows. It was built of Branches of Trees, the Vacancies between which were filled up with the Leaves of *Lattanier*; the Roof was of the ſame Structure. This Chief is very abſolute, as are all thoſe of *Florida*; he never hunts or ſhoots but for his Diſerſion, for his Subjects are obliged to give him Part of their Game. His Village is at preſent on the other Side of the River, half a League lower, and the Savages have tranſported thither even the Bones of their Dead.

A little below their new Habitation the Coaſt is much higher than any where hereabout, and it appears to me that

that they should have placed the City there. It would be but twenty Leagues from the Sea, and with a South Wind, or a moderate South East, a Ship would get up in fifteen Hours. The Night of the 23d we quitted the Boat which had brought us hither, and embarked in a Brigantine, in which we fell down with the Stream all Night. The next Morning by Day-Break we had passed a new Circuit, which the River makes, and which they call the *Reach of the Piakimines*.

We found ourselves soon after in the midst of the Passes of the *Mississippi*, where it requires the greatest Attention to work the Ship, that it may not be drawn into some one of them, from whence it would be impossible to recover it. The greatest Part are only little Rivulets, and some are even only separated by Sand-Banks, which are almost level with the Water. It is the Bar of the *Mississippi* which has so greatly multiplied these Passes; for it is easy to conceive by the Manner in which I have said there are formed every Day new Lands, how the River, endeavouring to escape by where it finds the least Resistance, makes itself a Passage, sometimes one Way and sometimes another; from whence it might happen, if Care was not taken, that none of these Passages would be practicable for Vessels. The Night of the 24th we anchored beyond the Bar, over-against *la Balise*.

The contrary Wind keeping us still here, we were willing to make some Advantage of this Delay. Yesterday, the 25th, being *Sunday*, I began by singing a great Mass in the Island, which they call *la Balise*, on Account of a Sea-Mark which they have set up for the Direction of Ships.—I afterwards blessed it, we named it *Toulouse Island*, and we sang the *Te Deum*. This Island is scarce more than half a League in Compass, taking in also another Island which is separated from it by a Gutter, where there is always Water. On the other Hand it is very low, excepting only one Place, where the Floods never come, and where there is Room enough to build a Fort and some Magazines. They might unload Vessels here, which could not easily pass the Bar with their whole Lading.

M. *de Pauger* founded this Place with the Lead, and found the Bottom pretty hard, and of Clay, though there come out of it five or six little Springs, but which yield little Water; this Water leaves on the Sand a very fine Salt. When the River is lowest, *that is to say*, during the three hottest Months of the Year, the Water is salt round this Island: In the Time of the Floods, it is quite fresh, and the River preserves its Freshness a good League in the Sea. At all other Times it is a little saltish beyond the Bar. Therefore it is entirely a Fable, which has been reported, that for twenty Leagues the *Mississippi* does not mix its Waters with those of the Sea.

M. *Pauger* and I passed the rest of the Day with the Pilot *Kerlasio*, who commanded the Brigantine, in founding and discovering the only Mouth of the River which is navigable; and these are exactly our Observations on the State in which we found it, for I do not answer for the Changes which may happen in it. It runs North West and South East the Space of three Hundred Fathom, in going up from the open Sea quite to the Island of *Toucouffe*, over-against which there are three little Islands, which have yet nothing growing on them, though they are pretty high. In all this Interval, its Breadth is two Hundred and fifty Fathom, its Depth is eighteen Feet in the Middle, the Bottom soft Oose: But we must navigate here with the Sounding-Line in Hand, when we are not used to the Channel.

From whence going upwards, we make still the North West for four Hundred Fathom, at the End of which there are still fifteen Feet Water, the same Bottom; and it is to be observed that every where the Anchorage is safe, and that we are sheltered from all the Winds but the South and the South East, which may, when they are violent, make the Ships drive with their Anchors, but without Danger, because they would run on the Bar, which is a soft Oose: Then we make the North West by North East for five Hundred Fathom. This is properly the Bar, twelve Feet Water, mean Depth; we must also work here with great Attention, for we meet with many Banks: This



This Bar is two Hundred and fifty Fathom wide between low Lands that are covered with Reeds.

In the *Pafs* of the *East*, which is immediately above, we make full West for a League: It is two Hundred and fifty Fathom wide, and from four to fifteen Feet in Depth. Then all at once we find no Bottom. In taking again the great *Pafs* at coming off the Bar, we make again the North West the Space of three Hundred Fathom, and we have always here 45 Feet Water. We leave on the Right the *Pafs* of *Sauvole*, by which Boats may go to *Biloxi*, making the North: This Place took its Name from an Officer, whom M. d' *Iberville* made Commandant in the Colony upon his return to *France*.

Then we must return to the West and by North West for fifty Fathom, and in a Kind of Bay, which we leave on the Left; at the End of this Space there are three *Passes*, one to the South South East, another to the South, and a third to the West South West. This Bay is notwithstanding only ten Fathom deep, and twenty wide; but these *Passes* have little Water. We continue to follow the same Rhumb of the Wind, and at fifty Fathom farther there is on the same Hand a second Bay, which is twenty Fathom wide, and fifty deep. It contains two little *Passes*, which Canoes of Bark would be troubled to get through, and therefore they seldom reckon them among the *Passes*. From hence we take to the West for the Space of five Hundred Fathom, and we come over-against the *Pafs a la Loure (of the Otter.)* It is five Hundred Fathom wide, but is passable only for *Pettiaugres*. Then we turn to the South West for twenty Fathom; we return to the West for three Hundred, then to the West by North, the Space of one Hundred; to the West North West as many, to the North West eight Hundred; then we find on the Left the *Pafs* of the South, which is two Hundred and fifty Fathom wide, nine Fathom Water at its Entrance on the Side towards the River, and two Feet only where it goes out to the Sea. Two Hundred and fifty Fathom farther is the *Pafs* of the South West, nearly the same Breadth; never less than seven or  
eight

eight Feet Water. Hereabout the Country begins to be not so marshy, but it is overflowed during four Months of the Year. It is bounded on the Left by a Succession of little Lakes, which are at the End of that of the *Cbetimachas*; and on the Right by the Islands *de la Chandeleur* (*Candlemas*;) It is thought that between these Islands there is a Passage for the largest Vessels, and that it would be easy to make a good Port here. Great Barks may go up from the Sea to the Lake of the *Cbetimachas*, and nothing hinders from going thither to cut down the finest Oaks in the World, with which all this Coast is covered.

I think it would be best to stop all the Passes but the principal one, and nothing would be easier; to effect this we need only guide the floating Trees into them, with which the River is almost always covered. From hence it would follow in the first Place, that nothing would enter the River, not even Barks and Canoes, but by one Passage, which would defend the Colony from Surprise; in the second Place, that all the Force of the Current of the River being united, its sole Mouth would deepen itself as well as the Bar. I found this Conjecture on what happened at the two Points cut off, which I mentioned before. Then there would be nothing more to do than to preserve the Channel, and to hinder the floating Trees from causing any Obstruction in it, which does not appear to me to be very difficult.

As to what concerns the Breadth of the River between the Passes, *that is to say*, for the four Leagues from the Island *Toulouse* to the Pass of the South West, it is never more than fifty Fathom: But immediately above this Pass, the *Mississipi* insensibly recovers its usual Breadth, which is never less than a Mile, and seldom more than two Miles. Its Depth also encreases from the Bar upwards, which is the Reverse of all other Rivers, which are commonly the deeper the nearer they come to the Sea.

It would be here a proper Place, Madam, to entertain you with the Causes of the Failure of those numerous Grants, which have made so much Noise in *France*, and on which so many Persons have built such mighty Hopes;

but I had rather refer this to our first Interview, and confine myself at present to communicate to you my Thoughts of the Method that Persons should pursue in settling in this Country, if the bad Success of so many Efforts, and of such large Sums advanced to no Purpose, does not entirely disgust our Nation.

It appears to me that the Habitations ought not to be placed on the Side of the River; but I would have them removed higher up the Country, at least a Quarter of a League, or even half a League. I am not ignorant that it is possible to be freed from the Inconveniencies of the common Floods, by making good Ditches; but I think it is a great Inconvenience to build upon a Soil, where if you dig ever so little, you immediately find Water; and of Consequence one can have no Cellars. I am also of Opinion that they would be great Gainers by leaving the Lands all open to the annual Inundation of the River.

The Mud that settles on them, when the Waters are gone off, renews and enriches them: One might employ a Part of them in Pasturage, the other might be sown with Rice, Pulse, and in general with every Thing that requires rich and wet Lands. In Time we should see on both Sides the *Mississippi* nothing but Gardens, Orchards and Meadows, which would be sufficient to feed the People, and would supply Matter for an useful Commerce with our Islands, and the other neighbouring Colonies. In short, I think I could answer for it, having landed twice or thrice every Day as I came down the River, that almost every where, at a little Distance from the Sides, we may find high Grounds, where we might build on a solid Foundation, and where Wheat would grow very well, when they have given Air to the Country by thinning the Woods.

As to what concerns the Navigation of the River, it will always be difficult when we are to go up it, because of the Strength of the Current, which obliges us even in going down to be very cautious, often bears upon Points that run out, and upon Shoals; so that to navigate it safely,

ly, we must have Vessels that have both Sails and Oars. Moreover, as we cannot go forward at Night when it is cloudy, these Voyages will be always very tedious and expensive, at least till the Borders of the River have Settlements near each other, on the whole Extent of the Country, that is between the *Illinois* and the Sea.

Such, Madam, is this Country which they have so much talked of in *France* for some Years, and of which few People have a just Idea. We have not been the first *Europeans* to acknowledge the Goodness of it and to neglect it. *Ferdinand de Soto* run over it for three whole Years, and his Historian \* could not forgive him for not having made a solid Settlement here. “ Where could he go, says he, to do better ?”

Indeed I never heard *Louisiana* lightly spoken of, but by three Sorts of People that have been in the Country, and whose Testimony is certainly to be rejected. The first are the Mariners, who from the Road of *Ship Island*, or *Ile Dauphin*, could see nothing but that Island quite covered with a barren Sand, and the still more sandy Coast of *Biloxi*, and who suffered themselves to be persuaded that the Entrance of the *Mississippi* was impassable for Ships of a certain Bulk, or that it was necessary to go fifty Leagues up this River to find a Place that was habitable. They would have been quite of another Opinion, if they could have mistrusted those who talked to them in this Manner, and have discovered the Motives which induced them so to do.

The second Sort are poor Wretches, who being driven out of *France* for their Crimes, or bad Conduct, true or false, or who, whether to shun the Pursuit of their Creditors, have engaged themselves in the Troops and in the Grants. Both these looking upon this Country as a Place of Banishment, are disgusted at every Thing. They do not interest themselves in the Success of a Colony, of which they are Members against their Inclination, and they concern themselves very little about the Advantages

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which

\* *Garcilasso de la Vega's History of the Conquest of Florida.*

which it may procure for the State: The greatest Part of them are not even capable of perceiving these Advantages.

The third Sort are those, who having seen nothing but Poverty in a Country on which excessive Expences have been bestowed, attribute to it without Reflection what we ought entirely to cast on the Incapacity, or on the Negligence of those who had the Care of settling it. You also know very well the Reasons they had, to publish that *Louisiana* contained great Treasures, and that it brought us near the famous Mines of *St. Barbe*, and others still richer, from which they flattered themselves they should easily drive away the Possessors; and because these idle Stories had gained Credit with some silly People, instead of imputing to themselves the Error in which they were engaged by their foolish Credulity, they have discharged their Spleen on the Country, where they have found nothing of what had been promised them.

*I am, &c.*

LETTER

## L E T T E R    X X X I I I .

*Description of BILOXI: Of the CASSINE, or APALACHINE: Of the Myrtle Wax: Of MAUBILE: Of the Tchactas: Of the Bay of ST. BERNARD. Voyage from BILOXI to NEW ORLEANS by the Lake of PONTCHARTRAIN.*

MADAM,                      *On Board the ADOUR, April 5.*

**T**HE 26th, after having clofed my Letter I embarked, and we prepared to fail; but after we had made one Tack to the South, the Wind coming againft us obliged us to return to our Anchorage, and to remain there the two following Days. The 29th we weighed Anchor early in the Morning, but the Wind was fo weak, and the Sea ran fo high, that in twenty-four Hours we made but fourteen Leagues, which were but half the Way we had to go. The 30th we had neither the Wind more favourable, nor the Sea more calm till towards four in the Afternoon, when a Shower of Rain cleared up the Weather, which was very thick, and calmed the Sea: But after an Hour or two the Mift returned, and became fo thick, that not being able to fee how to fteer our Veffel, we came to an Anchor. The next Day as the Fog did not difperfe, M. de Pauger and I went into the Boat, to gain the Road of *L' Ifle aux Vaiffeaux* (*Ship Ifland*;) we vifited there fome Ships of *France*, and we got back to *Biloxi* about five in the Afternoon.

All this Coaft is extremely flat; Merchant Ships cannot come nearer it than four Leagues, and the fmalleft Brigantine than two: And even thefe are obliged to go further off when the Wind is North or North-Weft, or elfe

they find themselves on Ground; as it happened the Night before I debarked. The Road is the whole Length of *Ship Island*, which extends a small League from East to West, but has very little Breadth. To the East of this Island is *Dauphin Island*, formerly called *Massacre Island*, where there was a tolerable Port, which a Gust of Wind shut up in two Hours, a little more than a Year ago, by filling the Entrance of it with Sand. To the West of *Ship Island* lie one behind the other, the Island *des Chats* or *de Bienville*, the Island *a Corne*, and the *Isles de la Chandeleur*.

What they call *Biloxi* is the Coast of the Main Land, which is to the North of the Road. This is the Name of a Nation of Savages which were settled there formerly, but who are now retired towards the North West, on the Borders of a little River, called the *River of Pearls*, because they have found in it a poor Sort of Pearls. They could not have chosen a worse Situation for the General Quarters of the Colony; for it can neither receive any Succours from the Ships, nor give them any, for the Reasons I have mentioned. Besides this, the Road has two great Faults; the Anchorage is not good, and it is full of Worms, which damage all the Ships: The only Service it is of, is to shelter the Ships from a sudden Gust of Wind, when they come to discover the Mouth of the *Mississippi*, which having only low Lands, it would be dangerous to approach in bad Weather, without having first discovered it.

*Biloxi* is not more valuable for its Land, than for its Sea. It is nothing but Sand, and there grows there little besides Pines and Cedars. The *Cassine*, otherwise called *Apalachine*, also grows there every where in Plenty. It is a very small Shrub, the Leaves of which, infused like those of Tea, pass for a good Dissolvent, and an excellent Sudorific; but its principal Quality is diuretic. The *Spaniards* use it in all *Florida*; it is even their common Drink. It began to be used in *Paris* when I left it; but we were then in a bad Time for new Trials; they dropt as suddenly as they were taken up. Nevertheless, I know that

that several Persons who have used *Apalachine*, praise it greatly.

There are two Kinds, which differ only in the Size of the Leaves. Those of the large Sort are above an Inch long, the others are little more than half that Length. In Shape and Substance they are much like the Leaves of Box, except that they are rounder at the Ends, and of a brighter Green. The Name of *Apalachine*, which we have given this Shrub, comes from the *Apalaches*, a People of *Florida*, from whom the *Spaniards* learnt its Use, and this is their Manner of preparing it.

They set on the Fire in an earthen Pot a certain Quantity of Leaves, and they let them parch in it till their Colour becomes reddish, then they pour boiling Water on them gently, till the Pot is full. This Water takes the Colour of the Leaves, and it froths when it is poured out like Beer. They drink it as hot as possible, and the Savages would sooner go without eating, than miss drinking it Night and Morning; they think they should be sick, if they went without it, and it is said the *Spaniards* have the same Notion.

Half an Hour after they have taken it, it begins to pass off, and this lasts an Hour. It is hard to conceive how a Drink, which passes so soon through the Body, can be so nourishing as they say it is: It is easier to comprehend that it may cleanse away whatever hinders the Passage of the Urine, and Causes Diseases of the Reins. When the Savages would purge themselves, they mix Sea Water with it, and this produces great Evacuations; but if the Dose of Sea Water is too strong, it may kill them; and this is not without Example. I have seen it taken in *France* without so much ado in preparing it, and in the Manner one makes Tea, but only doubling the Quantity, and making it boil near half a Quarter of an Hour; and I make no Doubt but that it has then a great Effect.

They find here also a Kind of Myrtle with large Leaves, which I knew already was very common on the



Coast of *Acadia*, and of the *English Colonies* on this Continent. Some give it the fame of *Laurel*, but they are mistaken: Its Leaves have the Smell of Myrtle, and the *English* always call it the *Candle Myrtle*. This Shrub bears a little Grain, which being thrown into boiling Water, swims upon it, and becomes a green Wax, less fat and more brittle than that of Bees, but as good to burn. The only Inconvenience they have found in it is, that it breaks too easily, but they might mix it with another Wax extremely liquid, which they get in the Woods of the Islands of *America*; which however is not necessary, unless they want to make large Tapers. I have seen Candles made of it, which gave as good a Light, and which lasted as long as our's. Our Missionaries of the Neighbourhood of *Acadia* mix Suet with it, which makes them apt to run, because the Suet does not mix well with this Wax.

The *Sieur Alexandre*, who is here in the Service of the Company in the Quality of Surgeon and Botanist, mixes nothing with it, and his Candles have not this Fault; their Light is soft and very clear, and the Smoke they make when they are blown out, has a Smell of Myrtle very agreeable. He is in Hopes of finding a Way to blanch them, and he shewed me a Mass of it, which was above half blanched\*. He says, that if they would allow him five or six of those Slaves, who are least fit for the common Labours, to gather the Grain in the Season; he could make Wax enough to load a Ship every Year.

At thirteen or fourteen Leagues from *Biloxi*, inclining to the East, we find the River of the *Maubile*, which runs from the North to the South, and the Mouth of which is over-against *Dauphin Island*. It rises in the Country of the *Chicachas*, and its Course is about a hundred and thirty Leagues. Its Bed is very narrow, and it winds much, which does not hinder its being very rapid. But there are scarce any but the little *Pettiaugres* that can  
go

\* This has not been followed, as is said, because this Wax is considerably altered in blanching.

go up it when the Waters are low. We have on this River a Fort, which has been a long Time the principal Post of the Colony; yet the Lands are not good, but its Situation near the *Spaniards* made it convenient for trading with them; and this was all they fought for at that Time.

It is reported, that at some Leagues beyond the Fort, they have discovered a Quarry; if this is true, and the Quarry abounds with Stone, it may prevent the entire Desertion of this Post, which many Inhabitants begin to forsake, being unwilling to cultivate any longer a Soil which does not answer the Pains they take to improve it. Nevertheless, I do not believe that they will easily resolve to evacuate the Fort of *Maubile*, though it should serve only to keep in our Alliance the *Tchactas*, a numerous People, who make us a necessary Barrier against the *Chicachas*, and against the Savages bordering on *Carolina*. *Garcilasso de la Vega*, in his History of *Florida*, speaks of a Village called *Mauvilla*, which no doubt gave its name to the River, and to the Nation that was settled on its Borders. These *Mauvilians* were then very powerful; at present there are hardly any Traces left of them.

They are at present engaged in seeking to the West of the *Mississippi*, a Place fit to make a Settlement, which may bring us nearer to *Mexico*; and they think they have found it at a hundred Leagues from the Mouth of the River, in a Bay which bears the Name sometimes of *St. Magdalen*, and sometimes of *St. Louis*, but oftener that of *St. Bernard*. It receives many Rivers, some of which are pretty large; and it was there *M. de la Sale* landed, when he missed the Mouth of the *Mississippi*. A brigantine has been sent lately thither to reconnoitre it; but they found there some Savages, who appear little disposed to receive us, and whom they did not treat in such a Manner as to gain them to us. I also hear that the *Spaniards* have very lately prevented this Design, by settling there before us.

There is in Truth something more pressing, and better to be done, than this Enterprize. I know that Commerce is the Soul of Colonies, and that they are of no Use to  
such

such a Kingdom as our's but for this End, and to hinder our Neighbours from growing too powerful; but if they do not begin by cultivating the Lands, Commerce, after having enriched some private Persons, will soon drop, and the Colony will not be established. The Neighbourhood of the *Spaniards* may have its Use; but let us leave it to them to approach us as much as they will, we are not in a Condition, and we have no Need to extend ourselves farther. They are peaceable enough in this Country, and they will never be strong enough to give us any Uneasiness. It is not even their Interest to drive us out of this Country; and if they do not comprehend it yet, they will without Doubt soon be sensible that they cannot have a better Barrier against the *English* than *Louisiana*.

The Heat was already very troublesome at the *Biloxi* in the Middle of *March*, and I judge that when the Sun has once heated the Sand on which we walk here, the Heat must be excessive. They say indeed that without the Breeze, which rises pretty regularly every Day between nine and ten in the Morning, and continues till Sun-set, it would be impossible to live here. The Mouth of the *Mississippi* is in  $29^{\circ}$  Latitude, and the Coast of the *Biloxi* is in thirty. We had here in the Month of *February* some cold Weather, when the Wind blew from the North and North West, but it did not last long; and it was even followed by great Heats, with Thunder and Lightening, and Storms; so that in the Morning we were in Winter, and in the Afternoon in Summer, with some small Intervals of Spring and Autumn between both. The Breeze comes generally from the East: When it comes from the South, it is only a reflected Wind, which is much less refreshing; but it is still a Wind, and when it fails entirely there is no breathing.

The 24th of *March* I departed from *Biloxi*, where I had been stopt by a Jaundice, which held me above a Month, and I returned to *New Orleans*, where I was to embark in a Pink belonging to the Company, named the *Adour*. I made this Voyage in a Pettiagre, and I never yet made one more disagreeable. Five Leagues from *Biloxi*, the West Wind, which in three Hours brought me there, gave

gave Place to a South Wind so violent, that I was obliged to stop. I had scarce Time to set up my Tent, before we were overflowed with a Deluge of Rain accompanied with Thunder.

Two little Vessels that set out with me, were willing to take Advantage of the Wind, which carried them a great Way in a few Hours, and I was very sorry that I could not do the same; but I soon heard that their Fate deserved rather Pity than Envy: The first was in continual Danger of being lost, and her Passengers arrived at *New Orleans* rather dead than alive. The other was run a-ground about half Way, and five Persons were drowned in a Meadow, of which the Storm had made a Lake. The Wind continued all Night with the same Violence, and the Rain did not cease till the next Day at Noon. It began again at Night, and continued till Day, with Thunder.

