

trifling advantages, he might be allowed annually a gratuity which may be taken from the proceeds of the licenses.

Though it would not be possible to prevent all the inconveniences that might ensue on reëstablishing the licenses in the manner I propose, I believe it will be indispensable to do it, in consequence of the greater inconveniences which would inevitably result. Firstly, it must not be expected to oblige all the Coureurs de bois to return to the Colony, nor even to retain in it those who are obedient there, except by reëstablishing the licenses. Those people not being accustomed to till the soil, will never submit to do so, however they be punished. This country is composed of persons of various characters, and of different inclinations; one and the other ought to be managed, and can contribute to render it flourishingly. The Coureurs de bois are useful in Canada for the fur trade, which is the sole branch that can be relied on; for it is certain that if the articles required by the Upper Nations be not sent to Michilimakinak, they will go in search of them to the English at Hudson's bay, to whom they will convey all their peltries, and will detach themselves entirely from us, which would inflict a notable prejudice on that Colony. Experience sufficiently proves that it is not to be expected that these nations will come in quest of them to Montreal; witness the few canoes that have come down within eight or nine years, except in 1708, when about 60 descended. When these Indians will be obliged to go to a great distance to get their necessaries, they will always go to the cheapest market; whereas, were they to obtain their supplies at their door, they would take them, whatever the price may be. Moreover, the means of preventing them waging war against one another is to be continually carrying on trade with them; for by that means, the commandant of Michilimakinak can be informed of everything that happens, and by his mediation terminate all differences that might arise. Religion will derive an advantage therefrom; for the more French there are among those Nations, the greater will be the authority of the Missionaries there. This active intercourse may afford them also facilities to learn our language, and render them more docile and submissive to the instructions which will be given them.