

it was the last day of September, when the winter has already begun, which is very severe in that region. Half of our men went hunting, while the others worked at building the fort. We killed four hundred wild cattle [buffaloes], which made our provision for the winter; after having skinned and cleaned the carcasses, and cut them into quarters, we placed the meat on scaffolds in our fort. We also erected within the fort some cabins, and a building for storing our merchandise. After having dragged our shallop within the enclosure of the fort, we spent the winter there, in our cabins. When we were beginning to build our fort, seven French traders from Canada came to us there. They had been plundered and stripped naked by the Sioux, a wandering people who live wholly by hunting and pillage. Among these seven persons was a Canadian gentleman known to Monsieur Lesueur, who had at once recognized him, and supplied him, as well as all the other traders, with clothing and other necessary articles. In fine, they remained with us throughout the winter at our fort, where our sole food was the meat of our buffaloes, and we had not even salt to eat with it. At the beginning, during the first fortnight, we had considerable difficulty in accustoming ourselves to this diet; we had diarrhœa and fever, and felt such disgust for this food that we could not endure the taste of it. But gradually our systems so adapted themselves that at the end of six weeks there was not one of us who did not daily eat more than ten livres of meat¹ and drink four bowlfuls of soup. When we had become accustomed to this manner of life, it rendered us very fleshy, and there were no longer any sick persons among us.

When spring came, we proceeded to work the copper mine. This was at the beginning of April of that year [1701]; we took with us twelve laborers and four hunters. The location of this mine was about three-fourths of a league distant from our fort. In twenty-two days we took out from that mine more than thirty thousand livres' weight of ore; of this we selected only four thousand of the richest quality, which Monsieur Le Sueur, who had very good knowledge of ores, had conveyed to the fort;

¹The French livre of weight is equivalent to about 1.1 English pounds, *avoirdupois*.—ED.