When we sail in Sight of this Coast, it appears very pleasant, but when we come nearer, it is not the same Thing. It is all along a Sand, as at *Biloxi*, and we find on it only poor Woods. I observed here a Kind of Sorrel, which has the same Taste as our's, but the Leaves of which are narrower; and which causes, as they say, the Bloody-Flux. There is also in these Parts a Kind of Ash, which they call *Bois d'Amourette* (*Lovers Wood*;) the Bark of which is full of Prickles, and passes for a sovereign Remedy, and very speedy, against the Tooth-Ach.

The 26th it rained all the Day, and tho' the Sea was calm, we made little Way. We got a little farther the 27th, but the following Night we went out of our Course above the Island of *Pearls*. The next Day we went and encamped at the Entrance of Lake *Pontchartrain*, having left a little before on the Right the River of *Pearls*, which has three Mouths. The Separation of these three Branches is at four Leagues from the Sea, and *Biloxi* is a little above it.

In the Afternoon we crossed the Lake of *Pontchartrain*: This Traverse is seven or eight Leagues; and at Midnight  
we

we entered the *Bayouc* of *St. John*. Those who first navigated this Lake, found it, as they say, so full of Caimans, that they could scarce give a Stroke of the Oar without hitting one. They are at present very scarce in it, and we only saw some Traces of them at our encamping; for these Animals lay their Eggs on the Land.—After I had rested myself a little at coming out of the Lake, I pursued my Way by Land, and I arrived at *New Orleans* before Day.

The *Adour* was gone from thence, but not far, and I came up with her the next Day, the first of *April*. The Inundation was at its Height, and of Consequence the River much more rapid than I found it two Months before. Moreover a Ship, especially a *Pink*, is not so easily worked as a *Sloop*; and as our Sailors were not used to this Navigation, we had a great deal of Trouble to get out of the River. The Ship, driven sometimes to one Shore, and sometimes to the other, often tangled its Yards and Tackling in the Trees, and they were obliged more than once to cut away some of the Tackling, to free us from this Embarrassment. It was worse still when we came to the Passes, for the Currents always drew us into the nearest with great Violence. We got even into one of the smallest, and I could never yet conceive how we could get out again. We came off however with the Loss of an Anchor, which we left there: We had already lost one two Days before, so that we had only two remaining. Such a bad Beginning, made us a little thoughtful, but the Youth and little Skill of those with whom they had trusted us, gave us still more Uneasiness.

The *Adour* is a very pretty Vessel, of three Hundred Tons Burthen. It sailed from *France* with a very good Crew, under the Conduct of a Captain who understood his Business, and a Lieutenant who had a very good Character. The latter was left sick at *St. Domingo*: The Captain, soon after his Arrival at *Biloxi*, quarrelled with one of the Directors of the Company, who displaced him. To supply the Places of these two Officers, they had chosen a young Man of *St. Malo*, who came three Years ago to *Louisiana*, in the Station of Pilot's Mate, or Apprentice,

tice, and who since that Time got the Command of a Sloop in the Road of *Biloxi*, to go sometimes to *la Mau-bile*, and sometimes to *New Orleans*, with Provisions. He appears to have every Thing that is requisite to become a skilful Mariner ; he loves his Business, and applies himself to it ; but we should be very willing to see nothing of his little Experience, especially in a Navigation which is attended with great Difficulties.

He has for his second, an Officer who came from *France* in the Quality of Ensign ; he also is a young Man, very fit to be a Subaltern under Principals of Experience, who would leave nothing to him but the Care of executing their Orders. It would be hard to find a Seaman of more Courage in a Storm, which he has been used to from his Childhood, in the painful Fisheries of *Newfoundland* ; and two or three Shipwrecks, from which he has happily escaped, have given him a Confidence, which I shall be much surpris'd, if he does not come into a bad Plight by.

Our first Pilot appears a little more experienced than these two Officers, and they depend much on the Knowledge he has of the Channel of *Babama*, which he has pass'd once already. But this is but little to be acquainted with this Passage the most dangerous that there is in the *American Seas*, and where they reckon Shipwrecks by thousands. Moreover, I am greatly apprehensive that a certain self-sufficient Air which I observe in him, will produce some fatal Effect. He has two Subalterns, who are very good natured Fellows ; we have fifty failors of *Bretagne*, a little mutinous, but strong and vigorous ; almost all have been at the Cod-Fishery, and that is a good School. The Seamen appear to be Men of Judgment and Experience.

In Spite of all these Hindrances which I have mention'd, we anchored on the Outside of the Bar the second at Night ; we pass'd it the third, and for Want of Wind we could go no farther. Yesterday we were again stop't all the Day, and this Night we have had a Storm from the South,

South, which made us give Thanks to the Lord that we were not at Sea so near the Coast. I hope, Madam, to write to you in a short Time from *St. Domingo*, whither our Pink is bound to take in a Cargo of Sugar, which lies there ready for us. I take the Advantage of a Sloop which is going up to *New Orleans*, to send this Letter to you by a Vessel that is bound directly for *France*.

*I am, &c.*

LETTER

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## LETTER XXXIV.

*Voyage to the Channel of BAHAMA. Shipwreck of the  
ADOUR: Return to LOUISIANA along the Coast of  
FLORIDA: Description of that Coast.*

MADAM,

*At BILOXI, June 5.*

**I** Promised to write to you immediately from *St. Domingo*. But behold after two Months I am here, as far off as I was then: The Recital of the sad Event that has brought me back to this Colony, and which has but too well justified my Apprehensions, with some Observations on a Country which I did not expect to see, will make the Subject of this Letter. I am not, however, so much to be pitied as you may think. I am very well recovered of my Fatigues. I have gone through great Dangers, but have happily escaped from them: The Evil that is past is but a Dream, and often a pleasant one.

It was but half an Hour at most, after I had closed my Letter, when the Wind coming to the North West we prepared to sail. I thought that Respect due to the sacred Day of *Easter* would have engaged the Captain to have waited till the next Day, especially as it was past Noon; but he had few Provisions, and one Day's Delay might have had Consequences. Our Haste was attended with still worse. We soon lost Sight of Land, and at the End of an Hour's Sail, after having had the Pleasure of seeing the Waters of the River and those of the Sea mixt together without being blended, we no longer perceived any Difference, finding only Salt Water,

It



It may be said, perhaps, that we had quitted the right Channel, and I allow that it may be true; but that Struggle which we observed so near the Mouth, does not shew a River victorious, that opens itself a free Passage, and for twenty Leagues gives Laws to the Ocean. Besides, if this Fact was true, at least in the Time of the Inundation, in which Time we were, how came we to have so much Trouble to find the Mouth of the River? The Difference alone of the Colour of the Waters would have discovered it to any the least attentive.

In Regard to this Colour, I have said that the *Mississipi*, after its Junction with the *Missouri*, took the Colour of the Waters of that River, which are white: But would you believe it, Madam, that of all the Waters, that we can take for a Ship's Provision, there are none which keep sweet so long as these? Besides this, they are excellent to drink when they have been left to settle in Jars, at the Bottom of which they leave a Kind of white Tartar, which in all Likelihood, serves equally to give them the Colour they have, to purify them, and to preserve them.

The 12th at Noon, after having suffered excessive Heats for several Days, and more intolerable still in the Night than in the Day, we discovered Cape *Sed*, which is on the North Coast of the Isle of *Cuba*, and very high. At Sun-set we were over-against it, we then steered to the East, and sailed in Sight of the Shore; the next Morning, at Day-break, we were over-against the HAVANNAH: This City is about eighteen Leagues from Cape *Sed*, and about half-way we discover a very high Mountain, the Top of which is a Kind of Platform. They call it the *Table of Marianne*.

Two Leagues beyond the *Havannab*, there is a little Fort on the Coast, which is called *la Hougue*, from whence we begin to discover the *Pain de Matance* (*the Bread of Matance*.) This is a Mountain, the Top of which resembles an Oven, or if you please, a Loaf. It serves to reconnoitre the Bay of *Matance*, which is fourteen Leagues Distance from the *Havannab*. The Heat  
continued

continued increasing, and indeed we were on the Confines of the Torrid Zone: And withal, we had scarce any Wind, and got forward only by Favour of the Current, which runs to the East.

The 14th, about six in the Evening, we discovered from the Top of the main Mast the Coast of *Florida*. There is no prudent Mariner, who on discovering this Coast, if he has not at least six or seven Hours Day-light to run, does not tack about and keep off the Land till the next Day, and there being no Coast in the World where it is of more Importance to see every Thing clearly, because of the Diversity of the Currents, which we must never flatter ourselves that we certainly know. We had had an Instance of no long Date in the *Spanish* Galleons, which were lost here some Years ago, for Want of the Precaution which I have just now mentioned. The Chevalier *d'Here*, Captain of a Ship, who accompanied them, did all in his Power to engage the General of the Flota to wait till Day-Light to enter into the Channel, but he could not succeed with him, and he did not think proper to throw himself away along with him. Our Captain, who had received good Instructions on this Head, had resolved to make Use of them; but too great Readiness to hearken to others had the same Effect with Regard to him, as Presumption had on the *Spanish* General. His first Pilot, who thought himself the most skilful Man in the World, and his Lieutenant, who knew not how to doubt of any Thing, were of Opinion to continue the Route, and he had not the Resolution to oppose them. He proposed at least to make the North East, and the Consequences proved, that if his Opinion had prevailed, we had escaped Shipwreck. But he could prevail only for making the North North East, the Pilot positively affirming that the Currents bore violently to the East. He said the Truth, but it is only when we are near the Land on that Side, as they bear to the West on the other Side, on which we then were.

At seven o'Clock the Land appeared still at a considerable Distance, and they could not see it but from the

Round-Top; but half an Hour after, the Weather growing cloudy, a Sailor observed by the Help of some Flashes of Lightening, that the Water had changed Colour. He gave Notice of it, but his Information was received with Laughter, they told him it was the Lightening that had made the Water appear white. He still maintained his Opinion, many of his Companions were soon brought to agree with him: The Officers would have made a Jest of it still, but they cried so loud, and were so many in the same Opinion, that the Captain ordered the Lead to be thrown out. They found but six Fathom Water; the only sure Step they could have taken was to cast Anchor that Moment, but there was no Anchor ready. They thought to tack about, and perhaps it had been Time enough, if they had used Dispatch; but they amused themselves with sounding again, and they found only five Fathom Water. Presently after they sounded again and found only three. Represent to yourself, Madam, a Parcel of Children, who seeing themselves drawn towards the Brink of a Precipice, are only attentive to know the Depth of it, without taking any Measures to avoid it.

Now there arose a confused Noise, every Man cried out as loud as he could bawl, the Officers could not make themselves heard, and two or three Minutes after the Ship ran aground: There rose at this Instant a Kind of Storm, and the Rain which followed soon after made the Wind fall; but it soon rose again, settled in the South, and grew stronger than before. The Ship began immediately to lay hard upon her Helm, and they were afraid that the Main-Mast, which at every Shock rose pretty high, would jump out of its Step and split the Ship's Bottom. It was tried in the usual Way, condemned, and cut down immediately, after the Captain had given it the first Stroke with a Hatchet, according to Custom.

Then the Lieutenant went into the Boat, to try to discover in what Place we were, and in what Condition the Ship was. He observed that in the fore Part we had but four Feet Water, that the Bank on which we were wrecked was so small, that it was but just large enough to receive the Ship, and that all round it she would have floated.

ed. But if we had escaped this Bank, we could not have shunned another, for we were surrounded with them, and it is certain we should not have met with one so commodious.

The Wind continued to blow violently; our Ship continued to bear hard upon her Helm, and at every Shock we expected it to split. All the Effects of Fear were painted on our Faces, and after the first Tumult formed by the Cries of the Sailors who worked the Ship, and by the Groans of the Passengers, who expected Death every Moment, a deep and mournful Silence prevailed through all the Company. We heard afterwards that some Persons took their Measures secretly not to be nonplussed, in Case the Vessel should go to Pieces: Not only the Boat, but the Canoe also were in the Water, with every Thing in Readiness, and some trusty Sailors were ordered privately to be ready at the first Signal. They assured me afterwards, that they had agreed not to leave me in the Danger.

This is certain, that I passed the Night without closing my Eyes, and in the Situation of a Man who does not expect to see the Day again. It appeared however, and discovered to us the Land at more than two Leagues from us. It was not that which we discovered at first, and which we saw still at a great Distance, but a low Land, and which appeared to us very unfit to be inhabited. Nevertheless, this Sight was a Pleasure to us, and gave us a little Courage.

Then they considered if there was no Likelihood of getting the *Abour* afloat again, and because it was good to have two Strings to our Bow, they thought at the same Time of the Means of getting out of such a bad Situation, supposing it impossible to recover the Ship. Then they recollected that they shipped a flat-bottom'd Boat, with Design to use it at *St. Domingo*, to load the Sugars they were to take in there. This was a very prudent Precaution of the Captain, who had been told that in that Country the Loading often detains Ships in the Road much longer than is convenient for the Interest of

the Owners, and the Health of the Ship's Company: But Providence had another View without Doubt in inspiring him with this Thought. This Boat saved us.

I do not well know what passed the same Day between the Officers and the Pilot, but there was no more Talk of recovering the Vessel. Many have said, that all their Efforts for this Purpose would have been usefess; but the Captain complained to me more than once, that they would not suffer him to make this Attempt in the Way he chose. They resolv'd therefore the same Day to carry all the People to Land, and they laboured all the Morning to make a Raft, that they might not be obliged to make several Trips.

However, they did not think proper yet to forsake the Ship, and there were none but the Passengers that were embarked in the Long-Boat, and on the Raft. At a Gun-Shot from the Ship we found the Sea very high, and the Biscuit which we were carrying to Land was wetted: A little Pettiaugre that followed the Boat could with Difficulty keep above Water, and the Raft which carried twenty-two Men, was carried so far by the Current, that we thought it lost.

The Boat, in which I was made haste to Land, that it might go to assist the others; but as we were ready to go ashore, we perceived a pretty large Company of Savages armed with Bows and Arrows, which approached us. This Sight made us reflect, that we were without Arms, and we stopt some Time without daring to advance. We even thought, all Things well considered, that it would be imprudent to go any farther. The Savages perceived our Distress, and easily conceived the Cause of it. They came near us, and cried out to us in *Spanish*, that they were Friends. When they saw this did not encourage us, they quitted their Arms, and came to us, being up to the Waist in Water.

We were soon surrounded by them, and it is certain, that embarrassed as we were with Things in a Boat, where we could not stir, it was very easy for them to destroy

stroy us. They asked us at first if we were *English*; we answered them, we were not, but allies and good Friends of the *Spaniards*: They seemed much rejoiced at this, inviting us to land on their Island, and assuring us we should be as safe there as in our Ship. Mistrust on some Occasions only serves to discover Weakness, and gives Rise to dangerous Surmises. Therefore, we thought it best to accept the Invitation of these Barbarians, and followed them to their Island, which we found to be one of the Islands called *the Martyrs*.

But what seems most remarkable is, that we determined to take this Step upon the coming up of the Pettiaugre, in which there were but five or six Men, whilst we were talking with the Savages; we certainly ran a great Risque in trusting ourselves without Arms into the Hands of these *Floridans*, and we were well convinced of it in the Sequel: Four or five Men more were not capable of making them change their Design, supposing these Barbarians had any ill Intentions against us; and I never think of the Boldness which this light Reinforcement inspired us with, but I represent to myself those Persons, who cannot go alone in the dark, and whom the Presence of a Child immediately emboldens, by employing their Imagination, which alone causes all their Fear.

However, we were no sooner landed on the Island, than we began to distrust the Officers, having likewise but little Ground to depend on the Savages. The Captain of the *Adour* had brought us hither; but as soon as he had put us on Shore, he took his Leave of us, saying, he was obliged to return on Board, where he had many Things to do, and he would send us directly whatever we wanted, especially Arms. There was nothing in this but what was reasonable, and we easily conceived that his Presence was necessary in his Ship: But we reflected that he had brought away only the Passengers, and that all the Ship's Company would be compleat, upon the Return of the Captain.

This made us suspect that the Boat, which they spoke of to us, was only a Lure to amuse us, and they had only

landed us as People that were a Burthen to them, that they might take Advantage of the Boat and the Canoe, to go to the *Havannah*, or to *St. Augustin* in *Florida*. We were all more confirmed in these Suspitions, when we found that we all had the same Thought; this Agreement made us judge that it was not without Foundation: Upon which it was resolved among us, that I should return with the Captain to the Ship, in order to prevent unjust Resolutions, if they were tempted to take any.

I therefore declared to the Captain, that since his Chaplain resolved to stay in the Island, it was not proper that I should remain there also; that it was better to separate us, and that I was resolved not to lie from on board the Ship, whilst any Person remained on board. He seemed a little surpris'd at my Discourse, but he made no Objection, and we set off. I found on my Arrival at the Ship, that they had spread the Sails, to see, as they said, if it was possible to disengage it. But there were many other Manœuvres to make for this End, and they did not think fit to try them.

In half an Hour the Wind turned to the East, and grew very strong, which obliged us to furl the Sails: But this Storm proved the Means of saving those who were upon the Float, and who had been carried a great Way out to Sea: The Billows drove them back again towards us, and as soon as we perceived them, the Captain sent them his Long-Boat, which took them in Tow, and brought them again to the Ship. These unfortunate People, who were for the most Part poor Passengers, expected nothing but Death, and on our Side, we began to despair of saving them, when Providence raised this little Storm to save them from perishing at Sea.

My Prefence was more necessary in the Ship than I had imagined. The Sailors, during the Captain's Absence, were resolved to drown in Wine their Sorrow and Cares. In Spite of the Lieutenant, whom they did not much respect, and whom many did not love, they had broke open the Locker that secured the Stores, and we found them almost all dead drunk, And I saw some Symptoms amongst them

them of Mutiny and Desertion, from which I judged there was every Thing to fear, if it was not remedied betimes; and the more, as the Captain, though liked well enough by the Sailors, knew not how to make himself obeyed by the inferior Officers, the greatest Part of whom were much inclined to mutiny, and who could not bear his Lieutenant.

To encrease our Uneasiness, a Company of Savages followed us close, and we conceived, that if we had no Violence to fear from them, it would not be easy to shun their Importunities, and particularly, that we ought to guard well what we were not willing to lose. The most distinguished called himself *Don Antonio*, and spoke *Spanish* pretty well. He had learnt still better the *Spanish* Gravity and Manners. If he saw any one well dressed, he asked him if he was a *Cavallero*, and he had begun with telling us that he was one, and the most distinguished of his Nation. However, he had not very noble Inclinations; he longed for every Thing he saw, and if they had not been denied, he and his Company had left us nothing but what they could not carry away. He asked me for my Girdle; I told him him I could not spare it; he conceived that it was only necessary for my Cassock, and asked it of me with great Importunities.

We learnt of him that almost all the Savages of his Village had been baptized at the *Havannah*, whither they made a Voyage once a Year. They are forty-five Leagues distant from it, and they make this Passage in little Petti-augres very flat, in which People would not venture to cross the *Seine* at *Paris*. *Don Antonio* farther informed us that he had a King, who was called *Don Diego*, and that we should see him next Day. He then asked us what Resolution we intended to take, and offered to conduct us to *St. Augustin*. We let him know that we took his Offer in good Part, we treated him and all his Company well, and they returned well satisfied to all Appearance.

The Bodies of these Savages are redder than any I have yet seen: We could never learn the Name of their Nation: But although they did not appear to have the best



Disposition, they did not seem to us so mischievous, as to be of those *Calos* or *Carlos*, so much decried for their Cruelties, and whose Country is not far from the *Martyrs*. I do not believe that these are Men-Eaters; but perhaps they behaved so well to us only because we were the strongest. I know not what Quarrel they have had with the *English*, but we had great Reason to believe that they did not love them. The Visit of *Don Antonio* might very well proceed from no other Motive than to enquire if we were not of that Nation, or if it would not be too great a Risk for them to attack us.

The 16th I thought myself obliged to go to encourage those who remained in the Island, and to whom the Savages kept the Promise they had made them the Evening before. I passed almost the whole Day with them; and in the Evening, at my Return, I found all the Ship in an Uproar. The Authors of the Disturbance were inferior Officers, and all the best Sailors were of their Side. They wanted to be revenged of the Lieutenant; who till then, as they said, had treated them with great Haughtiness and Severity. The Wine, which they had at Discretion, heated their Heads more and more, and it was scarce any longer possible to make them hear Reason.

The Captain shewed on this Occasion a Prudence, a Steadiness, and a Moderation, which one would not have expected from his Age, his Want of Experience, and his past Conduct: He knew how to make himself beloved and feared by People, who scarce any longer hearkened to any Thing but their Fury and Caprice. The Lieutenant, on his Part, confounded the most mutinous by his Intrepidity; and having found Means to separate and employ them, he carried his Point, and reduced them to Obedience. They had at last got from the Bottom of the Hold, the Boat so much promised, and they had carried it to the Island. It was necessary to fit it up, and to lodge themselves till it was ready, and to get out of the Ship Provisions and Ammunition, to fortify themselves against any Surprize of the Savages. The Captain employed in these Works all those whom he most distrusted; and entertained

treated of me to stay on board, to assist the Lieutenant in keeping the rest to their Duty.

The 17th, at Day-break, there appeared a Sail two Leagues from us. We made Signals of Distress with our Flag \*, and some Time after we observed that he lay by to wait for us. Immediately the Lieutenant took the Canoe, and went aboard to ask the Captain if he would take us all in. But it was only a Brigantine of one hundred Tons, which had been plundered by Pirates, and which for three Days had made many Efforts to get out of this Bay ; where the Currents, the Captain said, being stronger this Year than had ever been known, had drawn his Brigantine against all his Endeavours to the contrary, though he made the East-North-East. It is true, that we had this only from our Lieutenant, whom some suspected of inventing this Story, that he might attribute to the Strength and Irregularity of the Currents, the Misfortune in which his Obstinacy had engaged us.

However that might be, the *English* Captain consented to take in twenty Persons, if we would supply him with Provisions and Water of which they were in great Want. The Condition was accepted, and the Captain approached us in Fact, with Intention to drop an Anchor as near us as possible ; but a strong Wind from the South rising on a sudden, he was obliged to pursue his Route, that he might not expose himself to the Danger of being lost, in endeavouring to succour us. The 19th we again saw three Ships under Sail. They went to make them the same Proposals as to the first, but they could not persuade them to accept them. They were also *English*, who complained of being plundered by Pirates.

