

Acadia 1612-1614

from: The Jesuit Relations

Letter from Father Pierre Biard to the Reverend Father Provincial, at Paris.

Port Royal, January 31, 1612.

Reverend Father,
The peace of Christ be with you.

Were we compelled to give an account before God and Your Reverence of our administration and our transactions in this newly acquired kingdom of the Son of God, this new France and new Christendom, from the time of our arrival up to the beginning of this new year, I certainly do not doubt that, in the aggregate and final summing up, the loss would exceed the profits; the foolish cost of transgression, the goodness and wisdom of obedience; and the reception of divine talents, graces, and indulgence would exceed their outlay and use in the royal and agreeable service of our great and so benign Creator. Nevertheless, inasmuch as (I believe) no one would be edified by our losses, or greatly benefitted by our gains, it is better that we mourn our losses apart; as to our receipts, we shall be like the unjust steward commended by Our Lord in the Gospels, namely, by sharing our Master's goods with others we shall make them our friends; and in communicating to many what is edifying in these

early foundations of Christianity, we shall obtain intercessors with God and supporters of this work. yet in doing this have shall in no wise diminish the debt, as did the wicked Steward, giving out Our Master's goods with profit; but we shall, perhaps, by this prudence acquit ourselves of a part of the dues and interests. So be it.

Today, January 22nd, 1612, eight months have passed since our arrival in this new France. Soon after that, I wrote you in regard to the condition in which we found this infant Church and Colony. Here is what followed:

When Monsieur de Potrincoourt went to France last June he left his son here, Monsieur de Biencourt, a young man of great integrity and of very estimable qualities, with about eighteen of his servants and us two priests of the Society. Now our duties and offices, in accordance with our calling as priests, have been performed while residing here at the house and settlement, and by making journeys abroad. Let us begin, as they say, at home, that is, at the residence and settlement; then we shall go outside.

Here then are our occupations: to say mass every day, and to solemnly sing it Sundays and holidays, together with Vespers, and frequently the procession; to offer public prayers morning and evening; to exhort, console, administer

the sacraments, bury the dead; in short, to perform the offices of the Curate. since there are no other priests in these quarters. And in truth it would be much better if we were more earnest workers here for Our Lord, since sailors, who form the greater part of our parishioners are ordinarily quite deficient in ant spiritual feeling, having no sign of religion except in their oaths and blasphemies, nor any knowledge of God beyond the simplest conceptions which they bring with them from France, clouded with licentiousness and the cavilings and revilings of heretics. Hence it can be seen what hope there is of establishing a flourishing Christian church by such evangelists. The first things the poor Savages learn are oaths and vile and insulting words; and you will often hear the women Savages (who otherwise are very timid and modest), hurl vulgar, vile, and shameless epithets at our people, in the French language; not that they know the meaning of them, but only because they see that when such words are used there is generally a great deal of laughter and amusement. And that remedy can there be for this evil in men whose abandonment to evil-speaking (or cursing) is as great as or greater than their insolence in showing their contempt?

At these Christian services which we conduct here at the settlement, the Savages are occasionally present, when some of them happen to be at the port. I say, occasionally, inasmuch as they are but little trained in the principles of the faith—those who have been baptized, no more than the heathen; the former, from lack of instruction, knowing but little more than the latter. This was why we resolved, at the time of our arrival, not to baptize any adults unless they were previously well catechized. Now in or-

der to catechize we must first know the language.

It is true that Monsieur de Biancourt, who understands the savage tongue better than any one else here, is filled with earnest zeal, and every day takes a great deal of trouble to serve as our interpreter. But, somehow, as soon as site begin to talk about God he feels as Moses did,—his mind is bewildered, his throat dry, his tongue tied. The reason for this is that, as the savages have no definite religion, magistracy or government, liberal or mechanical arts, commercial or civil life, they have consequently no words to describe things which they have never seen or even conceived.

Furthermore, rude and untutored as they are, all their conceptions are limited to sensible and material things; there is nothing abstract, internal, spiritual or distinct. *Good, strong, red, Black, large, hard*, they will repeat to you in their jargon; *goodness, strength, redness, blackness*—they do not know what they are. And as to all the virtues you may enumerate to them, *wisdom, fidelity, justice, mercy, gratitude, piety*, and others, these are not found among them at all except as expressed in the words *happy, tender love, good heart*. Likewise they will name to you a wolf, a fox, a squirrel, a moose, and so on to every kind of animal they have, all of which are wild, except the dog; but as to words expressing universal and generic ideas, such as *beast, animal, body, substance*, and the like, these are altogether too learned for them.

Add to this, if you please, the great difficulty of obtaining from them even the words that they have. For, as they neither know our language nor we theirs, except a very little which per-

tains to daily and commercial life, we are compelled to make a thousand gesticulations and signs to express to them our ideas, and thus to draw from them the names of some of the things which cannot be pointed out to them. For example, to think, to forget, to remember, to doubt; to know these four words, you will be obliged to amuse our gentlemen for a whole afternoon at least by playing the clown; and then, after all that, you will find yourself deceived, and mocked anew, having received, as the saying is, the mortar for the level, and the hammer for the trowel. In short we are still disputing, after a great deal of research and labor, whether they have any word to correspond directly to the word *Credo*, I believe. Judge for yourself the difficulty surrounding the remainder of the symbols and fundamental truths of Christianity.

Now all this talk about the difficulty of the language will not only serve to show how laborious is our task in learning it, but also still make our Europeans appreciate their own blessings, even in civil affairs; for it is certain that these miserable people, continually weakened by hardships, will always remain in a perpetual infancy as to language and reason. I say language and reason, because it is evident that there words, the messengers and dispensers of thought and speech, remain totally rude, poor and confused, it is impossible that the mind and reason be greatly refined, rich, and disciplined. However, these poor weaklings and children consider themselves superior to all other men, and they would not for the world give up their childishness and wretchedness. And this is not to be wondered at, for, as I have said, they are children.

Since we cannot yet baptize the

adults, as we have said, there remain for us the children, to whom the kingdom of heaven belongs; these we baptize with the consent of their parents and the pledge of the god-parents. And under these conditions we have already, thank God, baptized four of them. We instruct the adults who are in danger of death, as far as God gives us the means to do so; and experience has shown us that then God inwardly supplements the defects of his exterior instruments. Thus, an old woman dangerously ill, and a young girl have been added to the number of the children of God. The woman still lives, the girl has gone to Heaven.

I saw this girl, eight or nine years old, all benumbed and nothing but skin and bone. I asked the parents to give her to me to baptize. They answered that if I wished to have her they would give her up to me entirely. For to them she was no better than a dead dog. They spoke like this because they are accustomed to abandon altogether those whom their have once judged incurable. We accepted the offer so that they might see the difference between Christianity and their ungodliness. We had this poor skeleton brought into one of the cabins of the settlement, where we cared for and nourished her as well as we could, and when she had been fairly well instructed we baptized her. She was named Antoinette de Pons, in grateful remembrance of the many favors we have received and are receiving from Madame la Marquise de Guercheville, who may rejoice that already her name is in heaven, for a few days after baptism this chosen soul flesh away to that glorious place.

This was also our firstborn, for whose sake we could say, as Joseph did about his, that God had made us forget

all our past hardships and the homes of our Fathers. But in speaking of the Savages abandoning their sick, another similar occasion to exercise charity toward those who are deserted has had a more happy issue and one more useful in undeceiving these people. This occasion was as follows:

The second son of the grand sagamore Membertou, of whom we shall speak by and by, named *Actodin*, already a Christian, and married, fell dangerously ill. Monsieur de Potrin-court, as he was about to depart for France, had visited him, and being a kind-hearted gentleman, had asked him to let himself be taken to the settlement for treatment. I was expecting this suggestion to be carried out; but they did nothing of the kind. When this became evident, not to leave this soul in danger, I went there after a few days (for it was five leagues from the Settlement). But I found my patient in a fine state. They were just about to celebrate tabagie, or a solemn feast, over his last farewell. Three or four immense kettles were boiling over the fire. We had his beautiful robe under him (for it was summer) and was preparing for his funeral oration. The oration was to close with the usual adieus and lamentations of all present. The farewell and the mourning are finished by the slaughter of dogs, that the dying man may have forerunners in the other world. This slaughter is accompanied by the tabagie and what follows it—namely, the singing and dancing. After that it is no longer lawful for the sick man to eat or to ask any help, but he must already consider himself one of the “manes,” or citizens of the other world. Now it was in this state that I found my host.

