

The Illinois have replied to them that they were almost all "of the prayer" (that is, according to their manner of expression, that they are Christians); and that in other ways they are inviolably attached to the French, by the alliances which many of that Nation had contracted with them, in espousing their daughters.

"We always place ourselves," added they, "before the enemies of the French; it is necessary to pass over our bodies to go to them, and to strike us to the heart before a single blow can reach them."

Their conduct is in accordance with this declaration, and has not in the least contradicted their words. At the first news of the war with the *Natchez* and the *Yazous*, they came hither to weep for the black Robes and the French, and to offer the services of their Nation to Monsieur Perrier, to avenge their death. I happened to be at the governor's house when they arrived, and was charmed with the harangues they made. *Chikagou*,²⁵ whom you saw in Paris, was at the head of the *Mitchigamias*, and *Mamantouensa* at the head of the *Kaskaskias*.

Chikagou spoke first. He spread out in the hall a carpet of deerskin, bordered with porcupine quills, on which he placed two calumets, with different savage ornaments, accompanying them with a present according to the usual custom. "There," said he, in showing these two calumets, "are two messages which we bring you, the one of Religion, and the other of peace or war, as you shall determine. We have listened with respect to the Governors, because they bring us the word of the King our Father, and much more to the black Robes, because they bring us the word of God himself, who is the King of