AMERICAN JOURNEYS COLLECTION

The Journey of Dollier and Galinée, 1669-1670

by René Brehan de Galinée

DOCUMENT NO. AJ-049

WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
DIGITAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

|| www.americanjourneys.org || www.wisconsinhistory.org ||

The Journey of Dollier and Galinée, 1669-1670

CONTENTS

AMERICAN JOURNEYS COLLECTION

WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY
DIGITAL LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

INTRODUCTION

ZEALOUS and devoted as were the Jesuit missionaries of New France, they were not the only religious order to whom the great adventure appealed, nor the only priests to seek for converts in the heart of the American continent.

In the midst of old Montreal still stands by the water-side the grim, gray seminary of St. Sulpice, whose founders were the seigneurs of the city and who still own much of its landed territory. The brothers of St. Sulpice, an order founded in Paris in 1641, were brave and gallant men, many of them of noble birth and lofty ideals. They dreamed of an empire in New France that should be the Kingdom of God upon the earth, and with the coming to Montreal of the Western Indians for their yearly barter, fair opportunities opened to the Sulpicians for mission work among the tribesmen. Already the brother of the great Fénelon had begun a mission on the north shore of Lake Ontario, when a chance came to open new mission territory in the Far Southwest. The governor of New France fostered the enterprise for the exploration's sake, and in midsummer of 1669 a brave little flotilla of seven birch-bark canoes set off from the water-gate of St. Sulpice to seek a new route into the Western unknown.

Three remarkable men, all in the vigor of early life, were leaders of this expedition. François Dollier de Casson, powerful in frame, erect and soldierly of bearing, was a Breton of noble family, who had served as cavalry captain under the great Turenne. Although but thirty-three years old, he had been three years in Canada, and had learned the Algonquian tongue by wintering in the huts of the savages. Burning with a desire

for their conversion, he had persuaded his superior to permit him to explore for unknown tribes who might listen to the gospel message with more docility than those who had been longer in contact with the French. In 1671 he became superior of St. Sulpice at Montreal, and the head of its religious interests, and there he died in September, 1701.

Dollier de Casson was the originator and leader of the expedition. At the last moment it was decided to associate with him a newly-arrived member of the order, René de Bréhant de Galinée, likewise of a noble Breton family. He had reached Montreal in the late summer of 1668, and, being an expert mathematician, was chosen to accompany the expedition as map-maker and chronicler. A shrewd observer and ready writer, possessed of a keen sense of the picturesque, Galinée gives us in the following pages one of the most interesting narratives of travel that has survived from the seventeenth century. His New World experiences were limited. In 1671 he returned to France, never again to visit the great wilderness whose waterways he so vividly described.

The third member of the expedition was still younger than the two priests, but destined to leave a permanent impress on the history of North America. Robert René Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle, was a Norman from Rouen, where his father was a wealthy burgher interested in the fortunes of the Company of New France. Robert's elder brother Jean had preceded him to Canada, where as a member of the Sulpician order he was in a position to aid his younger brother. Upon the latter's arrival, in 1666, he had secured for him a seigneury on the upper end of Montreal Island, named, in derision of his ambition for Western exploration, La Chine. That it might lead to the discovery of a new water-route to China was apparently La Salle's earliest hope. With a quick and comprehensive mind he readily mastered the Algonquian language, and the winter before his first journey entertained upon his fief two Seneca

Indians, from whom he learned of the existence of south-westerly-flowing streams.

Filled with his project, he sought the governor at Quebec, who consented to his expedition, prudently stipulating, however, that La Salle himself should bear the necessary expense. To provide for this La Salle resold his seigneury to the priests of St. Sulpice, and at the governor's instance joined forces with them in their projected expedition.

So far as is recorded, this was the first journey from the lower Great Lakes to the upper ones, the first expedition to come within sound, if not within sight, of the cataract of Niagara, the first to map the shores of Lakes Ontario and Erie. The incidents of the voyage are so graphically given by Galinée that the reader can follow the travellers with ease. La Salle accompanied them only to the head of Lake Ontario; into the vexed question of his further route we need not here enter.

After a winter near Port Dover, in southern Ontario, the two priests set forth in March for their Western journey. In May they arrived at the Jesuit mission at Sault Ste. Marie; by June they were again at St. Sulpice in Montreal, having made the grand tour of the Great Lakes during an absence of a little less than a year.

Galinée's manuscript account of their voyage is in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, in the Renaudot collection, whose founder was a friend of the Sulpitian missionaries. It is a small manuscript of forty-eight pages, evidently written upon the author's return to Montreal, while every incident was fresh in his memory. Dollier de Casson generously commends it, saying: "I wrote a long account of [the voyage], but as it is much inferior to that of M. de Galinée I have thought best to omit it, because M. de Galinée's description will give you much more satisfaction."

The manuscript was found in 1847, in the library named, by Pierre Margry, who had it copied and furnished transcripts

to Parkman and several Canadian historians. In 1875 the Historical Society of Montreal published a version from which several important paragraphs were omitted, and in which many verbal changes were made. Margry republished it in his *Découvertes et Établissements des Français dans l'Amérique Septentrionale*, I. 112–166. This was collated with the original manuscript, and first translated into English, by James H. Coyne, who published the narrative bilingually in the Ontario Historical Society *Papers and Records*, vol. IV. We reprint from this edition the English version, pp. 1–75. The original manuscript at the Bibliothèque Nationale is in vol. 30 of the Collection Renaudot.