I denounced this way of doing

things, more by actions than by words; for, as to talking, my interpreters did not repeat the tenth part of what I wanted them to say. Nevertheless old Membertou, father of the sick man, understood the affair well enough and promised me that they should stop just where I wanted them to. Then I told him that the farewells and a moderate display of mourning, and even the tabagie, would be permitted, but that the slaughter of the dogs, and the songs and dances over a dying person, and what was much worse leaving him to die alone, displeased me very much that it would be better, according to their promise to Monsieur de Potrin-court, to have him brought to the settlement, that, with the help of God, he might yet recover. They gave me their word that they would do all that I wished; nevertheless, the dying man was not brought until two days afterward.

His symptoms became so serious that often we expected nothing less than that he would die on our hands. In fact, one evening, his wife and children deserted him entirely and went to settle elsewhere, thinking it was all over with him. But it pleased God to prove their despair unfounded; for a few days afterwards he was in good health and is so today (to God be the glory); which M. Hébert, of Paris, a well-known master in Pharmacy, who attended the said patient, often assured me was a genuine miracle. For my part, I scarcely know what to say; inasmuch as I do not care either to affirm or deny a thing of which I have no proof. This I do know, that we put upon the sufferer a bone taken from the precious relics of the glorified Saint Lawrence archbishop of Dublin in Ireland, which M. de la Place, the estimable Abbé d’Eu, and the Pri-

ors and Canons of the said abbey d'Eu, kindly gave us for our protection during the voyage to these lands. So we placed some of these holy relics upon the sick man, at the same time offering our vows for him, and then he improved. Influenced by this example, Membertou, the father of the one who had recovered, as I have said before, was very strongly confirmed in the faith; and because he was then feeling the approach of the malady from which he has since died, he wished to be brought here immediately; and although our Cabin is so narrow that when three people are in it they can scarcely turn around, nevertheless, showing his implicit confidence in us, he asked to be placed in one of our two beds, where he remained for six days. But afterwards his wife, daughter, and daughter-in-law having come, he himself recognized the necessity of leaving, and did so with profuse excuses, asking our pardon for the continual trouble he had given us in waiting upon him day and night. Certainly the change of location and treatment did not improve him any. So then, seeing that his life was drawing to at close, I confessed him as well as I could; and after that he delivered his oration (this is their sole testament). Now, among other things in this speech, he said that he wished to be buried with his wife and children, and among the ancient tombs of his family.

I manifested great dissatisfaction with this, fearing that the French and Savages would suspect that he had not died a good Christian. But I was assured that this promise had been made before he was baptized, and that otherwise, if he were buried in our cemetery, his children and his friends would never again come to see us, since it is the

custom of this nation to shun all reminders of death and of the dead.

I opposed this, and M. de Biancourt, for he is almost my only interpreter, joined with me, but in vain: the dying man was obdurate. Rather late that evening we administered extreme unction to him, for otherwise he was sufficiently prepared for it. Behold now the efficacy of the sacrament; the next morning he asks for M. de Biancourt and me, and again begins his harangue. In this he declares that he has, of his own free will, changed his mind; that he intends to be buried with us, commanding his children not, for that reason, to shun the place like unbelievers, but to frequent it all the more, like Christians, to pray for his soul and to weep over his sins. He also recommended peace with M. de Potrincourt and his son; as for him, he had always loved the French, and had often prevented conspiracies against them. A few hours afterward he died a Christian death in my arms.

This was the greatest, most renowned and most formidable savage within the memory of man; of Splendid physique, taller and larger-limbed than is usual among them; bearded like a Frenchman, although scarcely any of the others have hair upon the chin; grave and reserved; feeling a proper sense of dignity for his position as commander. God impressed upon his soul a greater idea of Christianity than he has been able to form from hearing about it, and he has often said to me in his savage tongue: "Learn our language quickly, for as soon as thou knowest it and hast taught me well I wish to become a preacher like thee." Even before his conversion he never cared to have more than one living wife, which is wonder-

ful, as the great sagamores of this country maintain a numerous seraglio, no more through licentiousness than through ambition, glory and necessity; for ambition, to the end that they may have many children, wherein lies their power; for fame and necessity, since they have no other artisans, agents, servants, purveyors or slaves than the women; they bear all the burdens and toil of life.

He was the first of all the Savages in these parts to receive baptism and extreme unction, the first and the last sacraments; and the first one who, by his own command and decree, has received a Christian burial Monsieur de Biancourt honored his obsequies. imitating as far as possible the honors which are shown to great Captains and Noblemen in France.

Now, that the judgments of God may be feared as much as his mercies are loved, I shall here record the death of a Frenchman, in which God has shown his justice as much as he has given us evidence of his mercy, in the death of Membertou. This man had often escaped drowning, and only recently upon the blessed day of last Pentecost. He showed but little gratitude for this favor. Not to make the story too long, the evening before St. Peter's and St. Paul's day, as they were discoursing upon the perils of the sea, and upon the vows made to the Saints in similar dangers, this wretch began impudently to laugh and to sneer, jeering at those of the company who were said to have been religious upon such occasions. He soon had his reward. The next morning a gust of wind carried him, and him only, out of the boat into the waves, and he was never seen again.

But let us leave the water and

come on shore. If the ground of this new France had feeling, as the Poets pretend their goddess Tellus had, doubtless it would have experienced an altogether novel sensation of joy this year, for, thank God, having had very successful crops from the little that was tilled, we made from the harvest some hosts [Wafers for consecration] and offered them to God. These are, as we believe, the first hosts which have been made from the wheat of these lands. May Our Lord, in his goodness, have consented to receive them as fragrant offerings and in the words of the Psalmist, *may he* give graciously, since the earth has yielded him its fruits.

We have stayed at home long enough; let us go abroad a little, as we promised to do, and relate what has taken place in the country.

I made two journeys with M. de Biancourt, the one lasting about twelve days, the other a month and a half; and we have ranged the entire coast from Port Royal to Kinibéqui, west southwest. We entered the great rivers St. John, Sainte Croix, Pentegoët, and the above-named Kinibéqui; we visited the French who have wintered there this year in two places, at the St. John river and at the river Sainte Croix; the Malouins at the former place, and captain Plastrier at the latter.

During these journeys, God often delivered us from great and very conspicuous dangers; but, although we ought always to bear them in mind, that we may not be ungrateful, there is no need of setting them all down upon paper, lest we become wearisome. I shall relate only what, in my opinion, will be the most interesting.

We went to see the Malouins; namely, Sieur du Pont, the younger, and

captain Merveilles, who, as we have said, were wintering at St. John river, upon an island called Emenenic, some six leagues up the river. We were still one league and a half from the island when the twilight ended and night came on. The stars had already begun to appear, when suddenly, toward the Northwards a part of the heavens became blood-red: and this light spreading, little by little, in vivid streaks and flashes, moved directly over the settlement of the Malouins and there stopped. The red glow was so brilliant that the whole river was tinged and made luminous by it. This apparition lasted some eight minutes, and as soon as it disappeared another came of the same form, direction and appearance .

There was not one of us who did not consider this meteoric display prophetic. As to the Savages, they immediately cried out, *Gara gara enderquir Gara gara*, meaning we shall have war, such signs announce war. Nevertheless, both our arrival that evening and our landing the next morning were very quiet and peaceful. During the day, nothing but friendliness. But (alas!) when evening came, I know not how, everything was turned topsy-turvy; confusion, discord, rage, uproar reigned between our people and those of St. Malo. I do not doubt that accursed band of furious and sanguinary spirits were hovering about all this night, expecting every hour and moment a horrible massacre of the few Christians who were there: but the goodness of God restrained the poor wretches. There was no bloodshed: and the next day, this nocturnal storm ended in a beautiful and delightful calm, the dark shadows and specters giving way to a luminous peace.