The same Day, as there was nothing left in the *Adour* that we could carry away, we took our last Leave of her, with so much the more Regret, as that for the four Days which she had been a-ground, she had not taken a Drop  
of

\* This is done by hoisting the Flag to the Top of the Staff, and twirling it about it so that it can't fly abroad.

of Water; and we went all to Land after Sun-set. We found here some Tents, which they had set up with the Sails of the Ship; a Guard-House, where Day and Night they kept a strict Watch; and some Provisions, well secured in a Warehouse, where they also kept a Guard.

The Island in which we were, might be about four Leagues in Compass. There were some to the Right and Left of different Extents; and that where the Savages had their Cabins, was the least of all, and the nearest our's. They lived there entirely by fishing; and all this Coast abounds with Fish, in Proportion as the Earth is incapable of supplying any Necessaries for Life. As to their Drefs, some Leaves of Trees, or a Piece of Bark, suffices them; they have nothing covered but what Decency teaches all Men to hide.

The Soil of these Islands is a very fine Sand, or rather a Kind of Lime calcin'd, every where intermixed with a white Coral, which is easily reduced to Powder. There are also only Bushes and Shrubs here, without a single Tree. The Shores of the Sea are covered with tolerably fine Shells; and they find here some Sponges, which seem to be thrown up by the Waves of the Sea in stormy Weather. They say, that what keeps the Savages here, are the Shipwrecks, which are common enough in the Channel of *Babama*, and of which they always make their Advantage. We do not even see a single Beast in all these Islands; which seem to be accursed by GOD and Man, and where there would be no Inhabitants, if there were not found some Men solely attentive to take Advantage of others Misfortunes, and often to put the finishing Stroke to them.

The 20th, *Don Diego* paid us a Visit. He is a young Man, of a Stature under the middle Size, and of an Appearance bad enough. He was almost as naked as his Subjects, and the few Clothes he had on were not worth picking off a Dunghill. He had about his Head a Kind of Fillet, of I know not what Stuff, and which some Travellers would certainly have called a *Diadem*. He had no Attendants,

Attendants, no Mark of Dignity; nothing, in a Word, to shew who he was. A young Woman pretty well shap-ed, and decently dressed as a Savage, accompanied him, and they told us it was the Queen his Spouse.

We received their *Floridan* Majesties with some State-lines; however, we showed them some Marks of Friendship, and they seemed very well satisfied with us. But we could discover nothing in these of those Caciques, whose Power and Riches are so highly extolled by the Historian of *Florida*. We said a few Words to Don *Diego*, of the Offer that Don *Antonio* had made to us, to carry us to *St. Augustin*, and he gave us Room to hope, that he would do us all the Services that lay in his Power. To engage him the more in our Interest, I made him a Present of one of my Shirts, and he received it with a great deal of Thankfulness.

He came again the next Day, wearing my Shirt over his Rags, which hung down to his Heels; and he let us know that he was not properly the Sovereign of his Nation, but that he held his Dignity under another Cacique, farther off. However he is absolute in his own Village, and had just then given a very good Proof of it. Don *Antonio*, who appeared to be twice his Age, and who could easily have beaten two such, came to see us soon after, and told us that Don *Diego* had thrashed him soundly, because he had got drunk in the *Adour*, where, in all Likelihood, they had forgotten some Remains of Brandy.—The most considerable Difference that appears between the Savages of *Canada* and those of *Florida*, is the Dependence which the latter have on their Chiefs, and the Respect they shew them. Also, we see not in them, as in the Savages of *Canada*, those elevated Sentiments, and that Nobleness, which Independence produces, and which is supplied in civilized States by the Principles of Religion and Honour, which proceed from Education.

The 22d, Don *Diego* came to dine with us without Ceremony, dressed as the Day before. He seemed to be much pleased with this Dress, which gave him nevertheless

less a very ridiculous Air ; which, added to his ill Look, made him exactly resemble a Man who goes to make the *Amende honorable* \*. Either from Religion or Antipathy, we could never engage him to eat any Meat : We had still the Remains of a Fish, which he had sent us the Day before, he eat some of this, and drank Water.

After Dinner we were willing to talk of Business ; but he told us directly, that after having well considered of our Proposal, he could neither give us Don *Antonio*, nor any of his People, to conduct us to *St. Augustin*, because on the Route which we were obliged to take, there were some numerous Nations, with whom he was at War. I know not whether they did not then repent of having so inconsiderately forsaken the *Adour*, for after Don *Diego* left us, they sent the Canoe to her ; but those who went in it to her, told us at their Return, that the Savages had broke her to Pieces, and that she was filling with Water.

The 23d, the Boat was finished, and they thought in earnest to resolve what Course to take. They had the Choice of two, and they were divided : Some were for hazarding the Passage to the *Havannab*, the others were for following the Coast to *St. Augustin*. The latter Course seemed the safest, the former was the shortest, But if this was a prudent Course, we ought to have done it the Day after the Shipwreck, or rather have sent the Long-Boat to the *Havannab*, to have informed the Governor of our Situation, and to have asked him to send us a Brigantine. The Rigging alone of the *Adour*, would have been more than sufficient to have repaid the Expences he might have been at.

However that might be, the greatest Part of the Ship's Company were of the last Opinion ; it was impossible to bring them to any other. They were forty ; and they demanded the Boat and the Canoe, and we were obliged to

\* *That is*, to do Penance in a white Sheet, with a Torch in his Hand.

to yield to their Request. The Chaplain of the *Adour* was of this Number: If it had not been so, I should have thought myself obliged to accompany them; but it was necessary to divide the spiritual Aids, as we did the Provisions. The next Morning, after Mass, the Chaplain, who was a *Dominican* Father, desired that I would bless the three Vehicles: I obeyed, and I baptized the Boat, and called it the *St. Saviour*. In the Evening after Prayers, I made a last Effort to bring all our People to be of one Opinion; I easily obtained, that the Day following they should depart together, that they should go to encamp in the Island that was farthest from the Land, and that they should determine there according to the Wind.

We departed in Fact the 25th about Noon, and we failed together for several Leagues; but towards Sun-set, we saw the Boat take the Channel, that they must cross to go to the *Havannab*, without concerning themselves about the Canoe, whose Provisions they carried; and which not being able to follow them, was obliged to join us. We received them kindly, tho' amongst those who were in it, there were some whom we had Reason not to be pleased with. We landed in the Island, where we had agreed all to unite, and where a Company of Savages were come already, I know not with what Design. We were upon our Guard all Night, and we departed very early in the Morning.

The Weather was charming, and the Sea fine, and our Company began to envy those that were in the Boat as having taken the better Course. Some began to murmur at it, and our Chiefs thought it best to seem willing to satisfy them: So they took the Route of the Channel. After two Hours, the Wind grew stronger, and they fancied they saw the Appearance of a Storm; then they all agreed that it was Rashness to engage ourselves in such a long Traverse, in such Boats as our's; for nothing could be weaker than our Boats, which took Water every where: But as to go to *St. Augustin*, we must have gone all the Way back which we had made hitherto, we unanimously agreed to go towards *Biloxi*.

So

So we made the West, but we did not advance much that Day, and we were obliged to pass the Night in the Boat, which was far from having Room enough for us all to lie down. The 27th, we encamped in an Island, where we found some Cabins forsaken, some Paths a great deal trodden, and the Footsteps of *Spanish* Shoes. This is the first of the *Turtle Islands*. The Soil is the same as at the *Martyrs*. I can't conceive what Men can do in such a bad Country, and so distant from any human Habitation. We still steered West, and we sailed with such a Rapidity, that could only proceed from the Currents.

We went a great Way again the 25th, till Noon. Though we had little Wind, the Islands seemed to run Post-haste by the Side of us. At Noon we took the Elevation, which we found twenty-four Degrees fifteen Minutes. If our Sea Charts were exact, we were at the West End of the *Turtle Islands*. It was hazardous to engage ourselves in the open Sea, and If I could have governed, we should have left all these Islands on the Left Hand; but our Officers were afraid they should not find a Passage between them and the Continent. They had great Reason to repent it, for we were two Days without seeing Land, though we steered continually North and North East.

Then our Sailors began to despair, and in reality there needed only a Gust of Wind, several of which we had often met with, to drown us. Even the calm Weather had its Inconveniencies; they were obliged to row all Day, and the Heat was excessive. The Sailors had Reason enough to be dissatisfied: The Obstinacy of two or three People had exposed us to the Danger in which we found ourselves; but the Mischief was done, and required another Remedy, than Murmuring. Since our Departure from *Louisiana*, I could not prevail with the greatest Part to come to the Sacraments, very few had even performed the Duties of *Easter*. I took Advantage of this Occasion to engage every Body to promise to confess themselves, and to communicate as soon as we should come again to Land: The Promise was scarcely made, when the Land appeared.

We

We steered directly for it, and we arrived there before Noon. The 4th at Noon we were in 26 Degrees 56 Minutes Latitude. We had always the main Land in Sight, without being able to approach it, because it was bordered with Islands and Peninsulas, the greatest Part of which are low and barren, and between which there is scarce a Passage for a Canoe or Bark. What we suffered the most from was, that we found no Water in them. The next Day we were often stopped by contrary Winds, but we found Shelter every where, and we got a small Matter by shooting and fishing. We wanted nothing but Water: I took the Advantage of this Delay to make every Body keep the Promise they had made of coming to the Sacrament.

It appears that there are few Savages in all this Country. We saw only four one Day, who came towards us in a Pettiagre: We waited for them; but when they had reconnoitred us, they did not dare to approach, and made all the Haste they could back to Shore. The 10th, we were obliged to retrench the Allowance of Brandy, which we had hitherto distributed every Day to each Man, as there was but little left, which we judged necessary to preserve for more pressing Occasions. We began also to be sparing of our Provisions, especially the Biscuit, Part of which had been spoiled: So that we were reduced to great Extremities, having often at a Meal only a Handful of Rice, which we were obliged to boil in brackish Water.

But this Coast is the Kingdom of Oysters, as the great Bank of *Newfoundland*, and the Gulph and the River *St. Laurence* are that of the Cod-Fish. All these low Lands, which we coasted as near as possible, are bordered with Trees, to which there are fastened a prodigious Quantity of little Oysters, of an exquisite Taste: Others, much larger and less dainty, are found in the Sea in such Numbers, that they form Banks in it, which we take at first for Rocks on a Level with the Surface of the Water. As we did not dare to leave the Shore, we often entered into pretty deep Bays, which we were obliged to go round,  
which



which greatly lengthened our Way; but as soon as the main Land difappeared, our Men thought themselves loft.

The 15th, in the Morning, we met a *Spanifh* Long-Boat, in which were about fifteen Perfons: They were Part of the Crew of a Ship which had been wrecked about the River *St. Martin*. It was twenty-five Days fince this Misfortune had happened, and for forty-two Perfons they had only a little Boat, which they made Ufe of by Turns, and which obliged them to make very fhort Journies. This Meeting was a good Providence in our Favour, for without the Inftitution which the *Spanifh* Captain gave us, we could never have found the Route which we were to keep; and the Uncertainty of what might become of us, might have inclined our Mutineers to fome Violence, or to fome desperate Refolution.

The next Night we were in very great Danger. We all lay in a little Ifland, except three or four Men who guarded the Boat. One of them, after having lighted his Pipe, imprudently fet his Match on the Side of the Boat, exactly in the Place where the Arms, the Powder, and the Provisions were kept in a Cheft covered with a Tarpaulin: He fell afleep after this, and while he fleep, the Tarpaulin took Fire. The Flame waked him as well as his Companions, but in one Minute more the Boat had been blown up or funk; and I leave you to judge what would have become of us, having only a Canoe, which could hold but the fixth Part of our Company, without Provisions, Ammunition, or Arms, and on an Ifland of Sand, in which there grew only fome wild Herbs.

The next Day, the 16th the Canoe left us to go to join the *Spaniards*. We had the Wind againft us, and we were obliged to go with the Sounding-Line in Hand, becaufe the Coaft was fo flat, and fo paved with fharp Flints, that at fix Leagues from the Shore our Boat, which drew but two Feet Water, was every Moment in Danger of ftriking and bulging. We were in the fame Diftrefs the two following Days, and the 20th we encamped in an Ifland which makes the Eaft Point of the Bay

Bay of the *Apalaches*. All Night we saw Fires on the main Land, which we were near, and we had observed the same for some Days.

The 21<sup>st</sup> we set off with a very thick Fog, which being soon dispersed, we saw some Buoys, which the *Spaniards* had told us to follow. We followed them making the North, and we found that without this Help it was impossible to shun the Sand-Banks, of which this Coast is full, and which for the most Part are covered with Oysters. About ten o'Clock we perceived a square Fort of Stone, with pretty regular Bastions; we immediatly hoisted the white Flag, and a Moment after they called out to us in *French* not to come any nearer.

We stop'd, and in a Moment we saw a Pettiagre coming towards us, with three Men in it. One of the three was a *Biscayneer*: He had been a Gunner in *Louisiana*, and he was in the same Employment at *St. Mark*. After the common Questions, the *Biscayneer* was of Opinion, that only the Captain of the *Adour* and I should go to speak with the Commandant, which we accordingly did. This Commandant was only a Deputy, and a Man of Sense: He made no Difficulty to let our Boat come up to the Fort, and he invited our Officers and the principal Passengers to Dinner; but it was after our boat had been visited, and all the Arms and Ammunition taken out, and carried to his own Magazine, with a Promise to restore them when we should depart.

This Post, which M. *Delille* has set down in his Chart under the Name of *St. Marie d'Apalache*, was always called *St. Mark*. The *Spaniards* had formerly a considerable Settlement here, but which was reduced to be of little Consequence, when in 1704 it was entirely destroyed by the *English* of *Carolina*, accompanied by a great Number of the Savages called *Alibamons*. The *Spanish* Garrison, which consisted of thirty-two Men, were made Prisoners of War; but the Savages burnt 17 of them, among whom were three *Franciscan* Friars; and of seven thousand *Apalaches*, who were in this Canton, and who had almost all embraced Christianity, there remained at

*St. Mark* but four hundred, who withdrew towards the *Maubile*, where the greatest Part of them are at present.

The Forests and Meadows near the Fort are full of wild Cattle and Horses, which the *Spaniards* let run here, and as they want them, they send some Savages, who take them with Snares. These Savages are also *Apalaches*, who probably went away when the *English* took this Place, and who returned after they were retired. For the rest, this Bay is exactly what *Garcilasso de la Vega*, in his History of *Florida*, calls the Port of *Auté*. The Fort is built on a little Eminence, surrounded by Marshes, and a little below the Confluence of two Rivers, one of which comes from the North East, and the other from the North West. They are but small, and full of *Caimans*, and notwithstanding pretty well stored with Fish.

Two Leagues higher, on the River of the North West, there is a Village of *Apalaches*; and in the Lands to the West, at a League and half from the Fort, there is a second. This Nation formerly very numerous, and which, divided into several Cantons, possessed a very large Country, is at present reduced to be very inconsiderable. It embraced *Christianity* long ago, yet the *Spaniards* do not trust them, and they do right: For besides that these *Christians*, being destitute of all spiritual Aids for a great Number of Years, are no longer such but in Name, their Conquerors treated them at first with so much Severity, that they ought always to look upon them as Enemies not well reconciled. It is difficult to make good *Christians* of People, to whom their first Treatment rendered *Christianity* odious.

They told us at *St. Mark*, that a Resolution was taken to re-establish this Post in its first State, and that they expected here five thousand Families: This is much more than the *Spaniards* of *Florida* can raise.—The Country is fine, well wooded, well watered, and they say that the farther you advance into the Country, the more fruitful it grows. They confirmed to us at this Fort, what the *Spaniards* whom we met had told us already, that the Savages of the *Martyrs*, and their King *Don Diego*, were

were a bad Sort of People, and that if we had not kept a good Guard, they would have done us some Injury. They told us farther, that a *Spanish* Brigantine being lately wrecked near the Place where we met four Savages in a Pettiaugre, all the Crew had been impaled, and eaten by these Barbarians.

*St. Mark* is dependent on *St. Augustin* for Military and Civil Affairs, and on the *Havannab* in Spirituals. Notwithstanding, it is the Convent of the *Cordeliers* of *St. Augustin* that sends a Chaplain hither: I found one here, who was a very amiable Person, and who did us very great Service. He informed us, that the Commandant of *St. Mark* wanted to detain us till he had given Advice of our Arrival to the Governor of *St. Augustin*, and had received his Orders. I desired him to ask this Officer if he was in a Condition to support us all the Time that we should be here, since what Provisions we had left were scarce sufficient to carry us to *Louisiana*.

He acquitted himself very well of his Commission, and his Discourse accompanied with some Presents, which he hinted to us that we ought to make the Governor, had all the Effect which we expected from it. This Officer granted us, with a very good Grace, some Guides, which we desired of him for *St. Joseph*, which is thirty Leagues from *St. Mark*; and the Way, as we had been informed, not easy to find.

This obliged us to stay the next Day, and I was not sorry for it; for besides being pretty well lodged in the Fort with the *Cordelier* (a Distinction that was paid to me, and which I owed to my Habit) I was glad to take a short Survey of the Environs of the Fort. They go by Land from *St. Mark* to *St. Augustin*; the Journey is eighty Leagues, and the Way very bad.

We departed the 22d in the Morning, and the 25th, about ten o'Clock, our Guides made us undertake a Traverse of three Leagues, to enter into a Kind of Channel, formed on one Side by the Continent, and on the other by a String of Islands, of various Extents. Without our

Guides, we should never have dared to engage ourselves among them, and we should have missed the Bay of *St. Joseph*. We were now almost destitute of Provisions, and the Difficulty of finding Water encreased every Day. One Evening that we had dug at ten Paces from the Sea, on a pretty high Ground, and got none but brackish Water, which was impossible to drink, I thought of making a shallow Hole close to the Sea Side, and in the Sand: It immediately filled with Water that was tolerably fresh, and as clear as if it had been taken from the finest Spring; but after I had filled a Vessel, it flowed no more, which made me judge that it was Rain Water, gathered in this Place, meeting with a hard Bottom, and I judge that this may often happen.

As soon as we had got a-head of the Islands, we failed till ten o'Clock at Night. Then the Wind fell, but the Tide which began to ebb, supplied the Want of it, and we went forward all Night. This is, the first Time that I observed any regular Tides in the Gulph of *Mexico*, and the two *Spaniards* told us, that from this Place to *Pensacole* the Flux is twelve Hours, and the Reflux as much. Next Day, the 26th, a contrary Wind kept us till Night, in an Island pretty well wooded, which is ten or twelve Leagues long, and where we killed as many Larks and Woodcocks as we pleased. We saw also here a great Number of Rattle-Snakes. Our Guides called it the *Ile des Chiens* (of Dogs,) and from the Beginning of it, they reckoned ten Leagues to *St. Mark*, and fifteen to *St. Joseph*; but they were certainly mistaken in the last Article, for it is at least twenty Leagues, and very long ones.

The 27th, at eleven o'Clock at Night, we ran upon a Bank of Oysters as large as the Crown of my Hat, and we were above an Hour in getting off again. We went from thence to pass the Night in a Country House, belonging to a Captain of the Garrison of *St. Joseph* named *Dioniz*, and at our Arrival they told us very strange News.

They assured us that all *Louisiana* was evacuated by the *French*; that a large *French* Ship came to *Ship Island*, and had embarked there the Commandant, the Director, and all

all the Officers ; that after their Departure, the Savages had killed all the Inhabitants and Soldiers that were left, except a small Number who had saved themselves in two Sloops ; that being in Want of Provisions, they were gone to the Bay of *St. Joseph* ; that those who arrived first were well received, but that they would not permit the others to land, for Fear lest so many *French* being together, they should be tempted to make themselves Masters of this Post, which we formerly possessed.

All this Story had so little Probability, that I could not possibly believe it ; but it was told with so many Circumstances, and coming from People who had so little Interest to impose upon us, and who being but at seven Leagues from *St. Joseph*, might have News from thence every Day, that it seemed hard to think it should be without any Foundation. The greatest Part of our People were struck with it ; and I found in myself that these general Confusions are communicated to the Heart, in Spite of our Understanding, and that it is as impossible not to feel some Fear in the midst of People who are seized with it, as not to be afflicted with those that weep. I did not in the least believe what they had just told us, and yet I could not be easy.

In the mean Time our Company, in Spite of their Despair, finding Plenty of Provisions, and the Servants of the *Sieur Dioniz* very obliging, feasted all the rest of the Night. In the Morning our Guides took Leave of us, according to their Orders. We had no further need of them ; for besides that we could not miss our Way to *St. Joseph*, we met with at the House of *M. Dioniz* a *Frenchman*, a Soldier in his Company, and an old Deserter from *Alauba*, who was heartily tired of the *Spanish* Service, among whom he was often almost starved, as he said, though they paid him well : So we easily engaged him to go with us to *St. Joseph*, and from thence to *Louisiana*, supposing he could get his Discharge.

We arrived about five in the Afternoon at *St. Joseph*, where we were perfectly well received by the Governor. We found there two great Boats of *Biloxi*, with four

*French* Officers, who were come to reclaim some Deferters, but they did not find them here. We had seen them the 24th, being *Whit-Sunday*, in a Bark that was under Sail, and which passed pretty near us. It is very probable that they had touched at *St. Joseph*; and to give a Colour to their Defertion, they had given out what the Night before had so greatly alarmed us. Two *Cordeliers*, who served the Chapel of the Fort, having heard of my Arrival, came to offer me a Bed in their House, which I accepted very thankfully.

For the rest, I do not think there is a Place in the World where one might less expect to meet with Men, and especially *Europeans*, than at *St. Joseph*. By the Situation of this Bay, its Shores, its Soil, and all that Environs it, nothing can make one conceive the Reasons of such a Choice. A flat Coast, open to the Wind, a barren Sand, a poor Country; and which can have no Manner of Commerce, nor even serve for Magazines: To such a Pitch have the *Spaniards* carried their Jealousy of our Settlements in *Louisiana*. We had been guilty of the Folly before them, but it was only for a short Time. There is Reason to think that they also will correct it soon; and that when we have restored *Pensacole* to them, they will transport thither every Thing they have at *St. Joseph*.

The Fort is not situated in the Bay, but on the Turn of a bending Point, and which encloses an Island. This Fort is only built of Earth, but well inclosed with Palisadoes, and well defended by Guns. It has a pretty numerous Garrison, an Etat Major compleat, and almost all the Officers have their Families with them. Their Houses are neat and convenient, and tolerably furnished, but every where in the Streets we sink up to the Ancles in Sand. The Ladies never go out but to Church, and always with a Pomp and Gravity, which is to be seen nowhere but among the *Spaniards*.

The Day after our Arrival, which was the 29th, there was a great Dinner at the Serjeant Major's. This Officer had been in *Louisiana*, and been highly treated there.