THE JOURNEY OF DOLLIER AND GALINÉE, 1669–1670

Narrative of the Most Noteworthy Incidents in the Journey of Messieurs Dollier and Galinée.

In the year 1669 M. Dollier spent part of the winter with a Nipissing chief named Nitarikyk in order to learn in the woods the Algonkin language. The chief had a slave the Ottawas had presented to him in the preceding year, from a very remote tribe in the southwest. This slave was sent by his master to Montreal on some errand. He came and saw here the Abbé de Queylus,[1] in whose presence he gave so naïve a description of the route to his country that he made everybody believe he was thoroughly familiar with it, and could easily conduct any persons that should wish to go there with him.

The Abbé de Queylus, who is very zealous for the salvation of the Indians of this country, saw that the man might be of great service in the conversion of his countrymen, who, he said, were very numerous. So he thought he could not do better than write M. Dollier by this same slave, that if he was still of the same disposition that he had long since manifested to him, to labor for the salvation of the Indians, he believed God was presenting an excellent opportunity by means of this slave. The latter would be able to conduct him amongst tribes hitherto unknown to the French, and perhaps more tractable than those we have hitherto known, amongst whom, so far, it has been found impossible to produce any result.

M. Dollier, who was actually intending to sacrifice himself

[1] Gabriel, Abbé de Queylus, the head of the Montreal establishment of Sulpicians, arrived in New France in the summer of 1657; during his term as vicar general he made three voyages to France, returning permanently in 1671, and dying there in 1677. His relations with the Jesuit order were not cordial, and he desired to rival their missionary work among the Western Indians.

in some of the missions of this country, seized this opportunity as if it had been sent him from God, and made great friends with the slave, endeavoring to acquire from him some knowledge of his native tongue. In short, he managed so well with the man that he extracted a promise from him to conduct him to his own country.

With this purpose in view M. Dollier returned from the woods in advance of the Indians with whom he was sojourning, in order to go to Quebec to buy the necessary supplies for the undertaking, after receiving the necessary orders from M. de Queylus.

It was at this place that M. de Courcelles[1] requested him to unite with M. de la Salle, a brother of M. Cavelier, in order that they might together make the journey M. de la Salle had been long premeditating towards a great river, which he had understood (by what he thought he had learned from the Indians) had its course towards the west, and at the end of which, after seven or eight months' travelling, these Indians said the land was "cut," that is to say, according to their manner of speaking, the river fell into the sea. This river is called, in the language of the Iroquois, "Ohio."[2] On it are settled a multitude of tribes, from which as yet no one has been seen here, but so numerous are they that, according to the Indians' report, a single nation will include fifteen or twenty villages. The hope of beaver, but especially of finding by this route the passage into the Vermillion Sea, into which M. de la Salle believed the River Ohio emptied, induced him to undertake this expedition, so as not to leave to another the honor of discovering the passage to the South Sea, and thereby the way to China.[3]

M. de Courcelles, the governor of this country, was willing to support this project, in which M. de la Salle showed him some probability by a great number of fine speeches, of which

[1] Daniel de Rémy, Sieur de Courcelles, was governor of New France from 1665 to 1672. He imposed a peace upon the Iroquois after an invasion of the Mohawk lands in central New York.

[2] The word "Ohio" is said to mean beautiful, therefore the French usually called the stream La Belle Rivière.

[3] The Vermillion Sea was the Gulf of California, leading to the South Sea, now the Pacific Ocean, thence across to China, the goal of early New World exploration.

he has no lack. But in short, this expedition tended to a discovery, that could not be otherwise than glorious to the person under whose government it was made, and, moreover, it was costing him nothing.

The project having been authorized by the Governor, letters patent were despatched to M. de la Salle, granting permission to search in all the forests, and all the rivers and lakes of Canada, to see if there might not be something good in them, and requesting the governors of provinces in which he might arrive, such as Virginia, Florida, etc., to allow him passage, and render assistance as they would wish us to do for them in like case. It was to help on this project, moreover, that M. Dollier was requested by the Governor to turn his zeal towards the tribes dwelling on the River Ohio and to agree to accompany M. de la Salle. Permission, moreover, was given to soldiers who wished to undertake this expedition to leave the ranks. At all events, the expedition made a great noise.

Messieurs Dollier and de la Salle went up to Montreal again, after making their purchases at Quebec, and bought all the canoes they could, in order to be able to take as large a party as possible. M. Barthélemy was intended to be a member of the party, and had, as well as M. Dollier, received authority from the Bishop of Canada.[1] Accordingly, towards the end of the month of June, 1669, everybody was preparing in good earnest to set out. M. de la Salle wished to take five canoes and fourteen men, and Messieurs Dollier and Barthélemy three canoes and seven men.

