

press. It was the custom of the missionaries to forward their reports to the Superior of the Jesuits at Quebec whenever a favourable opportunity afforded itself; in some cases they came down with the fur flotillas and made oral report. In the former case the Superior revised the written report forwarded to him; in the latter he composed a report from the oral narration given him. Then, having placed all the reports of the year in proper form, he despatched the whole *dossier* to the Provincial of the Order in France. This official, after a further "careful scrutiny and re-editing", gave them to Cramoisy for publication.* How much was added, altered or omitted during this double process of scrutiny and revision we have no means of knowing. It may not be unfair to conjecture, however, that the well-known teachings of the school of Loyola were not without some influence upon the editorial ethics. At any rate, we have the avowal of one of these revising Superiors that he did not attempt to send home a relation of all that went on in the colony, but only of "that which touches the good of the Faith and Religion."† "The *Rélations*", wrote Père Claude Boucher to Père Bagot in 1633, "should not be read with the idea that they tell everything, but only that which is edifying."‡

Nevertheless the *Rélations* do contain much more than a mere narration of religious life and progress, and much concerning the civil administration of the colony which is far from edifying. And it is just for this reason that caution in their use is necessary. For it is well-known that the Jesuits were, during the greater part of the French régime, in antagonism towards the civil authorities on many important points of political, social and economic policy. The Jesuits consistently opposed, for one thing, the system of carrying on the fur trade through the media of posts on the upper lakes for the reason that these too often served as centers for the distribution of brandy among the western redskins. To the civil authorities both the posts and the liquor were essential to the control of the trade; for if the French did not supply the savage with *eau-de-*

*Thwaites, *op. cit.* Introduction.

†Le Jeune, *Relation* of 1638.

‡Rochemontix, *Les Jesuites*, I, p. 16.