

promised, these prisoners, who possibly will escape from, or perhaps be liberated by, them; possibly even they may form a new alliance with, in order to obtain their supplies from them. This is the more to be apprehended, inasmuch as, independent of the little reliance to be placed on the inconstancy of the Indians, the prevailing scarcity of goods and articles they require, may produce among them great change towards us, and you will form a more correct opinion of our situation and of the difficulty we experience in supporting the posts in the Upper country, from the report M<sup>r</sup>. Hocquart and I have the honor to submit to you on that subject. What I specially have to inform you, and took the liberty to communicate to you in my despatch of the 19<sup>th</sup> of June last, is, that there has been a great falling off in the amount of goods taken up this year for the trade [*l'exploitation*] of the posts, in comparison with what has been sent there in previous years. In consequence of the small quantity of goods in the hands of the merchants who furnish outfits, the ruling high prices, and the low rates obtained for peltries brought in return from the Upper countries, the Indian traders have been discouraged from supplying themselves with goods, and notwithstanding I offered licenses for nothing—especially to Detroit, in order that there should be abundance of goods at that post—only ten went up this year; I was obliged to give seven of these licenses gratis, in return for conveying the effects of the Commandant and of the garrison which could not otherwise be carried up without great expense to his Majesty.<sup>1</sup> I have not been able to find sale, either for the usual number of licenses for the post of Missilimakinac, to which place only nine canoes have gone, after considerable solicitation; for the same reasons that I have just had the honor to set forth, which apply equally to all the other leased posts; also to those of Niagara and Fort Frontenac, which are hardly better provided with goods necessary for the Indian trade there, and will be much less so next year, no supplies of any description having reached us this year.

<sup>1</sup>Note on original MS.: "These effects have amounted to 11,400 lbs. in weight."