

1697.

How he  
extricates  
himself.

The Count de Frontenac was far from approving this modification, which diminished his authority, and as he saw that a literal obedience of the ordinance in question would entail difficulties that would compel the King's Council to restore matters to their former state, he had informed the minister that to conform to his Majesty's intentions, he was about to recall all the French from the remote posts; but the unfortunate affair of the Miamis, caused by the bushlopers, made him afraid that they would not approve even of the propositions of the Intendant and Governor of Montreal, and that those who had excited the Prince's zeal in regard to bushloping, would profit by this new incident to press the absolute execution of the last orders of the court, as they did in fact.

The Governor-General accordingly began to see more wisdom in the modifications proposed by de Champigny and de Callieres, because they left him part of the authority which he saw on the point of slipping entirely from his hands; he therefore united with them in representing to the Council: 1. That it was indispensably necessary not to interfere with the posts at Michillimakinac and on St. Joseph's River, and that an officer with twelve or fifteen soldiers must absolutely be maintained in each, to prevent the English going there to trade, which they would not do long, without planting themselves there so firmly as not to be easily expelled: 2. That it was impossible to maintain these same posts, unless at least twenty-five canoe-loads of goods were sent there annually. These were called *congés*, and the Governor had the distribution of them. 3. That it was important to send soldiers from time to time among the Indians for the security of the missionaries. 4. That these *congés* were a resource to relieve the indigence of several worthy families to whom they were assigned, and who traded them with the voyageurs; and that if this aid were cut off, their subsistence would have to be provided for otherwise. Finally, that these excursions tended to keep in the country a number of young men who knew no other business, and who, deprived of this, would go