The talk was already of starting as soon as possible, and every one had done his packing, when it occurred to the Abbé de Queylus that M. de la Salle might possibly abandon our gentlemen, and that his temper, which was known to be rather volatile, might lead him to quit them at the first whim, perhaps when it was most necessary to have some one with a little skill in finding his bearings for the return journey, or

[1] François de Laval de Montmorency was the first bishop of Canada. Born near Chartres in 1622, he was educated as a Jesuit, came to Canada in 1659 as vicar apostolic, was chosen bishop of Quebec in 1674, resigned in 1685, and died at Quebec in 1708. A patron of education, the Seminary of Quebec was his legacy to Canada.

acquainted with the situation of known countries, in order not to get them into difficulties through imprudence; and, besides, it was desirable to have some trustworthy map of the route that was contemplated.

It was from these considerations that the Abbé de Queylus permitted me to accompany M. Dollier when I asked his leave. I had already some smattering of mathematics, enough to construct a map in a sort of fashion, but still sufficiently accurate to enable me to find my way back again from any place I might go to in the woods and streams of this country. Besides, they were glad to leave some person here who knew Algonkin, to serve as an interpreter to the Ottawas, when they come here. Accordingly I was accepted for the expedition in the place of M. Barthélemy, who, from his perfect knowledge of the Algonkin language, could be more useful at this place than myself.

I had only three days to get my crew together. I took two men and a canoe, with some goods suitable to barter for provisions with the tribes through which we were to pass, and was ready to embark as soon as the rest. The precipitancy with which my journey was decided upon did not permit me to write the Bishop and the Governor.

Our fleet, consisting of seven canoes, each with three men, left Montreal on the 6th of July, 1669, under the guidance of two canoes of Seneca Iroquois,[1] who had come to Montreal as early as the autumn of the year 1668 to do their hunting and trading. These people whilst here had stayed a long time at M. de la Salle's, and had told him so many marvels of the River Ohio, with which they said they were thoroughly acquainted, that they inflamed in him more than ever the desire to see it. They told him that this river took its rise three days' journey from Seneca, that after a month's travel one came upon the Honniasontkeronons and the Chiouanons,[2] and that, after passing the latter, and a great cataract or waterfall that there is in this river, one found the Outagame

[1] The Seneca, called by the French Sonontouans (or Tsonontouans), was the most westerly division of the Iroquois.

[2] The latter tribe was that of the Shawnee; the former probably a subdivision of that tribe, whom the Iroquois called Ontonagannhas, meaning the rude, barbarous people.

and the country of the Iskousogos,[1] and finally a country so abundant in roebucks and wild cattle that they were as thick as the woods, and so great a number of tribes that there could not be more.

M. de la Salle reported all these things to M. Dollier, whose zeal became more and more ardent for the salvation of these poor Indians, who perhaps would have made good use of the word of God, if it had been proclaimed to them; and the greatness of this zeal prevented M. Dollier from remarking that M. de la Salle, who said that he understood the Iroquois perfectly, and had learned all these things from them through his perfect acquaintance with their language, did not know it at all, and was embarking upon this expedition almost blindly, scarcely knowing where he was going. He had been led to expect that by making some present to the village of the Senecas he could readily procure slaves of the tribes to which he intended to go, who might serve him as guides.

As for myself, I would not start from here unless I could take with me a man who knew Iroquois. I have applied myself to Algonkin since I have been here; but I should have been very glad at that time to know as much Iroquois as Algonkin. The only person I could find who could serve me for this purpose was a Dutchman. He knows Iroquois perfectly, but French very little. At length, unable to find any other, I embarked. M. Dollier and I intended to call at Kenté to obtain intelligence of our gentlemen who are on mission there,[2] but our guides were of the great village of Seneca, and we dared not leave them lest we should be unable to find any others.

With the outfit I have mentioned, we left Montreal on the 6th of July, 1669, and the same day ascended the St. Louis Rapids, which are only a league and a half away. Navigation above Montreal is quite different from that below. The latter is made in ships, barks, launches, and boats, because the

[1] The country of the Outagami and Mascoutin (Iskousogos) before their migration to Wisconsin was not far from the western end of Lake Erie.

[2] A Sulpician mission had been begun in 1668 on the north shore of Lake Ontario at the present Bay of Quinté (Kenté) not far from the modern Kingston. The two missionaries were Claude Trouvé and François, Abbé de Fénelon. This mission was maintained until 1673.

River St. Lawrence is very deep, as far up as Montreal, a distance of 200 leagues; but immediately above Montreal one is confronted with a rapid or waterfall amidst numerous large rocks, that will not allow a boat to go through, so that canoes only can be used. These are little birch-bark canoes, about twenty feet long and two feet wide, strengthened inside with cedar floors and gunwales, very thin, so that one man carries it with ease, although the boat is capable of carrying four men and eight or nine hundred pounds' weight of baggage. There are some made that carry as many as ten or twelve men with their outfit, but it requires two or three men to carry them.

This style of canoes affords the most convenient and the commonest mode of navigation in this country, although it is a true saying that when a person is in one of these vessels he is always, not a finger's breadth, but the thickness of five or six sheets of paper, from death. These canoes cost Frenchmen who buy them from Indians nine or ten crowns in clothes, but from Frenchmen to Frenchmen they are much dearer. Mine cost me eighty livres. It is only the Algonkin-speaking tribes that build these canoes well. The Iroquois use all kinds of bark except birch for their canoes. They build canoes that are badly made and very heavy, which last at most only a month, whilst those of the Algonkins, if taken care of, last five or six years.

