

These three nations together can now muster about 1200 men, whereas tradition informs us, that the *Natchez* were formerly the most powerful nation in all *North America*, and respected by all others as their superiors. They formerly stretched from *Manchare*, which is 50 leagues from the sea, to the river *Wabache*, at the distance of 460. Among them were 500 princes, whom they called *suns*, [*soleils*] nothing could exceed the vanity of these grandees, in preparing the detestable custom of permitting people to sacrifice themselves upon their funeral bier; a destruction which men and women voluntarily, nay gladly embraced, imagining by this action to secure to themselves a happy situation in a future world; that they should be retained in the service of their prince, without fear or punishment, that they should not suffer by hunger, thirst, heat, or cold; that they should have every sort of food they could wish; and to crown all, they should neither suffer nor die. It must however be observed that two branches of these people, whose princes were more humane than the rest, withdrew from the main body, and with some few followers settled upon distant lands to preserve their people from falling a prey to this desperate barbarity. These are the *Tanfas*, of whom we have just now spoken, and the *Tchitimachas*, whom the *Natchez* always regarded as brethren.

Forty leagues North keeping the great river on the East, are the *Tauxoux*, possessing about 100 huts on the banks of a river, to which they give name; and farther upon this river are the *Coraas* in about 40 huts; who pronounce R.

The *Chachoumas*, or *red bladders*, have about 50 huts on the same river. The *Ousecugas* about 60, and the *Tapoussas* not more than 25.

North of the river *Wabache*, near the banks of the *Mississippi* are the *Illinois*, who give name to a river, along the sides of which they are scattered in several villages, near one of which, called *Tamarouas*, there is one of the most considerable *French* settlements possessed by some *Canadians*: for these people have been always staunch to the *French* interest, and assisted them as much as possible in their discoveries, particularly of *Louisiana*, nor is that complaisance, which gives them so easy an ingress among other *American* people, any mark of their want of courage, which has been often tried and approved.

The *Renards* lie farther North, and are a large nation, who have for a long time been in peace, tho' they were formerly fond of war. The *Siaux* are a vast way beyond these, without any intermediate nation, and are dispersed East and West, on both sides of the great river. In going from the sea North, keeping West of the river *Mississippi*, the first nation we find is a very small one, known by the name of *Tchouachas*, and *Onachas*, the last being a small village united to it. It lies between the river *Mississippi*, and the lake.

In this neighbourhood are also the remains of the *Tchitimachas*, who from a numerous people are dwindled into nothing. Many of them were destroyed by the *Indians* in alliance with the *French*, whom they therefore hate, and prefer living solitary and remote from other people, and especially declining all correspondence with those *Europeans*, to whom they would by no means be obliged. The first occasion of this difference was their murder of a missionary, who was going down the river. His death was revenged: and hence hostilities commenced on both sides. This nation, which is not of a martial turn, lost many of its bravest people; in consequence of which they sued for peace, and it was granted them, on condition of their bringing in the head of the assassin. They did so, and at the same time presented the calumet to the *French* governor.

Along the western coast, not far from the sea, there is a nation of men-eaters, who are supposed to feed upon their enemies. The *French* call them *Atacoussas*, but our author says they have some more proper appellation, which he could never learn. They correspond with other *Indian* nations, but have no communication with *Europeans*.

The adventures of an officer of some consideration, who in the infancy of the colony fell into the hands of these *Anthropophagi*, may not be thought perhaps amiss in this place, as it may afford proper caution to people, whose fortune may lead them into this part of the world. A vessel from *France* coming to an anchor at the bottom of the river *Mississippi*, the captain-general sent down a brigantine, on board which was Mr. *Charleville*, a *Canadian*, perfectly well acquainted with all the *Indian* nations, among whom he had often travelled, with orders to the master to supply the brigantine with an officer and a few soldiers, to proceed on discoveries; but