

Before we arrive at the first Fort, which is on the left Hand, a League below the Isle of *St. Claire*, there are on the same Side two pretty populous Villages, and which are very near each other. The first is inhabited by some *Tionnontatez Hurons*, the same, who, after having a long Time wandered from Place to Place, fixed themselves first at the Fall of *St. Mary*, and afterwards at *Micbillimakinac*. The second is inhabited by some *Pouteouatamis*. On the Right, a little higher, there is a third Village of *Outaouais*, the inseparable Companions of the *Hurons*, since the *Iroquois* obliged them both to abandon their Country. There are no *Christians* among them, and if there are any among the *Pouteouatamis*, they are few in Number. The *Hurons* are all *Christians*, but they have no Missionaries: They say that they chuse to have none; but this is only the Choice of some of the Chiefs, who have not much Religion, and who hinder the others from being heard, who have a long Time desired to have one. *

It is a long Time since the Situation, still more than the Beauty of the Strait, has made us wish for a considerable Settlement here: It was pretty well begun fifteen Years ago, but some Reasons which are kept secret, have reduced it very low. Those who did not favour it said, first, that it brought the Peltry of the North too near the *English*, who selling their Merchandizes to the Savages cheaper than our's, would draw all the Trade to *New York*. Second, that the Lands of the Strait are not good, that the Surface to the Depth of nine or ten Inches is only Sand, and under this Sand there is a Clay so stiff, that Water cannot penetrate it: whence it happens that the Plains and the inner Parts of the Woods, are always covered with Water, and that you see in them only little Oaks badly grown, and hard Walnut-Trees; and that the Trees standing always in the Water, their Fruit ripens very late. But to these Reasons they reply, it is true, that in the Environs of Fort *Pontchartrain* the Lands are mixed with Sand, and that in the neighbouring Forests there are some Bottoms that are almost always

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* They have at length given them one for some Years past.