You do not row in these canoes as in a boat. In the latter the oar is attached to a rowlock on the boat's side; but here you hold one hand near the blade of the oar and the other at the end of the handle, and use it to push the water behind you, without the oar touching the canoe in any way. Moreover, it is necessary in these canoes to remain all the time on your knees or seated, taking care to preserve your balance well; for the vessels are so light that a weight of twenty pounds on one side more than the other is enough to overturn them, and so quickly that one scarcely has time to guard against it. They are so frail that to bear a little upon a stone or to touch it a little clumsily is sufficient to cause a hole, which can, however, be mended with resin.

The convenience of these canoes is great in these streams, full of cataracts or waterfalls, and rapids through which it is

impossible to take any boat. When you reach them you load canoe and baggage upon your shoulders and go overland until the navigation is good; and then you put your canoe back into the water, and embark again. If God grants me the grace of returning to France, I shall endeavor to take over one of these canoes, to show it to those who have not seen them. I see no handiwork of the Indians that appears to me to merit the attention of Europeans, except their canoes and their rackets for walking on snow. There is no conveyance either better or swifter than that of the canoe; for four good canoemen will not be afraid to bet that they can pass in their canoe eight or ten rowers in the fastest launch that can be seen.

I have made a long digression here upon canoes because, as I have already said, I have found nothing here more beautiful or more convenient. Without them it would be impossible to navigate above Montreal or in any of the numerous rivers of this country. I know none of these without some waterfall or rapid, in which one would inevitably get wrecked if he wished to run them.

The inns or shelters for the night are as extraordinary as the vehicles, for after paddling or portaging the entire day you find towards evening the fair earth all ready to receive your tired body. When the weather is fine, after unloading your canoe, you make a fire and go to bed without otherwise housing yourself; but when it is wet, it is necessary to go and strip some trees, the bark of which you arrange upon four small forks, with which you make a cabin to save you from the rain. The Algonkins carry with them pieces of birch-bark, split thin and sewed together so that they are four fathoms in length and three feet wide. These roll up into very small compass, and under three of these pieces of bark hung upon poles eight or nine men can be easily sheltered. Even winter cabins are made with them that are warmer than our houses. Twenty or thirty poles are arranged lengthwise so that they all touch each other at the top, and the bark is spread over the poles, with a little fire in the centre. Under these strips of bark I have passed days and nights where it was very cold, with three feet of snow upon the ground, without being extraordinarily inconvenienced

As to the matter of food, it is such as to cause all the

books to be burned that cooks have ever made, and themselves to be forced to renounce their art. For one manages in the woods of Canada to fare well without bread, wine, salt, pepper, or any condiments. The ordinary diet is Indian corn, called in France Turkey wheat, which is ground between two stones and boiled in water; the seasoning is with meat or fish, when you have any. This way of living seemed to us all so extraordinary that we felt the effects of it. Not one of us was exempt from some illness before we were a hundred leagues from Montreal.

We took the Lake Ontario route, our guides conducting us along the River St. Lawrence. The route is very difficult as far as Otondiata,[1] about forty leagues from here, for it is necessary to be almost always in the water dragging the canoes. Up to that place there are only thirteen or fourteen leagues of good sailing, in Lake St. Francis and Lake St. Louis. The river banks are of fairly good land here and there, but commonly it is mere sand or rocks. It is true the fishing is pretty good in all these rapids, for most frequently we had only to throw the line into the water to catch forty or fifty fish of the kind called here *barbue* (catfish). There is none like it in France. Travellers and poor people live on it very comfortably, for it can be eaten, and is very good cooked in water without any sauce. It is also full of a very good oil, which forms admirable seasoning for sagamite, the name given to porridge made of Indian corn.

We took two moose in Lake St. Francis, which were the beginning of our hunting. We fared sumptuously on them. These moose are large animals, like mules and shaped nearly like them, except that the moose has a cloven hoof, and on his head very large antlers which he sheds every winter, and which are flat like those of the fallow deer. Their flesh is very good, especially when fat, and the hide is very valuable. It is what is commonly called here the *orignal*. The hot weather and our scanty experience of living in the woods made us lose a good part of our meat.

The mode of curing it in the woods, where there is no salt, is to cut it in very thin slices and spread it on a gridiron raised

[1] Otondiata was Grenadier Island, not far from Oswegatchie River, at whose mouth now stands Ogdensburgh, New York.

three feet from the ground, covered with small wooden switches on which you spread your meat. Then a fire is made underneath the gridiron, and the meat is dried in the fire and smoke until there is no longer any moisture in it and it is as dry as a piece of wood.[1] It is put up in packages of thirty or forty, rolled up in pieces of bark, and thus wrapped up it will keep five or six years without spoiling. When you wish to eat it you reduce it to powder between two stones and make a broth by boiling with Indian corn. The loss of our meat resulted in our having nothing to eat but Indian corn with water for nearly a month, for generally we were not in fishing spots, and we were not in the season of good hunting.

