

of the blood. This policy is founded on the knowledge they have of the licentiousness of their women. They are not sure, they say, that the children of the chief's wife may be of the blood Royal, whereas the son of the sister of the great Chief must be, at least on the side of the mother.

The Princesses of the blood never espouse any but men of obscure family, and they have but one husband, but they have the right of dismissing him whenever it pleases them, and of choosing another among those of the Nation, provided he has not made any other alliance among them. If the husband has been guilty of infidelity, the Princess may have his head cut off in an instant; but she is not herself subject to the same law, for she may have as many Lovers as she pleases, without the husband having any power to complain. In the presence of his wife he acts with the most profound respect, never eats with her, and salutes her with howls, as is done by her servants. The only satisfaction he has is, that he is freed from the necessity of laboring, and has entire authority over those who serve the Princess.

In former times the Nation of the *Natchez* was very large. It counted sixty Villages and eight hundred Suns or Princes; now it is reduced to six little Villages and eleven Suns. In each of these Villages there is a Temple where the fire is always kept burning as in that of the great Chief, whom all the other Chiefs obey.

The great Chief nominates to the most important offices of the State; such are the two war-Chiefs, the two Masters of ceremony for the worship of the Temple, the two Officers who preside over the other