

American population, were ignorant, opposed to the customs of civilization, indolent, readily associated with the Indians, and looked with positive suspicion and hatred upon the energetic and educated pioneers from the Eastern States, and all the institutions they introduced. We might give incidents, showing how they persistently annoyed the earliest school teachers, and the founders of the first schools in the State.

### Schools Among Indians

We have already spoken of the early efforts of the French missionaries to maintain schools at Mackinaw and Kaskaskia for the instruction of the natives. Never have any class of laborers shown more humane, unselfish, and unflagging zeal to elevate and christianize the Indian race. The fur traders and their *attaches* partook, in some measure, of the same interest. On the contrary, the British Government, which held a sort of military sway in the State for over fifty years, made no exertion to civilize the Indians, but bent its energies to keep them in ignorance and barbarism and to thwart the influence of the missionaries, so that its fur trade companies might carry on a more lucrative traffic. The effect of the toil and the treatment by the Jesuits, of their language and their manners, is seen among these children of the forest after the lapse of two hundred years. French words with the pure accent are often heard in the lowliest wigwam; the courtly style of the refined missionary and of the polished trader has been rudely imitated in many a chieftain's council; and an unalterable attachment for their benefactors is felt in nearly every tribe which formerly dwelt within our borders. Never have any people had better opportunities for improving and saving them, if their utter destruction did not seem to be decreed.

The schools in Illinois, at the Straits of Mackinaw, and on the St. Lawrence, established between 1637 and 1721, were admirably adapted to the traits of the Indian converts. Their minds were captivated by the ceremonies of their religious festivals and almost daily mass. Supported largely by contri-