He

He was overjoyed to find this Occasion to make us a Return. He had especially made a particular Friendship in his Journey to *Louisiana* with *M. Hubert*, who was then the principal Commissary there, and who was amongst us. He heard that a Daughter of his Friend, three Years old, who was going to *France* with her Father, had only been sprinkled: He desired they would complete the Ceremonies of her Baptism at *St. Joseph*, and he would be her Godfather. This was performed with great Pomp, and firing of the Guns. The Godmother was a Niece of the Governor's, who at Night gave a magnificent Supper; and by an Excess of Politeness, seldom found among the *Spaniards*, he would have the Company of the Ladies. He completed all these Civilities, by furnishing us with Plenty of Provisions to continue our Route, though he had not yet received the Convoy that was to bring him Provisions from the *Havannah*, and for this Reason he had refused some to the Officers of *Biloxi*; but our Necessity had touched him extremely.

We departed the 30th with the two Boats, and the Fort saluted us with five Guns. We made seven Leagues that Day, and we anchored at the Entrance of a River; which comes out of a Bay open to the South East. At Eleven at Night, the Wind coming fair, we took Advantage of it, and we steered West North West. All the Coast was upon the same Point of the Compass for twenty Leagues, quite to the Island of *St. Rose*; and we do not find a single Place to get Shelter from a Gust of Wind that should come from the open Sea.

The 31st, at Four in the Afternoon, we had made twenty Leagues, and we anchored behind an Island which shuts up the great Bay of *St. Rose*, the Entrance of which is dangerous when the Sea runs high. Had we been a Moment later, we should have been greatly embarrassed, for the Wind turned all at once from the North East to the South West; and the Waves ran so high the same Instant, that it would have been impossible for us to have passed.

The 1st of *June*, about Two or Three in the Morning the Tide beginning to flow, we reembarked; and having



gone a small League, we entered into the Channel of *St. Rose*, which is fourteen Leagues long. It is formed by the Island of *St. Rose*, which has this Length, but is very narrow; which appears all covered with Sand, and which nevertheless is not ill wooded. The Continent is very high, and bears Trees of all Kinds. The Soil is almost as sandy as at *St. Mark*; but if they dig ever so little, they find Water.—The Wood here is very hard, but subject to rot soon. All this Coast swarms with wild Fowl, and the Sea with Fish. This Channel is narrow at its Entrance; afterwards it widens, and continues the Breadth of half a League to the Bay of *Penfacole*. The Current is strong here, and was in our Favour.

About Eleven o'Clock we doubled the Point *aux Chevreuils* (of *Roe-Bucks*;) at the Turn of which the Bay begins. We turn to the North, then to the North East. The Fort is a small League farther, and we discover it from the Point *aux Chevreuils*. We arrived there at Noon, and were surpris'd to see it in such a bad State. It appears plain that they do not expect to continue in it. The *Sieur Carpeau de Montigni*, who commands here, was gone to *Biloxi*, and we found here only some Soldiers. The *Spanish* Fort, which was taken two Years ago by the Count *de Champmelin*, was behind, and there remains nothing in it but a very fine Cistern; the building of which cost, as they say, fourteen thousand Pieces of Eight. They have been both built in an Island which joins almost to the main Land, which is not thirty Yards long, and the Soil of which does not appear to be extraordinary.

The Bay of *Penfacole* would be a pretty good Port, if the Worms did not destroy the Ships, and if its Entrance had a little more Water; but the *Hercules*, which carried *M. Champmelin*, ran a-ground here. This Entrance is directly between the West End of the Island *St. Rose*, where the *Spaniards* had also built a little Fort, and a Bank of Sand. It is so narrow, that only one Ship can pass at a Time: Its Opening is North and South. On the other Side of the Sand Bank there is another Pass, where there is Water only for Barks, and which is open to the South West. It is also very narrow. The Moorings for Ships,

Ships, in the Bay of *Penfacole*, is along the Island *St. Rose*, where the Anchorage is safe.

We departed from *Penfacole* at Midnight, and about Four in the Morning we left *Rio de los Perdidos* on the Right. This River was so called, because a *Spanish* Ship was wrecked here, and all the Crew lost.—*Dauphin Island* is five Leagues farther on the Left, and is five Leagues long, but very narrow. There is at least one half of this Island without a Tree upon it, and the rest is not much better. The Fort, and the only Habitation that remains here, are in the West Part. Between this Island and the *Isle a Corne*, which is a League distant, there is little Water. At the End of this, there is another very small Island, which they call the *Round Island*, on Account of its Shape. We passed the Night here.

Over-against the Bay of the *Pascagoulas*, where *Madam de Chaumont* has a *Grant*, which is not likely to pay her Expences soon, a River of the same Name, and which comes from the North, runs into this Bay. The next Day, about Ten o'Clock, one of our Seamen died of a *Quinsey*. This is the only Man we lost in our painful and dangerous Expedition. An Hour after, we anchored at *Boloxi*, where they were strangely surpris'd to see us. I went immediately to say Mass, to return Thanks to *God* for having supported us in the midst of so many Fatigues, and for delivering us from so many Dangers.

*I am, &c.*

L E T T E R



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## L E T T E R    X X X V .

*Voyage from BILOXI to Cape FRANCOIS in SAINT  
DOMINGO.*

MADAM,

*Cape FRANCOIS, Sept. 6.*

I Durst not venture to tell you in my last, as I had done in the preceding Letter, that I should not write any more to You but from *Cape Francois*, for Fear I should be obliged to contradiēt myself again, and the Event was very near justifying my Apprehensions. I am here at last, in this long wishd for Port, after a Voyage of sixty-four Days, and we enterd it at the Time when we had almost lost all Hopes of attaining it. But before I shall enter upon the Recital of the Adventures of this Voyage, I must proceed with my Journal.

The first News we heard on our Arrival at *Biloxi*, was that of the Peace concluded with *Spain*, and the double Alliance between these two Crowns. One of the Articles of Peace was the Restoration of *Penfacole*, and this Article was carried to *Louisiana* by Don *Alexander Walcop* an *Irishman*, and Captain of a Ship in *New Spain*. He embarked at *Vera Cruz*, in a Brigantine of forty Guns, and one hundred and fifty Men, and commanded by Don *Augustin Spinola*. They say, that the Design of the *Spaniards* is to make a great Settlement at *Penfacole*, and to transport thither the Garrison of *St. Joseph*, and all the Inhabitants. They add, that Don *Alexander Walcop* is intended for the Governor : He is a Man of a very good Presence, very sober, and religious.

Don

Don *Augustin Spinola* is a young Man, full of Fire, and of a very amiable Character; whose Sentiments declare his high Birth, and are worthy of the Name he bears: He is Lieutenant of a Man of War, and has engaged to serve three Years in *Mexico*, after which he reckons to return to *Spain*, and to make his Fortune there. He was greatly mortified to hear that an *English* Interloper, named *Marsbal*, did not quit the Road of *Biloxi*, where he had traded considerably with the *French*, till he entered it himself. This armed Ship did not even Care to sail away, saying, he did not fear the *Spaniards*; but *M. de Bienville* obliged him to it, being unwilling to be a Spectator of a Combat, the Success of which our Officers pretended would not have been very favourable to the Aggressors, though superior in Force. We shall soon see they were mistaken in the high Opinion they entertained of *Marsbal*.

Notwithstanding, that since the Departure of the *Adour*, some of the Company's Ships had brought some Provisions to *Louisiana*, they were still in great Necessity, and Discontent increased every Day. In Spite of the Care which *M. de Bienville* took to comfort the Inhabitants, we heard talk of nothing but Schemes for deserting. Besides the Boat which we met on the Route from *S. Mark* to *St. Joseph*, all the *Swiss* that were at *Biloxi*, with the Captain and the Officers at their Head, having received Orders to go to *New Orleans* in a Sloop, armed on Purpose for them, and which had been well provided with Provisions, instead of taking the Route of the *Mississippi*, had turned, with Colours flying, to the East, and 'twas not doubted but that they had taken the Route to *Carolina*; because, being *Protestants*, there was no likelihood they should go to the *Spaniards* \*.

The 8th of *June* I discovered a Conspiracy formed to carry off the *Spanish* Brigantine. It was seven o'Clock at Night when I was privately informed of it, and I was assured

\* We have since heard that they went to *Carolina*.

fired that before Nine the Scheme would be put in Execution, the Commandant of the Brigantine not being used to come on board till that Hour. The Conspirators were one hundred and fifty in Number; and their Intention was, if their Enterprize succeeded, to turn Pirates. I sent immediately to inform M. de Bienville, who was at Table with Don Augustin Spinola, who rose immediately and went on board, and the Major of Biloxi had Orders to begin his Round directly.

These Motions made the Conspirators apprehend that their Design was discovered, and the Major saw only four or five Men together, who disappeared as soon as they saw him, and he could not take any of them, so that they thought I had given a false Alarm. But besides that, for several Days following, we heard of nothing but of Soldiers and Inhabitants who had disappeared: Some of these Deserters being retaken, confessed the Plot, of which I had given Information.

The 12th, a Chief of the *Tchachas* came to tell M. de Bienville that the *English* made them great Promises, to bring them over to their Interest, and to engage them to have no more Commerce with the *French*. The Commandant, on this Occasion, gave a great Proof of the Talent he has of governing at his Pleasure the Minds of the Savages. He knew so well how to flatter this Chief, that with some Presents of little Consequence, he sent him away very well disposed to continue firm in our Alliance. This Nation would give us a great deal of Trouble if they should declare against us; the *Chicachas*, the *Natchez*, and the *Yafous*, would soon join with them, and there would be no longer any Safety in navigating the *Mississippi*; even if these four Nations should not draw in all the rest, which very probably would be the Case.

About the End of the Month, an Inhabitant of the *Illinois*, who had been to trade on the *Missouri*, arrived at *Biloxi*, and reported that he, and one or two more *French*, having travelled as far as the *Otatatas*, who in 1719 defeated the *Spaniards*, I mentioned before, they were well received

received by them, and for the Goods they carried them, they have received seven or eight hundred Livres in Silver, partly in Coin and partly in Bars; that some of these Savages had accompanied them to the *Illinois*, and assured M. de Boisbriant that the *Spaniards*, from whom they took this Silver, got it from a Mine a little Distant from the Place where they met them, and that they have offered to carry the *French* thither, which Offer this Commandant had accepted. Time will shew if these Savages have spoken with more Sincerity than so many others, who for a long Time have sought to draw the *French* to them by the Allurement of Mines, none of which have been yet found real\*.

The 22d I embarked in the *Bellona*, which sailed the 30th. The 2d of *July* we reckoned that we bore North and South of *Penfacole*, from whence we chose to take our Longitude, because that of the Mouth of the *Mississippi* is not yet ascertained. From that Time to the 20th nothing remarkable happened. We had then the Sun exactly over our Heads, and in our Voyage from the *Martyrs* to *Biloxi*, we had borne the greatest Heats of the Solstice, without being able to defend ourselves from them in any Manner, no more than from the Dews, which fell plentifully every Night. Yet, would you believe it, Madam, we suffered less from the Heat at that Season, than in the Month of *April* before our Shipwreck?

Yet nothing is more certain, and I remembered then that I had been several Times much surpris'd to see People, who were born under the torrid Zone, complain of the great Heats of *France*. We were in the same Case in the Month of *April*, we had the same Heats that we feel in *France*, and even in *Italy*, in the Month of *July*. In the Month of *July*, during the Dog Days, we were under the Zone, and the Heat was much greater, but it was more supportable. This Difference did not proceed from the Winds; we had the same, and we had always some in both Seasons. Neither was it only from our being more used

\* We have heard no more of this Mine since that Time.

used to them, for we were not subject to those continual Sweats, which had so much troubled us in the Month of *April*.

We must therefore seek for another Reason, and this is what occurs to my Mind. In the Spring, the Air is still full of Vapours, which the Winter raises. These Vapours, when the Sun approaches them, are directly inflamed, and this is what caused those heavy Heats, and those plentiful Sweats, which overpowered us in the Month of *April*: We were almost always in *Balneo Mariae*. In the Month of *July*, these Vapours were dispersed, and though the Sun, was much nearer us, the least Wind sufficed to refresh us, by blunting the Power of its Rays almost perpendicular over our Heads. Now in *France* the Sun never thoroughly disperses the Vapours, as it does between the Tropics; at least they are here much less gross; and this is what produces, not the Difference of the Heat, but the different Sensation of the Heat.

The 20th, we discovered the Land of *Cuba*, which three Months before we had made in seven Days. Two Things occasioned this Delay. The first is, that we cannot depend on our Observations, when the Sun is so near, because its Rays form no sensible Angle †. For this Cause, when we have the least Suspicion of the Land's being near, we dare make no Sail in the Night. The second is, that the Captain of the *Bellona* wanted to go to the *Havannab*, and as he judged that the Currents bore to the East, he made the West as much as he thought necessary, not to miss his Mark.

However, he was very nigh passing before the *Havannab* without knowing it. They came and told me very early in the Morning, that they saw Land; I asked how it appeared, and on the Answer they made, I assured them it was *Cape Sed*. They laughed at me, and the two Officers of the *Adour*, who were with us, were the first to maintain that I was mistaken. I went upon Deck, and persisting

† This Defect of *Davis's* Quadrant is remedied by *Hadley's*.



persisting in my Opinion, contrary to that of the whole Ship: Our Pilots affirming that we were sixty Leagues more to the West. At Sun-set I discovered the Table of *Marianne*, but I was still alone in my Opinion: However, we had the Wind against us, and all Night we only made Tacks to and from the Land.

The next Day at Noon we were still in Sight of the two Lands, which were the Subject of our Dispute, when upon coming nearer the Shore we perceived the *Havannah* before us, which greatly pleased the Captain, who had a large Parcel of Goods that he expected to dispose of to the *Spaniards* for a great Profit. I was little concerned for his Interest; but if we had been further out at Sea, and the Wind had not been against us all Night, the Error and Obstinacy of our Pilots and our Officers would have cost us dear. The Wind was fair to enter the *Havannah*, and at five in the Afternoon we were but a League off; then we fired two Guns, one to shew our Flag, the other, after we had twisted the Flag round the Staff, as a Signal of Distress, to require a Pilot from the Port.

Nothing appeared, and it was resolved to send the Canoe to ask Leave to come in; but as it was already late, it was put off till next Day, and all the Night we passed in making Tacks. The 23d an Officer of the *Bellona* embarked to go to ask the Governor's Consent for us to water in this Port, and to buy Provisions, because they could not give us a sufficient Supply at *Biloxi*. This was but a Pretence, but I did not know it, and the Captain having desired me to accompany his Officer, I thought it not proper to refuse him.

The Entrance of the Port of the *Havannah* looked towards the North West and by West: On the Left, at the Entrance, we see a Fort built upon a Rock, at the Foot of which we must pass: They call it the *Moro Fort*. It is solidly built, and has three good Batteries of Brass Cannon, one above the other. On the Right there is a Range of Bastions, which appeared to be newly finished, or lately repaired. The Entrance in this Place is but five  
or

or six hundred Paces wide, and they shut it up by an Iron Chain, which may stop a Ship long enough to be beat to Pieces by the Guns, before it can break the Chain.

The Passage widens a little afterwards up to the Town, *that is to say*, for three or four hundred Paces. The Channel turns from thence to the Left a good Way beyond the City, which is on the Right.—This is all I can say of it, having never been any farther. I only know that the City occupies the Head of a Peninsula, and that the Side of the Land, which is its whole Length, is enclosed by a good Wall, with Bastions. It's Aspect is very agreeable and open, as soon as we have passed the *Morro Castle*. The Streets are well laid out, the Quay large and well kept, the Houses well built for the most Part; There are a good Number of Churches, and which appear tolerably fine; but I never went into any of them: In a Word, a City which contains twenty thousand Souls does not make a greater Appearance; but the *Havannab*, as I have been told, has not near so many.

Upon my landing I met several of the Sailors of the *Adour*, as well of the Long-Boat as of the Canoe. The first told me, that from the Place where we were wrecked, they were five Days getting to this Port, and almost always in the greatest Danger of being lost. I had no Time to enquire by what Means the second came here. But the Serjeant, who entered our Canoe at the Foot of the *Morro*, to conduct us, took Care to shew us the Brigantine of the Interloper *Marshal*, whom I mentioned at the Beginning of my Letter. It was moored near a Boat so small, that it could with Difficulty carry fifteen or twenty Men, which notwithstanding had taken this Brigantine by boarding her. We must allow, that the Privateers of *Cuba* and the neighbouring Islands are brave: Our *Flibustiers* \* have taught them to fight; but considering the Disproportion of the Force, and the Valour and the Guns of the *English*, they must have been taken by Surprise.

The Governor of the *Havannab* received us coldly, and after having heard us, he told us he should have been very  
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\* Free *Negroes* and *Mulattoes* of the *French* Islands.

glad if he could have granted our Request; but the King his Master had tied up his Hands on this Article, and that he was above all expressly forbid to receive any Vessel coming from *Louisiana*. He added that there were several Places on the same Coast where we might stop without any Danger, and where they would supply us with all the Refreshments we wanted. We were forced to be contented with this Answer, and after having paid my Compliments to the Rector of the College which we have in this City, I re-embarked.

The next Day, the twenty-fourth, at six in the Morning, we were North and South of the Loaf of *Matanza*, and at half an Hour after eleven off *Rio de Ciraca*, where there is a *Spanish* Habitation. But as the Captain was resolved to try if he could not succeed better at *Matanza*, than he had at the *Havannah*, and as he had still seven Leagues thither, he took the Resolution to ply off and on all Night; and the twenty-fifth at Day-break we found ourselves at the Entrance of the Bay, which is two Leagues wide.

To enter it we must at first double a Point, which does not advance far into the Sea, then make the West for a League; then we discover, on the Right Hand another Point, behind which is the Fort, and a large Quarter of a League farther the Town of *Matanza*, between two Rivers, which wash its Walls on both Sides. About ten in the Morning, they sent a Canoe thither with an Officer, who did not find the Commandant of the Fort there. He declared our pretended Necessity to the Deputy, but this Officer told him he could not take upon himself to grant the Permission we required; that all he could do for our Service was to send a Courier to the *Havannah*, to know the Intentions of the Governor of that City, who was his General; that if this would content us, we might in the mean Time anchor on the other Side of the Point, where we should be safer.

This Answer, and the Declaration, which our Pilots then thought fit to make, that they would not answer for bringing

bringing the Ship into the Bay of *Matanza*, because they were not sufficiently acquainted with it, determined the Captain at last to continue his Route with his whole Packet of Merchandize, for the Sake of which he had made us lose at least fifteen Days of precious Time. The next Day, at six in the Morning, we had still behind us in Sight the Loaf of *Matanza*, from which we reckoned ourselves distant between twelve and fifteen Leagues; and the 27th at five in the Morning we discovered from the Mast-Head the Land of *Florida*.

At this Sight we steered North North East; two Hours after we changed our Course to take a little more to the East; at nine we got again into the Route, and we found ourselves in the true Current which goes to the Channel of *Babama*, for we went as swift as an Arrow. We saw at this Instant the *Adour*, which shewed still an End of a Mast out of the Water, but the Hulk was almost covered, and we found that she was far from being wrecked over-against the most northern of the *Martyr* Islands, as some Persons believed; for she was over-against us at half past ten, and at half an Hour past one the last of these Islands was still to the North.

About three o'Clock we discovered a Breaker from the Round-Top, close by which we were going to pass, and farther on a Shoal, which ran out a great Way. This Shoal was probably the End of the *Martyrs*, and to shun it, we steered all the rest of the Day towards the South and the East, the Current carrying us always to the North, and towards Night we made the North East. The 28th at Noon, the Pilot judged that we were at the Entrance of the Channel, in twenty-five Degrees thirty Minutes, at half past seven o'Clock at Night he was afraid of being too near the Land, and steered South South East till Midnight with a good Wind. At Midnight he took again his Route, and the 29th we saw no more Land. At Evening we thought ourselves out of the Channel, but for greater Security we continued to make the North North East till ten o'Clock.

In all the rest of our Voyage to *Cape St. Francois*, we had almost always little Wind, and sometimes Calms. From Time to Time there arose Storms: The Sky and the Sea were all on Fire; and the Ship leaning to one Side, went like the Wind: but this never lasted long, and a Quarter of an Hour's Rain cleared the Sky, and smoothed the Waves of the Sea, which resembled those Persons of a gentle and calm Disposition, who have sometimes pretty warm Fits of Passion, but who are soon pacified. I believe that what contributes to calm the Sea so soon, after these violent Agitations, are the Currents. They are in Reality very perceivable in these Parts: On the other Hand, they vary continually, which disconcerts all the Skill of the Pilots.

When we are out of the Channel of *Babama*, the direct Route to go to *St. Domingo* would be the South East. But the Winds which blow almost always from the Eastward do not permit us to take it, and we must go by a Parabolic Line to the Height of *Bermudas*, which it would be proper to discover if possible; to be assured of the Longitude. For Want of this Knowledge, we are sometimes obliged to go to the Great Bank of *Newfoundland*, before we can be sure of being enough to the East of all those Shoals, which lie to the North and to the East of *St. Domingo*.

Yet they have not always gone so far about to go from the Gulph of *Mexico* to this Island. In the first Times of the Discovery of the New World, after having followed the North Coast of *Cuba*, up to the Point of *Ibaca*, which is the East End of it, fourteen Leagues from *Matanza*, they turned to the Right, and leaving on the Left all the *Lucaye* Islands, amongst which is *Babama*. This is what they call the Old Channel of *Babama*. It has Water enough for the largest Ships, but there are so many Sands in it, that at present none but small Vessels dare venture into it.

After we were come to the Height of thirty Degrees, thirty-one Minutes, our Pilots judged themselves enough to the East, to be in no Danger on making the South, of  
running

running on any of the Shoals I mentioned. So they confidently run Southward, and in a few Days we made a great deal of Way, sailing on a Sea always fine, and carried by the Trade Winds. The 27th of *August*, at eight in the Morning, the Sailor who was upon the Watch on the Round-Top, cried out Land, which caused a great deal of Joy, but it was of short Continuance; for the Sailor coming down, they asked him if the Land was high, and he replied that it was very low, so of Consequence it could only be one of the *Caiquis*, or the *Turk Islands*.

We were also very fortunate in having discovered them by Day, for we had infallibly been wrecked if we had come upon them in the Night, and no Person had escaped, because these Islands have no Strands, and the greatest Part of them are bordered with Shoals, which advance far into the Sea, and which are divided by little Channels; where there is not Water enough for Boats. On the other Hand they are very low, and we cannot perceive them at Night, till we are upon them.