In truths M. de Biancourt's good-

ness and prudence seemed much shaken by this tempest of human passions. But I also saw very clearly that if fire and areas were once put into the hands of badly disciplined men, the masters have much to fear and suffer from their own servants. I do not know that there alias one who closed his eyes during that night. for me, I made many fine propositions and promises to Our Lord, never to forget this. his goodness, if he were pleased to avert all bloodshed. This he granted in his infinite mercy.

It was three o'clock in the afternoon of the next day before I had time to feel hungry, so had I been obliged to go back and forth from one to the other. At last, about that time everything was Settled, thank God.

Certainly Captain Merveilles and his people showed unusual piety. For notwithstanding this so annoying encounter and conflict, two days afterwards they confessed and took communion in a very exemplary manner; and so, at our departure, they all begged me very earnestly, and particularly young du Pont, to come and see them and stay with them as long as I liked. I promised to do so, and am only waiting for the opportunity. For in truth I love these honest people with all my heart.

But dismissing them from our thoughts for the time being, as we did then from our presence, let us continue our journey. Upon our return from this river Saint John, our route turned towards the country of the Armouchiquoys. Two principal causes led M. de Biancourt to take this route: first, in order to have news of the English, and to find out if it would be possible to obtain satisfaction from them; secondly, to buy some Armouchiquoys corn to help us pass the winter, and not

die of hunger in case we did not receive help from France.

To understand the first cause you must know that a little while before, captain Platrier, of Honfleur, already mentioned, wishing to go to Kinibéqui, was taken prisoner by two English ships which were at an island called Emmetic, eight leagues from Kinibequi. His release was effected by means of presents (this expresses it mildly), and by his promise to comply with the interdiction laid upon him not to trade anywhere upon all this coast. For the English want to be considered masters of it, and they produced letters from their King to this effect, but these we believe to be false.

Now, Monsieur de Biancourt, having heard all this from the mouth of Captain Platrier himself, remonstrated earnestly with these people, showing how important it was to him, an officer of the Crown and his father's Lieutenant, and also how important to all good Frenchmen, to oppose this usurpation of the English, so contrary to the rights and possessions of his Majesty. "For," said he, "it is well known to all (not to go back any farther in the case) that the great Henry, may God give him absolution, in accordance with the rights acquired by his predecessors and by himself, gave to Monsieur des Monts, in the year 1604, all this region from the 40th to the 46th parallel of latitude. Since this donation, the said Seigneur des Monts, himself and through Monsieur de Potrin-court, my very honored father, his lieutenant, and through others, has frequently taken actual possession of all the country; and this, three or four years before the English had ever frequented it, or before anything had ever been heard of these claims of theirs." This

and several other things were said by Sieur de Biancourt to encourage his people.

As for me, I had two other reasons which impelled me to take this journey: One, to give spiritual aid to Sieur de Biancourt and his people; the other, to observe and to study the disposition of these nations to receive the holy gospel. Such, then, were the causes of our journey.

We arrived at Kinibéqui, eighty leagues from Port Royal, the 28th of October, the day of St. Simon and St. Jude, of the same year, 1611. Our people at once disembarked, wishing to see the English fort, for we had learned, on the way, that there was no one there. Now as everything is beautiful at first, this undertaking of the English had to be praised and extolled, and the conveniences of the place enumerated, each one pointing out what he valued the most. But a few days afterward they changed their views; for they saw that there was a fine opportunity for making a counter-fort there, which might have imprisoned them and cut them off from the sea and river; moreover, even if they had been left unmolested they should not have enjoyed the advantages of the river, since it has several other mouths, and good ones, some distance from there. Furthermore, what is worse, we do not believe that, in six leagues of the surrounding country, there is a single acre of good tillable land, the soil being nothing but stones and rocks. Now, inasmuch as the wind forced us to go on, when the third day came, Monsieur de Biancourt considered the subject in council and decided to take advantage of the wind and go on up the rivers ill order to thoroughly explore it.

We had already advanced three good leagues, and had dropped anchor in the middle of the river waiting for the tide, when we suddenly discovered six Armouchiquois canoes Coming towards us. There were twenty-four persons therein, all warriors. They went through a thousand maneuvers and ceremonies before accosting us, and might have been compared to a flock of birds which wanted to go into a hemp-field but feared the scarecrow. We were very much pleased at this, for our people also needed to arm themselves and arrange the pavesade. In short, they continued to come and go; they reconnoitered; they carefully noted our numbers! our cannon, our arms, everything; and when night called they camped upon the other bank of the river, if not out of reach, at least beyond the aim of our cannon.

All night there was continual haranguing, singing and dancing, for such is the kind of life all these people lead when they are together. Now as we supposed that probably their songs and dances were invocations to the devil, to oppose the power of this cursed tyrant, I had our people sing some sacred Hymns, as the *Salve*, the *Ave Maria Stella*, and others. But when they once got into the way of singing, the spiritual songs being exhausted they took up others with which they were familiar. When they came to the end of these, as the French are natural mimics, they began to mimic the singing and dancing of the Armouchiquois who were upon the bank, succeeding in, it so well that the Armouchiquois stopped to listen to them; and then our people stopped and the others immediately began again. It was really very comical, for you would have said that they were two choirs

which had a thorough understanding with each other, and scarcely could you distinguish the real Armouchiquois from their imitators.

In the morning we continued our journey up the river. The Armouchiquois, who were accompanying us, told us that if we wanted any *piousquemin* (corn), it would be better and easier for us to turn to the right and not, with great difficulty and risks to continue going up the river; that if we turned to the right through the branch which was just at hand, in a few hours we would reach the great sagemore Meteourmite, who would furnish us with all we wanted; that they would act as our guides, since they themselves were going to visit him.

It is to be supposed, and there were strong indications of it, that they gave us this advice only with the intention of ensnaring us, and making an easy conquest of us by the help of Meteourmite, whom they knew to be the enemy of the English, and whom they supposed to be an enemy of all foreigners. But, thank God, their ambushade was turned against themselves.

However, we believed them; so a part of them went ahead of us, part behind, and some in the barque with us. Nevertheless Monsieur de Biancourt was always on his guard, and often sent the boat on ahead with the sounding-lead. We had not gone more than half a league when, reaching a large lake, the sounder called out to us: "Two fathoms of water; only one fathom, only one fathom everywhere," and immediately afterward, "Stop! stop! cast anchor." Where are our Armouchiquois? Where are they? Not one. They had all silently disappeared. Oh, the traitors! Oh, how God had delivered us! They had led us

into a trap. "Veer about, veer about." We retrace our path.

Meanwhile, Meteourmite having been informed of our coming, came to meet us, and, although he saw our prow turned about, yet he followed us. It was well that Monsieur de Biancourt was wiser than many of his crew, whose sole cry was to kill them all. For they were as angry as they were frightened; but their anger made the most noise.

Monsieur de Biancourt restrained himself, and not otherwise Shoving any ill-will toward Meteourmite, learned from him that there was a route by which they could pass; that in order not to miss it, he would let us have some of his own people in our barque; that, besides, if we would come to his wigwam he would try to satisfy us. We trusted him, and thought we might have to repent it; for we traversed such perilous heights and narrow passes that we never expected to escape from them. In fact, in places some of our men cried out in distress that we were all lost. But, thank God, they cried too soon.

When we arrived, Monsieur de Biancourt armed himself, and thus arrayed proceeded to pay a visit to Meteourmite. He found him in the royal apparel of Savage majesty, alone in a wigwam that was well matted above and below, and about forty powerful young men stationed around it like a body-guard, each one with his shield, his bow and arrows upon the ground in front of him. These people are by no means simpletons, and you may believe us when we say so.

