

is doubtful if more thrilling reading can be found anywhere than in the story of these explorations and of the work of the "Jesuits in North America."\* As far back as 1626, at least, some of these missionaries visited a band of Indians, called the Neutrals, who held the entire peninsula of what has, until recently, been styled Western Ontario, and who were neutral in the wars between the Hurons and the Iroquois. In 1669 two missionaries and seven other Frenchmen from Montreal landed on the north shore of Lake Erie and wintered there. In virtue of this, Father Francois Dollier, priest of the Diocese of Nantes in Brittany, and Father de Galinée, deacon of the Diocese of Rennes in Brittany, in 1670, set up at the mouth of Kettle Creek (Port Stanley) a proclamation stating the facts, and thus formally took possession of the entire country in the name of Louis XIV. of France. Even then the land was full of promise, for De Galinée calls it "the terrestrial paradise of Canada." In 1679 the great French explorer, Sieur De La Salle, sailed up Lake and River St. Clair, on his famous journey to the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico. Charlévoix passed through Lake Erie in 1721 and gave a very glowing description of the country along the north shore.

In 1683 the French built Fort St. Joseph, near the present site of Fort Gratiot, Michigan. This was one of a chain of forts for the protection of "New France," as our country was then called; but little or nothing was done toward the development of the western