These savages have part of the customs of the people of the North and part of those of the people of the prairies.

I am, sir, etc.

LETTER 54

Of the Puants, the Outagamis, the Mascoutins and the Kicapous

At Quebec, the 1710

Sir,

I have already spoken of two sorts of savages, wandering and sedentary} those of whom I am going to tell you are those of the prairies, which have customs different from the others and which are peculiar to them: I leave them, however, until I shall write you about the Illinois, who are the most numerous of these savages.

One finds above the Sakis on a river that forms the Baye des Puants, the savages of this name, who could muster thirty or forty warriors. They are sedentary.

Several leagues from them live the Outagamis or Renards, who could send out about four hundred men. They surpass the Poutouatamis and the Sakis in theft, and they do not content themselves with using their hands to steal, for they employ also their feet, and it is necessary to be very vigilant and very attentive to keep what one has when one is with these people. These Outagamis as well as the Sakis are so savage that the others cannot stand them, but as they are numerous, mustering nearly five hundred warriors, they fear them and let them make war without interference on the Scioux.

Next to these Renards one finds the Mascoutins or Nation of Tire to whom are joined the Kicapous. These two nations are sedentary and could muster one hundred and fifty warriors.

These Kicapous are almost all crippled with wounds and covered with scars, being always at war.

One could not treat otherwise of the last three nations I
MEMOIR

have just mentioned than to say that they are devils on earth, they have nothing human but the shape, they are always nude and glory in it. One can say of them that they have all the bad qualities of the other nations without having a single one of their good ones.

The place where they are is well situated for living and seems to make them more ferocious and more insolent. Although they sow wheat there they often live on acorns and beans.

I am, sir, etc.

LETTER 55

Of the Miamis and Iliinois

At Quebec, the 1710 Sir,

The Miamis if all assembled together would number more than eight hundred warriors, included under the names Ouyatanons, Mingkakoia, Peangichia, Chachakingoya, Kira-tica, and Pepepikoa. The first live on the St. Joseph River where it flows into Lake Michigan. The second live at Chi-cagou, at the mouth of the Iliinois River on Lake Michigan. The third live on the Malamee River or the Barbue River, which flows into the Mississipy, and the three others live partly on the banks of the Mississipy and partly on the Wabash.

There is near the Malameek a rich lead mine. Too imprudently, a few Frenchmen have taught these savages to melt lead and have even furnished them molds, with the result that we no longer sell it to them and they trade it with other nations.

At the end of this lake is found the Iliinois River. The savages of this name are divided into eight nations of which six, who are the Peourias, Caskakias, Moningouenas, Kouera-kouitenons, Marouas, and Rapaououas, live on the shores of the lake which the Pimiteouy River forms and the two others, who are the Caoukias and the Tamaououas, have villages at eight leagues beyond the mouth of this river that flows into the Mississippy. They could muster, all assembled together, fifteen hundred warriors.

The Miamis and Iliinois have missionaries. Like the other savages of the prairies of which I have told you, they do not use birchback canoes. They almost all have the same customs. I am going to tell you of them in my following letters, especially of the last two nations which are the largest in number. I shall tell you also of the beauty of the climate and of the land which the Iliinois occupy. That of the Miamis is almost the same thing;
however, it is neither as beautiful nor as abundant in game.
I am, sir, etc.

LETTER 56

1 he Country the I linois Inhabit, the Trees Found There
and the \vegetables Which Are Cultivated There
At Quebec, the 1710 Sir,

The country that the I linois inhabit is unquestionably the most beautiful which we know of from the mouth of the St. Lawrence River to that of the Mississipy. There is little snow there, and the longest it lasts at a time is four or five days. There is almost no cold weather there, but then the country is at the latitude of forty degrees twenty minutes.

The land is almost all flat and smooth. There are no mountains, only a few wooded hills. It is nothing but prairies as far as the eye can see, dotted here and there with small patches of woods, with orchards, and with avenues of trees which it seems as if nature took pleasure in making grow in a straight line equally distant one from another.

These woods are full of horse chestnuts, locusts, oaks, ashes, basswoods, beeches, cottonwoods, maples, pecans, medi lars, mulberries, chestnuts, and plums. All these trees are almost covered with a vine that bears a handsome grape and which has large seeds, but has not an agreeable taste.

The pecan bears an olive-shaped nut twice as large as that fruit. The meat within is of a great delicateness and is found separated equally in two by a very bitter thin shell.

The medlar and the mulberry bear fruits as good as those in France, as does the chestnut, but its nut is smaller.

The plums are as beautiful as those of France. There are several kinds, but they have very thick skins and do not come loose from the seed, nor do they have the agreeable taste that plums should have.