As for me, I received that day the greater part of the welcome; for, as I was unarmed, the most honorable of them, turning their backs upon the soldiers, approached me with a thousand demon-

strations of friendship. They led me to the largest wigwam of all; it contained fully eighty people. When they had taken their places, I fell upon my knees and repeated My *Pater, Ave, Credo*, and some orisons; then pausing, my hosts, as if they had understood me perfectly, applauded after their fashion, crying *Ho! ho! ho!* I gave them some crosses and pictures explaining them as well as I could. They very willingly kissed them, made the sign of the Cross, and each one in his turn endeavored to present his children to me, so that I would bless them and give them something. Thus passed that visit, and another that I have since made.

Now Meteourmite had replied to Monsieur de Biancourt that as to the corn he did not have much, but he had some skins, if we were pleased to trade with him. Then in the morning when the trade was to take place I went to a neighboring island with a boy, to there offer the blessed sacrament for our reconciliation. our people in the barque, not to be taken by surprise under pretext of the trade, were armed and barricaded, leaving a place in the middle of the deck for the Savages; but in vain, for they rushed in in such Crowds and with such greediness, that they immediately filled the whole ship, becoming all mixed up with our own people. Some one began to cry out, "Go back, go back." But to what good? On the other hand, the savages revere yelling also.

Then our people were sure they were captured, and there was nothing loud cries and confusion. Monsieur de Biancourt has often said and said again, that several times he had raised his arm and opened his mouth to strike the first blow and to cry out, "Kill, kill;" but that somehow the one consideration

that restrained him was that I was outside, and if they came to blows I was lost. God rewarded him for his goodwill by saving not only me but also the whole crew. For, as all readily acknowledge at this hour, if any foolish act had been committed none of them would ever have escaped, and the French would have been condemned forever all along the coast.

God willed that Meteourmite and some other captains should apprehend the danger, and so cause their people to withdraw. When evening came and all had retired, Meteourmite sent some of his men to excuse the misconduct of the morning, protesting that all the disorder had originated not with him, but with the Armouchiquois; that they had even stolen a hatchet and a platter (a great wooden dish), which articles he herewith returned; that this theft had so displeased him that immediately after discovering it he had sent the Armouchiquois away from him; that, for his part, he was friendly toward us and knew very well that we neither killed; nor beat the Savages of those parts, but received them at our table and often made tabagie for them, and brought them a great many nice things from France, for which courtesies they loved us. These people are, I believe, the greatest speech-makers in the world; nothing can be done without speeches.

But as I have spoken here of the English, some one perhaps will wish to hear about their adventure, which was related to us in this place. So here it is: In 1608 the English began to settle at one of the mouths of this Kinibéqui river, as we have said before. They had then as leader a very honest man, who got along remarkably well with the natives of the country. They say, however,

that the Armouchiquois were afraid of such neighbors, and so put the captain to death, as I have said. These people make a practice of killing by magic. But the second year, 1609, the English, under another Captain, changed their tactics. They drove the Savages away without ceremony; they beat, maltreated and mis-used them outrageously and without restraint; consequently these poor, abused people, anxious about the present, and dreading still greater evils in the future, determined, as the saying is, to kill the whelp ere its teeth and claws became stronger. The opportunity came one day when three boatloads of them went away off to the fisheries. My conspirators followed in their boat, and approaching with a great show of friendliness (for they always make the greatest show of affection when they are the most treacherous), they go among them, and at a given signal each one seizes his man and stabs him to death. Thus were eleven Englishmen dispatched. Others were intimidated and abandoned their enterprise the same year; they have not resumed it since, being satisfied to come in the summer to fish, at this island of Emetenic, which we have said was eight leagues from the fort they had begun building.

So, for this reason, the outrage to which Captain Platrier was subjected by these English having been committed upon this island of Emetenic, Monsieur de Biancourt decided to go and reconnoiter it, and to leave there some memento in assertion of his rights. This he did, erecting at the harbor a beautiful cross bearing the arms of France. Some of his crew advised him to burn the boats which he found there; but as he is kind and humane he would not do

it, seeing they were fishermen's boats and not men-of-war.

Thence, as the season was advancing, it being already the 6th of November, we turned our ships towards Port Royal, stopping at Pentegoët, as we had promised the Savages.

The Pentegoët is a very beautiful river, and may be compared to the Garonne in France. It flows into French Bay [the bay of Fundy] and has many islands and rocks at its mouth; so that if you do not go some distance up, you will take it for a great bay or arm of the sea, until you begin to see plainly the bed and course of a river. It is about three leagues wide and is forty-four and one half degrees from the Equator. We cannot imagine what the Norembega of our forefathers was, if it were not this river; for elsewhere both the others and I myself have made inquiries about this place, and have never been able to learn anything concerning it.

When we had advanced three leagues or more into the current of the river we encountered another beautiful river called Chiboctous, which comes from the northeast to discharge its waters into the great Pentegoët.

At the confluence of these two rivers there was the finest assemblage of Savages that I have yet seen. There were 80 canoes and a boat, wigwams and about 300 people. The most prominent Sagamore was called Betsabés, a man of great discretion and prudence; and I confess we often see in these Savages natural and graceful qualities which will make anyone but a shameless person blush, when they compare them to the greater part of the French who come over here.

When they had recognized us they showed their great joy during the

evening by their usual demonstrations; dancing, singing and making speeches. And as for us, we were very glad to be in a country of safety; for among the Etechemins, as these are, and the Souriquois, as are those of Port Royal, we are no more obliged to be on our guard than among our own servants, and, thank God we have never yet been deceived in them.

The next day I went to visit the Savages, and followed my usual custom, which I have described in speaking of Kinibéqui. But there was more to be done here, as they told me they had some sick; I went to visit them; and as priest, it being thus ordained in the Ritual, I recited over them the holy Gospel and Orisons, giving to each one a cross to wear around the neck.

Among others I found one stretched out, after their fashion, before the fire, wonder expressed in his eyes and face, great drops standing upon forehead, scarcely able to speak, so severe the attack. They told me that he had been sick for four months and as it appeared, he could not last long. Now I do not know what his malady was; whether it only came intermittently or not I do not know; at all events, the second day after that I saw him in our barque, well and happy, with his cross around his neck. He showed his gratitude to me by a cheerful smile and by taking my hand. I had no means of speaking to him, as the trading was then going on, and for this reason the deck was full of people and all the interpreters were busy. Truly I was very glad that the goodness of God was beginning to make these poor and abandoned people feel that in the sign of the holy and salutary Cross there was every good and every blessing.

Finally, not to continue repeating the same story, both in this place and in all others, where we have been able to talk with these poor gentiles, we have attempted to impress upon them some of the simplest conceptions of the grandeur and truth of Christianity, in so far as our means would permit. And to sum it up in a word, this has been the result of our journey. We have begun to know and to be known, we have taken possession of these regions in the name of the Church of God, establishing here the royal throne of our Savior and King, Jesus Christ, his holy altar; the Savages have seen us pray, celebrate the mass, and preach; through our conversations, pictures, and crosses, our way of living, and other similar things, they have received the first faint ideas and germs of Our holy faith, which will some day take root and grow abundantly, please God, if it is followed big longer and better cultivation.

And indeed such is about all we are accomplishing, even here at Port Royal, until we haven learned the language. However, it comforts us to see these little Savages, though not yet Christians, yet willingly, when they are here, carrying the candles, bells, holy water and other things, marching in good order in the processions and funerals which occur here. Thus they become accustomed to act as Christians, to become so in reality in his time.

No need is felt except that we ought to be better workers for Our Lord, and ought not to divert from ourselves and others so many of His blessings by our many sins and great unworthiness. As for me, truly I have good reason to severely reproach myself; and all those who are imbued with earnest charity ought to be deeply touched in their

hearts. Stay Our Lord, by his sacred mercy, and by the prayers of his glorious mother and of all his Church, both heavenly and militant, be moved to compassion!

