

prairies ! One might have thought that my companions and I had no other mission to fulfil than to give scandal ; our immorality went so far that it astonished the very barbarians among whom we lived. One day, such had been our excesses that the Indians plainly avowed their intention of massacring us at no distant period ; whereupon two of my companions immediately conceived the plan of arming themselves to the teeth, and of murdering the inhabitants of a neighboring wigwam on the following night. They killed six victims, amongst whom were two women and three children. When they returned all bloody to tell us of the frightful deed, we decided to fly without delay ; for, knowing the vindictive spirit of these savages, we were sure of being exposed to the most atrocious tortures were we to be discovered. We fled with the quickness of the deer pursued by the hunter. At daybreak we were already far from the scene of the massacre ; but in what a pitiful state ! Our legs and feet were torn and bleeding, our clothes were tattered and we were exhausted with fatigue. But how could we think of taking rest ? It would have been death to us. Our only hope of safety was in forced marches, without even devoting a few moments to swallowing some food. After three days and three nights of such travelling, more dead than alive, we reached the banks of a river which we were obliged at any price to cross, in order to escape from our ferocious enemies. We set to work to build a raft to cross to the opposite bank. At the end of half an hour, our raft was built and launched. We thought ourselves in safety, but alas ! heaven also was pursuing us, and held our death-warrant suspended over our guilty heads. After rowing as far as the middle of the stream, our strength gave way to such a degree that we were obliged to let our frail raft float adrift, without