

given *in extenso*, only such matter being omitted as either did not come within our historical field, or appeared to the Editor needlessly detailed for the present purpose. In a few cases, where documents are either too profuse or are unavailable, a synoptical editorial note covers the period sufficiently for the average student—references being given to more abundant sources.

Owing to the great extent of the material, it has been found impossible to include all of it within this volume, the size of which is restricted by law. A considerable portion of vol. xvii will be occupied with the remainder of the documents, which carry us to the downfall of New France, in 1763.

It is hoped that the publication of these documents may greatly renew both popular and scholarly interest in the period when the region of the upper Great Lakes was a part of New France. The story here revealed is one possessing great interest to the student of civilization, as well as of Western history.

With the simple record in the *Jesuit Relations* of Nicolet's voyage in 1634 (or possibly 1638), we see the French—impelled by desire for empire, for trade, and for religious proselytizing—first reaching out to the Northwest. With this event, the annals of our region begin. For many years, these concern almost wholly the migrations and wars of Indian tribes, and the operations of a few adventurous fur-traders. At first the accounts are shadowy in character, having reached the French at the settlements on the St. Lawrence river through devious channels of report, for few white men had as yet penetrated to these far-away wilds; and most of the explorers were unlicensed traders whose interests did not lie in spreading knowledge of their wanderings. We find the Winnebagoes (Puants), an outcast tribe of the Siouan stock, reported as being, in the middle of the seventeenth century, powerfully entrenched upon Green Bay, tyrannizing over their Algonquian neighbors, the Menomonees, Pottawattomies, Sacs, Foxes, Kickapoos, and Mascoutens; and cruelly betraying the Ottawas and Illinois, whose envoys they "cooked in their kettles." The Ottawas first formed a war-league against the Winnebagoes, whom they pitilessly scourged; later, the Illinois headed a similar conspiracy,