



INDIAN PRAYER



GREAT SPIRIT —
GRANT THAT I
MAY NOT CRITICISE MY
NEIGHBOR UNTIL I HAVE
WALKED A MILE IN HIS
MOCCASINS.



84



P. 24

House 93
Kuyt

Three Caughnawaga Indian Apostles

Between the years 1800 and 1820, the Caughnawagas had reached the Western prairies and had even crossed the Rocky Mountains with the white men as much to the discomfort of the tribes living out there. David Harmon, an officer of the Northwest Fur Company, wrote from Stuart's Lake, British Columbia, in October 1817, "that for several years past, Iroquois from Canada have been in the habit of coming into different parts of the Northwest country to hunt the beaver. The natives of the country consider them intruders. As they are mere rovers they do not feel the same interest as those who permanently reside here in keeping the stock of animals good, and therefore they make great havoc among the game, destroying alike animals which are young and old. A number of Iroquois have passed several summers on this side of the mountains, which circumstances they know to be displeasing to the Indians here, who have often threatened to kill them if they persisted in destroying the animals of their land. These menaces were disregarded." The murder, however, of an Iroquois with his wife and two children, by Carrier Indians of Stuart's Lake, discouraged further intrusion.

By Devine, S.J.

The Caughnawagas were apparently more welcome among the pagan Salish and Flatheads further south, where a few of them settled and whither they brought the religion and the religious observances which they had learned and kept at the old village on the banks of the St. Lawrence. Intermarriage with the Flatheads gave a permanent status to those wandering Iroquois; but they were Catholics and were without church or missionary. The presence of a blackrobe among them to baptize their children and to teach them the truths they themselves had been taught, was all that was needed to complete their happiness. The chief of those argonauts was Ignace La Mousse, who under a rude exterior hid a lively intelligence and the heart of an apostle. This old Iroquois often reminded his Flathead brethren of the happiness he and his people experienced while they lived under the influence of religion at Caughnawaga, and he longed for the day — which then seemed far distant — when he should be able to welcome a missionary among them. Meanwhile he assumed the office of catechist and spoke to them of the faith of his childhood, its doctrines and its obligations. Those poor natives listened attentively to things which must have sounded strange in their pagan ears, but they learned from Ignace in a vague way the principal mysteries of the faith, the great precepts of Christianity, the Lord's Prayer, the Sign of the Cross, and other religious practices. They regulated their lives by his teaching, sanctified Sundays, baptized the dying, and placed crosses over the graves of their dead. Two neighboring tribes, friendly to the Flatheads, the Pend'Oreilles and the Nez Percés, had also heard his words and were likewise anxious to receive further instruction.

Merchant traders passing through their country had brought them the news that blackrobes had reached St. Louis on the Missouri river. The old Caughnawaga, La Mousse, whose influence was still paramount, assembled the council of the tribe and proposed the sending of a deputation to ask that a missionary be sent to them. It was a rather daring undertaking, in those early days, to cross the Rocky Moun-

tains and the plains of what are now the States of Oregon, Wyoming and Nebraska. There was danger of meeting enemies among the hostile Crows and Blackfeet; yet the proposal was accepted, and four Indians offered to start at once. They left their country in the spring of 1831, reached St. Louis only in the beginning of October, and delivered their message. But a keen disappointment awaited them there; missionaries were scarce, and no one could be spared to accompany them back. The brave envoys had other trials awaiting them. Worn out with the fatigues of the long journey, two of them fell ill and died at St. Louis, after they had received the last rites of the Church in which they sought membership. The other two set out for their country, but they never reached it, nor was it ever known what had befallen them.

After waiting anxiously four years for the return of the envoys, the Flatheads decided to send a second deputation. This time it was the old apostle, Ignace La Mousse himself, with his two sons, who offered to make the journey. They started out in the summer of 1835, and arrived at St. Louis after a fatiguing journey, but they also were doomed to disappointment. Their zeal for the conversion of their nation excited the interest and sympathy of Bishop Rosati, but this prelate could only promise to send them missionaries as soon as he had them to spare. No blackrobe having arrived after eighteen months of patient waiting, a third deputation, composed of three Flatheads and one Nez Percé, with old Ignatius once more at their head, started out again. Unhappily they never reached their journey's end, for they were slaughtered by the Sioux on the prairies. This crushing news did not dampen the ardour of the Flatheads. In 1839, a fourth deputation was decided on, and two Iroquois, who had a knowledge of the French tongue, arrived at Council Bluffs on the Mississippi, in the middle of September, where they had the good fortune to meet the Jesuit Father, Pierre de Smet, at the mission he had established, three years before. Encouraged by his recommendations they continued their journey onward to St. Louis, and once more pressed their claims on Bishop Rosati. Their earnest appeal so often made, and so often set aside, could not fail to touch the heart of the zealous prelate. He wrote immediately to the General of the Jesuits in Rome, and received the promise that a missionary would be sent to them the following spring. This envoy was Father de Smet himself, who began a work among the Flatheads and other Western tribes, which his successors have continued to the present day.