Several kinds of trees are found there which are unknown to us. There is one that does not grow very tall whose trunk is as thick as a leg, it bears a fruit that the savages call as- semina ("pawpaw"). The French have given this fruit a name in keeping with its shape, which is that of a mediumsized cucumber. This fruit, whose name it seems to me ought not to be either spoken or written, is very good and has five or six seeds as large as the broad beans and of their color. There are also trees that have large pods in which are found black stones and a kind of green ointment whose usage the savages do not know. Another tree is found whose branches are full of thorns as long as the fingers
bears pods full of little beans resembling coffee beans and something sticky that is sweet and which it is said that the English used to put in punch.

The black poplar is also a tree of this country. It grows very tall and big and serves these savages in making large canoes for navigating on their rivers and lakes.

Formerly, it was as an endless task for them to make these canoes; not using iron, it was necessary to set fire to the foot of a tree, to fell it and scrape it with their stone axes, and to remove the charcoal which remained on, in order that the fire penetrate to the center. After felling it they cut it the same way to the length that they wish and also hollow it out with fire.

The orchards are full of apple trees whose fruit is acrid and not larger than is the api." This country produces a quantity of roots and kinds of onions of which these savages eat a great deal. There is a quantity of simples which they know and use to heal their wounds. Indian com, beans, pumpkins, and watermelons grow there abundantly.

I am, sir, etc.

LETTER 57

The Animals, Land and River Fowl, and the Fish Which Are Found in the Country of the Illinois

Sir,

As the country of the Illinois is almost entirely full of fruit trees, the plains covered with hay, the beds of the lakes and rivers and their shores full of herbs and roots, and as the climate is very good, there is an abundance of game and fish.

The animals are deer, roebuck, bear, lynx, beaver, otter, muskrat, wolf, buffalo, cougar, and opossum.

The buffalo is of extraordinary size. It has a hump about eight inches high extending from the shoulders to the middle of the back. Its head is covered with mane so that its eyes are scarcely visible. The animal is horrible to see. It has short hair in summer, but from the month of September until the month of June it is covered with a very fine brown wool which is easily spun. Its meat is very good to eat.

The cougars are thus named (les grandes queues') by these savages because of their tails, which are about two feet long. I he animal has a head like a cat, a body about three feet long, a very thin stomach, long legs, and very short reddish hair.

Here are no animals that they do not get hunting, and if they were as common as the wolf one would not see a deer in this
country because they live principally on this animal.

A French variety of »mall red apple.

The opossum is the size of our cats, its hair is white, a little reddish, long and fine like that of the marten. The savage women use it to make garters. It has a tail, as thick as the finger, covered with a black skin like that of the muskrat. The female of this animal has two skins under the stomach, which has the same effect as a close coat buttoned above and below and open in the middle. It forms a kind of sack in which she carries, when they are young, as many as eight little ones—the number of her litter. At her slightest cry they assemble there, and she carries them with her.

There is much small game such as hare, grouse, passenger pigeon, quail, wild turkey, and a certain bird which resembles the pheasant.

The marshes are full of all kinds of river game such as Canada goose, mallards, wood ducks, teal, white and gray bitterns, swans, and several others that I do not mention. This game is so abundant that when it is forced to leave the marshes because of the dryness, which happens in certain years in the autumn, the lake and river on which the savages are established are covered so that a canoe could hardly pass without moving them out of the way with the paddles.

In this lake and in this river there are better carp than those of the Seine and brill of such monstrous size that they have measured some which were eighteen inches between the eyes. There are all kinds of other fish in abundance.

Many rattlesnakes are to be found on the prairies. This name was given them because they have some sort of rattles at the end of their tail with which they make a noise when they crawl. We think that this is the viper of this continent. Its bite is very dangerous, and if one is not promptly cared for by the savages who know the simples which cure it, one soon dies. They say that the oil drawn from its fat is good for curing all sorts of pain and is so penetrating that if it is poured on the hand it will pass through.

I am, sir, etc.
Sir,

One seldom sees savages better built than are the Illinois. Generally, they are neither tall nor short. The waist is well proportioned, and there are some who have such a slender one that one could surround it with two hands. They have a proud carriage, and faces that are fairly good looking and as white as savages always exposed in the open air and bad weather could have. They also have alert piercing eyes, the most regular teeth, and the whitest one may ever see, and they run better than any other people, catching deer in their hunting every day. The Miamis are not generally as well built as they are, but these two nations are exactly alike in regard to the qualities of mind and heart. They are both alert and, with that, idle, proud, and vain, and they say that they are all sons or relatives of chiefs. They are given over to their senses. When they have business with someone they dress themselves up. They dare not look at in private those whom they provoke in public. They take advantage always of the weakness of those with whom they deal. They are excessively jealous, ungrateful, dissembling, perjurers, and often a mere deer is the cause of murder.

When they are young they have their backs tattooed from the shoulders to the heels, and as soon as they are twenty-five they have their stomachs tattooed, their sides and the upper arms, so much so that their bodies are entirely tattooed.

