

ted between the French and the Natives, show conclusively that the early visits of the missionaries, were missions of peace and friendship. To the efforts of these primitive pioneers, devoted and pious men, do we owe the first settlement of this country; and to their journals and narratives, imperfect though they be, can we alone have resource for information relative to their early expeditions and discoveries, and the condition of the country at that remote period.

Contemporaneous with the arrival of the Jesuits in this region, another class of adventurers visited, and eventually became identified with the country. I allude to the French traders, familiarly known among their compeers as *voyageurs*. They were truly pioneers of Wisconsin, and are justly entitled to share with the missionaries the reward and credit of bringing the country into notice; opening the way for the introduction of civilization and improvement, and, to some extent, improving the condition of the natives, and subduing their savage propensities. This class of men were actuated by more selfish and sordid motives than those which governed their brethren the missionaries, yet their character and disposition bore a great similarity to each other. All, or nearly all, were Frenchmen, and were possessed, in common, with that urbanity of manner, and all those warm and friendly traits so characteristic of that polite but volatile nation. And experience has shown, that the people of no other country have ever acquired and maintained, during their intercourse with them, the same degree of influence over the Indian tribes.

Nor have any other people ever succeeded in preserving so long an enduring peace and friendship. This result was probably owing as well to the peculiar character of the French people, as also to their adaptation, and ready conformity, to many of the customs and habits of the Aborigines. Of a social and excitable temperament, fond of change, and unaccustomed to the restraints and conventional refinements of society, they found it an easy task to conform readily to the customs and modes of life peculiar to those with whom they came to reside. They