

**THE JESUIT RELATIONS AND
ALLIED DOCUMENTS: TRAVELS
AND EXPLORATIONS OF THE
JESUIT MISSIONARIES IN NEW
FRANCE 1610-1791. VOL. LII**

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REUBEN GOLD THWAITES

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Vol. LII

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PREFACE TO VOL. LII

Following is a synopsis of the documents contained in this volume:

CXXIV. In Vol. LI. appeared Chaps. i.-viii. of the *Relation of 1667-68*; the rest of the document is here given. Le Mercier, having in preceding chapters outlined the state of the various distant missions, now returns to affairs at Quebec. A remnant of the Hurons—"small indeed, but very precious"—yet exists there. Still more, the Jesuits there are instructing over two hundred Iroquois, sixty of whom have been baptized. The details of some remarkable conversions among these people are given; and the writer describes the death of a young Indian girl, who had planned to become an Ursuline nun. Her patience, purity, and devotion show that she has reached "the perfection of souls consummate in sanctity;" and she has a visit from the Virgin Mary, and a vision of angels at her death.

The *Relation* proper apparently terminates here; but various addenda are made, beginning with a letter from Laval to a French priest in Paris. He notes the recent arrival in Canada of several priests from France, enabling him to supply outlying settlements, which have hitherto been destitute of religious services. Laval mentions with much gratification his recent visit to Tadoussac (described in Chap. vii. of this *Relation*). He has undertaken to educate a

number of Indian children in the French mode of life and language; but finds considerable difficulty in this, as the Indian parents cling to their children, and will not be long separated from them. This seminary is a branch of the older one, which is, about this time, united with the Paris Seminary of Foreign Missions.

A postscript is added, "on the eve of the departure of the last ship," stating that ambassadors have just arrived from the Senecas to ask that Jesuits be sent to instruct them; and that Father Frémin has already gone to that tribe, leaving the Mohawks to the care of Pierron. The comparative gentleness and docility of the Senecas, and the presence among them of a Christian Huron village, render this a promising field of labor for the Jesuits.

Next follows a circular letter on the death of Mother Catherine de St. Augustin, a Hospital nun of Quebec, who passed away May 8, 1668. The details of her life, character, and religious experiences are recounted at considerable length, as also are the particulars of her death. She has many visions, and the martyr Brébeuf appears to her as her celestial spiritual director. Another circular letter—sent for the French convents belonging to the Institute of Hospital Nuns at Dieppe—narrates many of her pious traits, and graces received from heaven. Among the latter are included a knowledge of the inmost feelings and secret sins of others, the ability to predict future events, visits from departed saints, and even from the Virgin and Christ. At the end of this letter is a short article, probably written by the Jesuit superior at Quebec, praising the admirable work done by the nuns, both Hospital and Ursu-