

1644. their enemies and his own triumph. Not only was their faith proof to a temptation which often overcomes those born and brought up in the bosom of the Church, but it did not even cool their zeal, and their numbers daily increased. Proselytes came to Sylleri from the far North, and it was not unusual to see the very men entering the fold who had used the greatest exertions to scatter it.

Calumnies  
invented in  
France  
against the  
Jesuits of  
Canada.

Such was the situation of Christianity in New France, when news came that astounded every man of honor in the colony. Who, in fact, could imagine that missionaries, whose sanctity, labors, and disinterestedness were admired by all, could all at once see themselves under the necessity of making statements to justify their conduct, and persuade the public that it was not interests of trade that kept them in the midst of barbarism, exposed to all the dangers that we have witnessed? Yet this was asserted in Europe; and destitute of all probability as these calumnies were, they were spread with the greater assurance, as many gave them credence.

The Company of One Hundred Associates was no less amazed at these clamors than the inhabitants of New France, who saw the falsehood with their very eyes. As the Company was most deeply interested in preventing the trade imputed to the Jesuits, and better able to know the facts by means of the agents which it maintained in Canada, it deemed itself bound in honor to defend the accused, and did so by an authentic declaration, which is in these words :

Their justifi-  
cation.

“The Directors and Associates in the Company of New France, called Canada, having heard that some persons are persuaded, and spread the report, that the Society of the Jesuit Fathers has a share in the embarkation, returns, and trade carried on with that country—seeking by this means to lower and destroy the esteem and value of the great labors which those missionaries undertake in said country, with incredible pain and hardship, at the peril of their life, for the service and glory of God, in converting