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COLLECTIONS

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OF WISCONSIN

EDITED BY

REUBEN GOLD THWAITES

Secretary and Superintendent of the Society

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The French Regime in Wisconsin—1

1634-1727

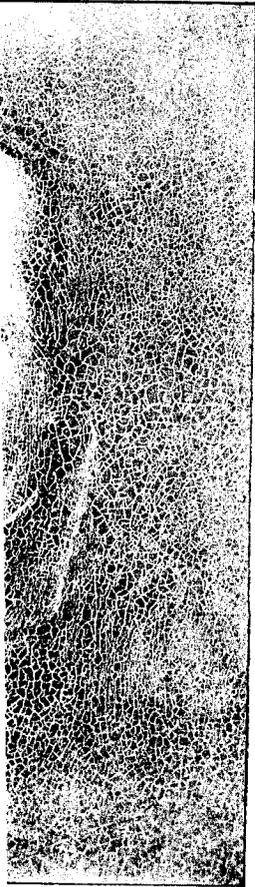


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ARQUETTE  
erred in Montreal in 1897

trifling advantages, he might be allowed annually a gratuity which may be taken from the proceeds of the licenses.

Though it would not be possible to prevent all the inconveniences that might ensue on reestablishing the licenses in the manner I propose, I believe it will be indispensable to do it, in consequence of the greater inconveniences which would inevitably result. Firstly, it must not be expected to oblige all the Coureurs de bois to return to the Colony, nor even to retain in it those who are obedient there, except by reestablishing the licenses. Those people not being accustomed to till the soil, will never submit to do so, however they be punished. This country is composed of persons of various characters, and of different inclinations; one and the other ought to be managed, and can contribute to render it flourishingly. The Coureurs de bois are useful in Canada for the fur trade, which is the sole branch that can be relied on; for it is certain that if the articles required by the Upper Nations be not sent to Michilimackinac, they will go in search of them to the English at Hudson's bay, to whom they will convey all their peltries, and will detach themselves entirely from us, which would inflict a notable prejudice on that Colony. Experience sufficiently proves that it is not to be expected that these nations will come in quest of them to Montreal; witness the few canoes that have come down within eight or nine years, except in 1708, when about 60 descended. When these Indians will be obliged to go to a great distance to get their necessaries, they will always go to the cheapest market; whereas, were they to obtain their supplies at their door, they would take them, whatever the price may be. Moreover, the means of preventing them waging war against one another is to be continually carrying on trade with them; for by that means, the commandant of Michilimackinac can be informed of everything that happens, and by his mediation terminate all differences that might arise. Religion will derive an advantage therefrom; for the more French there are among those Nations, the greater will be the authority of the Missionaries there. This active intercourse may afford them also facilities to learn our language, and render them more docile and submissive to the instructions which will be given them.

It is to be remarked that to render these licenses valuable, a large number of canoes ought to be prevented going up to Detroit; for, being unable to trade off within its limits the great quantity of goods with which they would be loaded, in the time ordinarily employed in bartering, those who would find their stock too large, would not fail to go further off to sell them. Finally, Mr. Lord, the value of these licenses will depend on the proportion of the number of canoes which will go up to Detroit, which ought to be fixed at 8 or 10 at most.—*N. Y. Colon. Docs.*, ix, pp. 852, 853.

[Endorsed: "Mr de Frulain, in answer, show Father de Lambertiller what he says about the licenses: moreover, censure M. de Ramsay, who abuses the protection he thinks he possesses."]

#### 1712: SIEGE OF DETROIT BY WISCONSIN INDIANS.

[Official Report, made by the commanding officer, Mr. Dubuisson, to the Governor General of Canada, of the war which took place at Detroit, in 1712, between the French and their allies, and the Ottawa and Mascoutis Indians.?] ]

SIR—As I have thought it was of great consequence to inform you of the state of this post, by an express canoe, I have requested Mr. De Vincennes to make the voyage, having assured him that this arrangement would be pleasing to you, per-

<sup>1</sup> Jean de Lambertville, who had labored in the Jesuit missions (mainly among the Iroquois) from 1669 to 1692; returning then to France, he acted as business agent for those missions during nearly twenty years; he died in 1614.—*Ed.*

<sup>2</sup> This document is reprinted from a rare pamphlet with the foregoing title, published in 1845 at Detroit (printed by Harsna & Willcox, but copyrighted by A. McFarren). The preface mentions the copies made by Gen. Lewis Cass of documents in the archives of Paris, and states that he "furnished the publisher with a translation of one of the most interesting of these papers," Dubuisson's report of the Indian attack on Detroit in 1712. We find it necessary to correct a few obvious typographical errors in the document; otherwise, it is produced *verbatim et iteratim*. It was also published by William R. Smith, in his *History of Wisconsin* (Madison, 1854), vol. iii, pp. 315-336.—*Ed.*

snaded as I am, Sir, that you are very solicitous about what passes here. The fatigue I undergo day and night, in consequence of the public and private councils, that I hold with the Indians, preventing me from rendering you a detailed account of all the circumstances, Mr. De Vincennes has promised to forget nothing, which has passed, in order to communicate it fully to you.

The destruction of two Mascoutin and Ottaganie villages, is one of the principal reasons which induces me to send this express canoe. It is God who has suffered these two audacious nations to perish. They had received many presents, and some belts, from the English, to destroy the post of Fort Pontchartrain, and then to cut our throats and those of our allies, particularly the Hurons and Ottawas, residing upon the Detroit River; and after that, these wretches intended to settle among the English and devote themselves to their service. It is said, that the band of Oninetonam, and that of Mucatemangona, have been received among the Iroquois, and have established a village upon their lands. This information has been brought by three canoes of Outaganis, who have been defeated by the Chippeways within four leagues of the post. I am under some apprehension for the safety of Mr. Delaforet [La Forest], because, being no doubt upon his march to this place, he may fall in with some of those hostile bands, who have joined themselves to the Iroquois.

The band of the great chief Lamina, and that of the great chief Penoussa, came early in the spring and encamped, in spite of my opposition, at about fifty paces from my fort, never willing to listen to me, speaking always with such insolence, and calling themselves the owners of all this country. It was necessary for me to be very mild, having, as you know, Sir, but thirty Frenchmen with me, and wishing to retain eight Miamis, who were with Mr. De Vincennes, and also to sow our grain and pasture our cattle and besides the Ottawas and Hurons had not come in from their winter hunt. I was thus exposed every day to a thousand insults. The fowls, pigeons, and other animals belonging to the French, were killed without their being able to say a word, and, for myself, I was in no condition to openly declare my intentions.