But we were not safe because we had discovered the Danger: The Land before us appeared to be a pretty large Island, and pretty well wooded in some Places; this made us judge, that it was the grand *Caique*, of Consequence, that we were forty or fifty Leagues too much to the West. To gain our proper Longitude, we must have gone up again to the North above two or three hundred Leagues, which would certainly have taken up five or six Weeks Navigation, and we had scarce Water and Provisions enough to serve us for fifteen Days, with great Oeconomy. The Captain was greatly embarrassed; he saw the Faults of his Pilots, and might blame himself for having depended too much upon them, for not having taken Observations himself above two or three Times, and for having always preferred the Reckoning of the second Pilot, a very presumptuous and blundering young Fellow, to that of the first, who was more experienced and skilful, and who had never approved their Manœuvre.

Nevertheless they were obliged to take some Resolution immediately: A Gust of Wind from the North, that

should have surprized us, and thrown us on these low Coasts, would infallibly have destroyed us. But as they could take no Resolution which had not its Inconveniency, the Captain would have the Advice of every Body. Some were for making the best Way to *Carolina*, where we might arrive in ten or twelve Days, and buy Provisions. This Advice was rejected, and they followed another which was extremely hazardous, and which appeared to me to proceed only from Despair, this was to coast the grand *Caique* as near as we could till we came to the Opening; *that is to say*, to the Separation of all these Shoals from the *Lucaye Islands*.

All the Vessels pass this Way, which come from *St. Domingo*, to return to *France*, and then there is nothing to fear, because they can take their Time to get out, and this Passage being open to the North West, we are almost sure of having favourable Weather to come out. But to enter it on the Side where we were, we must depend on the North East, and it is a great Hazard to find this Wind the Moment it is wanted. Therefore no Body that we know, has ever yet attempted this Passage. In short they resolved to run all Hazards, and they approached the Grand *Caique*.

At two in the Afternoon we were but a good Cannon-Shot from it, and we are perhaps the first, who without an indispensable Necessity, ventured to visit it so near in a Ship. The Coast of it is nevertheless very safe, elevated, as it appeared to me, about seven or eight Feet, sometimes a little more, but it is perpendicular, and without any Strand. Its Soil has not at all the Appearance of being barren. Geographers place it directly under the Tropic, which we could not verify, because the Weather was cloudy; but I think it a little more to the South, for there is not certainly three Degrees Difference between this Island and *Cape Francois*.

We coasted the Grand *Caique* till four in the Afternoon, having the Wind and the Currents for us. Then they made a Sailor go to the Mast Head, to observe what we had before us, and he soon came down and told us that he  
had

had seen the End of the Island ; but that beyond it he saw still low Lands, divided by Channels in which the Waters appeared all white. Upon this Information, we judged proper to change our Course, and we steered North North East. At Midnight we made the South South East, and it looked as if the Wind turned as we would have it ; but it was very weak, and the Currents carried us with so much Violence to the West, that at Day-break the low Lands and the Sands, which the Evening before were so far a Head of us, were almost as much behind ; and the Passage which we sought began to open itself.

This was the decisive Moment of our Fate, and what gave us good Hopes, was that the Wind inclined by Degrees to the North-East. At eleven o'Clock we made the South East and by South, soon after the South East : But the Currents carried us so much out, that our true Course was scarcely South. At Noon we could make no Observation, and the West Point of *Caique* bore North and by East of us. In short, in an Hour's Time we had cleared the Passage, and I cannot better express to you what appeared on all our Countenances, as we advanced by Degrees into the Opening, than by comparing it to what happens to those Animals that have been put in the Receiver of the Air Pump, which appear dead when they have pumped out almost all the Air, and to which they restore Life by little and little, by letting the Air in again slowly.

We did not dare yet to flatter ourselves that we should be able to gain *Cape Francois*, which was to Windward of us, but we had *Port de Paix*, or at least *Leogane*, which we could not miss ; and after the extreme Danger we had lately passed, any was good, so we could find a Port. At Midnight we had a violent Gust of Wind, but of little Duration, and the next Day, at nine in the Morning, we discovered the Land of *St. Domingo*, but without distinguishing what Part all the Day, because it was foggy. A Ship, which by its Way of working we judged to be a Pirate, employed us a good Part of the Afternoon : We prepared in Earnest to engage her, or rather to



defend ourselves, if they should attack us, for we would not have changed a Sail to follow her.

At last we discovered that it was only a small Vessel of one hundred and fifty Tons at most, and which probably had been more frightened than we. We judged by her Manœuvre that she came out of *Cape Francois*, and she appeared deep laden. All Night we made Tacks to the North East, varying a little, which brought us higher up in our Latitude; and when it was Day, we discovered with a great deal of Joy that we were to Windward of *Cape Francois*. We saw it plain, were almost at it, but had so little Wind, that we could not enter it till the first of *September*, at four in the Afternoon. Since that Time I have not had a Moment to myself to entertain you about this Country, and my Letter is called for to carry it to a Ship which is ready to sail for *Nantz*. I propose to depart myself in fifteen Days for *Havre de Grace*, from whence I shall have the Honour to write to you once again.

*I am, &c.*

L E T T E R

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## LETTER XXXVI.

*Description of CAPE FRANCOIS in ST. DOMINGO.  
Return to FRANCE, landing in ENGLAND.*

MADAM,

ROUEN, *January, 5.*

I Was but one Day at *Havre*, because I would not miss the Coach for *Rouen*, and I came here to rest myself at my Ease, after the longest and most fatiguing Voyage I ever made. But it is now over, and I am going to take Advantage for the little Leisure I have left, while I wait for the Coach for *Paris*, to finish the Account of my Adventures for these two Years and half, that I have been wandering through the World.

*Cape Francois of St. Domingo*, from whence my last Letter was dated, is one of the Ports of all *America*, where the *French* have the greatest Commerce. It is, properly speaking, but a Bay, which is not quite a League deep, and the Opening of it is very wide: But this Opening is full of Sand Banks, between which we cannot sail with too much Caution. To enter it we must take to the Right along a Point, where there is a Redoubt and some Guns; but it is the Custom before we engage ourselves in these narrow Passes, where two Ships cannot go a-breast, to call a Pilot from the Fort; and lest the Desire of saving a Pistole, which we must give him, should endanger the Lives of the whole Ship's Company, it has been wisely ordered, that, even though we should enter without his Assistance, we should nevertheless pay the Pilot.

The Town is at the Bottom of the Bay on the Right. It is not considerable, because almost all that are not Artizans,

tizans, Shopkeepers, Soldiers, or Publicans, live in the Plain, as much at least as the Service permits it to the Officers, Execution of Justice to the Magistrates, and the Business of Commerce to those who are concerned in it; *that is to say*, almost all the People of a better Rank who are in this Place: So that to see the *Beau Monde*, we must go into the Country. And indeed nothing is more charming than the Plain and the Vallies which are between the Mountains. The Houses are not stately, but they are neat and convenient. The Highways are laid out by a Line, of a handsome Breadth, bordered with Hedges of Lemon Trees, and sometimes planted with large Trees, and from Space to Space cut by Brooks of clear Water, cool, and very wholesome. All the Habitations appear well cultivated, and they are really very beautiful Country Houses. We see every where an Air of Plenty which is very pleasing.

This Plain is at the North West End of the famous *Vega-Real*, which is so much spoken of in the *Spanish* Histories of *St. Domingo*, which they affirm to be 80 Leagues long; and which, as the famous Bishop *de Chiappe*, *Bartholemew de las Casas*, pretends, is watered by twenty-five thousand Rivers. Great Names cost the *Spaniards* nothing; these pretended Rivers are for the most Part only little Brooks, the Number of which are really incredible, and which would make of this Royal Plain something more charming and more delightful than the Valley of *Tempe*, so boasted of by the *Greeks*, if it was not under the torrid Zone. There are also some Parts of it where the Air is very wholesome, and the Heat supportable; Such is that where the Town *St. Jago de los Cavalteras* is built; and we may say the same Thing of the Vallies which are between the Mountains, with which the Plain of the *Cape* is bordered on the South. They begin to be peopled, and they will soon be more so than the Plain itself, because they see few People sick here; and those who come hither from other Parts, recover in a short Time of Distempers, when all Manner of Remedies have proved ineffectual.

I visited

I visited all the Habitations that are nearest the Town, but I had not Leisure to make many Observations. Moreover, during the Day, the Heat was extreme; and in the Evening, as soon as the Sun was set, the Musketoos, and other Flies of that Kind, did not permit me to walk about long. These little Insects particularly attack new Comers, whose Skin is tenderest, and their Blood freshest. They assured me, that in the *Spanisb* Part of the Island they are free from this Inconvenience; but to make Amends, we have no venomous Serpents, and they have many. They also observed to me, that excepting Lettuce, all Sorts of Garden Herbs and Roots must be renewed every Year in this Island with Seeds from *Europe*.

What I found here most curious, were the Sugar-Mills. I shall say nothing of them, because Father *Labat* has described them much better than I can. After Sugar, the greatest Riches of this Colony is Indigo, of which the same Author has also treated very particularly. This Plant has an irreconcilable Enemy, and which is much more detrimental to it than Darnel to our Wheat. This is an Herb which they call *Mal-nommée*; and which, as it grows out of the Ground, bears a Seed, which it scatters every where. It grows in a Tuft; and by its Bulk, and its prodigious Fruitfulness, it so choaks the Indigo, that it kills it; so that when it has made the least Progress in a Field, it is entirely lost, and they must plant another.

The Coasts of *St. Domingo* have not Plenty of Fish; but if they go a little out to Sea, they find all Sorts. We caught, especially coming from *Louisiana*, many *Dorados*, on which our Sailors pretend to have made a pretty singular Remark, which is, that when they take this Fish in the Increase of the Moon, the Flesh of it is firm, and of an exquisite Taste; whereas, if they take it in the Decrease, it is insipid, its Flesh has no Consistence, and is like Meat that is boiled to Rags. It is certain, that we experienced both in the different Times before-mentioned; but that this happens always, and that the Moon is the Cause of it, is what I will by no Means affirm.

We

We departed from *Cape Francois* the 25th of *September* in a Merchant Ship of *Havre*, named *Louis de Bourbon*, commanded by one of the most skillful Navigators that I have known: But we had scarce got to Sea, when we discovered two Leaks in her; so that during all the Passage, which was ninety-two Days, they were obliged to pump Night and Morning; which, added to the Want of Provisions, though they had taken in Plenty, but which they never husbanded for the first Month, was the Cause that our Captain was several Times on the Point of stopping at the *Azores*. We had been still more embarrassed, if we had gone into the Snare that was laid for us by a Captain of an *English* ship, whom we met half Way in our Passage.

He came out of *Jamaica* with a Fleet, of which he was at first, as he said, the best Sailor; but as in loading his Ship, he was so imprudent as to leave all his Provisions in one Place, it happened that by Degrees as they were consumed, the Vessel losing its Equilibrium, lost by little and little the Advantage that it had over the rest, and at last remained a great Way behind the Fleet. We fell in with him in Reality alone, and making so little Way, that in Comparison of him our Ship, which was far from being an extraordinary Sailor, went like a Bird; and he was afraid that his Provisions would entirely fail before he could arrive in *England*. He told us the Trouble he was in, and to explain it the better to us, he invited himself to dine on board us. They replied that he should be welcome, and our Captain ordered some of our Sails to be furled to wait for him.

While we were at Dinner, he turned the Discourse on our Route, and asked us whereabouts we thought ourselves. The Captain shewed his Account of the Day before, and he appeared surpris'd at it. He assured us that we were two hundred Leagues forwarder than we reckoned, which he endeavoured to prove by the last Land he had seen. This gave great Pleasure to the greatest Part of our People, who were already very much tired of so  
long

long a Voyage, being continually obliged to contend with violent Winds, and a stormy Sea, in a very crazy Ship. But I had some Suspicion that the *English* Captain said he was so far advanced, only that he might engage us to let him have some of our Provisions. Our Captain, to whom I communicated my Suspicion, told me he had the same Thought, and contented himself with well treating his Guest, and eluded his Demand. He continued to sail by his own Reckoning, which he found so exact, that he entered into the Channel the Day, and almost the Hour, that a little before he said he should enter it.

The 2d of *December* we entered the Port of *Plymouth*, without any apparent Necessity; but our Captain without Doubt had some Business here. We found here the King's Frigate, the *Tbetis*, which a Storm had driven in here in a shattered Condition, though it was the first Time of her coming out of *Havre*, where she was built. She was commanded by the Chevalier *de Fontenay*, whose Orders were to go to the *American* Islands, in Pursuit of the Pirates, who had lately taken several Ships. As soon as he knew I was in the Port, he did me the Honour of a Visit, before I could have the Convenience of going to pay my Respects to him, and he carried me on board his Ship, where I passed all the Time very agreeably that I continued in this Port.

*Plymouth* is one of the five great Ports of *England*, and one of the finest in *Europe*. It is double, and before we enter it, we must pass under the Guns of the Citadel. From thence we turn to the Right, to enter into the Port of the Town, which is the smallest, and from whence one must come out of the Channel, and 'twas here the *Tbetis* was moored. They turn to the Left to enter into the other Port, where the King of *England's* Ships are laid up, over-against a magnificent Arsenal. This Port extends a great Way, and we anchored at the Entrance, because the Winds which blow here are good to go farther up the Channel.

The

The Town of *Plymouth* is not large, but its Environs, where I used to walk often, are very pleasant. I never saw a better Country: The Weather was very mild, and the Fields as green as in the Spring.

On the Night of *Christmas-Day*, after I had celebrated the three Masses, we set sail, and all the next Day we had a fair Wind. Two Frigates of fifty Guns had weighed Anchor two Hours before us, and we soon overtook them. This surpris'd me, because we sail'd but poorly ourselves; but what surpris'd me still more was, that to see these two Ships under Sail, if I had not seen them prepare for sailing, I could never have believed they were the same that appeared so large to me in the Port, on which they told me, that this proceeded from a particular Construction and setting of the Sails, which was done on Purpose to draw Pirates into a Snare, which in the Sea Dialect makes them call these Ships *Lubber Traps*, in Fact, as they say, the Pirates on seeing them, judging of them by their Appearance, take them for Merchant Ships, and pursue them as a certain Prey. But when they are so near as not to be able to escape, they find somebody to talk to, and are caught in the Snare, without being able to make any Resistance: Therefore the *English*, above all Nations, are most feared by Pirates, and are the worst used by them when they fall into their Hands.

The Night following we went through one of the most terrible Storms that had been seen for a long Time in the Channel. The next Day, though the Wind was almost quite fallen, the Sea was in an Agitation enough to terrify the boldest; we shipped some Water which put us in great Danger; the great Cabin especially was overflowed as I was beginning to say Mass, and hindered me from proceeding; so that when we entered *Havre de Grace* about Noon, every Body ask'd us how we could hold out in a Storm that was felt even in the Port.

But they would have been more surpris'd at our Escape, when two Days after, our Ship being drawn ashore, they

they might have seen it drop to Pieces with Rotteneſs. This was the firſt News that I heard on my Arrival here. Judge, Madam, how greatly our Lives were expoſed in ſuch a Ship in a Voyage of eighteen hundred Leagues, and in a Seaſon when the Sea is always in a Fury; and what Thanks we ought to return to GOD, not only for having delivered us from ſuch an imminent Danger, but alſo for having concealed from us the Knowledge of it, which alone was ſufficient to have killed us a thouſand Times over with Fear.

*I am, &c.*

F I N I S.





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# A P P E N D I X.

## CONTAINING

An Account of the *West-India* Islands, the Trade of *Mexico* and *La Vera Cruz*, the Flota, Register Ships and Galleons. To which is added an Account of the Nature of Sugar; the manner of manufacturing it; of Planters in the *West-Indies*; their Manner of living; Management of their Negroes and other Affairs.

## S E C T. I.

### *Climate of the WEST-INDIES.*

**T**HE climate in all our West-India islands is nearly the same, allowing for those accidental differences which the several situations, and qualities of the lands themselves produce. As they lie within the tropic, and that the sun goes quite over their heads, passing beyond them to the north, and never retires further from any of them than about 30 degrees to the South, they are continually subjected to the extreme of an heat, which would be intolerable, if the trade-wind rising gradually as the sun gathers strength, did not blow in upon them from the sea, and refresh the air in such a manner, as to enable them to attend their concerns even under the meridian sun. On the other hand, as the night advances, a breeze begins to be perceived, which blows smartly from the land, as

it were from its centre, towards the sea, to all points of the compass at once.

By the same remarkable providence in the disposing of things it is, that when the sun has made a great progress towards the tropic of Cancer, and becomes in a manner vertical, he draws after him such a vast body of clouds, as shield them from his direct beams, and dissolving into rain cool the air, and refresh the country, thirsty with the long drought, which commonly reigns from the beginning of January to the latter end of May.

The rains in the West-Indies are by no means the things they are with us. Our heaviest rains are but dews comparatively. They are rather floods of water poured from the clouds with a prodigious impetuosity; the rivers rise in a moment; new rivers and lakes are formed, and in a short time all the low country is under water. Hence it is, that the rivers which have their source within the tropics, swell and overflow their banks at a certain season; and so mistaken were the ancients in their idea of the torrid zone, which they imagined to be dried and scorched up with a continual and fervent heat, and to be for that reason uninhabitable; when in reality some of the largest rivers in the world have their course within its limits, and the moisture is one of the greatest inconveniences of the climate in several places.

The rains make the only distinction of seasons in the West-Indies; the trees are green the whole year round; they have no cold, no frosts, no snows, and but rarely some hail; the storms of hail are however very violent when they happen, and the hailstones very great and heavy. Whether it be owing to this moisture alone, which does not seem to be a sufficient cause, or to a greater quantity of sulphurous acid, which predominates in the air of this country, metals of all kinds that are subject to the action of such causes, rust and canker in a very short time; and this cause, perhaps, as much as the heat itself, contributes to make the climate of the West-Indies unfriendly and unpleasant to an European constitution.

It

It is in the rainy season (principally in the month of August, more rarely in July and September,) that they are assaulted by hurricanes; the most terrible calamity to which they are subject from the climate; this destroys at a stroke the labours of many years, and prostrates the most exalted hopes of the planter, and often just at the moment when he thinks himself out of the reach of fortune. It is a sudden and violent storm of wind, rain, thunder and lightening, attended with a furious swelling of the seas, and sometimes with an earthquake; in short, with every circumstance which the elements can assemble, that is terrible and destructive. First, they see as the prelude to the ensuing havock, whole fields of sugar canes whirled into the air, and scattered over the face of the country. The strongest trees of the forest are torn up by the roots, and driven about like stubble; their wind-mills are swept away in a moment; their works, the fixtures, the ponderous copper boilers, and stills of several hundred weight, are wrenched from the ground, and battered to pieces: their houses are no protection, the roofs are torn off at one blast; whilst the rain, which in an hour rises five feet, rushes in upon them with an irresistible violence.

There are signs, which the Indians of these islands taught our planters, by which they can prognosticate the approach of an hurricane. The hurricane comes on either in the quarters, or at the change of the moon. If it comes at the full moon, when, you are at the change observe these signs. That day you will see the sky very turbulent; you will observe the sun more red than at other times; you will perceive a dead calm, and the hills clear of all those clouds and mists which usually hover about them. In the clefts of the earth, and in the wells, you hear a hollow rumbling sound like the rushing of a great wind. At night the stars seem much larger than usual, and surrounded with a sort of burs; the North-west sky has a black and menacing look; the sea emits a strong smell, and rises into vast waves, often without any wind; the wind itself now forsakes its usual steady Easterly stream, and shifts about to the West; from whence it sometimes blows with intermissions violently and irregularly for about two hours at a time. You have the same signs at

the full of the moon; the moon herself is surrounded with a great bur, and sometimes the sun has the same appearance. These prognostics were taught by the Indians; and in general one may observe, that ignorant country people and barbarous nations, are better observers of times and seasons, and draw better rules from them, than more civilized and reasoning people, for they rely more upon experience than theories, they are more careful of traditional observations, and living more in the open air at all times, and not so occupied but they have leisure to observe every change, though minute, in that element, they come to have great treasures of useful matter, though, as it might be expected, mixed with many superstitious and idle notions as to the causes. These make their observations to be rejected as chimerical in the gross by many literati, who are not near so nice and circumspect as they ought to be in distinguishing what this sort of people may be very competent judges of, and what not.

## S E C T. II.

### SPANISH Settlements. *Islands of CUBA, HISPANIOLA and PORTO RICO.*

**T**HE Havanna is the capital city of the island of Cuba; it is situated upon an excellent harbour upon the Western extremity of the island. This city is large, containing not less than two thousand houses, with a number of churches and convents; but then it is the only place of consequence upon the noble island of Cuba, which lies in the latitude 20, and extends from East to West near seven hundred miles in length, though in breadth it is disproportioned, being but from one hundred and twenty to seventy miles. However, it yields to no part of the West-Indies in the fertility of its soil, or in excellence of every thing which is produced in that climate. But the Spaniards, by a series of the most inhuman and impolitic barbarities, having exterminated the original inhabitants, and not finding the quantities of gold in the islands which the continent afforded, they have left this as well as Hispaniola, of which the French now possess the greater part, and Porto Rico, a large, excellent, and fertile





fertile island, comparatively so many deserts. The commerce between these islands, and the Spanish continent, is carried on by the Barlevento fleet, consisting of six ships of good burden and force, who annually make the tour of all these islands, and the coast of Terra Firma, not only to carry on the commerce between those places, but to clear the sea of pirates and illicit traders. Now and then a register ship from Old Spain is bound to one or other of these islands. Hitherto the Spaniards seemed rather to keep them, to prevent any other nation from growing too powerful in those seas, than for any profit they expected to derive from them. And it is certain, that if other nations should come entirely to possess the whole of these islands, the trade of the American continent, and perhaps the continent itself, would be entirely at their mercy. However, of late, the Spaniards have taken some steps towards the better settlement of Porto Rico. They are beginning to open the American trade to some other towns in Spain besides Cadiz. They have made a difference in point of duty between their own manufactures and those of foreigners. They are, in short, opening their eyes to the true interest of their country, and moving their hands, though slowly, to promote it.

## S E C T. III.

*The FRENCH Settlements. HISPANIOLA.*

**T**HE French were amongst the last nations who made settlements in the West-Indies; but they made ample amends by the vigour with which they pursued them, and by that chain of judicious and admirable measures, which they used in drawing from them every advantage, which the nature of the climate would yield; and in contending against the difficulties which it threw in their way.

