

Letter from Father Jacques Buteux to the Very
Reverend Father, Mutio Vitelleschi, General
of the Society of Jesus, at Rome.

VERY REVEREND FATHER IN CHRIST,
Pax Christi.

Six years have elapsed since I was sent to the Canadian province; I have spent the same number of years in the residence of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin at the three rivers, concerning which I have a few things to write to Your Paternity officially. I am now serving my fourth year as superior. But if hitherto I have not fulfilled this office, you will assign the fact rather to my limited mind or to the fault of ignorance, than to neglect.

This residence is situated on the banks of a river which flows into the very famous river Saint Lawrence by three mouths, from the north. The climate is salubrious; the soil, indeed, adapted to bearing fruits not only for our fellow countrymen,—namely, wheat, barley, peas, and vegetables of every kind,—but also Indian grains. It is everywhere cut up by numerous rivers and marshes; and these are very abundant in fish. Whence it happens that it is loved nearly as much by the French as by the savages. These, not in very great numbers, publicly abused us when we first landed here,—and that, too, in the following 4 years,—as the authors of a certain mortal disease (by which they were consumed). But finally (which is a favor from God), this opinion has