One of their parties entered my fort, in order to kill one of the inhabitants named Lagnessesse [probably La Jenesse], and a daughter of Roy, another inhabitant. I could then no longer restrain myself, but took arms to prevent their accomplishing their object. I compelled them to retire immediately from the vicinity of the fort, in order not to give them time to strengthen their party, as they expected the Kickapoos, their allies, that they might together execute their nefarious project; hoping to be strong enough to retire without loss among the English and Iroquois. They waited but for a favorable moment to set fire to the fort.

But they were alarmed when they learned that the party of Mascoutins, who had wintered upon the heads of the St. Joseph, had been cut off to the number of fifty men, women and children by Saginaw, a war chief of the Ottawas and Potawatamies. They immediately determined to set fire to an Ottawa cabin, which was close by the gate of my fort. I was informed of their intention by an Ottaganie Indian, named Joseph, who long since left his people and came to reside among us. It was from him that I learned all that passed in the Ottaganie and Mascoutins village. He had the honor to be presented to you, Sir, last year at Montreal. He informed me of the intention to set fire to my fort, and I immediately sent an express canoe to the hunting grounds of the Ottawas and Hurons, to request them to join me as soon as possible. I sent also another canoe to the other side of the lake, to invite the Chippeways and Mississaugas to join us.

The church and the house of Mr. Mullet were outside of the four of them into the redoubt, I had just constructed. I placed prevented our allies from arriving, which troubled me much, as the circumstances now pressing, I prevailed on the few Frenchmen, who were with me, immediately to bring the wheat into the fort. And it was well I did so; for, two days later, it would have been pillaged. We had to fire upon the enemy to secure it, and as it was they stole a considerable portion of it. But the principal object was, to pull down, as quick as possible, the church, the storehouse, and some other houses which were near my fort, and so close, that the Indians, at any time by

setting fire to them, might have burnt our works. And besides, it was important in order to defend ourselves in case of an attack, which very soon took place. It becomes us to render thanks to the Lord for his mercies. We should have been lost if I had not formed this determination. I put on the best countenance I could, encouraging the French, who were in consternation, believing themselves lost. The apprehension I entertained, that some accident might happen to the French, who had not yet arrived, and the necessity of sowing our grain and pasturing our cattle, prevented me from refusing them permission to enter the fort to trade, for fear they should suspect I was aware of their object. The only thing I could do was to tell them that I apprehended the Miamis would attack me, because I permitted them to remain so near, and therefore I was about to repair my fort. They did not appear to give much credit to my assertions. Our men were obliged to draw some posts of which the Indians had taken possession, in order to repair the fort as soon as possible, and I succeeded perfectly well in effecting the repairs with material taken from some of the houses. They wished to preserve a pigeon house from which they might have assailed us, but I deceived them and took possession of it. I placed it immediately opposite their fort and pierced it with loop holes. I mounted two swivels upon logs of wood to serve as cannon, in case of necessity.

The thirteenth of May, while I was impatiently awaiting the arrival of my allies, who were the only aid I could expect, Mr. De Vincennes arrived from the Miami country with seven or eight Frenchmen. He brought me no news of the Indians, which gave me much trouble, and I did not know on what saint to call. But Heaven watched over our preservation, and when I least expected it there entered a Huron, all breathless, who said to me, "My Father, I wish to speak to you in secret. I am sent to you by our peace chiefs." There were then in their village but seven or eight men. It seems that our deliverance was miraculous, for all the others arrived two hours after, and the Ottawas also. The messenger said "God has pity on you. He has decreed that your enemies and ours should perish. I bring you information that four men have just arrived at our

fort, not daring to enter yours, on account of the Ottagamies and Mascoutins, who surround you. Makisabie, war chief of the Pottawatamies, and his brother, Tehamasimon, are at the head, and desire to council with you."

I requested Mr. De Vincennes to meet them, and he recognized at once the four Indians. He returned an hour after to render me an account of the interview, and told me, on the part of Makisabie, that six hundred men would soon arrive to aid me, and to eat those miserable nations who had troubled all the country. That it was necessary to keep myself on my guard against the Ottagamies and Mascoutins, who might learn the expected arrival of assistance.

I requested Mr. De Vincennes to return to the Huron fort, and to ascertain from Makisabie if it would not be satisfactory to his people to content ourselves with driving away the Mascoutins and the Ottagamies, and compelling them to return to their former villages, which, Sir, was your intention. But this could not be done for the Hurons were much too irritated. This great affair had been too well concerted during the whole autumn and winter with all the nations. Mr. De Vincennes, perceiving it would only irritate the Hurons to speak of accommodation, dropped the subject, and the more readily, as they said these wicked men never kept their words. Nothing else could be done, but to be silent, and to put the best face upon the affair, while we fought with them against our common enemies. The Hurons even reproached us with being tired of living, as we knew the bad intentions of the Ottagamies and Mascoutins. They said it was absolutely necessary to destroy them, and to extinguish their fire, and it was your intention they should perish. They added that they knew your views on this subject at Montreal.

Mr. De Vincennes returned and told me it was useless to speak of any accommodation. And in truth, I well knew there was great danger in having so many nations around us of whose good intentions we were not certain. I then closed the gates of the fort and divided my few Frenchmen into four brigades, each having its brigadier. I inspected their arms and ammunition, and assigned them their stations on the bastions. I put

four of them into the redoubt, I had just constructed. I placed some of them at the two curtains, which were most exposed, and armed them with spears. My two cannon were all ready with slugs of iron prepared to load them, which had been made by the blacksmith. Our Rev. Father held himself ready to give a general absolution in case of necessity, and to assist the wounded, if there should be any. He communicated also the Sacred Host.