So early as the reign of Francis I. the French attempted an establishment in North-America; but it was not until the year 1625, that they made their first settlement in the West-Indies. This was upon St. Christopher's, one of the Caribbee islands. A remarkable circumstance



attended it; the English took possession of the island the same day. But this settlement had not long life on either side. The Spaniards had reason to dread the establishment of such powers in their neighbourhood; and they envied the French and English those advantages, it was foreseen they would draw, from countries from which they had themselves no benefit, and which they claimed only to keep them deserts.

They assaulted these new colonies, and drove them out of the island. The English colony soon returned, and possessed themselves of the largest and most fertile quarter, before the French could collect themselves; who, finding the English already occupied the best part, left a small colony on the other. But their chief, and the most adventurous of their inhabitants, went in search of a new settlement; when after various fortune, and after combating the difficulties, which an uncultivated country and some indiscretions of their own had occasioned, they made a considerable settlement in the islands of Martinico and Guadaloupe.

After the Spaniards had ruined the first colony at St. Christopher's, they brought upon themselves, by this act, a very heavy revenge for the injustice of it. Their example at the same time made it apparent, how much better it is to let a bold and adventurous people settle in some place where they can do but little mischief, and to suffer their spirit to evaporate in peaceful occupations, rather than to keep it up by difficulties, forcing it to take another and more dangerous turn.

Several of the French inhabitants, who were expelled from St. Christopher's, being reduced to great indigence, began to think of desperate courses. They betook themselves to piracy; and uniting with some vagrant English, Dutch, and other outcasts of all nations, but resolute fellows, and not destitute of men of capacity amongst them, they began a piratical war upon the Spaniards.

The pirates whom we called buccaneers improperly, the French denominated *sibuffiers*, from the Dutch fly-boats,

boats, in which they made their first expeditions. The buccaneers are no more than persons who hunt wild cattle in America for their hides and tallow. Some of these joined the filibusters in their first expeditions; and from them we named the whole body buccaneers. These people brought their prizes and plunder frequently into Jamaica, by which they enriched that island extremely. Others, finding that the Spaniards were very weak in Hispaniola, and that they had in a manner deserted a considerable part of the island, made it a place of rendezvous. They who hunted cattle saw the hideous desarts, left by the Spanish tyranny, a proper place for exercising their profession. To these two sorts of people were soon added a third; who were some of the French in the Lesser Antilles, who finding how much might be made by supplying a sort of people who expended largely, and were not very exact in their bargains, and perceiving that no part of America afforded a better soil, passed over to this island, and exercised here their business of planters and merchants. These three sorts of people mutually in want of each other, lived in very good harmony. The Spaniards dislodged them several times; but they still returned, and with new strength; so that it was with difficulty, and after a long dispute, that the Spaniards were able to retain one part of the island.

The court of France saw the progress of these people silently. Whenever complaints were made, they disavowed their proceedings; resolved not to break measures with Spain for the sake of an object, which they were not sure they could hold, and the advantages of which were yet doubtful; but when they found the French in Hispaniola numerous, strong and wealthy, they owned them as subjects, sent them a governor and regular forces to keep them so, and to defend them in what they had done: the old method of piracy was still connived at, whilst the trade of skins increased, and the plantations extended. At last the French obtained a legal right by the cession, which the Spaniards made them of the North-West part of the island, by the treaty of Ryswick, in 1697; the best and most fertile part of the best and most fertile island in the West-Indies, and perhaps in the world; that

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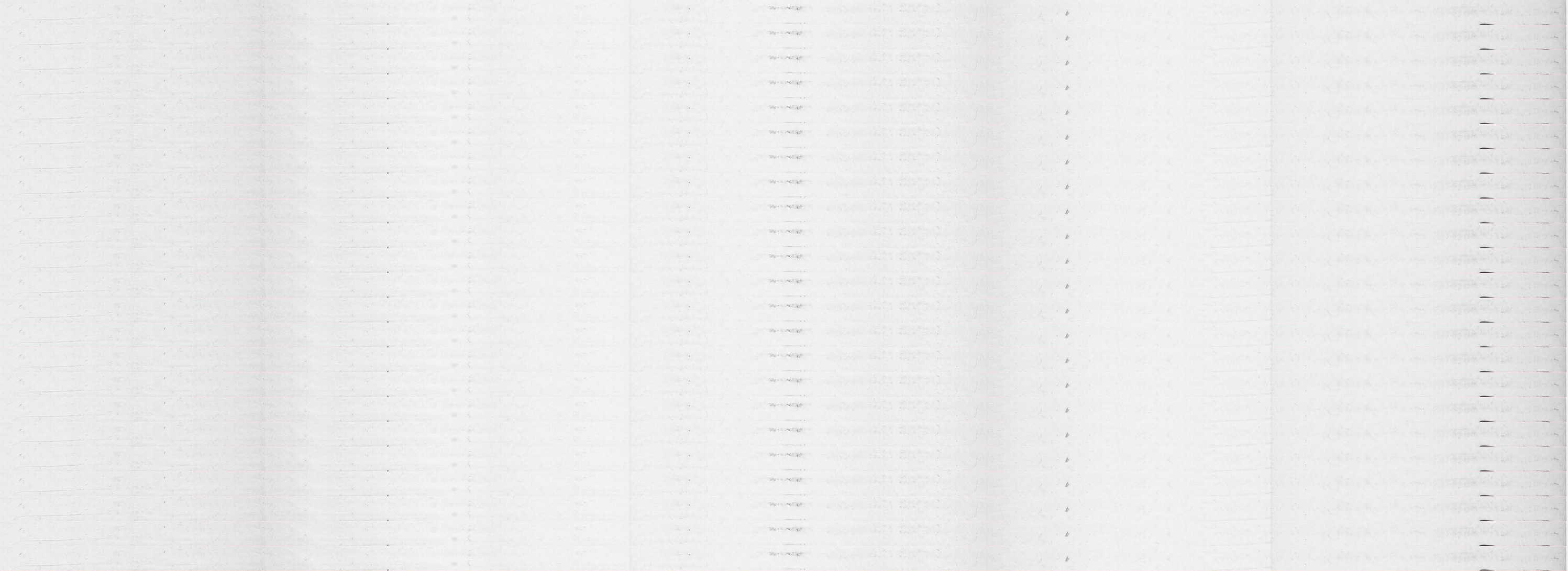
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which was first settled, and the whole of which is upwards of four hundred miles long, and one hundred and forty broad. This is the principal settlement of the French in the West-Indies, and indeed in all America. The country is mixed; pretty mountainous in some parts, but many of these mountains are fertile, and covered with beautiful woods. Others, which are barren and rocky, anciently had mines of gold; they are not worked now, tho' it is judged they not only contain those of gold, but mines of silver, copper and iron. But the French think, and, I believe, with reason, that their labour is better bestowed on the culture of the plains, for those rich commodities which vend so well in Europe, than in the pursuit of mines, really more precarious in their profits, and which yield a wealth after all of a less useful kind.

This country has likewise prodigiously fine plains, of a vast extent, and extreme fertility; either covered with noble and beautiful forests of timber and fruit-trees, excellent in their kinds, or pastured by vast numbers of horned cattle, sheep and hogs.

The air of Hispaniola is the most healthy in the West-Indies. The country is admirably watered with rivulets as well as navigable rivers. It is no wonder therefore, that this active and industrious nation, in possession of so excellent and extensive a country, has reaped from it prodigious advantages. They were the better enabled to do this, from the great encouragement their settlements met with in France; and from the wise regulations which were made concerning them.

It is certain they reckoned in the year 1726, that on this island they had no less than one hundred thousand negroes, and thirty thousand whites; that they made sixty thousand hogheads of sugar of five hundred weight each; that the indigo was half as much in value as the sugar; that they exported large quantities of cotton, and that they had sent besides to France cacao and ginger in tolerable plenty. Since that time they have raised coffee here to a very great amount. And not this article only, but every other branch of their commercial products has increased





increased to a degree truly astonishing since that period. Towards the conclusion of the late war, a Spanish writer of great judgment and well informed, reckons the produce of the plantations near Cape St. Françoise, the capital of French Hispaniola, and which were exported from that single town, at 30,000 tons in sugar, indigo, tobacco, and coffee. This export at the lowest possible calculation cannot be of less value than 600,000 pounds sterling. If to this we add the exports of the two considerable ports of Leogane and Petit Guaves, and the other inferior ones, which certainly do not send out less than the capital; on this low estimation, we find the exported produce of this island to be worth 1200,000 l. annually; which, great as it is, is certainly under-rated. But there is another branch of their trade if possible more advantageous to the mother country, the contraband which they carry on with the Spaniards, wholly in the manufactures of France, and for which they receive their returns in silver. The above-mentioned author from the most authentic information tells us, that this trade returns annually to France no less than two millions of dollars. This progress of the French colonies, and their flourishing state after a war in which they suffered greatly, we have displayed, in order to explode a notion which prevails with many; that by distressing the French in time of war it is in our power entirely to destroy their commerce; but this notion, if it should prevail generally, may mislead us greatly to our disadvantage.

Nations like France and England, full of people of spirit, and of industry, easily recover all the losses of war. The trade of France was in a deplorable condition at the treaty of Utrecht. She had not then five hundred vessels of all sorts in the world. At the beginning of the consequent war, only thirty years after, they had eighteen hundred. Their losses in that were very great; and yet their losses in the late war shew, that in a very little time they have more than repaired them. Wherever the vital principle subsists in full vigour, wounds are soon healed. Disorders themselves are a species of remedies; and every new loss not only shews how it may be repaired, but by the vigour it inspires, makes new advantages known. Such



The rest of the French islands in those seas are Desiada, \*St. Lucia, St. Bartholomew, and Marigalante; all of them inconsiderable in comparison of those which we have mentioned. They do not all together produce much more than seven or eight thousand hogsheads of sugar. These islands, besides their staple commodities, send home roucou, and Brazil wood, in considerable quantities for the use of dyers, cassia for druggists, and rosewood for joiners. The French have a settlement upon an island on the coast of Terra Firma in the province of Guiana, which they call Caen; and they claim besides a considerable part of the adjacent continent, but they have not much extended their settlements that way. The island is excessively unhealthy, though not so bad as formerly. The French here raise the same commodities which they have from the Caribbee islands, and in no inconsiderable quantity.

## S E C T. V.

D U T C H *and* D A N I S H *Settlements.*

**T**HE islands which the Dutch possess are four, Curassou, St. Eustatia, Aruba and Bonaire; none of them large or fertile, but turned to the best advantage possible by that spirit of industry for which the Dutch are justly famous. Curacco or Curassou, as it is generally called, is about thirty miles long, and ten in breadth. Though it is naturally barren, it produces a considerable quantity both of sugar and tobacco, and here are besides very great salt works which furnish a good deal to the English islands, and for which there is a considerable demand from our colonies on the continent; but the trade for which this island is chiefly valuable, is that which in time of war is carried on between them, the English and the French; and the contraband which is carried on between them and the Spaniards at all times.

The Dutch vessels from Europe touch at this island for intelligence or proper pilots, and then proceed to the Spanish coast upon a trade which they force with a strong hand. It is very difficult for the Spanish guarda costas to take these vessels; for they are not only stout ships, with  
a number

\* Confirmed to them by the treaty of *Versailles*, 1763.

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a number of guns; but by a very wise policy manned with a large crew of chosen seamen, who are all deeply interested in the safety of the vessel and the success of the voyage. They have each a share in the cargo, of a value proportioned to the owner's station, supplied by the merchants upon credit, and at prime cost. This animates them with an uncommon courage; they fight bravely, because every man fights in defence of his own property. But there is besides this, a constant intercourse between the Spanish continent and this island.

The island of Curassou has its numerous warehouses always full of the commodities of Europe, and the East-Indies. Here are all sorts of woollen and linen cloths, laces, silks, ribbands, utensils of iron, naval and military stores, brandy, the spices of the Moluccas, and the callicoes of India, white and painted. Hither the West-India, which is likewise their African company, bring three or four cargoes of slaves annually. To this mart, the Spaniards come themselves in small vessels, and carry off not only the best of their negroes, and at the best price, but very great quantities of all sorts of goods; with this advantage to the seller, that the refuse of warehouses and mercers shops, things grown utterly unfashionable and unsaleable in Europe, go off extremely well, where every thing is sufficiently recommended by being European. They leave here their gold and silver in bars or coined, cacao, vanilla, cochineal, jesuit's bark, hides, and other valuable commodities. The ships that trade directly from Holland to the Spanish continent, as they touch here on their outward passage to gain intelligence or assistance, on their return put in here likewise to compleat what is wanting of their cargo, with the sugar, the tobacco, the ginger, and other produce of the island itself. The trade of this island, even in times of peace, is reputed to be worth to the Dutch, no less than 500,000 l. sterling annually, but in time of war the profit is far greater, for then it is in a manner the common emporium of the West-Indies; it affords a great retreat to the ships of all nations, and at the same time refuses to none of them arms and ammunition to annoy one another. The intercourse with Spain being interrupted, the Spanish colonies

colonies have scarce any other market, from whence they can be well supplied either with slaves or goods; the French come hither to buy the beef, pork, corn, flour and lumber, which the English bring from the continent of North America, or which is transported from Ireland; so that whether in peace or in war, the trade of this island flourishes extremely. Nor is this owing to any natural advantage whatsoever. It seems as if it were fated, that the ingenuity and patience of the Hollanders should every where, both in Europe and America, be employed in fighting against an unfriendly nature: for the island is not only barren, and dependant upon the rains for its water, but the harbour is naturally one of the worst in America. But the Dutch have entirely remedied that defect; they have upon this harbour one of the largest, and by far the most elegant and cleanly towns in the American islands. The public buildings are numerous and handsome; the private houses commodious; and the magazines large, convenient, and well filled. Every kind of labour is here performed by engines; some of them so dexterously contrived, that ships are at once lifted into the dock, where they are compleatly careened; and then furnished with naval stores, provisions, cannon, and every thing requisite either for trade or war.

Eustatia is but one mountain of about twenty miles in compass; it is amongst the Leeward islands; but though so small and inconveniently laid out by nature, the industry of the Dutch have made it turn out to very good account, and it is fully peopled; the sides of the mountain are divided and laid out in very pretty settlements; and though they have neither springs nor rivers, they are so careful that they never want proper supplies of water from their ponds and cisterns. They raise here sugar and tobacco; and this island, as well as Curassou, is engaged in the Spanish counterband trade, for which, however, it is not so well situated; and it draws the same advantages from its constant neutrality.

As for Aruba and Bonaire; they lie near Curassou, and have no trade of consequence; they are chiefly employed  
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in raising fresh provisions for the principal island, and for the refreshment of such ships as use those seas.

The trade of all the Dutch American settlements was originally carried on by the West-India company only. At present such ships as go upon that trade pay two and a half per cent. for their licences; the company however reserves to itself, the whole of what is carried on between Africa and the American islands.

The Danes had likewise a West-India company, though its object was far from extensive. It was little more than the island of St. Thomas, an inconsiderable member of the Caribbees; lately they have added to their possessions the island of Santa Cruz in the same cluster. These islands, so long as they remained in the hands of the company, were ill managed, and nothing like the proper advantage was made of them; but the present king of Denmark, inferior to none who ever sat upon that or any other throne, in love to his subjects, and a judicious zeal for promoting their welfare, has bought up that company's stock, and laid the trade open. Since then, the old settlement at St. Thomas is very much improved; it produces upwards of three thousand hogshheads of sugar at a thousand weight each, and others of the West-Indian commodities in tolerable plenty; and as for Santa Cruz, from a perfect desert a few years since, it is beginning to settle fast; several persons from the English islands, and amongst them some of great wealth, have gone to settle there, and have received very great encouragement to do so. The air of the place is extremely unhealthful; but this ill disposition will probably continue no longer than the woods, with which the island at present is almost wholly covered. These two nations, the Dutch and Danes, hardly deserve to be mentioned amongst the proprietors of America; their possessions there are comparatively nothing. But as they appear extremely worthy of the attention of these powers, and as the share of the Dutch is worth to them at least six hundred thousand pounds sterling a year, what must we think of our possessions? what attention do they not deserve from us? and what may not be made of them by that attention?

## S E C T. VI.

BRITISH *Settlements.* JAMAICA.

**J**A M A I C A lies between the 75th and 79th degrees of West longitude from London, and is between seventeen and nineteen degrees distant from the Equinoctial. It is in length from East to West, an hundred and forty English miles, in breadth about sixty, and of an oval form. This country is in a manner intersected with a ridge of lofty mountains, rugged and rocky, that are called the blue mountains. On each side of the blue mountains are chains of lesser mountains gradually lower. The greater mountains are little better than so many rocks; where there is any earth, it is only a stubborn clay fit for no sort of husbandry. The mountains are very steep, and the rocks tumbled upon one another in a manner altogether stupendous, the effect of the frequent earthquakes which have shaken this island in all times. Yet barren as these mountains are, they are all covered to the very top with a great variety of beautiful trees, flourishing in a perpetual spring; their roots penetrate the crannies of the rocks, and search out the moisture which is lodged there by the rains that fall so frequently on these mountains, and the mists that almost perpetually brood upon them. These rocks too are the parents of a vast number of fine rivulets, which tumble down their sides in cataracts, that form amongst the rudeness of the rocks and precipices, and the shining verdure of the trees, the most wildly pleasing imagery imaginable. The face of this country is a good deal different from what is generally observed in other places. For as on one hand the mountains are very steep; so the plains between them are perfectly smooth and level. In these plains the soil, augmented by the wash of the mountains for so many ages, is prodigiously fertile. None of our islands produce so fine sugars. They formerly had here cacao in great perfection, which delights in a rich ground. Their pastures after the rains, are of a most beautiful verdure, and extraordinary fatness. They are called Savannas. On the whole, if this island were not troubled

troubled with great thunders and lightnings, hurricanes and earthquakes, and if the air was not at once violently hot, damp, and extremely unwholesome in most parts, the fertility and beauty of this country would make it as desirable a situation for pleasure, as it is for the profits, which, in spite of these disadvantages, draw hither such a number of people.

The river waters are many of them unwholesome and taste of copper; but some springs there are of a better kind. In the plains are found several salt fountains; and in the mountains, not far from Spanish-town, is a hot bath, of extraordinary medicinal virtues. It relieves in the dry belly-ach, one of the most terrible endemial distempers of Jamaica, and in various other complaints.

This island came into our possession during the usurpation of Cromwell, and by means of an armament which had another destination. Cromwell, notwithstanding the great abilities which enabled him to overturn the constitution, and to trample upon the liberties of his country, was not sufficiently acquainted with foreign politics. This ignorance made him connect himself closely with France, then rising into a dangerous grandeur, and to fight with great animosity, the shadow which remained of the Spanish power. On such ideas he fitted out a formidable fleet, with a view to reduce the island of Hispaniola; and though he failed in this design, Jamaica made amends not only for this failure, but almost for the ill policy which first drew him into hostilities with the Spaniards; by which, however, he added this excellent country to the British dominions.

There was nothing of the genius of Cromwell to be seen in the planning of this expedition. From the first to the last all was wrong; all was a chain of little interested mismanagement, and had no air of the result of absolute power lodged in great hands. The fleet was ill victualled; the troops ill provided with necessaries to support and encourage men badly chosen and worse armed. They embarked in great discontent. The generals were but little better satisfied, and had little more hopes than the sol-



diers. But the generals, (for there were two in the command, Pen and Venables, one for the marine, the other for the land-service,) were men of no extraordinary talents. And if they had been men of the best capacity, little was to be expected from two commanders not subordinate, and so differing in their ideas, and so envious of each other as land and sea-officers generally are. But to make this arrangement perfect in all respects, and to improve the advantages arising from a divided command, they added a number of commissioners as a check upon both. This tripartite generalship, in the truest Dutch taste, produced the effects that might be expected from it. The soldiers differed with the generals, the generals disagreed with one another, and all quarrelled with the commissioners. The place of their landing in Hispaniola was ill chosen, and the manner of it wretchedly contrived. The army had near forty miles to march before it could act; and the soldiers, without order, without heart, fainting and dying by the excessive heat of the climate and the want of necessary provisions, and disheartened yet more by the cowardice and discontent of their officers, yielded an easy victory to an handful of Spaniards. They retired ignominiously and with great loss.

But the principal commanders, a little reconciled by their misfortunes, and fearing to return to England without effect, very wisely turned their thoughts another way. They resolved to attempt Jamaica, before the inhabitants of that island could receive encouragement by the news of their defeat in Hispaniola. They knew that this island was in no good posture of defence; and they set themselves vigorously to avoid the mistakes, which proved so fatal in the former expedition. They severely punished the officers who had shewn an ill example by their cowardice; and they ordered, with respect to the soldiers, that if any attempted to run away, the man nearest to him should shoot him.

Fortified with these regulations they landed in Jamaica, and laid siege to St. Jago de la Vega, now called Spanishtown, the capital of the island. The people, who were in no condition to oppose an army of ten thousand men,  
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and a strong naval force, would have surrendered immediately, if they had not been encouraged by the strange delays of our generals and their commissioners. However at last the town with the whole island surrendered, but not until the inhabitants had secreted their most valuable effects in the mountains.

After the restoration, the Spaniards ceded the island to our court. Cromwell had settled there some of the troops employed in its reduction; some royalists uneasy at home sought an asylum in this island; not a few planters from Barbadoes were invited to Jamaica by the extraordinary fertility of the soil, and the other advantages which it offered. These latter taught the former settlers the manner of raising the sugar cane, and making sugar. For at first they had wholly applied themselves to the raising of cacao, as the Spaniards had done before them. It was happy for them that they fell into this new practice; for the cacao groves planted by the Spaniards began to fail, and the new plantations did not answer, as the negroes foretold they would not, because of the want of certain religious ceremonies always used by the Spaniards in planting them, at which none of the slaves were suffered to be present, and to the use of which they attributed the prosperity of these plantations. Probably there were methods taken at that time, that were covered by the veil of these religious ceremonies, which are necessary to the well-being of that plant. However that be, the cacao has never since equalled the reputation of the Spanish, but gave way to the more profitable cultivation of indigo and sugar.

But what gave the greatest life to this new settlement, and raised it at once to a surprising pitch of opulence, which it hardly equals even in our days, was the resort thither of those pirates called the buccaneers. These men who fought with the most desperate bravery, and spent their plunder with the most stupid extravagance, were very welcome guests in Jamaica. They often brought two, three, and four hundred thousand pieces of eight at a time, which were immediately squandered in all the ways of excessive gaming, wine and women. Vast fortunes

tunes were made, and the returns of treasure to England were prodigiously great. In the island they had by this means raised such funds, that when the source of this wealth was stopped up by the suppression of the pirates, they were enabled to turn their industry into better channels. They increased so fast, that it was computed that in the beginning of this century, they had sixty thousand whites and a hundred and twenty thousand negroes in this island. This calculation is certainly too large. However, the Jamaicans were undoubtedly very numerous until reduced by earthquakes, (one of which entirely ruined Port Royal, and killed a vast number of persons in all parts of the country) and by terrible epidemical diseases, which treading on the heels of the former calamities swept away vast multitudes; losses which have not been since sufficiently repaired. At present the white inhabitants scarcely exceed twenty five thousand souls; the blacks are about ninety thousand; both much less numerous than formerly, and with a disproportion much greater on the side of the whites.

