

which was issued at the time when Your Paternity was elevated to the rank of General — respecting the triennial term of authority of superiors, may compel us to change our superior, which cannot be done in this condition of affairs and circumstances, without notable injury to the mission. Surely he who now presides, Reverend Father Paul Ragueneau, is in truth most excellent; and, to speak in a single word, is accomplished in every respect, and thorough in all duties. He has not his counterpart here, and I know not whether he will have in the future. The mission owes very much to him, for he has up to this time governed it most prudently, most benignly, and most vigorously. Such, moreover, is the condition of affairs and circumstances, that I regard him as the one and only man who can govern it now, as befits its dignity. For there are many men here, and among ours there are certainly men who are most devout, and illustrious for many gifts of both nature and grace; nevertheless, they are all, in my judgment, far inferior to him in many respects,—in all other things, indeed, but most of all in the matter of administration; and, in fact, there is no one who has governed before. For the rest, if necessity should compel the choice of another superior, it would seem that he ought to be taken only from those who are here, and not from others who have no experience whatever in these regions. Therefore, as early as last year I wrote to the Reverend Father Provincial that, if it could in any way be arranged, Reverend Father Ragueneau ought to be continued in office, and that in him lay the power for good in this mission. Now, however, I suppose the die is cast; and we expect letters this year, concerning either his