Every arrangement being made, and while we were waiting with impatience, I was informed that there were many people in sight. I immediately ascended a bastion, and casting my eyes toward the woods, I saw the army of the nations of the south issuing from it. They were the Illinois, the Missouris, the Osages and other nations yet more remote. There were also with them, the Ottawa Chief, Saguna, and also the Potawatamies, the Sacs, and some Menomenies. Detroit never saw such a collection of people. It is surprising how much all these nations are irritated against the Mascoutins and the Ottagamies. This army marched in good order, with as many flags, as there were different nations, and it proceeded directly to the Fort of the Hurons. These Indians said to the head chief of the army, "You must not encamp. Affairs are too pressing. We must enter immediately into our Father's Fort, and fight for him. As he has always had pity on us, and as he has loved us, we ought to die for him. And don't you see that smoke also. They are these women of your village, Saguna, who are burning there, and your wife is among them." Not another word was necessary. There arose a great cry, and, at the same time, they all began to run, having the Hurons and the Ottawas at their head. The Ottagamies and the Mascoutins raised also their war cry, and about forty of them issued from their fort, all naked, and well armed, running to meet our Indians, and to brave them in order to make them believe they were not afraid. They were obliged, however, to retreat immediately, and to return to their village. Our Indians requested permission to enter our fort, which I granted, seeing they were much excited. It was my design they should encamp near the woods, that they might not be troublesome to us. All the Indian chiefs assem-

bled upon the parade ground of my fort, and spoke to me as follows: "My Father, I speak to you on the part of all the nations, your children, who are before you. What you did last year in drawing their flesh from the fire, which the Ottagamies were about to roast and eat, well merits that we should bring you our bodies to make you the master of them, and to do all you wish. We do not fear death whenever it is necessary to die for you. We have only to request that you would pray the Father of all Nations to have pity on our women, and our children, in case we should lose our lives with you. We beg you to throw a blade of grass upon our bones to protect them from the flies. You see, my father, that we have abandoned our villages, our women and our children, to hasten as soon as possible to join you. We hope that you will have pity on us, and that you will give us something to eat, and a little tobacco to smoke. We have come from a distance, and are destitute of everything; we hope you will give us powder and balls to fight with you. We don't make a great speech. We perceive that we feign you and your people by the ardour which you show for the fight." I immediately answered them, and briefly: "I thank you, my children; the determination you have taken, to offer to die with us, is very agreeable to me, and causes me much pleasure. I recognize you as the true children of the Governor General, and I shall not fail to render him an account of all you have done for me today. You need not doubt, that when any question respecting your interest arises, he will regard it favorably. I receive orders from him every day, to watch continually for the preservation of his children. With regard to your necessities, I know you want everything. The fire which has just taken place, is unlucky for you, as well as for me. I will do all I can to provide you with what you want. I beg you to live in peace, union, and good intelligence together, as well among your different nations as with the French people. This will be the best means of enabling us to defeat our common enemies. Take courage, then; inspect and repair your war clubs, your bows and arrows, and especially your guns. I shall supply you with powder and ball immediately, and then will attack our enemies. This is all I have to say to you."

All the Indians uttered a cry of joy and of thanks, and said: "Our enemies are dead from the present moment. The heavens begin to grow clear, and the Master of Life has pity on us." All the old men made harangues through the fort, to encourage the warriors, telling them to listen to my words, and strictly to obey all my orders. I distributed among them immediately a quantity of balls and powder; and then we all raised the war cry. The very earth trembled. The enemy, who were not more than a pistol shot distant, raised also their war cry, at the same time. The guns were immediately discharged on both sides, and the balls flew like hail.

We had to do as our Indians did, in order to encourage them. The powder and balls that you had the goodness to send us, Sir, the past autumn, did not last long. I was obliged to have recourse to three barrels, that Mr. de Lamothe left with a certain Roy to sell, not leaving me a single grain when he went away, for the defence of the fort, in case of attack. All mine was exhausted, as well as a quantity which I had been obliged to purchase of some of the French people.

I held the Otagamies and the Mascoutins in a state of siege during nineteen days, wearing them out by a continual fire, night and day. In order to avoid our fires, they were obliged to dig holes four or five feet deep in the ground, and to shelter themselves there. I had erected two large scaffolds, twenty feet high, the better to fire into their villages. They could not go out for water, and they were exhausted by hunger and thirst. I had from four to five hundred men, who blockaded their village night and day, so that no one could issue to seek assistance. All our Indians went and hid themselves at the edge of the woods, whence they continually returned with prisoners, who came to join their people, not knowing they were besieged. Their sport was to shoot them, or to fire arrows at them and then burn them.

The enemy that I had kept besieged, thinking to intimidate me, and by this means to have the field left open to them, covered the palisades with scarlet blankets and then halloed to me that they wished the earth was all covered with blood; these red blankets were the mark of it; they hoisted twelve red blankets

as standards in twelve different places of their village. I well knew that these signals were English, and that they fought for them. This indeed they told us, for we could speak from one fort to the other. They said they had no father but the English, and told all the nations our allies, that they would do much better to quit our side and join theirs.

The great war chief of the Pottawatamies, after having requested my advice and permission, mounted one of my scaffolds and spoke to our enemies in the name of all our nations in these words: "Wicked nations that you are, you hope to frighten us by all that red color which you exhibit in your village. Learn, that if the earth is covered with blood, it will be yours. You speak to us of the English, they are the cause of your destruction because you have listened to their bad councils. They are enemies of prayer, and it is for that reason that the Master of Life chastises them, as well as you, wicked men that you are; don't you know as well as we do, that the Father of all the nations, who is at Montreal, sends continually parties of his young men against the English to make war, and who take so many prisoners, that they do not know what to do with them. The English, who are cowards, only defend themselves by secretly killing men by that wicked strong drink, which has caused so many men to die immediately after drinking it. Thus we shall see what will happen to you for having listened to them.

I was obliged to stop this conversation, perceiving that the enemy had requested to speak, merely to attract our attention while they went for water. I ordered our great fire to recommence, which was so violent, that we killed more than thirty men, and some women, who had secretly gone out for water. I lost that day twelve men, who were killed in my fort. The enemy, in spite of my opposition, had taken possession of a house, where they had erected a scaffold behind the gable end, which was of earth. Our balls could not penetrate this defence, and thus, every day, many of our people were killed. This obliged me to raise upon one of my scaffolds, the two large logs upon which were mounted our swivels. I loaded them with slugs, and caused them to be fired upon the scaffold, which troubled me so much. They were so well aimed, that at the

first two discharges, we heard the scaffold fall, and some of the enemy were killed. They were so frightened that we heard them utter cries and frightful groans, and toward evening they called out to know if I would allow them to come and speak to me. I assembled immediately, the Chiefs of all the nations who were with me, to ascertain their opinion; and we agreed it was best to listen to them, in order, by some stratagem, to withdraw from them three of our women, whom they had made prisoners some days before the siege, and one of whom was the wife of the great war chief Saguna. I told them, through my interpreter, that they might come in safety, to speak to me, as I was willing they should have that satisfaction before dying.

