

**THE EARLY JESUIT MISSIONS IN
NORTH AMERICA; COMPILED
AND TRANSLATED FROM THE
LETTERS OF THE FRENCH JESUITS,
WITH NOTES, PART I**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649029747

The Early Jesuit Missions in North America; Compiled and Translated from the Letters of the French Jesuits, with Notes, Part I by William Ingraham Kip

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

WILLIAM INGRAHAM KIP

**THE EARLY JESUIT MISSIONS IN
NORTH AMERICA; COMPILED
AND TRANSLATED FROM THE
LETTERS OF THE FRENCH JESUITS,
WITH NOTES, PART I**

THE
EARLY JESUIT MISSIONS

IN
NORTH AMERICA;



COMPILED AND TRANSLATED FROM THE LETTERS OF THE
FRENCH JESUITS, WITH NOTES.

BY THE
REV. WILLIAM INGRAHAM KIP, M.A.
CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

PART I.

LONDON:
WILEY AND PUTNAM.

1847.

TO

THE HON. GEORGE FOLSOM,

IN REMEMBRANCE OF

MANY PLEASANT HOURS PASSED IN HIS COMPANY,

THIS VOLUME

IS INSCRIBED AS A SLIGHT TESTIMONY OF REGARD.

10

10

10

100 100 100 100

100 100 100 100

100 100 100 100

100 100 100 100

100 100 100 100

10

100 100

100

100

100

100

PREFACE.

THERE is no page of our country's history more touching and romantic, than that which records the labors and sufferings of the Jesuit Missionaries. In these western wilds they were the earliest pioneers of civilization and faith. The wild hunter or the adventurous traveller, who, penetrating the forests, came to new and strange tribes, often found that years before, the disciples of Loyola had preceded him in that wilderness. Traditions of the "Black robes" still lingered among the Indians. On some moss-grown tree they pointed out the traces of their work, and in wonder he deciphered, carved side by side on its trunk, the emblem of our salvation and the lilies of the Bourbons. Amid the snows of Hudson's Bay—among the woody islands and beautiful inlets of the St. Lawrence—by the council fires of the Hurons and the Algonquins—at the sources of the Mississippi, where, first of the white men, their eyes looked upon the Falls of St. Anthony, and then traced down the course of the bounding river, as it rushed onward to earn its title of "Father of Waters"—on the vast prairies of Illinois and Missouri—among the blue hills which hem in the salubrious dwellings of the Cherokees—and in the thick canebrakes of Louisiana—everywhere were found the members of the "Society of Jesus." Marquette, Joliet, Brebeuf, Jogues, Lallemand, Rasles, and Marest, are the names which the West should ever hold in remembrance.

But it was only by suffering and trial that these early laborers won their triumphs. Many of them too were men who had stood high in camps and courts, and could contrast their desolate state in the solitary wigwam with the refinement and affluence which had waited on their early years. But now all these were gone. Home—the love of kindred—the golden ties of relationship—all were to be forgotten by these stern and high-wrought men, and they were often to go forth into the wilderness, without an adviser on their way, save their God. Through long and sorrowful years they were obliged to “sow in tears” before they could “reap in joy.” Every self-denial gathered around them which could wear upon the spirit and cause the heart to fail. Mighty forests were to be threaded on foot, and the great lakes of the West passed in the feeble bark canoe. Hunger and cold and disease were to be encountered, until nothing but the burning zeal within could keep alive the wasted and sinking frame. But worse than all were those spiritual evils which forced them to weep and pray in darkness. They had to endure the contradiction of those they came to save, who often after listening for months with apparent interest, so that the Jesuit began to hope they would soon be numbered with his converts, suddenly quitted him with cold and derisive words, and turned again to the superstitions of their tribe.

Most of them too were martyrs to their faith. It will be noticed in reading this volume, how few of their number “died the common death of all men,” or slept at last in the grounds which their Church had consecrated. Some, like Jogues and du Poisson and Souel, sunk beneath the blows of the infuriated savages, and their bodies were thrown out to feed the vulture, whose shriek, as he flapped his wings above them, had been their only requiem. Others, like Brebeuf and Lallemand and Senat, died at the stake, and their ashes “flew no marble tells us whither,” while the

dusky sons of the forest stood around, and mingled their wild yells of triumph with the martyrs' dying prayers. Others again, like the aged Marquette, sinking beneath years of toil, fell asleep in the wilderness, and their sorrowing companions dug their graves in the green turf, where for many years the rude forest ranger stopped to invoke their names, and bow in prayer before the cross which marked the spot.

But did these things stop the progress of the Jesuits? The sons of Loyola never retreated. The mission they founded in a tribe ended only with the extinction of the tribe itself. Their lives were made up of fearless devotedness and heroic self-sacrifice. Though sorrowing for the dead, they pressed forward at once to occupy their places, and, if needs be, share their fate, "Nothing"—wrote Father le Petit after describing the martyrdom of two of his brethren—"nothing has happened to these two excellent missionaries for which they were not prepared when they devoted themselves to the Indian Missions." If the flesh trembled, the spirit seemed never to falter. Each one indeed felt that he was "baptized for the dead," and that his own blood, poured out in the mighty forests of the West, would bring down perhaps greater blessings on those for whom he died, than he could win for them by the labors of a life. He realized that he was "appointed unto death." "Ibo, et non redibo," were the prophetic words of Father Jogues, when, for the last time, he departed to the Mohawks. When Lallemand was bound to the stake, and for seventeen hours his excruciating agonies were prolonged, his words of encouragement to his companion were, "Brother! we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." When Marquette was setting out for the sources of the Mississippi, and the friendly Indians who had known him, wished to turn him from his purpose by declaring "Those distant nations never spare the stran-

gers," the calm reply of the missionary was, "I shall gladly lay down my life for the salvation of souls." And then, the red sons of the wilderness bowed with him in prayer, and before the simple cross of cedar, and among the stately groves of elm and maple which line the St. Lawrence, there rose that old chant which the aged man had been accustomed to hear in the distant Cathedrals of his own land—

"Vexilla Regis prodeunt;
Fulget Crucis mysterium."^{*}

But how little is known of all these men! The history of their bravery and sufferings, touching as it is, has been comparatively neglected. And it is to supply in some degree this deficiency, and to give at least a specimen of what the early Jesuits endured and dared, that this volume has been prepared. It is sent forth merely as a contribution to the historical records of the country. The early Jesuit missions form indeed a page of our history which has never yet been written, and the interest which the writer has taken in them is entirely accidental. During the last year he found in a bookstore in Europe, a set of the "*Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses, Ecrites des Missions Etrangères,*" in thirty-four volumes, scattered through which are letters from the Jesuits in our own country. There are but few copies of this work in America, and it is thus rendered inaccessible to most persons, while its size would prevent others from attempting to investigate it. It has therefore remained only as a storehouse from which some of our historians have drawn occasional facts with regard to the early discoveries in our country. Having become interested in reading it, the writer determined to

^{*} The banners of Heaven's king advance,
The mystery of the Cross shines forth.

Bancroft's United States, vol. iii. 156