

not vouch for the truth of all I have told you, and which I have not learned from personal observation but from the reports of the savages and a few frenchmen, whose experience is but slightly more extensive than my own. At some future date, perhaps, I shall be in a position to give you something more reliable on this vast extent of territory so little known. If I have risked speaking to you at all about these wilds, it was merely to gratify you. As for the savages who dwell here, and especially the Kristinaux, I do not believe that, unless it be by miracle, they can ever be persuaded to embrace the faith; for even not taking into account the fact that they have no fixed abode, and that they wander about the forests in isolated bands, they are superstitious and morally degraded to a degree beyond conception. What is most deplorable is that the demon makes use of the very men who should endeavor to break their bondage to rivet their fetters more firmly. Both English and French, by their accursed avarice, have given them a taste for brandy, and have thus been instrumental in adding to their other vices that of drunkenness; so that brandy is their only topic of conversation, the sole object of their petitions, nor can they ever be counted upon unless they receive enough to get drunk on. The good God has already chastised more than one of our fellow-countrymen engaged in this infamous traffic by visiting them with financial ruin; but neither the loss of temporal goods nor the fear of losing God in eternity has as yet availed to abolish so shameful a trade. This, my Reverend father, constitutes one of the greatest crosses which the missionaries have to endure here; it has brought about the destruction