They did not fail the next morning to make me a visit. We were very much surprised not to see the red flags in their village, but only a white flag. It was the great chief Pemoussa, who was at the head of this first embassy. He came out of his village with two other Indians, carrying a white flag in his hand. I sent my interpreter to meet him, and conduct him to me, and to protect him from the insults of some of the younger warriors. He entered my fort; I placed him in the midst of the parade ground, and then I assembled all the chiefs of the nations who were with me, to hear our ambassador, who spoke in these words (Presenting a belt of wampum and two slaves):

"My father, I am dead; I see very well that the heaven is clear and beautiful for you only, and that for me, it is altogether dark. When I left my village, I hoped that you would willingly listen to me. I demand of you, my father, by this belt, which I lay at your feet, that you have pity on your children, and that you do not refuse them the two days that they ask you, in which there shall be no firing on either side, that our old men may hold a council, to find a means of turning away your wrath.

"It is to you that I now speak, you, other children, listening to the advice of our father; this belt is to pray you to recollect, that you are our kindred. If you shed our blood, recollect, that it is also your own; endeavor then to soften the heart of our father, whom we have so often offended. These two slaves are to replace, perhaps, a little blood that you may have lost. I do

not speak many words until our old men can council together, if you grant us those two days, that I have asked of you."

I answered him thus: "If your hearts were properly moved, and if you truly considered the Governor at Montreal as your father, you would have begun by bringing with you the three women whom you hold as prisoners; not having done so, I believe your hearts are yet bad. If you expect me to listen to you, begin by bringing them here. This is all I have to say." All the chiefs who were with me, exclaimed with a high voice, "My father, after what you have just said, we have nothing to answer to this ambassador. Let him obey you, if he wishes to live." The ambassador answered, "I am only a child. I shall return to my village to render an account of what you have said, to our old men."

Thus finished the council. I gave him three or four Frenchmen to re-conduct him, assuring him that we would not fire upon his village during the day, on condition, however, that no one should leave it to seek water; and that if they did so, the truce would be at an end, and we should fire upon them.

Two hours after, three chiefs, two of them Mascoutins, and the third an Ottaganie, came bearing a flag, and bringing with them the three women. I made them enter the same place, where the others were stationed, and where all our chiefs were again assembled. The three messengers spoke as follows: "My father, here are these three pieces of flesh that you ask of us. We would not eat them, thinking you would call us to an account for it. Do what you please with them. You are the master. Now, we Mascoutins and Ottaganies request, that you would cause all the nations, who are with you, to retire, in order that we may freely seek provisions for our women and our children. Many die every day of hunger. All our village regret that we have displeased you. If you are as good a father as all your children, who are around you, say you are, you will not refuse the favor we ask of you."

As I had now the three women, whom I sought, I did not care any longer to keep fair with them, and I therefore answered, "If you had eaten my flesh, which you have now brought me, you would not have been living at this moment.

You would have felt such terrible coils, that they would have covered you so deep in the ground, that no one would any longer speak of you, so true is it that I love the flesh of the father of all the nations. With regard to the liberty you demand, I leave to my children to answer you. Therefore I shall say no more."

The head chief of the Illinois, whose name is Makonandebv, was appointed by the chiefs of the other nations to speak in these words:

"My father, we all thank you for your kindness to us; we thank you for it, and since you give us permission to speak, we shall do so."

And then, addressing the hostile chiefs, he said: "Now listen to me ye nations who have troubled all the earth. We perceive clearly by your words, that you seek only to surprise our father, and to deceive him again, in demanding that we should retire. We should no sooner do so, but you would again torment our father, and you would infallibly shed his blood. You are dogs who have always bit him. You have never been sensible of all the favors you have received from all the French. You have thought, wretches that you are, that we did not know all the speeches you have received from the English, telling you to cut the throats of our father, and of his children, and then to lead his children into this country. Go away, then. For us, we will not stir a step from you; we are determined to die with our father; we should disobey him; because we know your bad heart, and we would not leave him alone with you. We shall see from this moment, who will be master, you or us; you have now only to retire, and as soon as you shall re-enter your fort, we shall fire upon you."

I sent an escort to conduct the ambassadors to their fort, and we began to fire again as usual. We were three or four days without any intercourse, firing briskly on both sides. The enemy discharged their arrows so rapidly that more than three or four hundred were flying at the same time, and at their ends were lighted fuses: the object being to burn us, as they had threatened to do. I found myself very much embarrassed; the arrows fell upon all our quarters, which were covered with straw, so that the fire easily caught many of them, which fright-

ened the French so much, that they thought everything was lost. I reassured them, telling them that this was nothing, and that we must find a remedy as soon as possible. "Come, then," said I, "take courage; let us take off the thatch from the houses, and let us cover them with bear-skins and deer-skins; our Indians will help us." I then directed them to bring in two large wooden pirogues which I had filled with water and provided Badronilles ["mops"] at the end of rods, to extinguish the fire, when it should break out any where, and hooks to pull out the arrows. There were four or five Frenchmen, who were wounded. I fell into another embarrassment much greater than this. My Indians became discouraged, and wished to go away, a part of them saying that they should never conquer those nations. That they knew them well, and that they were braver than any other people; and besides, I could no longer furnish them with provisions.

This inconstancy ought to teach us how dangerous it is, to leave a post so distant as this without troops. I then saw myself on the point of being abandoned, and left a prey to our enemies, who would not have granted us any quarter, and the English would have triumphed.

The French were so frightened, that they told me they saw clearly, it was necessary we should retire as quickly as possible, to Michilimacinae. I said to them, "What are you thinking of? Is it possible you can entertain such sentiments? What! abandon a post in such a cowardly manner? Dismiss such thoughts, my friends, from your minds; do things appear so bad? You ought to know that if you abandon me, the Governor General would follow you every where, to punish you for your cowardice. What the Indians have just said ought not to frighten you. I am going to speak to all the chiefs in private, and inspire them with new courage. Therefore change your views, and let me act, and you will see that everything will go well." They answered me, that they did not think of retiring without my consent, nor without me at their head; believing that we could not hold the place, if our Indians should abandon us. They begged me to pardon them, and assured me they would do all I wished. And truly, I was afterward very well contented with them. They did their duty like brave people.

