

and Similar Matters. They pretend to have resolved upon the performance of these, in order thereby to lead the Commandants to Consider themselves obliged to buy them with gifts. Such are the effects that This new Custom has produced on the minds of the savages, so that at present their sole Business and occupation, as regards the Commandants, consists in helping each other to deceive and cheat the latter, by making them give them presents under the false pretenses that I have just Mentioned.

But with all This, all the presents that are given them are almost nothing in Comparison with the fund supplied by the Court to the Commandants for that Purpose. The gifts are Reduced almost entirely to the single expenditure of tobacco—which is the most usual present, because the savages are passionately fond of it, and cannot refrain from continually smoking, so greatly accustomed are they to it from their youth. However, what remains of the fund is much greater and more Considerable than the amount spent in giving them presents, successively and gradually, on the occasions when it is Deemed necessary; and It is greatly to be Feared that the Commandants turn it to their own benefit and that by careful Economy They keep the best part of it for their own Use. Still, this is a matter respecting which we have nothing to see or to say; It is for those who are Established here for that purpose to see to it, and to prevent by their vigilance all the frauds that might be committed in connection therewith, and not to allow the King to be put to great and Needless expense under any false pretense of necessity.

To all that I have just said respecting the Commandants, I must add that—As there is no other