At last, with all our misery, we discovered Lake Ontario on the second day of August, which comes in sight like a great sea, with no land visible but what you coast along. What seems land on the lake-shore is merely sand and rocks. It is true that in the depth of the woods fine land is remarked, especially along some streams that empty into the lake. It is by this route that the reverend Jesuit Fathers go to their Iroquois missions, and on the river of Onondaga that they intend to make their principal establishment.[2] They have eight or ten men there now for the purpose of building a house and making clearings to sow grain. Before this year there were only one Father and one man for each nation, but this year they have sent a considerable shipment of men and merchants to begin a permanent establishment to which the missionaries may retire from time to time to renew their spiritual and bodily strength, for, to tell the truth, the life of missionaries in this country is the most dissipating life that can be imagined. Scarcely anything is thought of but bodily necessities, and the constant example of the savages, who think only of satisfying their flesh, brings the mind into an almost inevitable enervation, unless one guards against it.

There are rivers flowing into Lake Ontario that lead into

[1] This method of preparing meat is called by frontiersmen "jerking," and the dried product is known as "jerk."

[2] This settlement, called Ste. Marie, was on the eastern side of Onondaga Lake, between Syracuse and Liverpool, New York. The mission to the Onondaga, begun by Jogues in 1646, was re-established nine years later and named Mission of St. Jean Baptiste.

the forests of the Five Iroquois Nations, as you will see them marked on the map. On the 8th of August we arrived at an island where a Seneca Indian has made a sort of country house, to which he retires in summer to eat with his family a little Indian corn and squash that he grows there every year. He has concealed himself so well, that unless one knew the spot one would have a great deal of difficulty in finding it. They are obliged to conceal themselves in this way when they leave their villages, lest their enemies, who are always around for the purpose of surprising and killing them, should discover them.

The good man received us well and entertained us hospitably with squashes boiled in water. Our guide would stay two days with him, after which, leaving us to go to notify the village of our arrival, we were not in entire security for our lives in the vicinity of this tribe, and many reasons gave us ground for apprehending something disagreeable.

In the first place, the peace had been made very shortly before, and these barbarians had often broken it with us when it seemed still more assured than this one, and all the more easily, as there are no authorities amongst them, everyone being perfectly free in his actions, so that all that is necessary is for a young ruffian, to whom the peace is not acceptable, or who remembers that one of his relations was killed in the preceding wars, to come and commit some act of hostility, and so break the treaty that has been made by the old men.

Secondly, the Antastogué or Antastouais, who are the Indians of New Sweden,[1] that are at war with the Senecas, are continually roving about in the outskirts of their country, and had shortly before killed ten men in the very spot where we were obliged to sojourn an entire month.

Thirdly, a week or a fortnight before our departure from Montreal, three of the soldiers in garrison there, having gone to trade, found a Seneca Indian who had a quantity of furs, to get which they made up their minds to murder the Indian, and in fact did so. Happily for us the matter was discovered

[1] The Andastes were of Iroquoian stock, occupying the valley of the Susquehanna River. The English called them Susquehannocks, Minquas, or Conestoga Indians. See A. C. Myers, *Narratives of Early Pennsylvania, West New Jersey, and Delaware* (Original Narratives Series), pp. 103, 104.

five or six days before our departure, and the criminals, being convicted, were put to death in presence of several Seneca Indians that were here at the time, and who were appeased at the sight of this justice; for they had resolved, in order to avenge the deceased, who was a man of importance, to kill just as many Frenchmen as they could catch away from the settlements. Judge for yourselves whether it would have had a good result for us in this country if we had left Montreal before those criminals had been executed. But nevertheless, although the bulk of the nation was appeased by this execution, the relatives of the deceased did not consider themselves satisfied, and wished at all hazards to sacrifice some Frenchmen to their vengeance, and loudly boasted of it. On this account we performed sentry duty every night, and constantly kept all our weapons in good condition.

However, I can assure you, that for a person who sees himself in the midst of all these alarms and who must, moreover, add the constant fear of dying of hunger or disease in the midst of a forest, without any help—in the midst, I say, of all these alarms, when one believes he is here by the will of God, and in the thought that what one suffers is agreeable to Him and will be able to serve for the salvation of some one of these poor Indians, not only is one free from sadness, but, on the contrary, one tastes a very appreciable joy in the midst of all these hardships.

This is what we experienced many times, but especially M. Dollier, who was sick near Seneca with a continued fever, that almost carried him off in a short time. He said to me at the time, "I am well pleased, and even rejoice, to see myself destitute as I am of all spiritual and corporal aid." "Yes," said he, "I would rather die in the midst of this forest in the order of the will of God, as I believe I am, than amongst all my brethren in the Seminary of Saint Sulpice."

At length, after thirty-five days of very difficult navigation, we arrived at a small stream, called by the Indians Karontagouat,[1] which is at the part of the lake nearest to Seneca, about one hundred leagues southwestward from Montreal. I took the altitude at this place with the Jacob's-staff that I had brought, on the 26th August, 1669, and as I had a

[1] The present Irondequoit River of central New York.

very fine horizon to the north, for no more land is seen there than in the open sea, I took the altitude from behind, which is the most accurate. I found the sun then distant from the zenith 33 degrees, to which I added 10 degrees 12 minutes, being the sun's north declination for that day. The equinoctial was distant from the zenith, and consequently the north pole elevated above the horizon, at this place, 43 degrees 12 minutes, which is its actual latitude, and agreed pretty well with the latitude I found I had obtained by dead reckoning, following the practice of sailors, who do not fail to get the latitude they are in although they have no instrument for taking altitude.[1]

No sooner had we arrived at this place than we were visited by a number of Indians who came to make us small presents of Indian corn, squashes, blackberries, and blueberries, fruits that they have in abundance. We returned the compliment by making them also a present of knives, awls, needles, glass beads, and other things which they esteemed and with which we were well provided.

