

on land, it was [48] all he could do to reach the top of a piece of ice with the rest of a musket that he held in his hand. All this should not astonish any one. All who are here say that they have suffered more from cold in France than in Canada. The Scorpion carries its own antidote: in the countries most subject to sickness, more remedies are found: if disease is there, medicine is not far away.

On the 3rd of December we began to change our footgear, and to use raquettes;³⁹ when I first put these great flat skates on my feet, I thought that I should fall with my nose in the snow, at every step I took. But experience has taught me that God provides for the convenience of all nations according to their needs. I walk very freely now on these raquettes. As to the Savages, they do not hinder them [49] from jumping like bucks or running like deer.

They make shoes of Elk skins, which they use with their raquettes. They have not ingenuity enough to harden or tan leather; therefore they use none. In the summer, they go barefooted; in the winter, their shoes must be of a pliable skin, otherwise they would spoil their raquettes. They make them broad and very ample, in order to line them inside with a layer of old rags against the cold. If we had some French leather here a little softer than the hard, untanned cowhide, it would be of incomparable service to us, especially in the spring, when the snow begins to melt toward the south. For the shoes of the Savages take water like a sponge, and those leathers from France would keep the feet dry.

[50] On the 5th of December there was a very strong wind, which has happened several times. The Northeastern is violent here; one day it tore