

them. According to the reports of the Frenchmen who have been there, his village can furnish nine hundred men capable of bearing arms.

For the rest, this country is of far greater importance than is imagined. Through its position alone, it deserves that France should spare nothing to retain it. It is true that it has not yet enriched the King's coffers, and that convoys to and fro are costly; but it is none the less true that the tranquillity of Canada and the safety of the entire lower part of the Colony depend upon it. Assuredly, without this post there can be no communication by land between Louisiana and Canada. There is another consideration: several regions of the same Canada and all those on the lower part of the river would be deprived of the provisions they obtain from the Illinois, which are often a great resource to them. By founding a solid establishment here, prepared to meet all these troubles, the King would secure the possession of the most extensive and the finest country in north America. To be convinced of this one has but to glance at the well-known map of Louisiana, and to consider the situation of the Illinois country and the multitude of Nations against whom the post usually serves as a barrier. In union with your holy sacrifices, I remain, etc.