

"Their bodies were discovered and identified by a party of Frenchmen who passed by the same place a few days later.¹ Their heads had been placed on robes of beaver skin, and most of them with the scalp missing. The missionary was kneeling on one knee, an arrow in his side, a gaping wound in the breast, his left hand resting on the ground and his right hand raised. The *Sieur de la Véranderie* was stretched on the ground, face downward, his back all hacked with a knife; there was a large opening in his loins, and his headless trunk was decked out with garters and bracelets of porcupine quills.

"It will be only this year that we shall be in possession of the other particulars of this unfortunate affair.

"Some are of opinion that the Indians wished to wreak their vengeance more particularly on young *La Véranderie*, the son, who two years before had joined a war party of *Christinaux* against the *Sioux*. It would appear that in the council he had been proclaimed leader. Be that as it may, the young man had desisted and had not taken part in the hostilities.

"According to *Bourassa*, the bulk of the attacking party was composed of the *Prairie Sioux*, of some *Sioux* of the *Lakes* and of *Monsieur de la Ronde's* post. The latter appeared well disposed towards the French; perhaps they were overruled in the affair of the *Sieur de la Véranderie's* murder. If the *Sioux* of the *Lakes* conspired with the *Sioux* of the *Prairies* to shoot the French, then there is much to be feared for the *Sieur St. Pierre*, who is commandant at the post of the *Sioux*.² The *Sioux* nations are the fiercest of all the native tribes. They have been from time immemorial at war with the *Cristinaux* and the *Assiniboels*. These latter were originally from the same stock; they speak very nearly the same language, and yet they are irreconcilable enemies. A circumstance which the same *Bourassa* reports is, that the *Sioux* complained to him that the French supplied the *Cristinaux* with arms and ammunition. The *Cristinaux* might as well complain of the French furnishing the *Sioux* with ammunition.

"The *Sieur de la Véranderie* writes that, grief-stricken at the loss of his son, he intends placing himself at the head of the *Cristinaux* and *Assiniboels*, and of marching against the *Sioux* (an extreme measure and not to be recommended). He would do better to agree to give up the post of the *Western Sea*, or have another officer

¹ *Pierre Margry*, in an article in the *Moniteur* (Paris, 1852), says that the discovery of the murdered man was made by five Canadian *voyageurs*, several days after the event.

² *Fort Beauharnois*, situated on *Lake Pepin*, about forty miles south-east of the present city of *St. Paul*.