

very singular ceremonies. The Bear's head, painted with all sorts of colors, is placed during the repast upon a raised place, and there receives the homage of all the Guests, who celebrate in song the praises of the Animal, meanwhile cutting its body into pieces and regaling themselves thereon. Not only do these Savages have, like all the others, the Custom of preparing themselves for their grand Hunts by fasting, which the Outagamis extend even to ten consecutive days; but besides, while the Hunters are in the field, the Boys are often compelled to fast; the dreams which they have during this abstinence are noted, and good or evil auguries for the success of the Hunt are drawn from them. The object of these fasts is to appease the tutelary Spirits of the Animals whom they are to hunt; and it is claimed that they make known, through dreams, whether they oppose or are favorable to the Hunters.

The Tribe which, for the last twenty years, has been more talked about than any other in these Western Lands is that of the *Outagamis*. The natural ferocity of these Savages, increased by the bad treatment often inflicted on them (sometimes very unreasonably), and their alliance with the Iroquois, who are always disposed to excite fresh enemies against us, have rendered them formidable. Moreover, they have since become closely united with the Sioux, a populous Tribe, which has also become gradually inured to war; and that union now renders the navigation of all the upper Micissipi almost impracticable for us. There is not entire safety even in voyaging upon the Illinois River, unless one is sufficiently equipped not to fear a surprise; this inflicts great damage upon the mutual Commerce between the two Colonies.

I met at la Baye some Sioux, whom I closely questioned about the Regions which are West and North-West of Canada; and, although I know that one cannot always accept to the letter all that the Savages say, I have every reason to believe, in comparing what they have related to me with what I have heard from several other sources, that there are on this Continent Spanish or other European Colonies—far more to the North than those of which we have knowledge in New Mexico or California; and that by ascending the Missouri, as far as it is possible to navi-