Particularly I beg Your Reverence and all our Reverend Fathers and Brothers to be pleased to remember in your most earnest devotions both us and these poor souls, miserable slaves under the tyranny of Satan. May it please this benign Savior of the world, whose grace is denied to no one, and whose bounty is ever beyond our merits, may it please him, I say, to look down with a pitying eye upon these poor tribes, and to gather them soon into his family, in the happy freedom of the favored children of God. Amen!

From Port Royal, this last day of January, 1612. While I was writing these letters, the ship which was sent to our assistance has, thank God, arrived safe and sound, and in it our Brother Gilbert du Thet. He, who knows the dangers and necessities we were in, will appreciate the joy we felt and that we feel at its arrival. God be praised. Amen.

Of Your Reverence, the son and very humble servant in Our Lord.

Pierre BIARD

To the Reader.

After the Fathers of the Society of Jesus had overcome the ill-will of their enemies and again been admitted to France, they felt themselves called to other fields for the fruitful employment of their labors.

A rich harvest was offered in New France, where the natives lived almost like animals, without any knowledge of God.

To that country, accordingly,

were sent two priests of the Society, Fathers Pierre Baird and Enemond Massé, who reached Acadia on the 22nd of May, 1611. After remaining there seven months, Father Baird sent this epistle to his Superior.

The letter is divided, as it were, under four heads, and relates: "What New France is, the nature of the country, what tribes inhabit it, and their customs.

In what manner, with what help and with what success the Society secured a mission in this country.

In what condition the Society found the Christian religion in this region.

What has been done by the missionaries thus far, or rather what has been attempted."

Although the end of the letter reads: the last day of January, 1611,—either there is an error in the year, or Father Baird wrote according to the old style, for the year ought to be 1612.

Canadian Mission.

Reverend Father in Christ,

The peace of Christ be with you.

The end of this year 1611, which is already so rapidly drawing near, invites me to write to your Reverence in acknowledgment of its beginning, in which our Society first penetrated into this territory of new France. The profusion of blessings and favors which the divine bounty has bestowed upon us while undertaking and sustaining this infant enterprise, requires that in this haven, as it were, of time and of the year we should, reviewing the course of our actions and the occurrences of our voyage, invite our dear Fathers and Brothers to share both in our rejoicing for those things which the hand of God has

happily effected through us, and, too, in our mourning and our prayers for our delinquencies and inefficiency in seeking the salvation of souls. The object sought by the Society for a long time previously and with many efforts, that it might in some degree impart help and light to this savage people also by its labors in bringing the Gospel among them, it seems at last to have attained in this year with a small and slight beginning indeed, yet auspiciously and in accordance with its hopes.

This also I must narrate and explain to your Reverence, of what nature and how numerous is this harvest of souls, and what has hitherto been given to us by our Heavenly Father, and what further gifts we may hope for in the future. But to facilitate my whole narration, and to obviate the possible omission of many details in its course, I think it best to divide the whole matter under four heads. I shall therefore first describe new France, the country, the natives, and their customs; next, in what manner, and with what help, and with what result, our Society secured a mission to this country; thirdly, in what condition we found the Christian religion in this region; and, finally, what has been accomplished by us thus far, or rather what has been attempted for the glory of God. This appears to me a very convenient and sufficient summary of all I am to tell.

And, in order that I may begin at the begin and explain first what sort of a land New France is the nature of the country and the customs of the natives, I think it will be not only a pleasure for your Reverence, but also a necessity for ourselves that the whole territory be rather accurately described. For, since this is the field assigned to us for

our labors, it is certain that your reverence cannot direct us in accordance with our varied needs without a knowledge of the extent of the country, of the impediments to travel, of the distance of neighboring settlements, and of the condition of people and things.

Besides, I find this matter involved in so may error and darkness by the older Geographers, that unless we, who know these things not from hearsay only, but are eyewitnesses thereof, come to the rescue, it is impossible that the mind, in tracing our footsteps and our journeys, should not wander as far away from the truth as it has to do from the body. They speak of a certain Norumbega and give the names of cities and strongholds of which to-day no trace or even report remains.

However, let me fulfill my promise. New France, as the French now call it, is that territory across the French Ocean which extends from the forty-first to the fifty-second, or even fifty-third degree of latitude.

I know that some extend the boundaries of this region much farther, while others restrict them more narrowly, but I am not arguing this point; I merely explain what is, as I have said, the prevailing interpretation of them, either because this part of the country has been for many years past particularly explored and claimed by the French, or because the parallels bounding this western region are almost the same as those of old France.

New France has an exceedingly varied sea-coast, indented by bays and rivers, broken and irregular. Where are two principal bays of vast size, one called the gulf of St. Lawrence, the other French bay. Indeed, from the forty-seventh degree as far as to the

fifty-first, the land opens its bosom, as it were, to receive the Ocean into it, or to facilitate the outflow of the great Canadian river. This gulf is known as the gulf of St. Lawrence, in the mouth of which lies that enormous island which the French call Newfoundland, the Savages Præsensis [Plaisance]; it is famous for its cod-fishery; the shores of the gulf and the rivers are occupied toward the North by the Excomminqui, or, as they are commonly called, the Excommunicated. This tribe is very savage, and, it is said, is addicted to cannibalism; although once in very peaceful relations with the French for a considerable length of time, it is now on a footing of irreconcilable enmity. There follow, in the interior, toward the west, the Algonquins; then the Montagnais; those dwelling at the head-waters of this same great Canadian river are the Iroquois, whose territory also extends far to the south.

These Iroquois are known to the French chiefly for the perpetual warfare which they maintain against the Montagnais and Algonquins, allied and friendly tribes. To the south, however, the coast gradually advances up to the forty-third degree, where once more it is interrupted by a very large bay called French bay. This gulf, advancing far into the interiors and bending toward the north and the Gulf of St. Lawrence, forms a sort of Isthmus; and this Isthmus is completed by the St. John, a very long river which, taking its rise almost at the very banks of the great Canadian river, empties into this French bay. This isthmus has a circuit of fully five hundred leagues and is occupied by the Soriquois tribe. In this isthmus is port royal, where we are now sojourning, lying on the parallel of $44^{\circ} 40'$. But this

port (to obviate misunderstanding) is not on the Ocean lying eastward, but on that gulf which I have called French bay. To the west and north, from the river of St. John to the river Potugoët, and even to the river Rimbegui, live the Etheminqui. The mouth of this river is in latitude 43°40'. Not far distant is Chouacoët, which is the other shore or arm embracing French Bay. For to the east lies what we call Cape Sable, while Chouacoët lies toward the West; both are on the forty-third parallel, though they are separated by an interval of a hundred leagues. From the Rimbegui river to the fortieth parallel the whole country is in the possession of the tribe called the Armouchiquois. Such is the distribution of the territory. The tribes amount to seven in number, differing from each other in language and character: the Excommunicated, the Algonquins, the Montagnais, the Iroquois, the Soriquois, the Etheminqui and the Armouchiquois. But of these neither the Excommunicated, nor the Iroquois, nor the Armouchiquois are well known to the French. The remaining four tribes appear already to be united in firm friendship and intimacy with them. They stay over night among us; we rove about with them, and hunt with them and live among them without arms and without fear; and, as has thus far appeared, without danger. This intimacy arose partly from association while fishing for cod, which abound in these waters, and partly from trading in furs. For the Savages, who have neither copper, iron, hemp, wool, vegetables nor manufactured articles of any kind, resort to the French for them, giving in return the only thing of value they have, namely, furs. This whole region is for the most part very cold, owing to various causes. In the

first place, the country is a very wet one; for, besides being washed on almost every side by the sea, it abounds in rivers and ponds and large lakes. Islands are so numerous that the whole shore is cut up by a confused procession of them, as it were. Moreover, though a land of frost, it is very windy, the wind being nearly always a cold one. Another cause of cold is the wildness of the country; for, being covered on every side by one continuous forest, it naturally follows that the soil hardly ever becomes really warmed through. A third cause is the mountains, covered with snow and perpetual frost, which are said to wall us in far away to the north and the west.