Our guides requested us to wait at this place until the next day, and informed us that the principal persons would not fail to come in the evening with provisions to escort us to the village. And, in fact, the evening was no sooner come than we saw a large band of Indians arriving with a number of women loaded with provisions, who came and camped near us and made bread for us of Indian corn and fruits. They would not speak there in form of council, but told us we were expected at the village, and that word had been sent through all the cabins to assemble all the old men for the council, which was to be held to learn the reason of our coming.

Thereupon M. Dollier, M. de la Salle, and I consulted together to know in what manner we should act, what should be offered as presents, and how many should be made. It was resolved that I should go to the village with M. de la Salle to try to get a slave of the tribes to which we wished to go for the purpose of conducting us thither, and that we should take eight of our Frenchmen with us. The rest were to remain

[1] This observation was very accurate, being about the true latitude of the entrance to Irondequoit River. The Jacob's-staff, or cross-staff, was a rude predecessor of the quadrant.

with M. Dollier in charge of the canoes. The business was carried out in this way, and no sooner had daylight appeared, on the next day, the 12th August, than we were notified by the Indians that it was time to start. We set out accordingly, ten Frenchmen with 40 or 50 Indians, who obliged us every league to take a rest for fear of tiring us too much. About half way, we found another band of Indians coming to meet us who made us a present of provisions and joined us in order to return to the village. When we were about a league away the halts were more frequent and the crowd kept adding to our escort more and more until at last we saw ourselves in sight of the great village, which is in the midst of a large clearing about two leagues in circumference.[1]

In order to reach it, it is necessary to ascend a small hill, on the brow of which the village is situated. As soon as we had climbed this hill, we perceived a large number of old men seated on the grass waiting for us, who had left a good place for us opposite them, where they invited us to sit down, which we did. At the same time an old man, who could scarcely see and hardly hold himself up, so old was he, rose and in a very animated tone made us an oration, in which he assured us of his joy at our arrival, that we might regard the Senecas as our brothers and they regarded us as theirs, and that, feeling thus, they requested us to enter their village, where they had prepared a cabin for us whilst waiting until we should broach our purpose. We thanked them for their civilities and informed them through our interpreter that on the following day we should tell them the object of our journey.

Thereupon an Indian, who had the office of introducer of ambassadors, presented himself to conduct us to our lodging. We followed him, and he took us to the largest cabin of the village, where they had prepared our abode, with orders to the women of the cabin to let us lack for nothing. And in truth they were always very faithful whilst we were there to attend to our kettles, and bring us the necessary wood to light up during the night.

This village, like all those of the Indians, is nothing but a lot of cabins, surrounded with palisades of poles twelve or

[1] This was the Seneca village on the site of Boughton Hill, about one mile south of Victor in Ontario County, New York.

thirteen feet high, fastened together at the top and planted in the ground, with great piles of wood the height of a man behind these palisades, the curtains being not otherwise flanked, merely a simple enclosure, perfectly square, so that these forts are not defensible. Besides, they scarcely ever take care to settle on the bank of a stream or spring, but on some hill, where, as a general rule, they are some distance from water. By the evening of the 12th, we saw all the principal persons of the other villages arriving to attend the council, which was to be held next day.

The Seneca nation is the most numerous of all the Iroquois. It is composed of four villages, two of which contain one hundred and fifty cabins each, and the other two about thirty cabins, in all, perhaps, a thousand or twelve hundred men capable of bearing arms. The two large villages are about six or seven leagues apart, and both are six or seven leagues from the lake shore.

The country between the lake and the large village,[1] farthest to the east, to which I was going, is for the most part beautiful, broad meadows, on which the grass is as tall as myself. In the spots where there are woods, these are oak plains, so open that one could easily run through them on horseback. This open country, we were told, continues eastward more than a hundred leagues. Westward and southward it extends so far that its limit is unknown, especially towards the south, where treeless meadows are found more than one hundred leagues in length, and where the Indians who have been there say very good fruits and extremely fine Indian corn are grown.

At last, the 13th of August having arrived, the Indians assembled in our cabin to the number of fifty or sixty of the principal persons of the nation. Their custom is, when they come in, to sit down in the most convenient place they find vacant, regardless of rank, and at once get some fire to light their pipes, which do not leave their mouths during the whole time of the council. They say good thoughts come whilst smoking.

When we saw the assembly was numerous enough, we began to talk business, and it was then M. de la Salle admitted he was unable to make himself understood. On the other hand, my

[1] On the site of the present city of Geneva, New York.

interpreter said he did not know enough French to make himself thoroughly understood by us. So we deemed it more convenient to make use of Father Frémin's man to deliver our address and interpret to us what the Indians should say; and it was actually done in this way. It is to be remarked that Father Frémin[1] was not then at the place of his mission, but had gone a few days before to Onondaga for a meeting that was to be held there of all the Jesuits scattered among the five Iroquois nations. At that time there was no one but Father Frémin's man, who served as our interpreter.

Our first present was a double-barrelled pistol worth sixty livres, and the word we joined to the present was that we regarded them as our brothers, and in this character were so strong in their interest that we made them a present of this double-barrelled pistol, so that with one shot they could kill the Loups,[2] and with the other the Andostoues, two tribes against whom they wage a cruel war.

