

what they are about, reduce, from sordid motives of avarice, those simple people to this condition, can they be imagined to have any religion at all? We certainly know that an Indian will give all he is worth for one glass of brandy, this is strong temptation to our dealers, against which, neither the exclamations of their pastors, nor the zeal and authority of the magistrate, nor respect for the laws, nor the severity of the divine justice, nor the dread of the judgments of the Almighty, nor the thoughts of a Hell hereafter, of which these barbarians exhibit a very striking picture, have been able to avail. But it is time to turn away our eyes from so disagreeable a speculation.

The chief part of the peltry or fur-trade, after the northern and western nations left off frequenting the city of the *Three Rivers*, was for some time carried on at Montreal, whither the Indians resorted at certain seasons from all parts of Canada. This was a kind of fair, which drew great numbers of French to this city. The governor general and intendant came hither likewise, and made use of those occasions to settle any differences which might have happened amongst our allies. But should your Grace happen by chance to light on la Hontan's book, where he treats of this fair, I must caution you to be on your guard lest you take every thing he says of it for matter of fact. He has even forgot to give it so much as an air of probability. The women of Montreal never gave any ground for what this author lays to their charge, and there is no reason to fear for their honour with respect to the Indians. It is without example that any of them have ever taken the least liberty with any French woman, even when they have been their prisoners. They have never been subject to the least temptation by them,  
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and it were to be wished, that Frenchmen had the same distaste of the Indian women. La Fontan could not be ignorant of what is notorious to the whole country ; but he had a mind to render his account entertaining ; on which account every thing true or false was the same to him. One is always sure of pleasing some people of a certain cast, by observing no measure in the liberty one assumes of inventing, calumniating, and in our way of expressing ourselves on certain topicks.

There are still now and then companies or rather flotillas of Indians arriving at Montreal, but nothing in comparison of what used to resort hither in time past. The war of the Iroquois is what has interrupted the great concourse of Indians in the colony. In order to provide against this evil, storehouses have been erected in the countries of most Indian nations, together with forts, in which there is always a governor and a garrison, strong enough to secure the merchandize in them. The Indians are above all things desirous there should be a gunsmith amongst them, and in several there are missionaries, who would generally do more good there, were there no other Frenchmen with them besides themselves. It would one would think have been proper to have restored things upon the old footing, especially as there is an universal peace and tranquillity all over the colony. This would have been a good means of restraining the *Couriers de Bois*, whose avidity, without mentioning all the disorders introduced by libertinism, which occasions a thousand meanesses, which render us contemptible to the barbarians, has lowered the price of our commodities, and raised that of their peltry. Besides that, the Indians, who are by nature haughty, have grown insolent