

the ministers of the true faith, and the persecutions they incessantly excite against them, whenever they can exercise sufficient influence over their adherents. And on what a people did they exercise their influence, before the arrival of our missionaries in their country !

Father Point, a missionary among the Cœur-d'Alènes from 1842 to 1846, wrote of them as follows, in a letter printed in 1848. These details prove the civilizing tendency and power of religion.

“Not a quarter of a century since, the Cœur-d'Alènes were so hard-hearted, that to paint them to the life, the common sense of their first visitors found no expression more just than the singular name which they still bear ; minds so limited, that while rendering divine worship to all the animals that they knew, they had no idea of the true God, nor of their soul, nor consequently of a future life ; in fine, a race of men so degraded, that of the natural law, there survived among them only two or three very obscure notions, which few, very few attempted to reduce to practice. Yet it must be said to the credit of the tribe, that there were always in their midst elect souls, who never bent the knee to Baal. I know some, who from the very day when the true God was preached to them, never had to reproach themselves with the shadow of an infidelity.”