It appears at present, that Jamaica is rather upon the decline; a point this that deserves the most attentive consideration. A country which contains at least four millions of acres, has a fertile soil, an extensive sea coast, and many very fine harbours, for an island so circumstanced, and at a time when the value of all its products at market is considerably risen, for such a country to fall short of its former numbers, and not to have above three or four hundred thousand acres employed in any sort of culture, shews clearly that something must be very wrong in the management of its affairs; and what shews it even yet more clearly, land is so extravagantly dear in many of the other islands, as to sell sometimes for one hundred pounds an acre and upwards; a price that undoubtedly never would be paid, if convenient land was to be had, and proper encouragement given in Jamaica. Whether this be owing to public or private faults, I know not; but certain it is, that wherever they are, they deserve a speedy and effectual remedy from those, in whose power it is to apply it.

The natural products of Jamaica, besides sugar, cacao, and ginger, are principally piemento, or, as it is called, allspice, or Jamaica pepper. The tree which bears the piemento rises to the height of above thirty feet. It is straight, of a moderate thickness, and covered with a grey bark extremely smooth and shining. It shoots out a vast number of branches upon all sides, that bear a plentiful foliage of very large and beautiful leaves of a shining green, in all things resembling the leaf of the bay tree. At the very end of the twigs are formed bunches of flowers; each stalk bearing a flower which bends back, and within which bend are to be discerned some stamina of a pale green colour; to these succeeds a bunch of small crowned berries, larger when ripe than juniper berries; at that season they change from their former green, and become black, smooth, and shining; they are taken unripe from the tree, and dried in the sun; in this case they assume a brown colour, and have a mixed flavour of many kinds of spice, whence it is called allspice. But it is milder than the other spices, and is judged to be inferior to none of them for the service which it does to cold, watery and languid stomachs. The tree grows mostly upon the mountains.

Besides this they have the wild cinnamon tree, whose bark is so serviceable in medicine; the manchineel, a most beautiful tree to the eye, with the fairest apple in the world, and when cut down affording a very fine ornamental wood for the joiners; but the apple and the juice in every part of the tree, contain one of the worst poisons in nature. Here is the mohogany, in such general use with our cabinet makers; the cabbage tree, a tall plant, famous for a substance, looking and tasting like cabbage, growing on the very top, and no less remarkable for the extreme hardness of its wood, which when dry is incorruptible, and hardly yields to any tool; the palma, from which is drawn a great deal of oil, much esteemed by the negroes both in food and medicine; the white wood, which never breeds the worm in ships; the soap tree, whose berries answer all purposes of washing; the mangrove and olive bark, useful to tanners; the fustic and redwood to the dyers, and lately the logwood; and their forests supply the apothecary with guaiacum, sarsaparilla,

china, cassia, and tamarinds; they have aloes too; and do not want the cochineal plant, though they know nothing of the art of managing it; nor perhaps is the climate suitable. The indigo plant was formerly much cultivated; the cotton tree is still so, and they send home more of its wool than all the rest of our islands together.

The whole product therefore of the island may be reduced to these heads. First sugars, of which they imported in 1753 twenty thousand three hundred and fifteen hogheads, some vastly great even to a tun weight, which cannot be worth less in England than 424,725 pounds sterling. Most of this goes to London and Bristol, and some part of it to North America, in return for the beef, pork, cheese, corn, pease, staves, plank, pitch and tar, which they have from thence. 2. Rum, of which they export about 4000 puncheons. The rum of this island is generally esteemed the best, and is the most used in England. 3. Molasses, in which they make a great part of their returns for New England, where there are vast distilleries. All these are the produce of their grand staple the sugar cane. 4. Cotton, of which they send out 2000 bags. The indigo, formerly much cultivated, is now inconsiderable, but some cacao and coffee are exported, which latter is in no great esteem; though it is said to be little inferior to that of Mocha, provided it be kept for two or three years. With these they send home a considerable quantity of pimento, ginger, drugs for dyers and apothecaries, sweetmeats, and mahogany and manchineel plank. But some of the most considerable articles of their trade are with the Spanish continent of New Spain and Terra Firma; for in the former they cut great quantities of \* logwood, and both in the former and latter they drive a vast and profitable trade in negroes, and all kinds of the same European goods which are carried thither from Old Spain by the flota.

But there is a trade yet more profitable carried on between this island and the Spanish continent, especially in time of war. This has been the cause of much bickering

\* By the treaty of *Versailles* the privilege of cutting logwood has been granted to the *English*.

ering between us and the court of Spain, and it will be very difficult for them to put a stop to it because the Spaniards are so eager for it, and it is so profitable to the British merchant, and whilst the Spanish officers from the highest to the lowest shew so great a respect to presents properly made. The trade is carried on in this manner. The ship from Jamaica having taken in negroes, and a proper sortment of goods there, proceeds in time of peace to a harbour called the Grout within Monkey-kay, about four miles from Porto bello. A person who understands Spanish, is directly sent on shore to give the merchants of the town notice of the arrival of the vessel; the same news is carried likewise with great speed to Panama; from whence the merchants set out disguised like peasants with their silver in jars covered with meal, to deceive the officers of the revenue. Here the ship remains trading frequently for five or six weeks together. The Spaniards usually come on board, leave their money, and take their negroes, and their goods packed up in parcels fit for one man to carry, after having been handsomely entertained on board, and receiving provisions sufficient for their journey homeward. If the whole cargo is not disposed of here, they bear off eastward to the Brew, a harbour about five miles distant from Carthagena, where they soon find a vent for the rest. There is no trade more profitable than this; for your payments are made in ready money; and the goods sell higher than they would at any other market. It is not on this coast only, but every where upon the Spanish main, that this trade is carried on; nor is it by the English only, but the French from Hispaniola, the Dutch from Curassou, and even the Danes have some share in it. When the Spanish guarda costas seize upon one of these vessels, they make no scruple of confiscating the cargo, and of treating the crew in a manner little better than pirates.

This commerce in time of peace, and this with the prizes that are made in time of war, pour into Jamaica an astonishing quantity of treasure; great fortunes are made in a manner instantly, whilst the people appear to live in such a state of luxury as in all other places leads to

beggary. Their equipages, their cloaths, their furniture, their tables, all bear the tokens of the greatest wealth and profusion imaginable; this obliges all the treasure they receive, to make but a very short stay, as all this treasure added to all the products of the island itself, is hardly more than sufficient to answer the calls of their necessity and luxury on Europe and North America, and their demand for slaves, of which this island is under the necessity of an annual recruit for its own use and that of the Spanish trade, of upwards of six thousand head, and which stand them one with another in thirty pounds apiece, and often more.

The whole island is divided into nineteen districts or parishes, which send each of them two members to the assembly, and allow a competent maintenance to a minister. Port-Royal was anciently the capital of the island; it stood upon the very point of a long narrow neck of land, which towards the sea formed part of the border of a very noble harbour of its own name. In this harbour above a thousand sail of the largest ships could anchor with the greatest convenience and safety; and the water was so deep at the quay of Port-Royal, that vessels of the greatest burden could lay their broadsides to the wharfs, and load and unload at little expence or trouble. This conveniency weighed so much with the inhabitants, that they chose in this spot to build their capital, though the place was an hot dry sand, which produced not one of the necessaries of life, not even fresh water. However, this advantageous situation, and the resort of the pirates, soon made it a very considerable place. It contained two thousand houses very handsomely built, and which rented as high as those in London. It had a resort like a constant fair, by the great concourse of people of business, and grew to all this in about thirty years time; for before that there was scarcely an house upon the place. In short, there were very few places in the world, which for the size could be compared to this town for trade, wealth, and an entire corruption of manners.

It continued thus until the 9th of June 1692, when an earthquake, which shook the whole island to its foundations,

ons, overwhelmed this city, and buried nine tenths of it eight fathom under water. This earthquake not only demolished this city, but made a terrible devastation all over the island, and was followed by a contagious distemper, which was near giving the last hand to its ruin. Ever since, it has been remarked, that the air is far more unwholesome than formerly. This earthquake, one of the most dreadful that ever was known, is described in such lively colours in the Philosophical transactions, and by persons who saw and had a large part in the terrors and losses of this calamity, that we shall say nothing of it, but refer thither; as 'tis certain no man from his fancy, could assemble a greater number of images of horror, than the nature of things, taught the persons who saw them, to bring together, and which are there related very naturally and pathetically.

They rebuilt this city after the earthquake, but it was again destroyed. A terrible fire laid it in ashes about ten years after. Notwithstanding this, the extraordinary convenience of the harbour tempted them to rebuild it once more. But in the year 1722 a hurricane, one of the most terrible on record, reduced it a third time to a heap of rubbish. Warned by these extraordinary calamities, that seemed to mark out this place as a devoted spot, by an act of assembly they removed the custom-house and public offices from thence, and forbid that any market should be held there for the future. The principal inhabitants came to reside at the opposite side of the bay, at a place which is called Kingston. The town is commodiously situated for fresh water, and all manner of accommodations. The streets are of a commodious wideness, regularly drawn, and cutting each other at equal distances and right angles. It consists of upwards of one thousand houses, many of them handsomely built, though low, with porticoes, and every conveniency for a comfortable habitation in that climate. The harbour was formerly in no good posture of defence, but by the care of the late governor Mr. Knowles, it is now strongly fortified.

The river Cobre, a considerable, but not navigable stream, falls into the sea not far from Kingston. Upon the banks of this river stands St. Jago de la Vega, or Spanish-



Spanish-town; the seat of government, and the place where the courts of justice are held, and consequently the capital of Jamaica, though inferior in size and resort to Kingston. However, this, tho' a town of less business, has more gaiety. Here reside many persons of large fortunes, and who make a figure proportionable; the number of coaches kept here is very great; here is a regular assembly; and the residence of the governor and the principal officers of the government, who have all very profitable places, conspire with the genius of the inhabitants, ostentatious and expensive, to make it a very splendid and agreeable place. Mr. Knowles, the late governor, made an attempt to remove the seat of government from hence to Kingston, for reasons which, it must be owned, have a very plausible appearance; for it would certainly facilitate the carrying on of business, to have the courts of justice and the seat of government, as near as possible to the centre of commercial affairs. But whether the consideration of a more healthful situation; the division of the advantages of great towns with the several parts of the country, and the mischiefs that might arise from shaking the settled order of things, and prejudicing the property of a great many private people, can weigh against the advantages proposed by this removal, I will not undertake to determine. One thing appears, I think, very plainly in the contest which this regulation produced; that the opposition was at least as much to the governor as to the measure; and that great natural warmth of temper upon all sides, enflamed and envenomed by a spirit of party which reigns in all our plantations, kindled a flame about this, which, if it had not happened, must have risen to the same height upon some other occasion, since there was a plenty of combustible materials ready upon all sides.

The government of this island is, next to that of Ireland, the best in the king's gift. The standing salary is two thousand five hundred pounds a year. The assembly vote the governor as much more; and this, with the other great profits of his office, make it in the whole little inferior to ten thousand pounds a year.





## S E C T. VII.

## B A R B A D O E S.

**T**HE next island, in point of importance which we possess in the West-Indies, but the oldest in point of settlement, is Barbadoes. This is one, and by no means the most contemptible one, amongst the Windward division of the Carribbee islands. It is not distinctly known when this island was first discovered or settled; but it was probably some time about the year 1625.

When the English first landed here, they found the place the most savage and destitute that can well be imagined. It had not the least appearance of ever having been peopled even by savages. There was no kind of beast of pasture or of prey, no fruit, no herb, nor root fit for supporting the life of man. Yet as the climate was good, and the soil appeared fertile, some gentlemen of small fortunes in England resolved to become adventurers thither. But the first planters had not only the utter desolateness of the place, and the extreme want of provisions to struggle with, but the trees were so large, of a wood so hard and stubborn, and full of such great branches, that they proceeded in the clearing of the ground with a difficulty that must have worn down any ordinary patience. And even when they had tolerably cleared some little spot, the first produce it yielded for their subsistence was so small and ordinary, at the same time that their supplies from England were so slow and precarious, that nothing but the noblest courage, and a firmness which cannot receive too many praises, could have carried them through the discouragements which they met in the noblest work in the world, the cultivating and peopling a deserted part of the globe. But by degrees things were mollified; some of the trees yielded saffic for the dyers; cotton and indigo agreed well with the soil; tobacco then becoming fashionable in England answered tolerably; and the country began gradually to lay aside its savage disposition, and to submit to culture.

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These good appearances in America, and the storm which some time after began to gather in England, encouraged many to go over; but still the colony received no sort of encouragement from the government, which at that time understood the advantages of colonies but little; and which was besides much worse occupied in sowing those seeds of bitterness, which came afterwards so terribly to their own lips. The court took no other notice of this island than to grant it to a very unworthy and unfaithful favourite, the earl of Carlisle; which, as may be judged, proved of no advantage to the settlement.

However, as this colony had the hardiest breeding, and the most laborious infancy of any of our settlements, so it was far stronger in its stamina, and grew with greater speed; and that to an height, which if it were not proved beyond any reasonable doubt, could scarcely be believed. For in this small island, which is but twenty-five miles in length, and in breadth but fourteen, in little more than twenty years after its first settlement, that is, in 1650, it contained upwards of fifty thousand whites of all sexes and ages, and a much greater number of black and Indian slaves. The former of which slaves they bought; the latter they acquired by means not at all to their honour; for they seized upon those unhappy men without any pretence, in the neighbouring islands, and carried them into slavery; a practice which has rendered the Caribbee Indians irreconcilable to us ever since.

This small island, peopled by upwards of one hundred thousand souls, was not yet above half of it cultivated, nor was the industry of the inhabitants at a stand. A little before the period I have mentioned, they learned the method of making sugar; and this enlarging the sphere of their trade, they grew prodigiously rich and numerous.

About this time the government in England, which was then in the hands of Cromwell, confined the trade of Barbadoes to the mother country; before it had been managed altogether by the Dutch. The rigour exercised towards the royal party, obliged several gentlemen of very good families to settle in this island, which was far from  
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being peopled like some other colonies, by fugitives and persons desperate at home. After the restoration it continued still to advance by very hasty strides. Not long after the restoration, king Charles created thirteen baronets from the gentlemen of this island, some of whom were worth ten thousand pounds a year, and none so little as one thousand.

In 1676, which was the meridian of this settlement, their whites were computed to be still much about fifty thousand, but their negroe slaves were increased so as to be upwards of one hundred thousand of all kinds. They employed four hundred sail of ships, one with another of an hundred and fifty tuns, in their trade; their annual exported produce in sugar, indigo, ginger, cotton, &c. amounted to upwards of three hundred and fifty thousand pounds, and their circulating cash at home was two hundred thousand. It is probable that Holland itself, or perhaps even the best inhabited parts of China were never peopled in the same proportion, nor have they land of the same dimensions, which produces any thing like the same profits. But since that time the island has been much upon the decline. The growth of the French sugar islands, and the settlement of Antigua, St. Christopher's, Nevis, and Montserrat, as well as the greater establishment in Jamaica, have drawn away from time to time a vast number of their people. A terrible contagion, said to be brought over by the troops from England, but more probably derived from the coast of Africa, attacked the island in the year 1692; it raged like a pestilence; twenty were died in a day in their principal town; and all parts of the island suffered in proportion. This sickness continued, with some abatements, for several years, and left an ill disposition in the climate ever afterwards. War raged at the same time with this distemper; and the Barbadians who raised a good number of men, lost many of them in fruitless expeditions against the French islands. The land too began not to yield quite so kindly as it formerly had done, and in some places they were obliged to manure it. All these causes contributed to reduce the numbers and opulence of this celebrated island. But it is only in comparison of itself, that it may be considered in any other

ther than the most flourishing condition even at this day; for it contains twenty-five thousand whites, very near eighty thousand negroes, and it ships above twenty-five thousand hogheads of sugar, to the value of three hundred thousand pounds, besides rum, molasses, cotton, ginger, and aloes; an immense peopling and produce for a country not containing more than one hundred thousand acres of land. By the rise of sugars, the returns of this island are little less than they were in its most flourishing times.

This island can raise near five thousand men of its own militia, and it has generally a regiment of regular troops, though not very compleat. It is fortified by nature all along the windward shore by the rocks and shoals, so as to be near two thirds utterly inaccessible. On the leeward side it has good harbours; but the whole coast is protected by a line of several miles in length, and several forts to defend it in the most material places.

They support their own establishment, which is very considerable, with great credit. The governor's place is worth at least five thousand pounds a year, and the rest of their officers have valuable places. They provide very handsomely for their clergy, who are of the church of England, which is the religion established here, as it is in the other islands. Here are very few dissenters. There is in general an appearance of something more of order and decency, and of a settled people, than in any other colony in the West-Indies. They have here a college, founded and well endowed by the virtue and liberality of that great man colonel Christopher Codrington, who was a native of this island, and who for a great number of amiable and useful qualities both in public and private life, for his courage, and his zeal for the good of his country, his humanity, his knowledge and love of literature, was far the richest production and most shining ornament this island ever had.

This college does not so fully answer the intentions of the excellent founder, as it might do. If the fund was applied to the education of a number of catechists for the instruction

instruction of the negroes, some of them of their own colour, it would be a vast public advantage, besides the charity, or perhaps the indispensable duty of some such work.

This college is in Bridge-town, the capital of this island, which before the late fire contained about twelve hundred houses, very handsomely built and inhabited by a numerous and wealthy people. The country of Barbadoes has a most beautiful appearance, swelling here and there into gentle hills; shining by the cultivation of every part, by the verdure of the sugar canes, the bloom and fragrance of the number of orange, lemon, lime and citron trees, the guavas, papas, aloes, and a vast multitude of other elegant and useful plants, that rise intermixed with the houses of the gentlemen which are sown thickly on every part of the island. Even the negroe huts, tho' mean, contribute to the beauty of the country; for they shade them with plaintain trees, which give their villages the appearance of so many beautiful groves. In short, there is no place in the West-Indies comparable to Barbadoes, in point of numbers of people, cultivation of the soil, and those elegancies and conveniencies which result from both.

#### S E C T. VIII.

*St. CHRISTOPHER's, ANTIGUA, NEVIS, MONTSERRAT, &c. their present condition and force.*

**T**HE island of St. Christopher's is the chief of those which we possess amongst the Leeward islands. It was first settled by the French and English in the year 1626, but after various fortunes it was entirely ceded to us by the treaty of Utrecht. This island is about seventy-five miles in compass. The circuit of Antigua is but little inferior. Nevis and Montserrat are the smallest of the four, not exceeding for either of them, about eighteen or twenty miles in circumference. The soil in all these islands is pretty much alike; light and sandy, but notwithstanding fertile in an high degree. Antigua has no rivulets of fresh water, and but very few springs; this  
made



made it be deemed uninhabitable for a long time; but now they save the rains in ponds and cisterns with great care, and they are rarely in great distress for water. In a word, this island, which we formerly thought useless, has got the start of all the Leeward islands, increasing every day in its produce and inhabitants both freemen and slaves. It has one of the best harbours in the West-Indies; on it stands the principal town called St. John's, which is large and wealthy.

The island of St. Christopher's is not so much on the increase. Neither that, nor any of the Leeward islands, yields any commodity of consequence but what is derived from the cane, except Montserrat, which exports some indigo, but of a very inferior kind.

It is judged that the island of St. Christopher's contains about seven thousand whites, and twenty thousand negroes; that Antigua has also about seven thousand of the former colour, and thirty thousand blacks; and that Nevis and Montserrat may have each about five thousand Europeans who are masters of ten or twelve thousand African slaves. So that the whole of the Leeward islands may be reckoned without exaggeration to maintain about twenty thousand English, of whom every single man gives bread to several in England, which is effected by the labour of near seventy thousand negroes. Of the island of Barbuda, we say little, because it has no direct trade with England. It is employed in husbandry, and raising fresh provisions for the use of the neighbouring colonies. It is the property of the Codrington family.

These islands are under the management of one governor, who has the title of captain general and governor in chief of all the caribbee islands from Guadaloupe to Porto Rico. His post is worth about three thousand five hundred pounds a year. Under him each island has its particular deputy governor at a salary of two hundred pounds a year, and its separate, independent legislative of a council, and an assembly of the representatives.

S E C T.

## S E C T. IX.

*Of GRANADA, the GRANADILLOES, ST. VINCENT, DOMINICA, and TOBAGO.*

**T**H E S E islands were ceded to the king of Great-Britain by the treaty of Versailles. They are all in the number of those islands called by Geographers the Caribbees. Granada is the most Southern of these settlements about 159 miles S. W. of Barbadoes, about 25 miles in length and 5 in breadth. lat. 12. 2. N. lon. 61. 36. 'Tis very fertile, and productive of the same commodities, fruits, &c. with the other West-India islands. We can say nothing as yet concerning its trade, nor indeed of any of these ceded islands, the plantations being as yet in their infancy; but 'tis to be hoped that the industry of enterprizing adventurers, and proper encouragement from the throne, may render them a jewel of considerable value in the English crown.

The Granadilloes lie between 12 and 13 N. lat. and 61 W. lon. Before the peace of Versailles they were quite neglected, but are at present in a way of cultivation, the effect of which is, at present, in the womb of time.

St. Vincent is 20 miles in length and almost as much in breadth, lat. 12. 50. N. 58. 32. W. lon. it is the most populous of those the ancient inhabitants still possess. The duke of Montague sent a colony hither in 1722, to people this island, but they were driven back by the French.

Dominica is 32 miles in length and 12 in breadth about 28 miles N. of Martinico, lat. 15. 15. N. lon. 61. 8. W.

Tobago is about 52 miles long and 12 broad, lat. 11. 36. N. lon. 59. 10. W. It was formerly planted by the English, but being often ravaged by the Indians from Terra Firma, they thought proper to abandon it.

## S E C T. X.

*The trade of MEXICO. Some account of that city. The fairs of ACAPULCO, and LA VERA CRUZ. The flota, register ships and Galleons.*

**T**HE trade of Mexico may be considered as consisting of three great branches by which it communicates with the whole world; the trade with Europe by La Vera Cruz; the trade with the East-Indies by Acapulco; and the commerce of the South Sea by the same port. The places in New Spain, which can interest a stranger, are therefore three only, La Vera Cruz, Acapulco, and Mexico.