Given 73 Augl.

men who were already furnishing their arms. It was at this stage that with three Seneca captives, Father Claude Jean Allouez walked into the village and, in Governor de Courcelle's name, handed them over to their families.

In spite of the opposition shown by their enemies, Fathers Frémin and Garnier went about their work. The latter took charge of the village of Gandachiragou, where he quickly constructed a chapel that drew the Iroquois from every quarter.

The Seneca field was full of promise . . .

Ninety of them died quite peacefully. The terrible scourge felled even the hunters far away on the hunt, and the missionary worried about his inability to help them. He then requested aid from Father Julian Garnier stationed at Onondaga; however, when he reached the Seneca canton, the worst was over.

The epidemic was too tasty a morsel for the witch-doctors not to chew on it, and chew on it they did, holding the Blackrobes responsible for the keening that arose from countless hearths.

As if these deaths were not sufficient, the war-mongers filled the air with diatribes against the Outaouac or Ottawa. Father Frémin's persuasiveness finally determined the chiefs to put a stop to three war-parties of young

On the other hand, Father Frémin carried the heavier load—the three other Seneca villages. On September 27, 1669, for the first time, he made his way into Gandougarae, where his coming was heralded with considerable rejoicing.

Remnants of three different nations formerly overthrown by the Iroquois, who had forced the vanquished to come and live in their cantons, composed the village. These were onetime Onnon-tiogas (Indians established in the vicinity of today's Kingston, Ontario), Neutrals and Hurons. The first two groups knew little enough about God; the third one was a conglomerate of several Huron villages, acquainted with Christianity; many of them had been baptized thanks to the efforts of St. Jean de Brébeuf and of his companions.

the Seneca, and the Neutrals, everything remained to be done. A missionary's lifetime would not suffice to bring them up to the same level as the Hurons.

After the chapel opened its doors to the public, the Christians frequented it regularly, and on Sundays it was crowded, to the satisfaction of the Fathers offering the Holy Sacrifice. The eldest Huron acted as a catechist. He knew his prayers perfectly, and said them in a loud and clear voice so that all the faithful understood. The parents' fervor marked their little ones, and soon it became customary to see the Indian children inviting their friends to accompany them to the chapel. As a result, the presence of these youngsters attracted their fathers and mothers to the house of worship.

Father Frémin was speechless with wonder at the strength of character manifested by the Huron Christians for so many years. Despite the Iroquoian mentality which was highly adverse to opposing public opinion, his Christians unblushingly professed their faith before all. The people of the sister nations among the Seneca were so convinced of the steadfastness of their faith that they no longer called them anything else than "the believers" and "the faithful." Two of these men,

in particular, had such a reputation for virtue, that they were held in high esteem by Christians and non-Christians alike.

The first one, Pierre Atondo, lived in union with God through prayer much as the Venerable Kateri Tekakwitha would do a few years later. With this companions, he often talked of God and of his goodness. Better than words, he strictly observed the commandments.

"If you knew," he would say to his dark-eyed listeners, "what prayer is, and how powerful it is to make you happy, you would all choose to pray to God without ceasing. You are all so punctual in doing whatever your dreams order you to do; you spare neither feasts nor presents nor any expense, to make favorable to you, and obtain from them good success in fishing, hunting, and war, and long lives for yourselves. And yet you see clearly that you are in poverty and misery, and that diseases and the enemy sweep off so many of your people every day. As for me, I pray to the Maker of Heaven and earth, the sovereign Lord of our lives, and he gives me strong and vigorous health at a very advanced age. I usually catch more fish than you do; I am by this grace, more favored than you are; and what fills me with joy is that when I come to die, I shall be happy throughout all eternity."

Pour aimer Kateri
il faut la connaître !

Lisez :

Kateri vierge indienne
par Pierre Thérèse
Emmanuel Vitte, éditeur (Paris)

et

L'Héroïque Indienne Kateri Tetsakwitha
par Henri Béchard, S.J.
vice-postulateur
Fidea (Montreal et Paris)

Ces deux ouvrages, le premier, une biographie, le
second une étude plus poussée, "le dernier mot des
recherches sur cette Amérindienne", s'int. le P. Jean
Beneat, S.J., nous sont offerts ensemble pour \$4.00
(ordinairement \$5.60).