The sin of sodomy is even more prevalent among these savages than it is among the Miamis. They have boys that they raise for this purpose. It is not from a shortage of women for they are plentiful, at least three or four for each one. However, as soon as they see that a boy likes the mattock, the spindle, and the ax, and does not use arrows like other little boys, they put a piece of leather or cloth on him which covers him from waist to knee. They let his hair grow which
they fasten behind and put a small piece of skin on him for a headband.

These boys are tattooed on the cheeks, the chest, and the arms like the women, imitate their intonation, which is different from that of the men, and finally forget nothing to resemble women exteriorly. There are men brutish enough to have them on the same footing. The women and girls who prostitute themselves with the wretches are regarded as dissolute.

I am, sir, etc.

LETTER 59

The Jealousy of the Illinois, the Illinois Women and their Occupations Sir,

These savages are jealous to the last degree, and every day they have occasion to be. The women succumb easily to temptation, and the young men are so handsome and pressing and give so many presents to the brothers of these women to get them to love them that they cannot help granting their favors, but when the husbands discover their infidelity some scalp their wives as they do their enemies, stretch the scalps in hoops, and plant them on sticks which they put above their cabins. Others who think themselves more reasonable gather together some thirty young men and say to their wives: “Since you love men so much, I wish to give you a festival of them,” and deliver them into the hands of all these youths. Cries are futile. The wife has to succumb in spite of herself and is forced to do that which she only wishes to do willing. There are husbands who are always present at this. The Miamis are not so rough with their wives. They content themselves with cutting off their noses. These examples, which should make them tremble, do not correct them in any way, for they are no more reasonable for it. Here are among these savages those brave enough to go and attack the loven> of their wives and try to shoot them with arrows or stab them with a
knife. When the one who is wounded does not die, the family does not seek vengeance, but if he dies, in spite of all the presents that can be made, the family has to avenge itself.

Among all these husbands who are brutal to the last degree there are, however, those indulgent enough not to show any resentment of the affront their wives have done them by their infidelity. They content themselves with merely driving them out and taking others who are often less faithful than those they have sent back.

These savage women are rather neat, somewhat homely, rather well built, and as white as savages can be. They have one leg that they always put forward, which is the one on the side on which they sit when taking up their loads. The most beautiful among these savages are those who are tall and slender.

They are very industrious, especially when they are married. The women do all the housework, cultivate the fields, fetch the wood and water for the cabins, and gather the reeds in which they sew a twine made of basswood to make a sort of straw mat which covers their cabins. Two, one over the other, shelters them from the greatest rain.

Besides these things, they make sacks of buffalo wool which they spin, works of porcupine quills, and many other little art works.

I am, sir, etc.

LETTER 60

The Passion the Illinois Have for Games and the Cabins Where the Women Withdraw for Confinement or When They as Well as the Girls Have the Ailment to Which They Are Subject

Sir,

While the women work from morning to night the men are under the scaffolds that the women put up in front of the cabins and which they cover with leaves to prevent the heat of the sun from penetrating into them. There, naked
as dogs and seated on mats, the men play at straws. Lacrosse is also played by them. They like all games, for sport is one of nant and they lose, they accuse them of bringing them bad luck.

The pregnant women are not confined in their husbands’ cabins nor do they live there nor the girls either during their their dominant passions. Some, after having lost everything, put up their sisters. They are very superstitious about these games as about everything. When their wives are preg-

monthly periods. Hence opposite each cabin they build another to hold just barely two people. It is here that they withdraw. They have a kettle, a spoon, and a dish which they alone, or those who are in the same state, use. When they need anything they call, and it is brought to them.

When a girl first has this ailment she goes to make herself a cabin in the wilderness more than ten arpents distant from the village. All her relatives advise her neither to eat nor drink as long as she is in this state, telling her that she will see the devil and that when once she has seen him she will always be happy and will have the gift of foretelling many things of the future. She yields willingly in these talks, which are repeated to her so often that she does not come this cabin without imagining or pretending to have seen the devil and talked to him. She even considers it a

raent. vivid or empty imagination and the LETTER 6 I weakness or mm cause her to see things that she has never seen, or * are among these girls some foolish enough to stay there. T
Sir,

The Illinois girls have so strong a that there are some who fast, as
the time that they are in this cabin. One was there six days without drinking or eating, so that no longer having the strength to support herself, they were obliged after washing her well to carry her to her cabin. She made her father and all her relatives believe that she had seen a buffalo, that he had assured her that her brothers who were on an excursion against the Iroquois would make an attack without losing anyone. The thing happened partly as she had said, her brothers made an attack, but one of them was killed. Although she had not hit it exactly, the jugglers said that she had predicted well, but that as she had, apparently, not fasted all the time that was necessary, the devil had lied to her in part of what he had told her as she had failed in part of that which she should have done.

The women go as I have already told you into the cabins which are opposite those of their husbands for their confinements. When they have difficulty in delivery, forty or fifty men rush on this cabin at the time when the women suspect it the least, making cries similar to those made when, shooting their guns and striking great blows, they fall on their enemies. Surprise and fear make them deliver immediately. There are some of these women who remain fifteen days in this cabin, for, although savages, one finds some who are as much weakened by childbirth as are Frenchwomen.

