

for it is, to mix with it a little sugar, to relieve its insipidity. There is no lack of sugar in these forests. In the spring the maple-trees contain a fluid somewhat resembling that which the canes of the islands contain.³⁰ The women busy themselves in receiving it into vessels of bark, when it trickles from these trees; they boil it, and obtain from it a fairly good sugar. The first which is obtained is always the best.

The whole Abnakis Nation is Christian and is very zealous in preserving its Religion. This attachment to the Catholic Faith has made it thus far prefer an alliance with us to the advantages that it would have obtained from an alliance with its English neighbors. These advantages are very attractive to our Savages; the readiness with which they can engage in trade with the English, from whom they are distant only two or three days' journey, the convenience of the route, the great bargains they find in the purchase of goods which suit them,—nothing would be more likely to attract them. Whereas in going to Quebec they must travel more than fifteen days to reach it; they must be supplied with provisions for the journey; there are several rivers to cross and frequent portages to make. They feel these inconveniences, and they are not indifferent to their own interests; but their faith is infinitely dearer to them, and they believe that if they were to break off their connection with us they would very soon be without a Missionary, without Sacraments, without the Sacrifice, almost without any service of Religion, and in manifest danger of being plunged back into their former unbelief. This is the bond which unites them to the French. There have been vain endeavors