

They subsisted as best they could until Advent, when they found themselves completely destitute of provisions. They searched and hunted everywhere without finding anything but a few Porcupines, and that very seldom. They were [127] compelled to eat their dogs, their skins, and their shoes, and often passed several days without food. During that time, a strange thing happened to a young Frenchman who wintered with them. One day, when a dog had been killed to save the lives of numerous persons who were starving, this boy, who was not satisfied with the little that they had given to him as to the others, seized the liver of the animal, that had been thrown away, and cooked and ate it. He was warned to leave that meat,—that it would do him harm, and make his skin fall off. He would not believe it, and continued his repast, but to his regret,—for it cost him his skin, which fell off in great flakes without any pain, so that in a short time his skin was entirely changed. The Savages know by experience this result on those who have eaten that meat.

“ This affliction however did not inspire our people with any distaste for prayer. On the contrary, they had recourse to it in their greatest weakness; and, as they told me, they arose therefrom less inconvenienced by hunger. They attributed the misfortune to their sins, and acknowledged that God punished them for their offenses. ‘ It is true,’ said Joseph Nepsuget, [128] ‘ that we have given God cause to be angry with us; but I, principally, have done so by my anger and impatience, and by my former drunkenness. He punishes us justly. Let us therefore have recourse to him; let us ask pardon of him. He will have pity on us; he is our Father.