When they wish to re-enter the cabin of their husbands they go to bathe or if the water is too cold, they wash themselves where they are. The husband on his side, warned of the day that they are to return, shakes all the skins which he has and throws out the ashes of the hearths so that nothing remains and then makes a fire with his fire stick, lights it himself, and sends to tell her to enter.

This fire stick is made of two pieces of wood, one of which is of white cedar near the edge of it the savages make little holes which do not go through the wood, with a notch from each hole through the edge. They have a piece of hard wood that they turn very fast with both hands in these holes, so that you see immediately a dust which throws out smoke and which falling through the notch on rotten wood or well-crushed dry grass makes a fire very rapidly.

I am, sir, etc.

LETTER 62

The Marriages of the Illinois

Sir,
The young men among the Illinois marry sooner at present than they did formerly. They say that since we have been with them they have lost the custom of marrying only when they have made some attack on their enemies, so that they were then at least twenty-eight to thirty years old. The girls waited on their side until the age of twenty-five years. But there are now boys who do not wait until the age of twenty years and girls that of eighteen. When a young man has attained a knowledge of hunting, he says to his father and his mother that he wishes to get married and names the girl that he loves; often it is one to whom he has never spoken, for a reasonable girl among this nation and that of the Miamis must never have conversation with the boys or the men if she wishes to be married with ceremony. Their marriages are a real ceremony, the propositions are made by the father or the uncle of the boy while he is at war or hunting. He takes five or six of the largest kettles, two or three guns, skins of stags, deer, cats, and beaver, flat sides of beef, some cloth, and a slave if he has one, in short, everything that he may have, which he has carried by his women relatives into the cabin of the girl, who leaves immediately. He gives his regards to the father and to the nearest relatives and tells them that he asks their alliance, that he begs them to have pity on him and to allow him to warm himself at their fire. He leaves his presents, which often remain four or five days in the cabin without anyone rendering him a reply because of difficulties made by the girl, whom the boy
does not please, or her brother, who wishes it was another who has been intriguing with him for a long time for the same purpose. It happens sometimes that the presents are returned without any comment, and that is the sign of refusal. In this case the father, who knows the love that his son has for the girl, adds to them and carries them back to the cabin of this girl and says to her father that he wishes to warm himself only at his fire. Sometimes also he carries them to another cabin where there is a girl he has heard esteemed by his son.

When the girl and her parents give their consent to the marriage they carry back in place of the presents made them, things very similar. The girl walks in front well decked out with belts of beads of all colors, of porcelains, and of bells. As soon as she arrives, the betrothed is seated on a skin of buffalo or deer spread in the middle of the cabin, and her relatives go back. In the evening the relatives of the boy lead her back with some gift. These comings and goings continue during four consecutive days, but on the last day the girl remains always in the cabin. They wait usually until the boy comes to make the last visit. The women are sometimes a long time without wanting to consummate the marriage, and it has often happened that the men, angry at not being able to get the consent of their wives, have left them to go to war without being able to say they were husbands. That comes usually from the fact that they do not love the men they marry, others claim by that to do themselves credit, wishing to avoid the reproach that would be made them of having loved their husbands before marriage if they were confined within nine months.

When one of these men is killed at war, the wife is indeed to be pitied. The relatives are always after her to reproach her, saying that the severity she showed her husband is the cause of his death. She dares not comb her hair nor attend a dance, and still less get married. She must shed tears in spite of herself, in order that her sadness in the end may
MEMOIR

These relatives tell her by her sister-in-law, who first combs her hair, to put an end to her mourning, to remarry. She must not do this for a year, for if she should do it before, the relatives of the deceased would scalp her as an enemy.

I am, sir, etc.

LETTER 63

The Way the Illinois Women Mourn Their Husbands, and Their Interment

Sir,

All the women mourn their husbands when they die. It is using the wrong word, however, to say that they cry for them, as in all their lamentations on this subject they never speak of them, but pity their children because they no longer have a father, their brothers because there is no longer anyone to give them presents, for all the men always give something to the brothers of their wives. The men also give a number of cries and tell how they were related to the deceased. These scenes usually are staged at night while the relatives are going around the village. The relatives and even the friends of the dead come to cover him and for this purpose bring cloth, axes, skins, kettles, guns, porcelain, necklaces, and bells. It is the custom among all the nations to cover the dead with presents. The people of the cabin who are the closest relatives do the thanking, and say that he is well off dead, since by presents brought to him so many people have shown that they esteemed him. All the things given merely change hands, for the following day the one who brought a red blanket is given back a blue one and the same for the others. The relatives pay four men to bury him. To do this they cut two ten-foot forks and a crosspiece, digging a hole a little larger than is necessary to bury one person, mattaching well the corpse, putting on it a white shirt, new leggings, and moccasins and covering it with the best robe that they have, laying it in this hole on a piece of old canoe and putting two others at the sides, with a small kettle, some Indian corn, a calumet, some tobacco, a knife, an ax, a bow, and some arrows, as if he were going to make a long voyage. Then, at the feet and the head they plant the two forks, put the crosspiece on them, and lean stakes against it on each side. They take much care to close the ends of this little shed so that animals cannot enter.