I was four days and four nights, without taking any repose, and without eating or drinking, striving all the time to secure to my interest all the young war chiefs, in order to keep the warriors firm, and to encourage them, so that they would not quit us, until our enemies were defeated. To succeed in this object, I stripped myself of all I had, making presents to one and another. You know, Sir, that with the Indians one must not be mean. I fatter myself that you will have the goodness to approve all these expenditures, which for me are immense, and for the King, of no consequence; for otherwise, I should be very much to be pitied, having a large family which occasions me great expense at Quebec.

Having gained all the Indians in private, I held a general council, to which I called all the nations, and said to them: "What, my children! when you are just on the point of destroying these wicked nations, do you think of retreating shamefully, after having so well begun? Could you lift up your heads again? You would be overwhelmed with confusion. All the other nations would say, are these the brave warriors, who fled so ignominiously, after having abandoned the French? Be not troubled, take courage, we will endeavor yet to find a few provisions. The Hurons and the Ottawas, your brothers, offer you some. I will do all I can to comfort you and to aid you. Don't you see that our enemies can hardly preserve their position? Hunger and thirst overpower them. We shall quickly render ourselves masters of their bodies. Will it not be very pleasant, after such a result, when you visit Montreal to receive there the thanks and the friendship of the father of all nations, who will thank you for having risked your lives with me? For you cannot doubt, that in the report I shall make to him, I shall render justice to each of you, for all you will have done. You must also be aware, that to defeat these two nations, is to give that life and peace to your women and children, which they have not yet enjoyed."

The young war chiefs, whom I had gained, did not give me time to finish, but said to me, "My father, allow us to interrupt you; we believe there is some liar, who has told you falsehoods. We assure you, that we all love you too much, to abandon you,

and we are not such cowards as is reported. We are resolved, even if we are much more pressed with hunger, not to quit you, till your enemies are utterly destroyed." All the old men approved of these sentiments, and said, "Come on, come on, let us hasten to arm ourselves, and prove that those are liars, who have reported evil of us to our father." They then raised a great cry, and sung the war song, and danced the war dance, and a large party went to fight.

Every day some Sacs, who had lived some time with the Ottawagames, left their fort and came to join their people who were with me, who received them with much pleasure. They made known to us the condition of our enemies, assuring us that they were reduced to the last extremity; that from sixty to eighty women and children had died from hunger and thirst, and that their bodies, and the bodies of those who were killed every day, caused an infection in their camp, as they could not inter their dead, in consequence of the heavy fire that we continually kept up.

Under these circumstances, they demanded permission to speak to us, which was granted. Their messengers were their two great chiefs, one of peace, the other of war; the first named Allamina, and the other Pemoussa. With them, were two great Mascoutin chiefs, one Knit, and the other Onabimanton. Pemoussa was at the head of the three others, having a crown of wampum upon his head and many belts of wampum on his body, and hung over his shoulders. He was painted with green earth, and supported by seven female slaves, who were also painted and covered with wampum. The three other chiefs had each a chichory<sup>1</sup> in their hands. All of them marched in order, singing and shouting with all their might, to the song of the Chichories, calling all the devils to their assistance, and to have pity on them. They had even figures of little devils hanging on their girdles. They entered my fort in this manner, when, being placed in the midst of the nations our allies, they spoke as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Evidently a misprint for "chichikoué," an Algonkin term adopted by the French of Canada and the West, which was given to the small drum used by the Indian medicine-men. Among many of the tribes, a chief was also often a medicine man or soothsayer.—Ed.

"My father, I speak to you, and to all the nations who are before you. I come to you to demand life. It is no longer ours. You are the master of it. All the nations have abandoned us. I bring you my flesh in the seven slaves, whom I put at your feet. But do not believe I am afraid to die. It is the life of our women, and our children, that I ask of you. I beg you to allow the sun to shine, let the sky be clear, that we can see the day, and that hereafter, our affairs may be prosperous. Here are six belts, that we give you, which bind us to you like your true slaves. Uncle them, we beg you, to show that you give us life. Recollect, ye nations, that you are our great nephews; tell us something, I pray you, which can give pleasure on our return to our village."

I left it to our Indians to answer these ambassadors. They were, however, so much enraged against them, that they would not give them any answer. Eight or ten of them asked permission to speak to me in private. "My father, we come to ask liberty of you to break the heads of those four great chiefs. They are the men who prevent our enemies from surrendering at discretion. When these shall be no longer at their head, they will find themselves much embarrassed, and will surrender."

I told them they must be drunk to make me such a proposition. "Recollect, that they came here upon my word, and you have given me yours. We must act with good faith, and if such a thing were done, how could you trust one another? Besides if I acquiesced in this proposition, the Governor General would never pardon me. Dismiss it, therefore, from your thoughts. They must return peaceably. You see clearly that they cannot avoid us, since you resolved not to give them quarter." They confessed I was right, and that they were foolish. We dismissed the ambassadors in all safety, without, however, giving them any further answer. These poor wretches well knew there was no longer any hope for them.

I confess, Sir, that I was touched with compassion, at their misfortunes; but as war and pity do not well agree together, and particularly, as I understood that they were paid by the English for our destruction, I abandoned them to their unfortunate fate; indeed, I hastened to have this tragedy finished,

in order that the example might strike terror to the English, and to themselves.<sup>1</sup>

The great fire recommenced, more and more violently; the enemy, being in despair, beaten in their village and out of it; and when they wished to go for water or to gather a few herbs, to appease their hunger, had no other resource but an obscure night with rain, in order to effect their escape. They awaited it with much impatience, and it came on the nineteenth day of the siege. They did not fail to make use of it, decamping about midnight, and we did not know their escape until daylight. I encouraged our people, and they pursued them very vigorously. Mr. De Vincennes joined in the pursuit, with some Frenchmen, and this gave much pleasure to the Indians.

The enemy, not doubting but that they would be pursued, stopped at the Presq'isle, which is opposite Hog island, near Lake St. Clair, four leagues from the fort.<sup>2</sup>

Our people, not perceiving their entrenchment, pushed into it, and lost there twenty men, killed and wounded. It was necessary to form a second siege, and also an encampment. The camp was regularly laid out; there were a hundred canoes every day, as well Ottawas, Hurons, and Chippeways, as Mississauguas to carry provisions there. The chiefs sent to me for two cannon and all the axes and mattocks that I had, to cut timber, and to place it so as to approach the hostile entrenchment; together with powder and ball. As for the Indian corn, tobacco, and seasoning, they were supplied as usual, without counting all the kettles of the French, which are now lost, and that I had to pay for.