The second present consisted of six kettles, six hatchets, four dozen knives, and five or six pounds of large glass beads, and the word was that we came on the part of Onontio (so they call the Governor) to confirm the peace.

Lastly, the third present was two capotes, four kettles, six hatchets, and some glass beads; and the word was that we came on the part of Onontio to see the tribes called by them the Touguenha,[3] living on the River Ohio, and we asked of them a slave from that country to conduct us thither. They decided that our proposition should be considered. So they waited until next day before answering us. These tribes have this custom, that they do not speak of any business without making some present, as if to serve as a reminder of the speech they deliver.

Early next morning they all proceeded to our cabin, and the

[1] Father Jacques Frémin (1628–1691) entered the Jesuit order in 1646; coming to Canada about nine years later he became in 1669 superior of the Jesuit missions to the Iroquois. In later life he served at the mission colonies on the St. Lawrence, dying at Quebec. He was the author of several of the *Jesuit Relations*.

[2] The Delaware Indians, called the Loups (Wolves) by the French. Their habitat was along the river of their name.

[3] This was an Iroquois word for the Shawnee tribe. See another form of the word, p. 170, note 2, *ante*.

head chief amongst them presented a wampum belt, to assure us we were welcome amongst our brothers. The second present was a second wampum belt, to tell us they were firmly resolved to keep the peace with the French and their nation had never made war on the French; they would not begin it in a time of peace. For the third present they told us they would give us a slave, as we asked for one, but begged us to wait until their people came back from the trade with the Dutch, to which they had taken all their slaves, and then they would give us one without fail. We asked them not to keep us waiting more than a week, because the season was getting late, and they promised us. Thereupon everybody went off home.

Meanwhile they treated us in the best way they could, and everyone vied with his neighbor in feasting us after the fashion of the country. I must confess that several times I had more desire to give back what I had in my stomach than to put anything new into it. The great dish in this village, where they seldom have fresh meat, is a dog, the hair of which they singe over coals. After scraping it well, they cut it in pieces and put it into the kettle. When it is cooked, they serve you a piece of three or four pounds' weight in a wooden platter that has never been rubbed with any other dishcloth than the fingers of the lady of the house, which appear all smeared with the grease that is always in their platter to the thickness of a silver crown. Another of their greatest dishes is Indian meal cooked in water and then served in a wooden bowl with two fingers of bear's grease or oil of sun-flowers or of butternuts upon it. There was not a child in the village but was eager to bring us now stalks of Indian corn, at another time squashes, or it might be other small fruits that they go and gather in the woods.

We passed the time in this way for seven or eight days, waiting until some slave should return from the trading to be given to us. During the interval, to while away the time, I went with M. de la Salle under the guidance of two Indians, about four leagues south of the village we were in, to see an extraordinary spring.[1] It forms a small brook as it issues

[1] This spring, which yields sulphuretted hydrogen gas, is situated in Bristol township of Ontario County, about half-way between Honeoye and Canandaigua.

from a rather high rock. The water is very clear, but has a bad odor, like that of Paris mud, when the mud at the bottom of the water is stirred with the foot. He put a torch in it, and immediately the water took fire as brandy does, and it does not go out until rain comes. This flame is, amongst the Indians, a sign of abundance, or of scarcity when it has the opposite qualities. There is no appearance of sulphur or saltpetre, or any other combustible matter. The water has no taste even; and I cannot say or think anything better than that this water passes through some aluminous earth, from which it derives this combustible quality.

During that time, also, brandy was brought to the village from the Dutch, on which several Indians got drunk. Several times relations of the man who had been killed at Montreal a few days before we left, threatened us in their drunkenness that they would break our heads. It is a somewhat common custom amongst them when they have enemies, to get drunk and afterwards go and break their heads or stab them to death, so as to be able to say afterward that they committed the wicked act when they were not in their senses. It is actually their custom not to mourn for those who have died in this manner, for fear of causing pain to the living by reminding him of his crime. However, we always kept so well on our guard that no accident happened to us.

Lastly, it was during that time that I saw the saddest spectacle I ever saw in my life. I was told one evening that some warriors had arrived, that they had brought in a prisoner, and he had been put in a cabin not far from our own. I went to see him, and found him seated with three women, who were striving to outdo each other in bewailing the death of their kinsman, who had been killed on the occasion on which this man had been made prisoner.

He was a young fellow of eighteen or twenty years, very well formed. They had dressed him from head to foot since his arrival, and had done him no harm since his capture. They had not even given him the salutation of blows with sticks, which it is their custom to give their prisoners on entering the village. So I thought I should have time to ask for him in order that he might be our guide; for it was said he was one of the Touguenhas. I went accordingly to M. de la Salle for

that purpose, who told me the Senecas were men of their word; as they had promised us a slave they would give us one, and it mattered little to us whether it was this man or another, and it was best not to press them. I gave myself no further trouble accordingly. Night came on and we went to bed. The light of next day had no sooner appeared than a large company entered our cabin, to tell us the prisoner was to be burned, and had asked to see some of the Mistigouch. I ran to the public square to see him, and found him already on the scaffold, where they were fastening him, hand and foot, to a stake. I was astonished to hear from him some Algonkin words, which I recognized, although from his manner of pronouncing them they seemed somewhat hard to make out. At last he made me understand that he would be glad if his execution were put off till the next day. If he had spoken good Algonkin I should have understood him, but his language differed from Algonkin even more than that of the Ottawas. So I understood him but very little.

