

after they are recalled, there is no necessity of sending any back. However, As This pretended need of garrisons is the sole pretext that is made use of to send commandants here, we beg you, Monseigneur, to be fully convinced of the falseness of That pretext, so that under Those specious appearances of the King's service it may not be considered obligatory to Send us any garrisons. For, in reality, the Commandants come here solely for the purpose of trading, in Concert with their soldiers, without troubling themselves about anything Else. They have no intercourse with the missionaries, except with regard to Matters wherein they Consider the latter useful for the furtherance of their own temporal affairs; and beyond that they are hostile to the fathers as soon as these undertake to oppose the misconduct which, being in accord neither with the service of God nor with the service of the King, is nevertheless advantageous to the trade of the Commandants, who sacrifice everything to it. That is the sole Cause of the disorder in our missions, which has so desolated them — through the ascendancy that the Commandants have obtained over the missionaries, by assuming all authority over both the french and the savages — that we now have no other power than That of laboring in vain under their domination. This has Gone so far as to make Civil crimes, and grounds for pretended juridical accusations, out of the performance of the very functions of our Ministry and of our duty. This was always done by Monsieur de la Motte, who would not even allow us to use the word " Misconduct," and who even brought a suit against the father prior for having used it!³⁶

Before there were any Commandants here, the