

250 years has the Roman Catholic Church prosecuted its missionary enterprises among the various tribes of Indians in British North America. Their success in Romanizing a portion of these people,—thus inducing them to give up their heathen charms for the scapular, rosary, crucifix and relics of the saints, and their spiritual allegiance from their medicine men to the man at Rome,—has principally been achieved through the instrumentality of the Jesuit Fathers, whose self-denials and sufferings on this continent are among the most thrilling annals of the world's missionary enterprises. The Episcopal Church in Canada has not been blind to the claims of these people upon their Christian affection and efforts, but has for a number of years ably laboured with a good measure of success in evangelizing a portion of this great multitude. The Wesleyan Methodists early sent their men and means into this unpromising field of labour, and are still patiently and faithfully seeking to win those souls for whom Christ died. When we add to these the station occupied by the Presbyterians in the Saskatchewan district, and the work of our own Society, the sum of missionary efforts among the Indians of Canada has been told, evidently shewing the necessity of enlarging the means, and thus the sphere of all these agencies in order to accomplish the great object before them. There is afforded matter for congratulation in the knowledge that the present societies in the field, representative of different branches of the Church of Christ, instead of manifesting an unholy jealousy and an unsanctified rivalry, are friendly, and in a great measure co-operative in their work. A Jesuit Father once said in regard to one of our missionary teachers, "She is a good woman, and doing a good work."

The Indians of the North-Western Territory of Ontario, among whom we labour, are a small part of the Chippewa or Ojibway tribe—type of the Algonquin stock—who have occupied from the earliest historical period the basin of Lake Superior. They are a tall, well developed and good-looking race, distinguished for their proud bearing and easy manners. The number of their tribe in 1850 was estimated at 10,000, many of whom dwell within the bounds of the United States. Their language is very copious, and has been called "the Greek of the Indian tongue," while the French discoverers, on learning it, named it "the court language of the Aborigines," and spread the praise of the people throughout Europe. There have been translated into this language the New Testament, the Book of Genesis, the Psalms, and a collection of hymns. The American missionaries among this tribe have never received a large measure of encouragement, they being suspected of the design to overthrow their simple forest system. With us there are many bands who for years persistently refused to receive a missionary or listen to the gospel, and who still do so; while others, though still pagan, profess their readiness to receive our teachers.

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