

## **Ossossané Afflicted with the Contagion, 1637, by François le Mercier**

On the fourth of December, having learned the news from Ossossané that the disease was spreading there and that some of its people had recently died, the father superior sent Father Charles Garnier and me there. We made this journey joyously and with all the more confidence in God, as I was convinced that my knowledge of the language was insufficient. On our arrival, we instructed and baptized a poor man who, it was believed, could not live through the night. We did not make a long sojourn there, as we had orders to be present at the Feast of the Conception of our Lady, and had it not been for that, we would not have readily left the sick, who were as many as fifty by actual count. We visited each of them individually, always giving them some little word of consolation. We were made very welcome, all greeting us with very kindly faces. The journey the father superior had made there having inclined to us the hearts and affections of all, most of them regarded us only as persons from whom they expected some consolation, and likewise something to relieve them in their sickness. A few raisins were very acceptable, and we were careful not to forget these. The few of them that we have are only for the Indians, and Your Reverence would not believe how readily they take these little sweets.

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Source: Allan Greer, ed., *The Jesuit Relations: Natives and Missionaries in 17th Century North America* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin, 2000) 83.