We certainly get nothing from that quarter but piercing winds and snow-storms. Elsewhere, however, the appearance of the country is very pleasing, and in many places inviting to the settler and quite promising; and, as experience has shown, it is not unfruitful if cultivated. The natives are not numerous. The Etheminqui number less than a thousand, the Algonquins and the Montagnais together would not amount to much more, the Soriquois would not amount to two thousand. Thus four thousand Indians at most roam through, rather than occupy, these vast stretches of inland territory and sea-shore, for they are a nomadic people, living in the forests and scattered over wide spaces, as is natural for those who live by hunting and fishing only. They are nearly all beardless and of average stature, even a little shorter and more slender than we, but not degraded nor ill-favored in appearance; their color is not very swarthy; they commonly paint their faces, and, when in mourning, blacken them. They love justice and hate vio-

lence and robbery, a thing really remarkable in men who have neither laws nor magistrates; for, among them, each man is his own master and his own protector. They have Sagamores, that is, leaders in war; but their authority is most precarious, if, indeed, that may be called authority to which obedience is in no wise obligatory. The Indians follow them through the persuasion of example or of custom, or of ties of kindred and alliance; sometimes even through a certain authority of power, no doubt. They wage war as a tribe on account of wrongs done to a private individual. The whole race is very revengeful and, after the fashion of savages, insolent in victory, carrying about the heads of their captives as trophies and spoils of victory.

They are even said to have been addicted to the eating of human flesh, and the Excommunicated and Armouchiquois tribes are said to have the same practice even now. Those, however, who are intimate with the French are far from being guilty of so great a crime.

Their whole religion consists of certain incantations, dances and sorcery, which they have recourse to, it seems, either to procure the necessaries of life or to get rid of their enemies; they have Autmoinos, that is, medicine-men, who consult the evil Spirit regarding life and death and future events; and the evil spirit [great beast] often presents himself before them, as they themselves assert, approves or disapproves their schemes of vengeance, promises them the death of their enemies or friends, or prosperity in the chase, and other mockeries of the same sort. To make these complete they even have faith in dreams; if they happen to

awake from a pleasing and auspicious dream, they rise even in the middle of the night and hail the omen with songs and dances. They have no temples, sacred edifices, rites, ceremonies or religious teaching, just as they have no laws, arts or government, save certain customs and traditions of which they are very tenacious. If the Medicine-man predicts that a certain person will die before a fixed date, this man is deserted by all; and, in his misery, feeling certain of impending death, he voluntarily condemns himself to suffer hunger and complete neglect, apparently that he may not seem to contend against fate.

If, however, he does not appear to be in a dying condition by the time predicted, his friends and relatives even hasten his death by pouring jars of cold water over his stomach. Such is the piety of these servants of Satan. Thus, no doubt because he is always deceitful, the soothsayer never appears to deceive himself; although this lying race of prophets have lost much of their authority since the coming of the French, and now universally complain that their Devils have lost much of their power, if compared with what it is said to have been in the time of their Ancestors. They so completely bury the very remembrance of the dead with their bodies that they will not even suffer their names to be mentioned afterwards. Of the one supreme God they have a certain slender notion, but they are so perverted by false ideas and by custom, that, as I have said, they really worship the Devil. To obtain the necessaries of life they endure cold and hunger in an extraordinary manner. During eight or ten days, if the necessity is imposed on them, they will follow the chase in fasting, and they hunt with the greatest ar-

dor when the snow is deepest and the cold most severe. And yet these same Savages, the offspring, so to speak, of Boreas and the ice, when once they have returned with their booty and installed themselves in their tents, become indolent and unwilling to perform any labor whatever, imposing this entirely upon the women. The latter, besides the onerous role of bearing and rearing the children, also transport the frame from the place where it has fallen; they are the hewers of wood and drawers of water; they make and repair the household utensils; they prepare food; they skin the game and prepare the hides like fullers; they sew garments; they catch fish and gather shell-fish for food; often they even hunt; they make the canoes, that is, skiffs of marvelous rapidity, out of bark; they set up the tents wherever and whenever they stop for the night—in short, the men concern themselves with nothing but the more laborious hunting and the waging of war. For this reason almost every one has several wives, and especially the Sagamores, since they cannot maintain their power and keep up the number of their dependents unless they have not only many children to inspire fear or conciliate favor, but also many slaves to perform patiently the menial tasks of every sort that are necessary. For their wives are regarded and treated as slaves. These Savages are extremely liberal toward each other; no one is willing to enjoy any good fortune by himself, but makes his friends sharers in the larger part of it; and whoever receives guests at what they call a *Tabagie* does not himself sit down with the others, but waits on them, and does not reserve any portion of the food for himself but distributes all; so that the host is constrained to suffer hunger dur-

ing that day, unless some one of his guests takes pity on him and gives him back a portion of what remains over from his own share. and they have often shown the same liberality toward the French, when they have found them in distress. For they have learned from us that, toward theirs than these, whether here or in the ships, nothing is readily given away. They hunt after the lice in their heads and regard them as a dainty. They are most importunate beggars and, after the fashion of beggars and needy people, they are hypocritical—contradicting, flattering and lying to achieve their ends. But when once they have gotten their fill they go off, mocking the French and everybody else at a distance and secretly laughing at everything, even the religion which they have received. They set up their tents easily and quickly in any place with branching stakes, which they cover either with bark or skins or even with mats. The fire is built in the middle. But this is enough, and more than enough, regarding the country and the people, especially as I send an accurate map of the region, a single glance at which will make clear whatever I have said regarding the geography of land and sea.

Now I shall enter upon my second topic and explain by what means the Society finally secured the sending of a mission to this province. It is true that our adherents at Bordeaux, in their zeal for the saving of souls, had looked forward to this, and had aimed at this for many years back, namely, at bringing help to this wretched race. But their pious and ardent efforts which recoiled before no danger, were long frustrated by lack of means for prosecuting them. When our Society was at last re-admitted into France, they

began to negotiate in earnest with Henry the Great, through Father Coton, to obtain permission to labor in these regions also, and the King, so full of good-will toward our Society, espoused this pious and important project; but, nevertheless, the taking of active steps was preceded by a long and vexatious delay. No Frenchmen as yet inhabited this region with the purpose of settling here, and such as had been sent by the King as explorers and in a tentative way, being indifferent to our holy aims, had soon returned to France, leaving these things not only unaccomplished but even almost hopeless. But our Prince, undeterred by these considerations, bade us be of good heart, and promised, if we would but designate those who were to be sent, that he would let us know when he deemed the time opportune; and, as an earnest of his promise, from that time forward he assigned to us a sum of money for the voyage. But at this point, unhappily, occurred the tragic death of the King. Yet at this very season God came to our help. Some messengers came to the new king from the man who last year solicited the royal permission to found a colony in this country.