La Cause de Kateri
C. P. 70
Caughnawaga (Québec)

JOY 180

Kateri

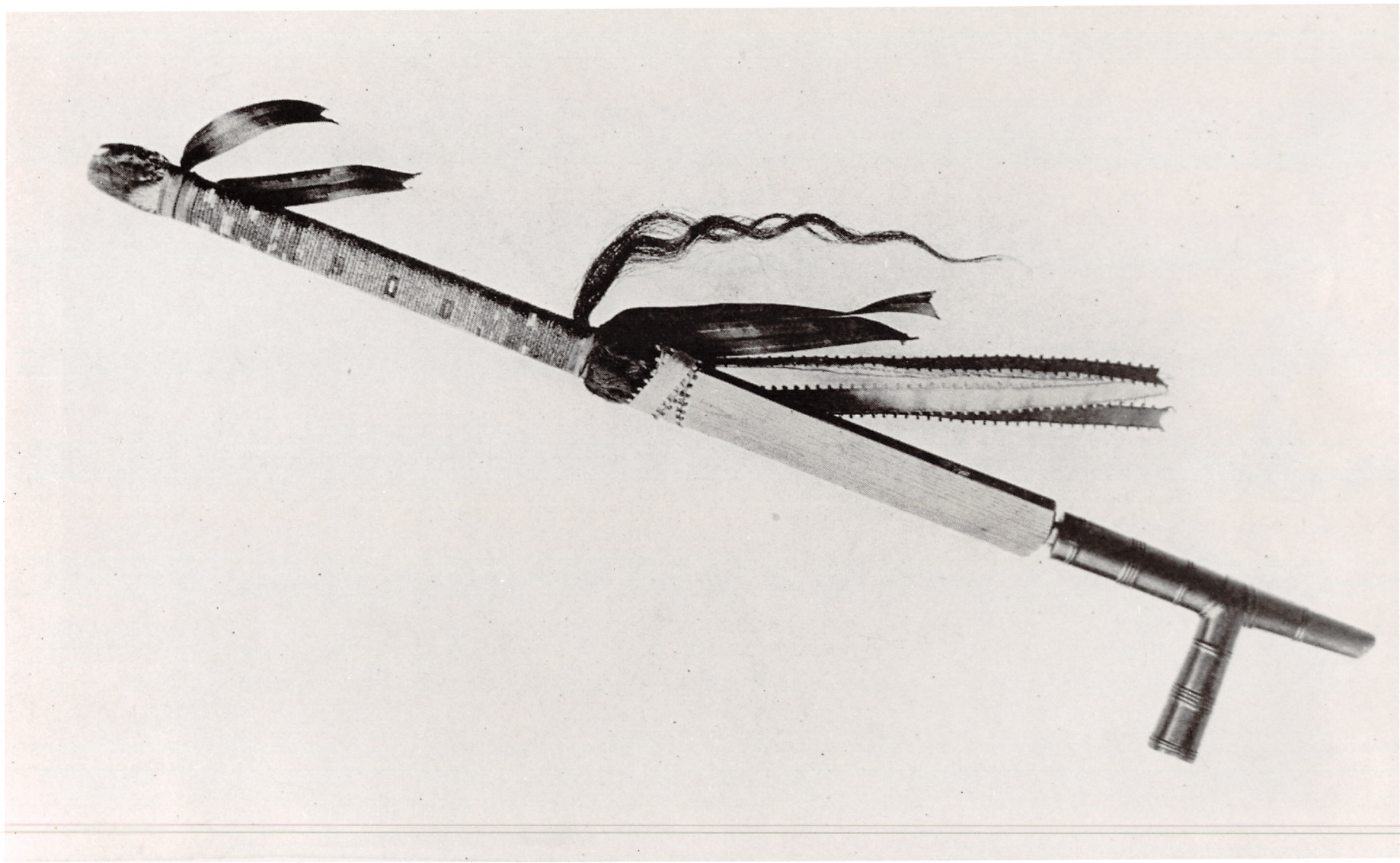








LOG CABIN AND TIPI OF A SIOUX POLICEMAN ON PINE RIDGE RESERVATION IN 1886



SITTING BULL

CLB FROM PHOTO '78





Peint par N. de Keyser.

Déposé.

Gravé par J. Franck.

P. J. De Smet S. J.



Pages
8.26.9

Hiver 23

May Kateri's Joy be Yours!

Kateri received the good news that she might make her First Communion on Christmas Day 1677 with all imaginable joy... She approached herself to this furnace of sacred love that burns on our altars, and she came out of it so glowing with this divine fire that only Our Lord knew what had passed between Himself and His dear spouse during her First Communion. All that we can say is that from that day forward she appeared different from us, because she remained so full of God and of love of Him.

Pierre Cholenec, S.J.
The Mission of St. Francis Xavier
1696

Henri Bechard S.J.