

from his memoir of the Michigan frontier,
"Quinze Jours au Désert," Pierson p. 244:

"...he will even see to your necessities, watch over your safety so long as you are under his roof; but... you perceive... such a profound indifference... that you feel your gratitude freezing. ... his hospitality has nothing which touches you because in exercising it he seems to submit himself to a painful necessity of the wilderness; he sees in it a duty which his position imposes on him, not a pleasure."

This darker side of sheer exigency does not vitiate the brighter side of real affection, but it should be brought forward equally. We can know ourselves better, if we let ourselves see how friends + family on the one hand, and need + obstinacy on the other, shape each other, and emerge in the contexts of each other, at every moment. Our deepest friendships are sealed by utility, just as our eldest ambitions have a human face.

¶ Thanks for the expedition. -

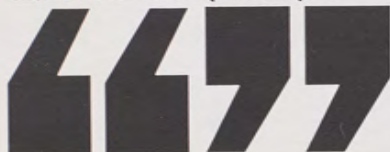
Dear Mr. Lamb,

I just have to make sure you see this variation on the uses of Tocqueville. The plush cats, so comfortably tucked among the timbers in this picture, presumably emblemize "the old aristocratic colors" noted by T.

¶ In discussions of voluntary associations, mutual aid, and spontaneous hospitality, as observed among Americans by Tocqueville, the darker side of the coin seems to be elided or unacknowledged. We may be using Tocqueville too selectively, to pat ourselves on the back. To illustrate that darker side, I quote

o.Toc

The Borealis Press Quote UnQuote



©1994 By The Borealis Press Inc.
39 Hancock Street, Ellsworth, Maine 04605 USA
207 667 3700

Photograph © Stanley Joseph

We print with soy inks, on acid-free, totally
chlorine-free recycled paper, which produces
no dioxins in the mill waste.

Q1 1.95

ISBN 0-8081-1926-5



9 780808 119265

“

The surface of American society is covered up



with a layer of democratic paint,
but from time to time one can see the old
aristocratic colors breaking through.

Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859)

”