

INTRODUCTION.

Some two or three years ago, in looking through the library of the late Hon. JOHN NEILSON, of Quebec, my attention was called to two original Jesuit manuscripts. I at once saw their great value, and in subsequent communications with my cousin, Surgeon Major NEILSON, I begged further particulars of them. In the meantime, I had mentioned my discovery to Mr. WOODWARD, the American bibliophile. He, in turn, mentioned the matter to Prof. PILLING, of Washington, who was at that time engaged upon a work on *The Languages of the North American Indians*. Their value to him was of considerable importance, and he at once wrote to Surgeon NEILSON for fuller particulars. The learned Abbé SASSEVILLE's good services were called into requisition, and, with the devotion of a savant, he compiled an abstract of the contents of the two manuscripts, page for page, a work involving much labor and learning. It is hoped that arrangements may be made for the publication in full of the two precious manuscripts. Dr. JOHN GILMERY SHEA, the learned scholar on all that pertains to early Jesuit Relations on this continent, also contributes to Abbé SASSEVILLE's notes, a review of the same with comments, which will be found valuable and interesting.

My object in publishing this pamphlet is simply to put upon record the existence of these valuable manuscripts, as they have been supposed lost or destroyed. Their value for a complete study of the Illinois and Montagnais dialect cannot be questioned.

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