If they bury a war chief they put at the side of his grave a pole thirty or forty feet high, painted red and black. On the pole
is sketched his portrait and the prisoners that he has led back, and tied to it is a bundle of sticks to show the number of men he has killed.

Then they have done all these things it is necessary to perform the last obsequies. The old men, who are all jugglers, tell them that until this time the dead are on the bank of a great river from which they hear the mirth and see the pleasures of a country where they are to go, that in this country all is delightful, that they dance there all the time, that one eats of everything that one could wish, that the women are all beautiful, that one has as many of them as one wishes, that it is never cold, and that there is a great abundance of everything, but that one is not suffered to cross the river whose passage is necessary to get there, if the last obsequies are not performed, this is the cause of all these savages hurrying to render them to the dead. For this purpose the relatives gather in the cabin of the dead and decide among themselves what presents they can give; they arrange things in such a manner that all the villages have an equal amount, in order that there are no malcontents, and as these last obsequies are performed only by dances or games that the deceased loved best, they send a deputation to the chiefs of each village to ask them to send the young men to dance or play in honor of the deceased; during this dance or these games, the women mourn in the cabin, and after they are
finished the closest relative distributes the presents, which are on poles, by showing with a stick that which is for each village.

When the women or girls die, it is persons of their sex who dig the hole and perform all the ceremonies. It is they also who play the games and make the dances in their honor.

When a woman who loved her husband dies and the husband remarries shortly after to a person who is not of the same family, the feminine relatives of the deceased go in his cabin, smash it, and break it to pieces, and cut and destroy everything that they find there without anyone being able to hinder them. They do the same thing when without reason a man leaves his wife to take one of another family.

I am, sir, etc.

LETTER 64

The Religion of the Illinois and the Way in Which the Jugglers Treat the Savages in Their Illnesses

Sir,

The religion of these savages is nothing but what I have already told you: each chooses a divinity in his way, and this divinity is a bear, a beaver, a crow, or some other beast. They are well persuaded of the immortality of the soul, since they believe that they only leave this earth to go live, as I have told you, on one much more agreeable and filled with pleasures. They speak of the deluge and specify even in what manner the men and animals saved themselves; they show a knoll of land that they call “the great canoe” and, indeed, this knoll has the form of a canoe; they say that it is in the place where that great canoe which saved their fathers, along with different kinds of animals, ran aground after the waters were drawn back from over the land, and their fathers were very weary of so fragile a carriage in the middle of so much water; hence, as soon as the rain had passed and the waters had a little diminished, they sent the otter to bring them some
soil in order to know by that if he would find bottom, but he beguiled himself with eating fish, the beaver, which was sent next, amused himself in the depths of the water, and the muskrat, the third to leave, brought back earth in his mouth, and the waters diminishing every day more and more, the land was uncovered, and the men and animals left this great canoe and repeopled the land.

The old men, who are almost all jugglers, tell these stories to the young people. They also meddle with divining, with speaking to the devil, and with curing the sick, for they are the physicians among all the savages. When a person is sick his relatives hang in the cabin two or three kettles, a gun, or two blankets to make a gift to the physician—they put up more or less according to whether the sickness is serious or slight and send for the juggler in whom they have the most confidence. This juggler arriving, they beg him to have pity on them, to cure the patient, showing him at the same time that which he will have for recompense. He does not seem to look at what they show him; however, it is always the first thing on which he casts his eyes, but he does not wish to appear interested, although he is; he approaches the patient, asks him his ailment, and informs himself of all that has happened since he has been attacked by it. After having looked over the patient and listened to all that he tells him, he leaves and comes back directly with his medicine and his chichigoue. The medicine is easy to carry, for it consists entirely of a little bag in which there are several packages of powder in dressed skins, some roots and leaves of herbs. He displays it and begins to sing at the top of his lungs; he says that the bear or the deer which is his manito has shown him the medicine which is good for such an ailment, he names that of which the patient is attacked, in order that he will be cured. This fine song lasts at least half an hour, although the patient is often in his last moments. When it is finished the juggler takes a little of five or six packages of powder, puts them in tepid water, and makes the patient swallow them, then he puts some in his mouth and blows it on the pain and
afterward wraps the sore spot. He visits him regularly twice a day, but he does not sing any more unless he becomes worse or better. When he grows worse he invokes his manito more and more, and when health returns to him he sings his praises, says that he is the true manito, and that he never lies to him. The praises increase when he sees that he is certain to cure the patient; he redoubles then his songs and says that his manito has assured him in a dream that he would cure him absolutely in drawing from him the cause of his illness. After having been shown the spot and having felt it well he throws his mouth over it, makes a cry as if he were enraged, and bites the poor patient in a manner that sometimes makes the blood come; in spite of the hurt that is done him he does not dare complain for fear of showing little courage; during this time this juggler puts an eagle’s claw or wolf’s claw, or a hair of the beard of the animal they call great tail [cougar] in his mouth. He shows it to the patient and to the relatives and tells them that that is what caused the illness. He begins to sing again and thanks his manito that he procures from him the means of often having merchandise, leads the cured person to bathe or washes him in his cabin, takes the goods which they have hung up for his compensation, and carries them off without saying anything. The relatives get up before he leaves and pass their hands over his head and legs, which is a sign of great thanks.

