

they remain in their original condition. Certain individuals content themselves with obtaining lead from some of these, because it lies almost at the surface of the ground. They supply this country, all the Savage Nations of the Missouri and Mississippi, and several posts of Canada.⁵⁴ Two men who are here, a Spaniard and a Portuguese, who claim to know something about mines and minerals, assert that these mines in no wise differ from those of Mexico and Peru; and that, if slightly deeper excavations were made, silver ore would be found under the lead ore. This much is certain: that the lead is very fine, and that a little silver is obtained from it. Borax has also been found in these mines, and in some places gold, but in very small quantities. Beyond a doubt, there are copper mines; because, from time to time, very large pieces of it are found in the streams.

There is not, in all America, any special Officer who has such a province as has he who commands for the King among the Illinois. On the North and Northwest, the extent is unlimited; it spreads through the vast country watered by the Missouri and the rivers that fall into it,—the finest country in the world. How many Savage Nations in these immense regions offer themselves to the Missionaries' zeal! They belong to the district of the Gentlemen of the Missions étrangères, to whom Monseigneur the Bishop of Quebec allotted them many years ago. There are three of these Gentlemen here, who have charge of two French Cures. Nothing can be more amiable than their character, or more edifying than their conduct. We live with them as if we were members of the same body.