Mexico, the capital of the kingdom, the residence of the viceroy, the seat of the first audience or chamber of justice, and an archbishopric, is certainly one of the richest and most splendid cities, not only in America, but in the whole world. Though no sea-port town, nor communicating with the sea by any navigable river, it has a prodigious commerce, and is itself the centre of all that is carried on between America and Europe on one hand, and between America and the East-Indies on the other; for here the principal merchants reside, the greatest part of the business is negotiated, and the goods that pass from Acapulco to La Vera Cruz, or from La Vera Cruz to Acapulco, for the use of the Philippines, and in a great measure for the use of Peru and Lima, all pass through this city, and employ an incredible number of horses and mules in the carriage. Hither all the gold and silver come to be coined, here the king's fifth is deposited, and here is wrought all that immense quantity of utensils and ornaments in plate, which is every year sent into Europe. Every thing here has the greatest air of magnificence and wealth; the shops glitter upon all sides with the exposure of gold, silver and jewels, and surprize yet more by the work of the imagination, upon the treasure which fill great chests piled up to the ceilings, whilst they wait the time of being sent to Old Spain. It is said that the negro wenches, who run by the coaches of the ladies there,  
wear

wear bracelets of gold, pearl necklaces, and jewels in their ears, whilst the black foot-boys are all over covered with lace and embroidery. It cannot exactly be ascertained what number of people are in this city. It is certainly very considerable, by many not made less than seventy or eighty thousand. This city itself is well and regularly built, though the houses are not lofty; the monasteries are numerous, and richly endowed, and the churches extravagantly rich in their ornaments, though comparatively poor in the taste of their architecture.

The port nearest to this city is Acapulco, upon the South-Sea, upwards of two hundred miles distant from the capital. Acapulco itself has one of the deepest, securest, and most commodious harbours in the South-Sea, and indeed almost the only one which is good upon the Western coast of New Spain. The entrance of the harbour is defended by a castle of tolerable strength; the town itself is but ill built, and makes every way a miserable figure, except at the time of the fairs, when it entirely changes its appearance, and becomes one of the most considerable marts in the world. About the month of December, the great galleon, which makes the whole communication that is between America and the Philippines, after a voyage of five months, and sailing three thousand leagues without seeing any other land than the Little Ladrões, arrives here loaded with all the rich commodities of the East; cloves, pepper, cinamon, nutmegs, mace, china, japan wares, callicoes plain and painted, chints, muslins of every sort, silks, precious stones, rich drugs, and gold dust. At the same time the annual ship from Lima comes in, and is not computed to bring less than two millions of pieces of eight in silver, besides quicksilver, cacao, drugs and other valuable commodities to be laid out in the purchase of the commodities of the East-Indies. Several other ships from different parts of Chili and Peru meet upon the same occasion; and besides the traffic for the Philippine commodities, this causes a very large dealing for every thing those countries have to exchange with one another, as well as for the purchase of all sorts of European goods. The fair lasts sometimes for thirty days. As soon as the goods are dis-

posed of, the galleon prepares to set out on her voyage to the Philippines with her returns, chiefly in silver, but with some European goods too, and some other commodities of America. I speak here, as though there were but one vessel on the trade with the Philippines; and in fact there is only nominally one trading vessel, the galleon itself, of about twelve hundred tuns; but another attends her commonly as a sort of convoy, which generally carries such a quantity of goods as pretty much disables her from performing that office. The galleon has often above a thousand people on board, either interested in the cargo, or merely passengers; and there is no trade in which so large profits are made; the captain of the vessel, the pilots, their mates, and even the common sailors, making in one voyage, what in their several ranks may be considered as easy fortunes. It is said by the writer of lord Anson's voyage, that the jesuits have the profits of this ship to support their missions; and if so their gains must be extremely great, and must add much to the consequence of a society which has as great a reputation for its riches as its wisdom.

This commerce to so vast a value, though carried on directly between the king of Spain's own dominions, enriches them in proportion but very little; the far greater part of every thing that comes from the Philippines, being the produce, or the fabric of other countries; the Spaniards add none of the artificial value of labour to any thing. The Chinese are largely interested in this cargo, and it is to them they are indebted for the manufacturing such of their plate, as is wrought into any better fashion than rude ingots, or inelegant coins. When this fair is over, the town is comparatively deserted; however it remains for the whole year the most considerable port in Mexico, for the trade with Peru and Chili, which is not very great. The East-India goods brought here are carried on mules to Mexico, from whence what exceeds their own consumption is sent by land carriage to La Vera Cruz, to pass over to Terra Firma, to the Islands, and some even to Old Spain, though in no great quantity.

From the port of La Vera Cruz it is that the great wealth of Mexico is poured out upon all the old world;  
and

and it is from this port alone, that they receive the numberless luxuries and necessaries that the old world yields them in return. To this port the annual fleet from Cadiz, called the *flota*, arrives about the latter end of November, after a passage of nine weeks. This fleet, which sails only from Cadiz, consists of about three men of war as a convoy, and fourteen or fifteen large merchant ships, from four hundred to one thousand tuns burthen. They are loaded almost with every sort of goods which Europe produces for export; all sorts of woollens, linens, silks, velvets, laces, glass, paper, cutlery, all sorts of wrought iron, watches, clocks, quicksilver, horse furniture, shoes, stockings, books, pictures, military stores, wines and fruits, so that all the trading parts of Europe are highly interested in the cargo of this fleet. Spain itself sends out little more than the wine and fruit. This, with the freight and commissions to the merchant, and the duty to the king, is almost all the advantage which that kingdom derives from her commerce with the Indies. It is strictly prohibited to load any commodities on board this fleet without entering the goods, the value, and the owner's name, in the India-house at Seville; and when they return, they must bring a certificate from the proper officer there, that the goods were duly landed, and in the proper port. They are not permitted to break bulk upon any account until they arrive at La Vera Cruz, nor are they suffered to take in any other than Spanish passengers, nor them without a licence first obtained at the India house.

Jealousy is the glaring character of the court of Spain, in whatever regards their American empire; and they often sacrifice their prosperity to an excessive regard to the security of their possessions. They attend in this trade principally to two objects; the exclusion of all strangers from any share in it, and the keeping up the market for such goods as they send; and they think both these ends best answered by sending out only one annual fleet, and that from one only port in Spain, and to one port only in Mexico. These views, which would be impolitic in any power in Europe besides, are judicious enough in Spain; because the goods they send belonging mostly to strangers,

and the profits upon the sale in the Indies being the only thing that really accrues to themselves, it is certainly right to consult primarily how they shall get the greatest returns upon the smallest quantity of goods. It would be quite otherwise, if all, or most of what they send abroad, were their own produce or manufacture. They are undoubtedly right too in keeping the trade very carefully to themselves, though perhaps the means taken to attain this end, will not be thought so rational. By suffering all the trade to be carried on only between two ports, they discourage in the old world all their towns from that emulation, which would not only enable them to traffic in foreign commodities, but in time to set up fabrics of their own; whereas now, with regard to the export of their commodities, they stand upon the level of strangers; they cannot carry their produce directly to the best market; and it is very certain, that even trifling discouragements operate very powerfully where the commercial spirit is weak, and the trade in its infancy. Again; in the new world, this confinement of the trade encourages interlopers, and an illicit commerce, too gainful for any regulation to prevent, and which may afford such bribes as will disarm the most rigid justice, and lull the most attentive vigilance. So that in reality it may greatly be doubted, whether the precautions, so systematically pursued, and improved from time to time with so much care and foresight, are at bottom of most advantage or prejudice to that nation. It was probably some consideration of this kind, that first gave rise to the custom of register ships: it was found that this confined commerce supplied its extensive object very imperfectly; and that those who were at watch to pour in counterband goods, would take advantage of this want of a regular supply from Spain. When therefore a company of merchants of Cadiz or Seville, judge that goods must be wanting at any certain port in the West-Indies, the course is, to petition the council of the Indies for licence to send a ship of three hundred tuns, or under, to that port. They pay for this licence forty or fifty thousand dollars, besides presents to the officers, in proportion to the connivance necessary to their design; for though the licence runs to three hundred tuns at the utmost, the vessel fitted

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ted out is seldom really less than six hundred. This ship and cargo is registered at the pretended burthen. It is required too that a certificate be brought from the king's officer at the port to which the register ship is bound, that she does not exceed the size at which she is registered; all this passes of course; these are what they call register ships, and by these the trade of Spanish America has been carried on principally for some years past, some think as much to the prejudice of their trade, as contrary to all their former maxims in carrying it on. But to return to the flota.

When all the goods are landed, and disposed of at La Vera Cruz, the fleet takes in the plate, precious stones, cochineal, indigo, cacao, tobacco, sugar, and hides, which are their returns for Old Spain. Sometimes in May, but more frequently in August, they are ready to depart. From La Vera Cruz they sail to the Havanna in the gulf of Cuba, which is the place of rendezvous where they meet the galleons; another fleet which carries on all the trade of Terra Firma by Carthagea, and of Peru by Panama and Porto-bello, in the same manner that the flota serves for that of New Spain. When they arrive at this port, and join the galleons and the register ships that collect at the same port from all quarters, some of the cleanest and best sailing of their vessels are dispatched to Spain, with advice of the contents of these several fleets, as well as with treasure and goods of their own, that the court may judge what indulto or duty is proper to be laid on them, and what convoy is necessary for their safety. These fleets generally make some stay at the Havanna, before all the ships that compose them are collected and ready to sail. As soon as this happens they quit the Havanna, and beat through the gulph of Florida, and passing between the Bahama islands, they hold their course to the North-East, until they come to the height of St. Augustin, and then steer away to Old Spain. When the flota has left La Vera Cruz, it has no longer the appearance of a place of consequence; it is a town in a very unhealthy situation, inhabited scarcely by any but Indians, Meztezcs, or negroes. All the merchants of any consequence reside at some distance, at a place called Los Angeles. This town may contain about three thousand inhabitants.



The fleet which is called the galleons, consists of about eight men of war, of about fifty guns each, designed principally to supply Peru with military stores; but in reality, laden not only with these, but with every other kind of merchandize on a private account; so as to be in bad condition for defending themselves, or protecting others. Under the convoy of these sail about twelve merchant ships, not inferior in burden. This fleet of the galleons is regulated in much the same manner with the flotas, and it is destined for the exclusive commerce of Terra Firma and the South-Sea, as the flota is for that of Mexico.

No sooner is this fleet arrived in the haven of Cartagena, than expresses are immediately dispatched to Portobello, and to all the adjacent towns, but principally to Panama; that they may get ready all the treasure which is deposited there, to meet the galleons at Porto-bello; in which town, (remarkable for the goodness of its harbour, which brings such a surprising concourse here at the time of the fair, and the unwholsomeness of the air, which makes it a desert at all other times) all the persons concerned in the various branches of this extensive traffic assemble; and there is certainly no part of the world where business of such great importance is negociated in so short a time. For in about a fortnight the fair is over; during which the display of the gold, silver, and precious stones, on the one hand, and of all the curiosity and variety of the ingenious fabrics of Europe on the other, is astonishing. Heaps of wedges and ingots of silver are tumbled about on the wharfs like common things. At this time an hundred crowns are given for a poor lodging, a thousand for a shop, and provision of every kind is proportionably dear; which may help us to some idea of the profits made in this trade. The treasure is brought hither from Panama, by a very dangerous road, upon mules. The other goods, sugar, tobacco, and drugs, are transported on the river Chagre.

When the galleons have taken in their returns, they steer together to the Havanna, which is the place of rendezvous of all the ships concerned in the Spanish American trade.





## S E C T. XI.

*Of the nature of Sugar, and the manner of manufacturing it; Planters in the WEST-INDIES; their way of life and management of their Affairs. The Negroes.*

**T**HE grand staple commodity of the West-Indies is sugar; this commodity was not at all known to the Greeks and Romans, though it was made in China in very early times, from whence we had the first knowledge of it; but the Portuguese were the first who cultivated it in America, and brought it into request as one of the materials of a very universal luxury in Europe. It is not settled whether the cane, from which this substance is extracted, be a native of America or brought thither by the Portuguese from India, and the coast of Africa; but however the matter may be in the beginning, they made the most as they still do the best sugars, which come to market in this part of the world. The sugar cane grows to the height of between six and eight feet, full of joints, about four or five inches asunder; the colour of the body of the cane is yellowish, and the top, where it shoots into leaves, of a vivid green; the coat is pretty hard, and within contains a spongy substance full of a juice, the most lively, elegant, and least cloying sweet in nature; and which sucked raw, has proved extremely nutritive and wholesome.

They are cultivated in this manner. In the month of August, that is in the rainy part of the year, after the ground is cleared and well hoed, they lay a piece of six or seven joints of the cane, flat in a channel made for it, above half a foot deep; this they cover with the earth, and so plant the whole field in lines regularly disposed and at proper distances. In a short time a young cane shoots out from every joint of the stock which was interred; and grows in twelve days to be a pretty tall and vigorous plant; but it is not until after sixteen months, or thereabouts, that the canes are fit to answer the purposes of the planter, though they may remain a few months after without any considerable prejudice to him. The longer they

they remain in the ground after they are come to maturity, the less juice they afford; but this is somewhat compensated by the superior richness of the juice. That no time may be lost, they generally divide their cane grounds into three parts. One is of standing canes, and to be cut that season; the second is of new planted canes; and the third is fallow, ready to receive a fresh supply. In some places they make second and third cuttings from the same root. The tops of the canes, and the leaves which grow upon the joints, make very good provender for their cattle, and the refuse of the cane after grinding, serves for fire; so that no part of this excellent plant is without its use.

The canes are cut with a billet, and carried in bundles to the mill, which is now generally a windmill; it turns three great cylinders or rollers plaited with iron set perpendicularly and cogged so as to be all moved by the middle roller. Between these the canes are bruised to pieces, and the juice runs through an hole into a vat which is placed under the rollers to receive it; from hence it is carried through a pipe into a great reservoir, in which however, for fear of turning sour, it is not suffered to rest long; but is conveyed out of that by other pipes into the boiling-house, where it is received by a large cauldron: here it remains, until the scum which constantly arises during the boiling, is all taken off; from this it is passed successively into five or six more boilers, gradually diminishing in their size, and treated in the same manner. In the last of these it becomes of a very thick clammy consistence; but mere boiling is incapable of carrying it farther: to advance the operation, they pour in a small quantity of lime-water; the immediate effect of this alien mixture, is to raise up the liquor in a very vehement fermentation; but to prevent it from running over, a bit of butter no larger than a nut is thrown in, upon which the fury of the fermentation immediately subsides; a vessel of two or three hundred gallons requires no greater force to quiet it. It is now taken out and placed in a cooler, where it dries, granulates, and becomes fit to be put into pots, which is the last part of the operation,

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The pots are conical, or of a sugar-loaf fashion; open at the point, which must be considered as their bottom; here a strainer is put across. In these pots the sugar purges itself of its remaining impurity; the molasses or treacle part disentangles itself from the rest; precipitates and runs out of the aperture at the bottom; it is now in the condition called muscavado sugar, of a yellowish brown colour, and thus is generally put into the hoghead and shipped off.

But when they have a mind to refine it yet further, and leave no remains at all of the molasses, they cover the pots, I have just mentioned, with a sort of white clay, like that used for tobacco pipes, diluted with water; this penetrates the sugar, unites with the molasses, and with them runs off, leaving the sugar of a whitish colour, but whitest at top. This is called clayed sugar; the operation is sometimes repeated once or twice more, and the sugar every time diminishing in quantity gains considerably in value; but still is called clayed sugar. Further than this they do not go in the plantations, because an heavy duty of sixteen shillings per hundred weight is laid upon all sugars refined there; it is therefore not to my purpose to carry the account any further.

Of the molasses rum is made, in a manner that needs no description, since it differs in nothing from the manner of distilling any other spirit. From the scummings of the sugar, a meaner spirit is procured. Rum finds its market in North America, (where it is consumed by the English inhabitants, or employed in the Indian trade, or distributed from thence to the fishery of Newfoundland, and the African commerce;) besides what comes to England and Ireland. However, a very great quantity of molasses is taken off raw and carried to New England to be distilled there.

They compute that when things are well managed, the rum and molasses pay the charges of the plantation, and that the sugars are clear gain. However, by the particulars we have seen, and by others which we may easily imagine, the expences of a plantation in the West-Indies  
are

are very great, and the profits at the first view precarious; for the chargeable articles of the windmill, the boiling, cooling and distilling houses, and the buying and subsisting a suitable number of slaves and cattle, will not suffer any man to begin a sugar plantation of any consequence, not to mention the purchase of the land, which is very high, under a capital of at least five thousand pounds. Neither is the life of a planter, a life of idleness and luxury; at all times he must keep a watchful eye upon his overseers, and even oversee himself occasionally. But at the boiling season, if he is properly attentive to his affairs, no way of life can be more laborious, and more dangerous to health; from a constant attendance day and night in the extreme united heats of the climate and so many fierce furnaces; add to this the losses by hurricanes, earthquakes, and bad seasons; and then consider, when the sugars are in the cask, that he quits the hazard of a planter, to engage in the hazards of a merchant, and ships his produce at his own risk. The sum of all might make one believe, that it could never answer to engage in this business; but notwithstanding all this, there are no parts of the world, in which great estates are made in so short a time as in the West Indies. The produce of a few good seasons will provide against the ill effects of the worst; as the planter is sure of a speedy and profitable market for his produce, which has a readier sale than perhaps any other commodity in the world.

Large plantations are generally under the care of a manager or chief overseer, who has commonly a salary of a hundred and fifty pounds a year, with overseers under him in proportion to the greatness of the plantation, one to about thirty negroes, and at the rate of about forty pounds. Such plantations too have a surgeon at a fixed salary, employed to take care of the negroes which belong to it. But the course, which is the least troublesome to the owner of the estate, is to let the land with all the works, and the stock of cattle and slaves to a tenant, who gives security for the payment of the rent, and the keeping up repairs, and the stock. The estate is generally estimated to such a tenant at half the neat produce of the  
best

best years. Such tenants, if industrious and frugal men, soon make good estates for themselves.

The negroes in the plantations are subsisted at a very easy rate. This is generally by allotting to each family of them a small portion of land, and allowing them two days in the week, Saturday and Sunday, to cultivate it; some are subsisted in this manner, but others find their negroes themselves with a certain portion of Guinea or Indian corn, and to some a salt herring, or a small quantity of bacon or salt pork a day. All the rest of the charge consists in a cap, a shirt, a pair of breeches, stockings and shoes; the whole not exceeding forty shillings a year.

## S E C T. XII.

*Observations on the settlement of the WEST-INDIES.  
Advantages there for tempers prejudicial at home. Bad  
tempers not always noxious in every sense.*

**T**HE disposition to industry has a variety of characters, and is by no means constantly of the same colour. Some acquiesce in a moderate labour through the whole of their lives, attended with no risk either to their persons or their gains; such sort of people, who form the best citizens in general, are fit to stay at home. Others full as remote from an indolent disposition, are of quite a different character. These are fiery, restless tempers, willing to undertake the severest labour, provided it promises but a short continuance, who love risk and hazard, whose schemes are always vast, and who put no medium between being great and being undone. Characters of this sort, especially when they happen in low and middling life, are often dangerous members in a regular and settled community. But the West-Indies open a fair and ample field to encourage persons of such a disposition; and it may be reckoned one very great benefit of our possessions in that part of the world, that besides the vast quantities of our fabrics which they consume, our seamen that they employ, and our revenues that they support, that they are a vent to carry off such spirits, whom they keep occupied greatly to the public benefit. Our dominions



nions are so circumftanced, and afford fuch a variety, that all difpofitions to bufinefs, of what kind foever, may have exercife without preffing upon one another. It is befides a great happinefs, that unfortunate men, whom unavoidable accidents, the frowns of the world, or the cruelty of creditors, would have rendered miserable to themfelves, and ufelefs to the public, may find a fort of afylum, where at laft they often fucceed fo well, as to have reafon to blefs thofe accidents, which drove them from their country poor, deserted and defpifed, to return them to it in opulence and credit. Of fuch a change every one can produce many inflances of his own knowledge; as whoever looks about him cannot fail to fee a great number of perfons, who having taken wrong fteps in the beginning of their lives, have eftablifhed fuch a character of weaknefs and imprudence, as prevents them ever after from being trusted or employed, wherever they are at all known, although their characters fhould be altogether changed and the paffions quite fubfided which gave occafion to their errors. Such perfons become, firft, indigent, then desperate, and at laft, abandoned; but when they have an opportunity of going where this prejudice does not operate againft them, they fet up as new men. With the advantage of an experience acquired by their miftakes, they are free from the ill reputation which attended them; and they prove of vaft fervice to their country, to which they could be of no advantage whilft they remained in it. There are perfons too, far more blameable than either of the former forts, who having erred without proper caution in points of morality, are defervedly regarded with diftruff and abhorrence, though they may be at bottom far from being utterly abandoned; and are ftill, excepting their character, the ftuff proper for making very good men of the world.

These are the feveral forts of people, who, with very few exceptions, have fettled the Weft-Indies, and North-America in a good meafure. And thus have we drawn from the rafhnefs of hot and vifionary men; the imprudence of youth; the corruption of bad morals; and even from the wretchednefs and mifery of perfons deftitute and undone, the great fource of our wealth, our ftrength and our

our power. And though this was neither the effect of our wisdom, nor the consequence of our foresight; yet having happened, it may tend to give us more wisdom and a better foresight; for it will undoubtedly be a standing monitor to us, how much we ought to cherish the colonies we have already established, by every encouragement in our power, and by every reasonable indulgence; and it will be an additional spur to make us active in the acquisition of new ones. Since experience has taught us, that as there is no soil or climate which will not shew itself grateful to culture, so there is no disposition, no character in mankind, which may not be turned with dexterous management to the public advantage. Those rulers, who make complaints of the temper of their people in almost any respect, ought rather to lament their own want of genius, which blinds them to the use of an instrument purposely put into their hands by providence, for effecting perhaps the greatest things. There are humours in the body, which, contained, may be noxious to it, yet which sent abroad are the proper materials for generating new bodies. Providence, and a great minister, who should imitate Providence, often gain their ends by means that seem most contrary to them; for earthquakes, and hurricanes, and floods, are as necessary to the well being of things, as calm and sun-shine; life and beauty are drawn from death and corruption; and the most efficacious medicines are often found united with the most deadly poisons. This as it is well known, is the order of nature, and perhaps it might not unwisely be considered, as an example for government.

F I N I S.



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