

When more than sixty years ago the Flatheads sent four separate embassies, two of which were destroyed, one by disease, the other by massacre, from the distant Rocky Mountains to St. Louis, through a trackless country, ambuscaded by deadly enemies, fording swollen streams and swimming treacherous rivers; urged by one impelling motive, to secure the ministrations of a Blackrobe: when the dreaded Sioux nation, still steeped in paganism, sent forth its eight most illustrious warriors and medicine men to welcome Father de Smet and with every manifestation of reverence placed him on a richly adorned Buffalo robe and then, amid joyous acclamations and gorgeous ceremonial, carried him in triumph to the crowded council chamber; when Hole-in-the-Day, a name that does not pale by the side of a King Philip, a Pontiac, a Tecumseh or a Blackhawk, besought the Chippewas to unite with the "French Religion" as being the only one that would bring them happiness here and lead them to Great Spirit; when the dying Spotted Tail, "King of the Sioux," gave his pipe to his tribal successor with the sacred injunction to hand it to the first Blackrobe whom he should encounter and beg him to remain with his people; when only a few days ago a Seneca chief knocked at the portals of the Apostolic Delegation in Washington, pleading with the Great Blackrobe Chief's representative, to send his people a missionary — in all these spontaneous exhibitions of a thirst for divine knowledge we have but the reflex sentiment of the entire Indian nation, that its desire and hope is to be Catholic, that the Catholic Church alone can satisfy the yearnings of its soul and silence the clamors of its conscience and lead it to the footstool of the Great Spirit.

In the light of the past history as well as under the pressure of existing conditions, it cannot be accentuated with too much stress and insistence, that it is the imperious duty, the divinely mapped destiny of the Church in the United States to grapple and complete this work. The psychological moment, or rather the heaven-appointed hour, was