<sup>1</sup>In regard to this affair, Heberd claims (*Wis. under French Dom.*, pp. 81-84) that the French, wishing to get rid of the Foxes, "enticed them to Detroit in order that they might be slaughtered." Parkman says: "It is by no means certain that they came with deliberate hostile intent. Had this been the case, they would not have brought their women and children" (*Half Century of Conflict*, i, pp. 268-287). It is probable that intertribal jealousies and hatreds are a sufficient explanation of the cruel overthrow of the Foxes.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup>Farmer says (*Hist. Detroit*, p. 231) that the place here mentioned was Grösse Pointe, a headland situated about five miles above Detroit, at the entrance to Lake St. Clair.—Ed.

The enemy held their position for four days, fighting with much courage; and finally, not being able to do anything more, surrendered at discretion to our people, who gave them no quarter. All were killed except the women and children, whose lives were spared, and one hundred men, who had been tied, but escaped.

All our allies returned to my fort with their slaves, having avoided it before as they thought it was ineffective. Their amusement was to shoot four or five of them every day. The Hurons did not spare a single one of theirs.

In this manner came to an end, Sir, these two wicked nations, who so badly afflicted and troubled all the country. Our Rev. Father charnted a grand mass to render thanks to God for having preserved us from the enemy.

The Ottagannies and Mascoutins had constructed a very good fort, which, as I said, was within pistol shot of mine. Our people did not dare to undertake to storm it, notwithstanding all I could say. The works were defended by three hundred men, and our loss would have been great, had we assaulted it; but the siege would not have been so long. Our Indians lost sixty men killed and wounded, thirty of whom were killed in the fort; and a Frenchman named Germain, and five or six others, were wounded with arrows. The enemy lost a thousand souls, men, women, and children.

I ought not to forget, Sir, to state, that there were about twenty-five Iroquois, who had joined themselves to the Hurons of the Fond du Lac<sup>1</sup> in this war. These two nations distinguished themselves above all the others, and therefore their loss has been proportionably greater. They received the thanks of all the Indians, and more particularly of the Potawatamies, to whom they made satisfaction for an old quarrel, by presents of slaves and pipes. I brought about this accommodation. I dare venture to assure you, Sir, that the general Assembly of all the nations has put them at peace with one another, and renewed their ancient alliance. They calculate upon receiving many presents, which they say, Sir, you promised them.

<sup>1</sup> Fond du Lac ("end, or foot, of the lake"); an allusion to the former location of the Hurons, probably at either Sault Ste. Marie or Michilimackinac.—Ed.

I have determined with the consent of his nation, to send you, the grand chief of the Illinois of Rock village.<sup>1</sup> His name is Chachagonache. He is a good man, and has much authority; and I trust, Sir, that you will induce him to make peace with the Miamis.

The affair is of very great consequence, the Miamis having sent me word, that they should abandon their village and build another on the Oyon, in the fond of Lake Erie.<sup>2</sup> It is precisely where the English are about to erect a fort, according to the belts they have sent to the different nations. They also said, that they would be contented, if you sent them, Sir, a garison and a Rev. Father, a Jesuit; and some presents, that they say you promised them.

Mikisabie, the Potawatamie chief, has much influence over the mind of this Illinois chief. He goes with him. Joseph, who accompanies them, deserves your kindness. I have had much trouble to save his life. I venture, Sir, to request, that you would take care that the Indians, who are with Mr. De Vincennes, return contented; their visit secures this post. Saguna has complained to me that Mr. Desliettes<sup>3</sup> would not wait for him last spring, believing it was through contempt.

Poor Otchipouac died this winter. It is a great loss to us, for he had much firmness, and was well disposed toward the French. We have another difficult affair, which threatens to give us much trouble. The Kickapoos, who live at the mouth of the Maumee River, are about to make war upon us, now that our allies have left us; about thirty Mascoutins have joined them. A canoe of Kickapoos, who came here to speak to the three villages, has been defeated by the Hurons and Ottawas.

<sup>1</sup> Reference is here made to the Illinois village located near La Salle's fort (St. Louis, on "Starved Rock;" see p. 100, *ante*, note).—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> There must be at this point some error or omission in the transcription of the original document. Allusion is apparently made to the place where the Miamis later formed a settlement, in the bend of the Maumee river where now stands the city of Fort Wayne, Ind.; not far from that place was a portage by which easy communication could be had with the Ohio river (the name of which was early spelled Oro).—Ed.

<sup>3</sup> A relative of Henry de Tonty, and long prominent in military and Indian affairs in the West.—Ed.

Among them was a principal chief, whose head was brought to me, with the heads of three others. This was done out of resentment, because the last winter they had taken prisoners some of the Hurons and the Iroquois; besides, they considered him a true Ottawaïne. I believe that if Mr. De Vincennes had not been at the mouth of the Maumee at the time, the Kickapoos would have killed the two Hurons and the Iroquois. There was every probability of it. Those same Indians took prisoner also, Langlois, who was on his return from the Miami country, and who had many letters from the Rev. Fathers, the Jesuits of the Illinois villages. All these letters have been destroyed, which circumstance has given me much uneasiness, as I am sure, Sir, there were some for you from Louisiana. They dismissed him, after robbing him of his peltry, charging him to return and tell them the news; but he had no more desire to do that, than I had to permit him. However, the Ottawas might safely send there, because the Kickapoos have among them one of their women, with her children. I will endeavor to prevail upon the Ottawas and the Hurons to accommodate their difficulties with the Kickapoos, in order that our repose may not be troubled here.

The different nations have returned peaceably, with all their slaves. Sagouina has abandoned his village, and gone to Michilimacine. The Potawatamies abandoned also theirs, and will either come here or go to the Illinois. More than half of the Ottawas, of this place, will repair to Michilimacine. The Chippeways and Mississignas will go to Topicanich. They have not at all been disposed to make any satisfaction to the Miami, for the murder of the last year, with Mr. De Tonty. The Miami are very urgent upon this subject. I spare no trouble to induce them to be patient, and also to persuade them, that I am laboring earnestly for their interest.