This man is Jean Biencourt, commonly called Potrin-court, of noble birth and a magnanimous man. Accordingly, seizing this opportunity, we made overtures to the Queen Regent, Marie de Medicis, that most pious and exalted lady, begging her to execute what her husband had so piously purposed by giving a place to two of our Fathers in the ship which was to sail shortly for this place. The Queen assented, and responded to our request most liberally. Accordingly one Priest was immediately summoned from Aquitaine, and

another was chosen in France. But lo! Satan rouses himself again, and again interposes new delay. We were to sail from Dieppe, but the ship that was to bear us to this country was so completely under the influence of Heretical merchants that it could not stir without their consent. Accordingly, as soon as they saw our Priests they refused outright to let the ship sail if the Jesuits were to embark in it. The order of the Queen was alleged, and the authority of the Governor was interposed. Recourse was had to the Queen, and letters, and orders were obtained from her; but even Royal authority is, like that of the Church, unable to break or bend heretical obstinacy. This stubborn resistance lent all the more luster to the piety of our benignant Rulers. For Antoinette de Pons, Marchioness de Guercheville, a most illustrious lady, and governess to the daughters of the Queen, on learning these petty hindrances did not hesitate, in her love for God and for our Society, to ask in his name for aid from some of the greatest men in the council of this realm, that the contumacy of the heretics might be subdued and the Jesuits permitted to sail to this land. Nor did she have any difficulty in gaining the good-will of the Catholic Princes, inclined of their own accord to sympathize with this holy cause; in a word, the sum of four thousand *livres* was collected. This not only put an end to the iniquitous resistance of the heretics, but gave our Priests the influence of Masters rather than of mere passengers in the ship. Thus, no doubt Christ, as usual, has strengthened his own followers through the attacks of enemies; through their iniquity he has furnished aid to his own children and protected them from the darkness

find the baseness of their foes, even through their intrigues and insult; His be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

We sailed from Dieppe in a most unfavorably season on the 26th of January, of this year 1611. The ship was not large and was insufficiently equipped, the sailors were mostly heretics. As it was winter and the sea was stormy, we encountered many severe tempests and the voyage lasted four whole months, from which it is apparent how many sufferings of every kind we underwent. Indeed, during the greater portion of the voyage one or the other of us lay sick and debilitated. Yet we attempted to discharge the usual duties of our Society. Morning and evening, every day, the passengers were called together for prayer; on holidays certain Ecclesiastical services were held, pious exhortations were frequently made, and sometimes disputations with the heretics took place. The habit of swearing and using obscene language was repressed. Nor were there wanting many examples of humility and of charity.

Finally, with God's blessing, we brought the Heretics, who, evidently through the preaching of their own Pastors, regarded us as monsters, to recognize the malice of these impostors in this matter, so that they afterwards on many occasions stood up to proclaim our praises. Such, in brief, was our voyage to this land.

Now follows the third of the topics proposed in the beginning—the setting forth, namely, of the condition in which we found the Christian religion in this country. Certainly before this time scarcely any attention has ever been given by the French to converting the souls of the natives to Christ. There have been many obstacles. For the

French only wandered through these regions, but did not remain here, and those who wished to remain were harassed by so many calamities that they assuredly could not give much thought to this matter. Some natives, it is true, were occasionally brought to France and baptized there, but these not being sufficiently instructed, and finding themselves without shepherds as soon as they returned to these shores, immediately resumed their former habits and traditions. We landed here on the 22nd of May, on the holy day of Pentecost of this year 1611. In this very same year Sieur Potrin-court, whom I shall have occasion to mention several times, had come here to establish himself permanently, and had brought a secular Priest with him. This Priest, it is said, baptized nearly a hundred persons during the year, among them one of the most celebrated of the Chiefs, of whom we shall have to speak again later, Henry Membertou, with his whole family, that is, three children already married. But, since neither this Priest nor any one else knew their language, save so far as pertains to the merest necessities of Intercourse and trade, the neophytes could of course not be instructed in our doctrines.

They accepted baptism as a sort of sacred pledge of friendship and alliance with the French. As regards Christ, the Church, the faith and the Symbol, the commandments of God, prayer and the Sacraments, they knew almost nothing; nor did they know the sign of the cross or the very name of Christian. So, even now, whenever we ask any one, "Are you a Christian?" every one of them answers that he does not understand what we are asking him. But when we change the form of our question and

ask, "Are you baptized?" he assents and declares himself to be already almost a Norman, for they call the French in general Normans. In other respects there is almost no change from the religion of the Gentiles to Christianity. They keep up the same manners and traditions and mode of life, the same dances and rites and songs and sorcery; in fact, all their previous customs. Concerning the one God and the reward of the just, they have learned some things, but they declare that they had always heard and believed thus. We found one little chapel here, a very small and poor one, but the other dwellings also, as is to be expected among new settlers, are by no means large or commodious.

Sieur Potrincourt's family is the only one here; without the women we number twenty. We two of the Society have a wooden cabin in which we can scarcely turn around when we have a table in it. And everything else is certainly in keeping with our dwelling and our vocation in life, that is, poverty. God grant that from these humble beginnings may rise and greatly flourish the work of salvation; to this we bend all our efforts, though, as we are but feeble workers, with no great success. What the nature and extent of this success has been I must now relate, since I have already treated my third topic, namely, the description of the state in which we found this vineyard, or rather this wild-wood.

We arrived here, as already noted, on the 22nd of May. Accordingly, we have now sojourned here a little more than seven months. During this period we have accomplished some work both at home and abroad. Our first efforts we expended at home, so that, as far as it lay in our power, there might be no

interruption of Religious services. For the secular Priest who had preceded us here, immediately on our arrival, of his own free will and in accordance with a long-cherished desire, had returned to France. On Sundays and holy days we celebrate solemn mass and vespers; we preach and sometimes have processions, the boys of our children of the forest carrying before us, when they are present here, tapers and censers and other sacred utensils. For thus, little by little, they become accustomed to our ceremonies. Our procession was, however, a more solemn one on the day of Corpus Christi when we carried about the blessed Sacrament. Sieur Potrincourt himself praised highly our efforts in this, as well as in adorning our chapel as much as we could, in spite of our great poverty. Since we have observed that those who had been previously baptized had gotten scarcely anything else through their baptism than increased peril, we have restrained this eager inclination to administer this sacrament without discrimination, and we insist that no adult person shall receive it until he has the necessary understanding of his faith and his profession. So, as we have thus far been ignorant of the language and have been unable to explain our doctrines through any interpreter, or to commit them to writing, howsoever great a labor that may prove—and it will certainly prove a great one—the course of the Gospel is, up to this point, embarrassed by these shoals and quicksands. We try to persuade the savages to bring their babes to us for baptism; and this, with God's blessing, they are beginning to do. We have baptized two boys, and a girl about nine years old. This girl was wasting away as much from hunger and neglect

as from sickness; for this people very readily despair of relief in sickness, and, as previously stated, soon abandon those whose recovery is deemed hopeless. Thus, when this girl was given up by her relatives, we asked that she be given us for baptism. They very willingly gave her to us, not only for baptism but to dispose of at our pleasure, as being, they said, no longer of more value than a dead dog. But we, to show them an example of Christian piety, carried her to a separate cabin and there fed her and cared for her; and, after teaching her as much as was necessary for one struggling with death, we cleansed her with the saving waters. On her death, nine days later, we entertained the glad hope that our labor had found some favor in heaven. We soon found opportunity for another deed of charity not dissimilar to this, though its result was more auspicious. This was in the case of the second son of that famous Chief Membertou, whom I have already mentioned as having received our doctrines first of all the Soriquois.

I went to visit this chief's son, who was already at death's door. I found that, in accordance with their old custom, they were holding a tabagie, that is, a solemn feast for the distribution of his property, so that after the entertainment he might, not like Jacob give them his blessing, but might bid them farewell, after which they were to bewail his death and then to offer up a sacrifice of dogs. I rebuked as well as I could, through an interpreter, these pagan usages among a people who were already Christians. The father himself, Membertou, answered mildly that they were but neophytes; that I had but to command and that everything lay in my power. I said that this slaughtering of dogs was wrong, as well as this

abandonment of the sick man for whom they were mourning; I added that those dances and death-songs in the very presence of the sick man displeased me, though I permitted them to hold their tabagie elsewhere, as well as to visit the dying man and learn his last wishes. All replied that this was enough for them, and that they would dispense with the rest. Moreover, in the name of Sieur Potrin court I invited them to transport to his house the sick man (who was at a very great distance), and said that we hoped, with God's mercy, for his recovery, so that they might thus learn at last that the predictions of their medicine-men or prophets are false and impious. They obeyed, and the third day after brought to us the sufferer, whose life they had despaired of, in a half-dying condition. God's right hand exerted its power; he did not die, but lived, and now, completely recovered, relates what God has done for him. Moved by this example, the elder Membertou himself, when he began to suffer from that sickness which was to be his last, desired of his own accord to be brought to us and to be received into our own cabin, and even, if it pleased us, to occupy one of our beds. He lay there five days, during which we performed every friendly and even every menial office. But on the sixth day, when his wife had also come, and when she saw that there was scarcely room left for one of us to find a wretched couch on the ground in our cabin, he, of his own accord, went elsewhere, and there died a pious death. We found, indeed, that this man (the first fruits of the Lord among this people) was, beyond all others, wont to be so wondrously moved within, that he apprehended much more of our faith than he could have learned