The greater part of the time the patients are not cured, although these jugglers have a great interest in curing them, for without a cure there is no payment, but they do not know the internal illnesses. Their drugs for purging have, however, all the effect that one could wish.

I am, sir, etc.

LETTER 65

The Way in Which the Jugglers Treat Wounds

Sir,

I have shown you by my last letter in what manner these juggler physicians treat the savages in their illnesses. It is a
veritable mummery. However, when a juggler is sick he sends for another man to cure him. Although jugglers are not very expert for internal ailments they are for wounds and cure them in a short time. The sucking without doubt plays a large part in it. However dirty and filled with pus a wound may be they clean it entirely without causing much pain. They put some powders in the mouth when they begin to suck, but afterward they do not put anything in it. When it is clean they throw some simples over it which they have chewed and during the day wrap only around the wound to let it suppurate. They cover it entirely at night, and in this way it is healed in a short time.

When a man has an arrow or a gun shot through the body they slit his side with a knife below the wound and put in his body a quantity of tepid water in which they have placed some of their drugs. I hey make him strain so by pushing him from one side to another and give him so much movement that they make him throw out all this water through the opened place along with a quantity of clotted blood which would suffocate him without doubt if by this means they did not get it out. After this operation they treat this wound as I have just told you, many are cured, and few die. These jugglers who on these occasions fill the office of surgeons do not know what it is to cut off arms or legs and they cure without these operations.

Those who cure these last wounds are regarded as mani- tos, which is to say, among the savages, as spirits and extraordinary men. I hey make themselves feared by the young men and still more by the young girls, from whom they easily obtain favors because these have the weakness to believe that they could make them die by throwing their medicine on them.

I am, sir, etc.
MEMOIR

LETTER 66

The Manner in Which the Jugglers Impose on the Public to Show Off and Be Respected

Sir,

The jugglers in order to be masters of the youth always keep them in the belief that they are masters of their life and their death, and for this purpose do about like the Saulteurs, they sing the medicine two or three times a year and do all that they can to make it believed that their remedies are extraordinary and to persuade the public of their power. To play this comedy they have an enclosure made of poles, half an acre square, in one of the finest places of the village. They cover this enclosure with mats all around. One sees all these jugglers enter there gravely, chichigoues in their hands and bearskins on their left arms. They sit on mats, and one takes the floor and says in song to all those present that they live only because the jugglers wish it, and by the extraordinary things they are going to do they will be persuaded of the truth of their words. All the other jugglers applaud this speech. Immediately, one sees in the gathering five or six persons upon whom they have only cast their eyes while mumbling some words rise up, some cry out as if they were possessed, others appear half dead. One sees some who fall prone from a standing position as if dead and who then rise up with eagle feathers in their hands, whose reddened barbs make it believed they are wounded. At this time fury seizes them, and they appear to wish to kill all the spectators, but they content themselves with pretending to shoot the feathers at others who fall immediately and emit a quantity of blood from the mouth. The jugglers go immediately to give aid to all these sick and treat them in a very serious manner; they draw from the mouths of some eagles’ feathers which they have held hidden there and cure them at once, they make others drink a quantity of tepid water which makes them vomit, and each throws out a small rattlesnake which was
held hidden also in the mouth. It is at this time that they all start to sing victory, saying that the reptile which they had sent into each man’s body was going to make him die, but that their medicines could make it come out.

All the surprised assembly come to see this little serpent. The things which the people have seen, which they do not believe natural but in which, however, there is no magic, only persons suitably posted and well acquainted with their roles, make them believe that their lives depend on these jugglers.

As there are many rattlesnakes in the prairies, a year never passes in which some savages are not bitten. Without the aid of a root that these jugglers know, all those who have this misfortune would die, but they are cured of it one day or another.

This root and its leaves have a great power against these snakes whose venom is as dangerous as that of the viper. One can take them after rubbing oneself with it and draw out their teeth. The jugglers use them to make people believe that these snakes have no effect on them, they handle them without fear, and these snakes, when they wish to strike at others, even draw back at the approach of their hands which have the odor of this root.

T. his Way, rude as it is, does not hinder these jugglers from succeeding j the young people fear them, respect them, and follow their counsels. It is by this means also that they govern them and that they endeavor to place their nation in safety and to augment it by wars waged on the Pawnees and Wichita, who are very numerous and established inland near the Missouri River.