I have the honor to inform you, Sir, that I accomplished a measure the last year that Mr. De Lamoignon never could effect, during all the time he was here; which was to compel the Ottawa to make a solid peace with the Miami, and to engage them to visit the latter, which, till now, they never would do. I succeeded very happily in the object, the Miami having received

them very kindly, and a durable alliance has been the consequence.

I flatter, myself, Sir, it will be agreeable to you to be informed, that Mr. De Vincennes has faithfully performed his duty, and that he has labored assiduously here, as well as on his voyage to the Miami and Onyatonoms the last winter. If I am so happy, Sir, as to receive your approbation of my conduct, I shall be fully compensated for all my trouble, and shall experience no more dejection. My success has been much owing to the great influence I have over the nations; Mr. De Vincennes is the witness of this. I do not say this either to gratify my vanity, or to claim any credit, for truly I am very tired of Detroit. You can easily judge, Sir, in what a condition my affairs must be, in consequence of having no presents belonging to the king in my hands. However, I venture to trust to your goodness, and hope that you will not suffer a [poor] devil to be reduced to beggary.

I have the honor to be, with profound respect, Sir, your very humble, and obedient servant,

(Signed) DUBUISSON.

At Fort du Detroit, Pontchartrain, June 15, 1712.

[This letter was addressed to The Marquis de Vaudreuil, Governor-General of New France.]

Statement of expenditures, made by Mr. Dubuisson, for the service of the king, to gain an influence over the nations and to secure them in his interest, in order to sustain the post of the Fort de Pontchartrain, of Detroit, against the Ottawaïnes and Mascoutins, who had been paid by the English to destroy it—to wit:

4 barrels of powder of 50 lbs. each, to distribute to the Indians, for the defence of Fort Pontchartrain, and to attack that of the Ottawaïnes and Mascoutins; the powder having been purchased of the voyageurs, at 4 livres pr lb. making the sum of .....

800 livres.

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| 300 lbs balls for the same object, at 50 sols the lb. ....   | 450   |
| 60 bags of Indian Corn, at 8 livres the bag, for the subsistence of the Indians.....                                       | 480   |
| 300 flints at 7 sols pr hundred.....   | 21    |
| 5 guns to give to five chiefs, in order to attach them to the interests of Mr. DuRuisson, estimated at 30 livres each..... | 150   |
| 8 blankets, to bury certain principal Indians, killed in the service, estimated at 30 livres each.....                     | 240   |
| 8 pr of leggins for the same object, at 7 livres 10 sols the pr.....   | 60    |
| 8 shirts for the same object, at 10 livres each.....   | 80    |
| 100 lbs tobacco to be given to the Indians at all times, at 4 livres the lb.....   | 400   |
| 100 butcher-knives, to use as bayonets, for the Indians  | 100   |
| 3 lbs vermilion to paint the Warriors, at 40 livres the lb.....  | 120   |
|  | 2,901 |

I certify, that I furnished, for the service of the king, for the defence of Fort de Pontchartrain, the articles mentioned in the above statement.

Done at Quebec, Oct. 14, 1712.

(Signed) DuRUISSON.

1712: INDIAN AFFAIRS IN THE LAKE REGION.

[Extract from a letter of Father Marest to Governor de Vandrenuil; dated June 21, 1712. From Sheldon's *Early Hist. Michigan*, pp. 299-305.]

No doubt you have already learned the news of the recent attack on Detroit, by the Sacs, Foxes, and Mascoutins, by a canoe sent from that place. The Rev. Father Recollet of Detroit informs me that about eight hundred men, women, and children of the Foxes and Mascoutins have been destroyed; yet, in this large number, I presume he does not reckon forty warriors,

sixty women, and more than a hundred children of the Mascoutins, who are reported to have been killed near the great river.<sup>1</sup> I only give the report of others. Sakima is going to Montreal; he and Makisabe, a Pottawatomie, who is also going down from Detroit, were the chiefs principally concerned; they will give you their own account of affairs.

Although the number of the dead is very great, the Fox nation is not destroyed. There still remain a great number of them near the [Green] Bay—some say there are two hundred warriors, besides those who have gone to the Iroquois. Their brothers, the Kickapoos, to whose villages ten families of the Mascoutins have retired, have more than a hundred good warriors; the Sacs, eighty men, boatmen; the Puans, sixty brave men, also boatmen. If these all unite, as is natural, they may yet excite terror, especially here. They would indeed be truly formidable, because so many of them are boatmen. Michilimackinac would no longer be a place of safety, as hitherto. It is not far from this post to the Bay, and the savages could come here both by land and water, and not only the savages, but the French,<sup>2</sup> who were the first movers in this war, having joined with the Outawas to destroy the Foxes. We believe, however, that the Foxes at the Bay, having heard of the attack upon those at Detroit, will flee; and it is not difficult to believe that the Sacs and Puans will take the part of the Foxes against the French and Outawas; but these are only conjectures. It is certain that, in this region, there will always be cause to fear an attack, either from the savages at Detroit or at the Bay, or from the Illinois. The French, if they go, as is their custom—two men alone in a boat to make the tour of the lakes—will always be in danger; for the Foxes, Kickapoos, and Mascoutins are found everywhere, and they are a people without pity and without reason.

If this country ever needs M. Louvigny, it is now; the savages say it is absolutely necessary that he should come for the

<sup>1</sup> Apparently a mistake in translation; reference is probably made to the Grand river of Michigan, flowing into Lake Michigan.—Ed.

<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to understand the meaning of this sentence, if taken literally; there is probably some error of omission in the transcript from the original.—Ed.

safety of the country, to unite the tribes, and to defend those whom the war has already caused to return to Michilimackinac. The Indians of the great river, those of Saginaw, and many from Detroit, have gone to Manitoulin with Le Pesant. But if M. Louvigny returns here, no doubt they will all quit Manitoulin, where they have planted but little, and return here.

The savages told me that all the Outawas at Detroit would have come here, but for the recent arrival of fifty or sixty Frenchmen, who said they were soon to be followed by hundreds of others. This news, though probably not entirely true, has changed the purpose of many who wished to leave Detroit, and they have now invited the Outawas and Pottawatomis to come and establish themselves there. Sakima has had a quarrel with all the Outawas, both here and at the great river. I do not know what course the Pottawatomis will take; nor even what course those will pursue who are here, if M. Louvigny does not come, especially if the Foxes come to attack them or us. Sakima very much desired to come and present his respects to you; but the French have thought it best for him to remain for the safety of this village. In his absence, the enemy might attack us, while his presence would arrest all such designs, as he is greatly feared. They have believed it quite sufficient for Koutaouilboe to go down and inform you of all that has passed: not deeming it expedient for both to leave Michilimackinac at such a time as this.