from hearing us. Thus he used to say frequently that he ardently desired that we might soon know his language. He said that as soon as he had learned them thoroughly he would become the preacher of this heavenly word and doctrine among his people. He himself had commanded that he should be buried in the ancient burial-place of his family, with those who were already dead (who, I knew, had died as pagans). I opposed this, fearing, of course, that the French and even the Gentiles might interpret this as an affront to our faith. But he answered that it had been promised him, before he gave himself to Christ, that this place should be consecrated; and he cited a past example of something of the sort, adding that he feared, on the contrary that if he were buried in our cemetery his people might thenceforth avoid the place and thus never return to us. I opposed all the reasons I could, and so did Sieur de Biencourt, the son of Sieur de Potrin-court, he being almost my only interpreter. I went off sadly, for I had accomplished nothing by arguing. Nevertheless, I did not refuse him the extreme unction, for which he was prepared. The power of the Sacrament manifested itself; the next day he called eagerly for Sieur de Biencourt and myself, and told us in the hearing of all the others that he had changed his mind, and wished to be buried in our cemetery; and to teach his people that they should not avoid the place in accordance with their old and erroneous notion, but rather, with the wisdom of a Christian people, should love and frequent it, in order to utter pious prayers for him.

Then he recommended to them again and again to maintain peace with us, and also piously gave his blessing

to certain of his people, I dictating the words and guiding his hand. A short time after, he died. We deemed it well to celebrate his funeral with great pomp. And certainly there has for a long time been no Chief of such great authority among these people. What is still more remarkable it that he always adhered firmly to his resolution never to have more than one wife at a time, even before his conversion.

Such are the things achieved at home; let us now consider what has been done elsewhere. I have explored with Sieur Biencourt a large part of this whole region—all that portion, namely, which the old geographers called Norumbega, including the principal rivers. The result is that not only have we come to know the country, but also to be known ourselves, and the savages, who had never before seen a Priest or the rites of our Religion, have begun to learn something concerning it. Wherever and whenever we could do so, we offered the priceless host to the Omnipotent God, so that the altar might be as a seat dedicated to the savior of men, whence he should begin to extend his dominion among this people, while their own hobgoblin tyrants are stricken with terror and driven from their usurpation. The Savages have often been present, always profoundly silent and reverent. Afterwards I would visit their huts to pray and to lay hands on the sick; I gave them little crosses of brass, or images, which I hung about their necks, and as far as possible I infused some religious notions into their minds. They received all these things very gladly, they made the sign of the Cross under my guidance, and nearly all the boys followed me a long distance in order to repeat it oftener. Once it happened

that a savage whom I had visited a couple of days before, finding him sick and almost given up by his friends, as I heard, met me rejoicing and well, and glorying in his cross, manifesting his gratitude toward me with hands and countenance, so that I strongly suspected that he had not only experienced the help of the cross but even recognized it. Whenever we fell in with French vessels—and this often happened—salutary counsels were given to the men, in accordance with time and place; sometimes, too, the passengers made their confession. Sometimes calamities that threatened the welfare and fortune of many were averted through the grace of God; sometimes, too, certain destruction and the slaughter of no small number. We have also succeeded in reclaiming a certain Young Man of great courage and hope who, through fear of *Sieur de Potrin-court*, has roamed about for a whole year with the Savages, adopting their ways and dress—not without suspicion, too, of something worse. The Lord brought about a meeting between us. I spoke with him, and at last he confided himself to me. I brought him to *Sieur de Potrin-court*; he did not repent of having placed faith in me; peace was made, to the great joy of all, and next day the young man, before receiving the holy Eucharist, of his own free will begged the pardon of those who surrounded him, for his evil conduct. But as it would be superfluous to speak of the many perils so miraculously escaped by our vessels, so would it be to speak of the many sufferings of those who sojourn here. We make no complaint of having to drink water: as for bread, in less than six weeks the supply ran so short that now no more is allowed for a week than formerly for a single day. We are awaiting a ship that

is to bring supplies. In the meantime, as *Bakers and Artisans*, a great and ancient quality withal, we continue living here, but we have each fallen seriously ill; however, the Lord sustained us with his hand. For this did not last long, and whenever one of us was sick the other was well. We feel, indeed, how great a burden it is to attend to all these household duties, in going for wood and water in cooking, in washing and mending our clothes; in repairing our cabin, and in giving the necessary time and attention to other material cares. Thus our days and nights wretchedly slip away; but the hope consoles and sustains us that God, who raises up those who are cast down, will some time in his mercy not despise our unworthiness. Though, certainly, when we consider our lack of resources, the trying nature of the country, and the manners of the natives, the difficulties incident to our undertaking and those incident to the establishing of a colony, the thousand perils and impediments interposed by the sea or by our fellow men, our enterprise seems but a dream and a Platonic idea. I might set forth all these things one by one, if this were not to imitate the Hebrew explorers, and rather with regard to our human strength than to God's help, and no less through the faintness of our own hearts than in accordance with the truth of things, to say: "This land devours its inhabitants; we are locusts, while there are here monsters of the race of Giants." But yet, however great these Giants be, that David with the sling and stone shall prevail against them, even he who tramples the earth under foot in his anger, and in his rage strikes terror into the senses of men; that Jesus, the Savior of mankind, who blesses the world and leads it toward

perfection in spite of all its shortcomings; he, even he, as we hope, will deem it a thing worthy of his love and his power that, as Isaiah prophesied, *The solitude should exult and blossom like a lily*; even as he deemed it good in his wisdom and his power that, as we see, the most civilized empires in the height of power and glory should receive the yoke of his cross and his humility. Amen, so be it. And may all heaven with its prayers further this, our hope, and above all the glorious Queen of heaven; and my own prayers be aided, too, by

the universal Church and especially by that portion of the Church over which, in accordance with God's will, your Reverence has so long presided—the Society; and I also pray and beseech your Reverence to further it with all possible aid, and to be pleased to bestow on us toward this end in all charity your benediction. From port Royal, in new France, the last day of January 1611.

*The son and unworthy servant of
Your Reverence
Pierre Biard.*

All Time Dumbest Questions Asked by Banff Park Tourists

Yes, they're ALL TRUE as heard at the information kiosks manned by Parks Canada staff!

1. How do the elk know they're supposed to cross at the "Elk Crossing" signs?
2. At what elevation does an elk become a moose?
3. Tourist: "How do you pronounce 'Elk'?" Park Information Staff: "Elk." Tourist: "Oh".
4. Are the bears with collars tame?
5. Is there anywhere I can see the bears pose?
6. Is it okay to keep an open bag of bacon on the picnic table, or should I store it in my tent?
7. Where can I find Alpine Flamingos?
8. I saw an animal on the way to Banff today - could you tell me what it was?
9. Are there birds in Canada?
10. Did I miss the turnoff for Canada?
11. Where does Alberta end and Canada begin?
12. Do you have a map of the State of Jasper?
13. Is this the part of Canada that speaks French, or is that Saskat-chewan?
14. If I go to B.C., do I have to go through Ontario?
15. Which is the way to the Columbia Ricefields?
16. How far is Banff from Canada?
17. What's the best way to see Canada in a day?
18. Do they search you at the B.C. border?
19. When we enter B.C. do we have to convert our money to British pounds?
20. Where can I buy a raccoon hat? ALL Canadians own one, don't they?
21. Are there phones in Banff?
22. So it's eight kilometres away... is that in miles?
23. We're on the decibel system you know.
24. Where can I get my husband really, REALLY, lost??
25. Is that two kilometres by foot or by car?
26. Don't you Canadians know anything?!