I am, sir, etc.

LETTER 67

The Manner in Which the Illinois Make War on the Pawnees

Sir,

When the Illinois have determined on war against the Pawnees, almost every one in the villages goes, even the
women. And as the people they go to attack are neither so brave nor so warlike as themselves, they carry off entire villages. They kill the men and scalp them and take only the women and the children, whom they grant life; however, they throw some of these in the fire when they have had some of their people killed in the war. Before the departure several young men go to all the cabin doors to dance to the sound of a sort of drum, which is usually an earthen pot half full of water and covered with a deer skin, which is carried by one of the band. Everyone comes out of the cabins, dances, and gives something to these young men. As the feast of dogs is the true war feast among all the savages, the women take care to shut up all those of the cabin, for as many as the warriors find at this time they kill to regale themselves.

These Pawnee savages are not the only ones who live on the banks of the Missouri River; there are many other nations on its banks and in the interior. This river is very beautiful and very wide. It is very swift above its discharge into the Mississippi River, and it carries so much soil with it that it renders the water of this river muddy for more than one hundred leagues. The nations who live along it say that it comes from a large lake which has a discharge on another side, which would make one believe that it falls into the sea of the West.

The Pawnees, of whom I have just told you, and the Wichita have commerce with the Spanish of New Mexico. They get horses from them which they sometimes use to hunt the buffalo. They also get from them small turquoises, thick and round like beads, and other triangular ones which they string together and hang in their noses, which is a great ornament among them.

I am, sir, etc.
LETTER 68

_The Shortness of the War the Illinois Make on the Pawnees and the Other Nations of the South_

Sir,

The war, of which I told you in my last letter, that the Illinois make on the Pawnee and on other savage nations who are on the banks of the Missouri is not of long duration; these people not being warlike like themselves and having need of their trade to get axes, knives, awls, and other objects, the Illinois buy these things from us to resell to them.

The need that these nations have for peace makes them do all that is necessary to conserve it. They go every year to the Illinois to carry them the calumet, which is the symbol of peace among all the nations of the South.

This calumet is accompanied by a dance of which I told you in writing of the dances of all the savages. The latter are very proud to see the other nations come to seek their friendship and recognize them as their chiefs. This honor that they receive makes them believe that all the ground should tremble under them.

I am, sir, etc.

LETTER 69

_The War the Illinois Make by Small Parties_

Sir,

Like the other savages the Illinois also make war by small parties, which are usually of fifteen to twenty men. To form these parties a war chief gives a feast in the month of February, which is ordinarily the time when they get ready, and tells the warriors that since the time approaches to go to get men, they must render their duty to their birds in order that they will be favorable to them, for all those who go to war among the savages have, besides their manito, birds in which they have great confidence. They keep the skins of them in
a sort of bundle made of reeds. The feast finished they go to fetch it, draw out of it their birds, spread them on a skin in the middle of the cabin, and sing all night apostrophizing them to the sound of the chichigoue. One, addressing himself to the crow, begs it to give him the same speed in pursuing the enemy as it has in flying, another speaking to the hawk asks for the same force against his enemies that it has in killing other birds, in order to be admired by his comrades and feared by other nations.

At dawn they take back all their birds, and when the chief of the enterprise wishes to leave he holds a second feast and invites all those who brought their birds. While it lasts this chief harangues them and says to them: “You know that for a long time I have mourned for my brother, he was killed by our enemies, he was your relative as well as mine, since we are comrades. If my powers equaled my courage I would go alone to avenge as brave and as good a relative as he for whom I weep, but I am too weak alone for such an enterprise, I have recourse to you, and it is of your hands that I await the vengeance that I ask. The birds that we have prayed to have assured me of our victory, and their protection joined to your courage must make us dare all.” After he has made this speech he gets up and goes to pass his hand over the head and the shoulders of each. Then they say that they are all ready to leave, and they actually do so the following night.

The leader carries the mat of war [war bundle], in which all those who march place their birds, and a good supply of herbs and roots for dressing the wounded. On their way they make caches, at intervals, of Indian corn, in order not to be so loaded that they would be hindered from going as fast as they would wish and to be able to find provisions on their return so as not to be obliged to live only by hunting.

The youngest, who is always he who has had the least experience, is the one who has to do the cooking and the repairing of the footgear of the whole troop.

When they arrive near the place where they expect to find their enemies, the chief draws all the birds from his mat immediately, makes them a short prayer, and sends out his scouts. They then fall on the enemy, pursue them while imitating the
cries of their birds, and try to take prisoners, for it is a much greater glory among them to take them than to carry back scalps. These prisoners belong to those who in pursuing them have been able to touch them with a stick or with a rock. They bind them when they have taken them. The chief then makes a short harangue to the troop, in which he exhorts them all to thank the spirit of spirits for having been so favorable to them and to make haste to get far from the place where they are, which they do with speed, marching day and night for two or three days in succession.

