

The usual wages of these Gentlemen are assigned according to the strength of their arms, to their zeal and good management. If they clear the ground better than the others, hunt better, fish better,—in short, if they are successful in trading, they are also richer than the others; but if not, they are the most necessitous, as experience has shown in the cases of some.

The incidental advantages are, in the first place, the best portions of the feasts, to which they are sure to be invited. 2. When any one makes a present, they get the best part of it. 3. When some one, be he Citizen or Stranger, wishes to obtain something from the Country, the custom [177] is to grease the palms of the principal Captains, at whose beck and call all the rest move. I am quite sure of what I have just said. The regret that some private individuals have for such irregularities, and the envy of the other Captains who have not been called upon to share the booty, discourage the practice more than they like; they decry one another, and the mere suspicion of these secret presents stirs up sometimes great debates and divisions,—not so much through desire of the public good as from regret at not having a share in them; and this jealousy sometimes hinders good measures. But let us come to the order they keep in their Councils.

In the first place, the Captain, having already consulted in private with the other Captains and Old Men of his Village, and having concluded that the affair warrants a public assembly, sends invitations to the Council, to as many persons of each Village as he desires. The Messengers are young men who volunteer or sometimes an Old Man, in order that