

The Jesuits in North America in the 17th Century



by
Francis Parkman

LibriVox

Francis Parkman

The Jesuits in North America 17C

Parkman has been hailed as one of America's first great historians and as a master of narrative history. Numerous translations have spread the books around the world. The American writer and literary critic Edmund Wilson (1895-1972) in his book "O Canada" (1965), described Parkman's France and England in North America in these terms: "The clarity, the momentum and the color of the first volumes of Parkman's narrative are among the most brilliant achievements of the writing of history as an art."

Parkman's biases, particularly his attitudes about nationality, race, and especially Native Americans, has generated criticism. The Canadian historian W. J. Eccles harshly criticized what he perceived as Parkman's bias against France and Roman Catholic policies, as well as what he considered Parkman's misuse of French language sources. However, Parkman's most severe detractor was the American historian Francis Jennings, an outspoken and controversial critic of the European colonization of North America, who went so far as to characterize Parkman's work as "fiction" and Parkman himself as a "liar".

Unlike Jennings and Eccles, many modern historians have found much to praise in Parkman's work even while recognizing his limitations. Calling Jennings' critique "vitriolic and unfair," the historian Robert S. Allen has said that Parkman's history of France and England in North America "remains a rich mixture of history and literature which few contemporary scholars can hope to emulate". The historian Michael N. McConnell, while acknowledging the historical errors and racial prejudice in Parkman's book *The Conspiracy of Pontiac*, has said:

..it would be easy to dismiss Pontiac as a curious perhaps embarrassing artifact of another time and place. Yet Parkman's work represents a pioneering effort; in several ways he anticipated the kind of frontier history now taken for granted.... Parkman's masterful and evocative use of language remains his most enduring and instructive legacy.

(Summary adapted from Wikipedia by Karen Merline)

Read by LibriVox volunteers. Total running time: XX:XX:XX

This recording is in the public domain and may be reproduced, distributed, or modified without permission. For more information or to volunteer, visit librivox.org.

Cover picture wikipedia. Copyright expired in U.S., Canada, EU. and all countries with author's life +70 yrs laws. Cover design by Annise. This design is in the public domain.

The Jesuits in North America 17C

Francis Parkman