

"In the first place, the majority of the Indians implicated were averse to putting him to death. In the second place, it was through sheer bravado that a crazy-brained Indian set at naught the consequences which held the others in awe.

"A third particular I have gathered is, that scarcely had the deed been perpetrated, than a deafening clap of thunder struck terror into the whole band. They fled from the spot, believing that Heaven was incensed at what they had done.

"Finally, that the portable chapel and, namely, the chalice, which was plundered, had fallen into the hands of a widowed squaw who had several grown-up sons, the pride and wealth of the tribe. In a remarkably short lapse of time, all, or nearly all of them perished in her sight. This she ascribed to the chalice, which her sons had given her; so she rid herself of it by throwing it into the river.

"This," concludes Father du Jaunay, "is all I have been able to gather from the various accounts of the Indians. I met here with a native, who claimed to be a Sioux and to have been present at the massacre; but on being warned that he was an imposter, I did not think it proper to question him, trusting to time to throw more light on the occurrence."

In the Archives of the Gesù at Rome is preserved the following letter, from Father Lafitau to the Father General at Rome. The letter is dated at Paris, April 4th, 1738, and the original is in Latin:¹

"As to what relates to Father Aulneau, nothing more has been learnt than what has already been written. He had followed an officer whom the Governor of New France had commissioned to discover the way across the continent to the Western Ocean, as yet unknown from this side. He had reached the sources of the Mississippi and had penetrated further west. But, according to the custom of adventurers of that class, who are alive to their own interests which they consult rather than the common weal, the party had, in barter, sold powder and other munitions of war to the tribes they met with.

"Some of the Indians, incensed at this species of traffic at which their enemies gained an advantage, took occasion of an expedition this officer had planned and had entrusted to his own son as leader, with Father Aulneau—who had a presentiment of his death, as his letters attest—to accompany him.

"In fact, the savage band stole upon them unawares, and slaughtered them all. Father Aulneau received two thrusts of a knife, and was decapitated."²

¹ *The Aulneau Collection*, pp. 91-92.

² Father F. Nau, writing in 1738 to Father Aulneau's mother, said: "A party of Frenchmen had captured, last autumn, the murderer of our dear