1729: IMPORTANCE OF POST AMONG THE SIOUX

[Extract of a letter from Beauharnois and Hocquart to the French Minister, dated Oct. 25, 1729. Source, same as preceding document, but vol. 51, c. 11, fol. 22. An abstract of the same is given in *N. Y. Colon Docs.*, ix, pp. 1016, 1017; also in Margry, *Découv. et établ.*, vi, pp. 559-565.]

MONSEIGNEUR—

*   *   *   *   *   *   *   *

It is true that the fort built by the French among the Sioux on the shore of Lake Pepin seems to be in a bad situation on account of the overflow of the Waters, but really in 1727 They rose higher than they have ever done before, according to what the savages say, and this may be relied on, for this year They have not approached the fort.

When the Sieur de la Perriere, placed the fort at that Spot, he had previously caused the savages to be asked whether it would be safe from Inundations, and the answer received was that the Waters did not rise to that height. He considered at the same time that he could not place it in a better Spot, both as regards the quality of the land suitable for Cultivation and on account of the abundance of Game. These two reasons, one being as necessary as the other (added to what the savages had told him Respecting the Inundation that he feared), induced him to decide upon placing the Fort at that Spot after considering all its advantages. But as it may happen that the Waters will rise as They did in 1727, the fort might be placed four or five Arpents from the shore of the Lake Without this Removal being prejudicial to the Views that caused it to be built at the Spot where it now is.

It does not seem probable, Monseigneur, that either the Settlement or the fort should have given any Umbrage to the sioux, who had themselves asked for it, and the good reception that they gave the French on their arrival among them seems to contradict what has been written to you on the subject. It is quite true that shortly after the arrival of the French those Savages started on their hunt, as they are in the habit of doing

[77]