

So these are the things that must be expected before undertaking to follow them; for, although they may not be pressed with famine every year, yet they run the risk every [198] winter of not having food, or very little, unless there are heavy snowfalls and a great many Moose, which does not always happen.

Now if you were to ask me what my feelings were in the terrors of death, and of a death so lingering as is that which comes from hunger, I will say that I can hardly tell. Nevertheless, in order that those who read this Chapter may not have a dread of coming over to our assistance, I can truly say that this time of famine was for me a time of abundance. When I realized that we began to hover between the hope of life and the fear of death, I made up my mind that God had condemned me to die of starvation for my sins; and, a thousand times kissing the hand that had written my sentence, I awaited the execution of it with a peace and joy which may be experienced, but cannot be described. I confess that one suffers, and that he must reconcile himself to the Cross; but God glories in helping a soul when it is no longer aided by his creatures. Let us continue on our way.

[199] After this famine, we had some good days. The snow, which had been only too deep to be cold, but too shallow to take the Moose, having greatly increased toward the end of January, our Hunters captured some Moose, which they dried. Now either on account of my lack of moderation, or because this meat, dried as hard as wood and as dirty as the street, did not agree with my stomach, I fell sick in the very beginning of February. So behold me obliged to remain all the time lying upon the cold ground; this