I am, sir, etc.

LETTER 70

The Way the Illinois Make Their Return to Their Villages After Having Made an Attack

Sir,

I have just shown you that the savages retreat as fast as they can from the place they have attacked. The fear of being pursued makes them hasten their march. If they have any women among their prisoners and if they are not able to follow them they break their heads or burn them. When some one of the party has been killed, the chief mattachs himself with earth during the entire journey and weeps very often while marching. He carries a bow and broken arrows in his hands on arriving at the village, goes to see the relatives of those who have been killed, makes them presents to cover the dead, and promises them that he will shortly start about avenging them. For this purpose he raises another party, but if there is again some one killed in this second one he will not find anyone to make a third. The unfortunates in that country, as in many others, are not loved. On the contrary, they are extremely hated by the family that has lost some one under their leadership, unless, to use their words, they know how to mend their hearts with presents.

On the other hand, when they arrive victorious, they make the usual cries; several persons run to meet them, and the first arrivals take all that these warriors have, even to leaving them as nude as the hand. It is a mark of honor shown them which is none the less inconvenient, but from it they know how to secure themselves by
leaving the night before in the woods that which they wish to save from this sort of pillage. If it come to be known that they have done this, however, they pass for avaricious. They then enter the village, where they are regaled by one of the most important members and where bear’s oil is carried to them, with which they rub their legs.

I am, sir, etc.

LETTER 71

_The Hunting of the Illinois in Summer and Winter_

Sir,

These Illinois savages leave their village in winter; there remain only a few women and some old men who absolutely cannot march. They go to hunt buffalo, deer, wapiti, beaver, and bear. They camp always in the prairies far from the woods, to be in a position to discover from farther off those who wish to attack them and to be able to pursue them more easily, and use mats of rushes tied together to cover their cabins.

When they have perceived a herd of buffalo the young men jog toward them and when they are about a quarter of a league away they run with all their strength, they come up to them soon, discharge their guns, and shoot an infinite number of arrows. Several buffalo fall from these shots, and the young men always pursue those who remain and make them pass by the old men who are ambushed and who make a great killing of them.
They take the tongues of the buffalo and the flat sides which they keep to carry to their village. It is the women who have the care of gathering this meat and smoking and preserving it.

Toward the end of April they return to their old village to do their sowing; they remain all summer, from time to time going on small hunts, but without going far away.

For their hunts of summer and winter they use large canoes of wood in which they carry all their baggage. One of these canoes would not dare separate from the mass, for immediately some guard canoes would run after it and break up and all that was in it. Likewise, one of these savages would not dare separate from the mass to go and hunt when they are on land, for immediately a band of young men who are guards would run after him to make him return, break his arms, and tear off all that he had on him. These savages have established this kind of law among themselves because those who go in advance would cause the animals to flee while killing only a very few of them, which would oblige them to go much farther to find some.

I am, sir, etc.

LETTER 72

Fort Pontchartrain of Detroit and the Huron Savages

Sir,

Part of the Ottawa savages and the Huron savages live in the straits of Lakes Huron and Erie near Fort Pontchartrain of Detroit, where His Majesty has an officer of the troops of this country who commands there. The land and the climate are not as fine as those of the Illinois, of which I have told you in my preceding letters. The snow, however, does not remain more than five to six days on the ground, and there is not more than a foot of it in the years when it falls the most; it is in the months of January and February that one sees it on the ground.
The Miamis and several other nations come to trade at this post, but all the pelts which come from this region, which is the south, are not as esteemed as those from the north, not being well enough furnished with hair, not even the beaver which besides this fault has still another—a very thick hide.

As I have told you of the Ottawa in one of my preceding letters I shall tell you now of the Hurons.

The Hurons do not have a plurality of wives, as the other savages have. They change them when they wish, and the wives have the same right, so much so that one could say that there are few men and women among this nation who have not had some hours of marriage together.

It is the girls who seek the men for marriage among these people, and they do not believe themselves married until they have children, for until this time the husband lives in his father’s cabin and the wife lives in the cabin of her father, but when they have some children the husband goes to live in the cabin of the girl.

These savages are always covered and take great care to hide that which modesty forbids them to show. They as well as their wives are very hard-working, hence they sow much grain, which they trade to the French and the other savages.

The women and girls are very neat in their way, well oiled and combed, their faces clean; they do not tattoo nor mattach themselves. They are accused of loving themselves and loving the boys too much, and they willingly give their favors during the night, when it seems to them that all must be permitted. They are very subject to poisoning themselves at the least grief that betakes them, the men also poison themselves sometimes. To leave this life they use a root of hemlock or of citron, which they swallow.

This citron is a plant that grows in moist and shady spots and has only one stalk, where ripens a fruit rather like a small citron and not disagreeable to the taste; it does not do any harm, but the root is a very subtle poison. These savages however, cure themselves of it by making themselves vomit.