

Jesuit Missionaries of the Northwest

[From the *Catholic Telegraph*, April 28th, 1855]

Our readers are aware that an interesting Lecture on the subject at the head of this article, was delivered on the 31st January, 1855, before the "Young Men's Catholic Literary Institute," Cincinnati, by the Hon. Judge John Law, of Evansville, Indiana. The Lecture was published in the *Catholic Telegraph* of the 10th of February following. And on the 10th of March, a communication received from J. G. Shea, Esq., author of the "*Discovery and Exploration of the Mississippi Valley*," and of the "*Catholic Missions among the Indian Tribes of the United States*," appeared in the columns of the same paper, vindicating the "fair fame" of, by the way, not the Jesuit, but the Franciscan, Recollect, Monk, Marquette, against an injustice, if at all, unconsciously done him by Judge Law, on the faith of what appeared to him to be authentic history, and admitted as such by more than one illustrious name, and asserting for Marquette his claim "as the first great explorer of the Mississippi, and to a certain extent its discoverer." In order to succeed in his defence of Marquette, it became necessary for Mr. Shea to demonstrate that the documents, purporting to have been taken from the archives of the Archbishop of Quebec, and which have misled the "Chancellor of St. Louis," the Right Rev. Dr. Brute, Dr. Spalding in his Life of Bishop Flaget, and Judge Law, were unreliable. This, truth constrains us to say, he has accomplished; nor do we see how it be possible that any hitherto undiscovered records of the early missionaries could induce us to distrust the soundness of Mr. Shea's criticism, or cease to rely on the accuracy of his statements.

Nevertheless, we must candidly avow how much we were distressed at the charges necessarily alleged by Mr. Shea, in