

1753: PEACE AMONG NORTHWESTERN TRIBES

[Extract from memoir of Legardeur de Saint-Pierre, May-Aug., 1753.
Translated from Margry, *Découv. et Étab.*, vi, pp. 648-650.]

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I had it always in mind that I ought to find a favorable occasion to conclude peace between the Cristinaux and the Sioux. But far from finding such an occasion, the stroke that the Sioux made upon the Cristinaux in July, 1752, greatly hindered my project. M. Marin junior was not less occupied than I in arranging this peace. He wrote to me the twenty-ninth of February, 1753 last, that the Sioux of the Rivers and the Lakes were very much disturbed, and did not cease to fear that the Cristinaux would take vengeance upon them for the attack previously mentioned. The Sioux desired to have an interview with the Cristinaux, with whom they were resolved to ally themselves to go and make war upon the Sioux of the Prairies, who continually were attacking them, and even carrying away their women as prisoners.⁶⁹ He said that for this purpose, he would bring to Missilimakinak several chiefs of that nation, and invited me to bring likewise with me the Cristinaux chiefs. That letter reached me May 26, at the foot of Ouenipik river.⁷⁰ It gave me extreme pleasure, all the more that the Sioux of the Prairies, who had dealt the blow had no Frenchmen among them, and in consequence were of little im-

⁶⁹ The question of the classification of the Sioux is an exceedingly difficult one. See on this subject, *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xvi, pp. 193, 194; and "Maximilian's Travels" in *Early Western Travels*, xxii, p. 305. The classification here used—Sioux of the lakes, of the rivers, and of the prairies—was in vogue during the latter years of the French regime. It would seem to refer to habitat rather than gentes; but, as in this instance, the bands often acted in opposition to one another.—Ed.

⁷⁰ St. Pierre was at the post technically known as Fort Maurepas, and built by Le Vérendrye in 1734. In voyageur parlance it was known as Fort Bas de la Rivière (Foot of the River), being at the entrance to Winnipeg River from the lake of that name. The later fur-trading post on that site was called Fort Alexander. See "Franchère's Narrative" in *Early Western Travels*, vi, p. 378.—Ed.