

trade between Europeans and natives. The sedentary missions founded by the Jesuits succumbed to the virus of alcoholism or expelled it temporarily—according to time and circumstances and the personality of their pastors.¹ In 1724 the learned Jesuit Lafitau exclaimed: "And would to God that the Europeans had never acquainted (the aborigines) with these unhappy beverages, which serve only to destroy them!"² In 1730 Father Laure wrote with admiration of an exceptional tribe along the lower St. Lawrence which was not addicted to alcohol. Five years later Father Nau of the Sault St. Louis confessed: "Our Indians find all the fire-water they want, and as soon as they are drunk they are capable of any crime"; and again: "Drunkenness is the great vice of the Indian."³ In 1730, also, a charge of Bishop Dosquet to his clergy forbade them to absolve those who contributed to the intoxication of the Indians. But this measure aroused a storm of protest and accomplished nothing.⁴

According to Latour, liquor prevented the Micmacs and the Ottawas from performing their duty in the wars with the English;⁵ but towards the close of the French period the "furore for brandy diminished a little," as the Indians became accustomed to it.⁶ However, Latour's range of observation must have been limited, for Bonnefons in his ten years (1751-61) of Canadian travel found that, apart from the sedentary missions along the river, the natives were still passionately fond of alcohol. In 1757 Montcalm described the conduct of the Indians who had been given brandy at La Chine: "They swam in barrells of this liquor, and did not quit the barrel until they fell dead-drunk. According to them, to die of inebriation would be

¹ Rochemonteix, vol. iii, pp. 395-400.

² Lafitau, p. 125.

³ Jones, vol. i, p. 36; vol. ii, pp. 59, 60.

⁴ *Mandements*, vol. i, p. 535.

⁵ Latour (1761), p. 77.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 87.