July 2, 1712.

This morning Koutaouilboe came to see me, determined to prosecute a German quarrel. "What does our father Onontio mean?" he demanded. "It is already five years since he promised us M. Louvigny; still, he wishes to deceive us this year, as he has done in all the others. He tells us that the great Onontio, the king, especially loves his children of Michilimackinac, yet it seems that he abandons them entirely. Formerly, before the establishment of Detroit, we were a powerful nation. All the other nations were obliged to come here to obtain necessities, and there was no trouble, as there is now. But the most savage and unreasonable of the nations, such as the Foxes, Kickapoos, Mascoutins, Miamiis, and others, who do not use the

canoe, have the power of going on foot to Detroit, in as great numbers as they wish, to buy their powder and trouble their allies. Yet the French desire more than ever to establish Detroit.

"A canoe which arrived yesterday from Detroit brought the news that M. de la Forest had already arrived with fifty men. He had not come to remain, but only came beforehand to hold a council with the savages. Some time hence there is to come another French chief, a young man, who has bought all the movables of M. la Motte, his cattle, and other property; he has also bought all the land of Detroit. This chief is to come with four hundred French to build a city, in which, after four years, they are to sell goods at the same price as at Montreal. Only two canoes are ordered to come to Michilimackinac. It is also said that a few persons will steal away, and come here to settle. This, then, is the preference which the French give to Michilimackinac. It is because Detroit has always been a theater of war, and because it always will be so, that they think only of its establishment. Does our father wish that we should leave a place of security like this, and go to Detroit to be killed, ourselves and our children?

"If our father loves us, why does he not establish us here, and give us him whom he has so long promised us, to give spirit to those who have it not, and to strengthen us against our enemies? Does not our father know that all the Outawas of the great river have returned here, almost all those of Saginaw, and many of those from Detroit, all except Jean le Blanc, whose wife is already here? Does he not know that all the Outawas of Detroit had already pitched their canoes, in order to come here, with half of the Hurons, while the other half of the tribe were to go to the Iroquois, not considering themselves safe at Detroit any more than the Sauteurs and the Mississagues, who all left that place after the attack made by the Foxes? But when they received the news of the coming of the French, they resolved to remain." I could only tell him that you would know how to reply to him when he should come into your presence. He said that the only satisfactory reply which his father could make, was to grant him the commandant who had been promised long since, and whom he was now going to seek.

Koutaouilboe has also told me another fine piece of news; that there was peace in all Europe, and that "the great Onontio of the French had given one-half of his children to the English, but that he had requested the English not to give them bad medicine." He said he was indifferent whether he went to Boston or Montreal, as there was nothing but powder at Montreal, and that the French themselves went to purchase goods at the stores of the English. Already at Detroit, he said, they gave two hands of tobacco for a beaver, and a scarlet blanket for five or six beavers, and so on with other goods.

There is one thing, however, which makes all this news suspicious; those who told it brought no letters, and that makes many believe that it is news made expressly for the occasion, either by the French inhabitants of Detroit, or by the savages who remain there in such small numbers that they wish to cause others to return there for their safety. He also told me that M. la Motte had gone to Quebec, and that he told the people at Detroit, at parting, that he was not leaving them forever, but, at the expiration of four years, they would see him again.<sup>1</sup> See how the savages make news according to their interests or inclinations!

The Folle-Avoines have made an attack upon Chagouamigon and his wife, the adopted brother and sister of Durangé; they have killed the one, and carried off the other. Durangé is coming here to recover the prisoner. It is said that the people of Detroit are coming to make war against the Kickapoos, and that they have invited the Sauteurs to join them.

Pardon me, sir, if I bring you only savage news; Koutaouilboe will be able to tell you some other. He will be sure to make you remember that he is the only one who has observed your words; and that he had reason to tell you last year, that all your children would forget them as soon as they should be beyond the region of Montreal, and would not fail to kill each other. I am, with profound respect, sir,

Your very humble, and very obedient servant,

JOSEPH J. MARKEST,

Of the Society of Jesus.

<sup>1</sup> Lamotte-Cadillac was appointed, in 1711, governor of Louisiana, and was succeeded by Dubuisson as commandant at Detroit.—Ed.

## 1712: ANOTHER ACCOUNT OF THE SIEGE OF DETROIT.

[Translated from *Collection de Manuscrits relatifs à la Nouvelle-France* (Quebec, 1883), pp. 622-625; authorship ascribed to Gaspard Chaussegros de Léry, chief engineer of Canada.]

About the month of August, the Iroquois chiefs came down to Quebec, and were regaled at the palace by Monsieur d'Aigremont. A few days afterward, we were informed of the defeat of the Renards at Detroit, but we did not learn the details of the affair until long afterward. It is well to know that when Monsieur de Lamotte was at Detroit, wishing to attract the trade of all the nations to his post, he sent collars to the Mascoutins and Quiyuapous, to invite them to form a village there, and offered them a location for it. They accepted this proposal, and, having come thither to the number of forty families erected a fort there in the place assigned them. As that nation [the Renards] is both feared and hated by the other tribes, on account of its people's arrogance, the others began to stir up a conspiracy against those who were settled at Detroit; and actually, in 1712, when Sieur de Buisson was commandant at that place, the Huron and Outaouac conspirators, to the number of about nine hundred men, arrived at the French fort. That commandant opened the gate to them; they quickly entered the fort and ascended the bastions, which commanded the Renard fort, and fired many volleys of musketry at the Renards.

One of the Renard chiefs spoke aloud, addressing the French in the following terms: "What does this mean, my Father? Thou didst invite us to come to dwell near thee; thy word is even now fresh in our ponches. And yet thou declarest war against us. What cause have we given for it? My Father, thou seemest no longer to remember that there are no nations among those whom thou callest thy children who have not wet their hands with the blood of Frenchmen. I am the only one whom thou canst not reproach; and yet thou art joining our enemies to eat us. But know that the Renard is immortal; and that if in defending myself I shed the blood of Frenchmen my Father cannot reproach me." There were also many other points in his speech.