I sent word to the Iroquois by our Dutch interpreter, but he told me the prisoner had been given to an old woman in place of her son, who had been killed: that she could not bear to see him live, and all her relations were so much concerned in her grief that they could not delay his execution. The irons were in the fire to torture the poor wretch. As for myself, I told my interpreter to ask for him as the slave that had been promised, and I would make a present to the old woman to whom he belonged; but our interpreter never would make this proposition, saying it was not the custom amongst them, and the matter was too important. I went so far as to threaten him in order to make him say what I wished, but could effect nothing, because he was obstinate like a Dutchman, and ran away from me.

I remained alone accordingly near the poor sufferer, who saw before him the instruments of his execution. I endeavored to make him understand that he must no longer have recourse to anyone but God, and should offer Him this prayer, "Thou who madest all, have pity on me; I am sorry I have not obeyed Thee; but if I live I will obey Thee entirely." He understood me better than I understood him, because all the tribes bordering on the Ottawas understand Algonkin. I did not think I

could baptize him, not only because I did not understand him sufficiently to know his frame of mind, but also because the Iroquois were urging me to leave him, in order to begin their tragedy; and, moreover, I believed that the act of contrition which I was persuading him to make might save him. Certainly, if I had foreseen this accident the evening before, I would have baptized him, because I should have had time to instruct him during the night; but I could do nothing at the time but encourage him to suffer patiently, and to offer to God his torments, saying often to him, "Thou who madest all, have pity on me," which he repeated, with his eyes raised to heaven.

At the same time I saw the principal relative of the deceased approach with a gun-barrel red-hot up to the middle. This obliged me to withdraw. The others began to find fault with me for encouraging him, the more so because amongst them it is a bad omen for a prisoner to endure torture patiently. I retired therefore with grief, and scarcely had I turned my head when this barbarian of an Iroquois applied his red-hot gun-barrel to the top of his feet, which made the poor wretch utter a loud cry, and forced me to turn towards him. I saw that Iroquois with a grave and steady hand applying the iron slowly along his feet and legs, and other old men smoking round the scaffold, with all the young people leaping for joy to see the contortions that the violence of the fire compelled the poor sufferer to make.

Meanwhile I retired to the cabin in which we lodged, filled with grief at not being able to save this poor slave, and it was then I recognized more than ever how important it was not to engage one's self amongst the tribes of these countries without knowing their language or being sure of one's interpreter; and I may say that the lack of an interpreter under our own control prevented the entire success of our expedition.

I was in our cabin praying to God and very sorrowful. M. de la Salle came to tell me he feared, in the tumult he saw the whole village was in, there was reason to apprehend some insult might be offered to us; there were many persons getting drunk that day, and finally he was resolved to get away to the place where the canoes and the rest of our people were. I told him I was ready to follow him, and that remaining with him I had difficulty in getting that pitiful spectacle out of my mind.

We told seven or eight of our men who were with us at the time to withdraw for that day to a little village half a league from the large one in which we were, for fear of some insult, and M. de la Salle and I came away and found M. Dollier six good leagues from the village.

There were some of our men barbarous enough to wish to see the torture of the poor Toaguenha from beginning to end. They reported next day that he had been burned with hot irons over his whole body for the space of six hours, until there was not a single spot on him that was not roasted. After that they had required him to run six courses through the square where the Iroquois awaited him armed with large flaming brands, with which they kept urging him on and knocking him down when he would come near them. Many took kettles full of coals and hot cinders, with which they covered him the instant that, by reason of his exhaustion and weakness, he wished to rest for a single moment. At last, after two hours of this barbarous amusement, they killed him with a stone, and afterwards, everyone throwing himself upon him, tore him to pieces. One carried off his head, another an arm, a third some other limb, and everyone hurried away to put it in the kettle to feast on it. Several presented portions of his flesh to the French, telling them there was no better eating in the world; but no one would try the experiment. Towards evening everybody assembled in the square, each with a small stick in his hand, with which they began to beat the cabins on all sides with a very great clatter, to drive away, as they said, the dead man's soul, which might have hidden itself in some corner to do them harm.

We returned to the village some time afterward to collect amongst the cabins the supply of Indian corn that we needed for our expedition, which the women of the village brought to us, each according to her means. We had to carry it on our necks six good leagues, the distance from the village to the place where we were encamped.

During our sojourn at the village we had made careful enquiry as to the road we must take to reach the River Ohio, and everybody had told us that in order to get to it from Seneca, it was six days' journey by land of about twelve leagues each. This made us think it was not possible for us to get to it that

way, as we could hardly carry anything for so long a journey but the mere necessaries of life—carrying our baggage being out of the question. But at the same time we were told that in going to Lake Erie by canoe we should have only three days' portage to get to that river,[1] much nearer the tribes we were seeking than we should find it going by Seneca.

But what prevented us more than all was that the Indians told our Dutch interpreter he had no sense to wish to go to the Toaguenha, who were an extremely wicked people, that would endeavor to discover our fire in the evening, and afterwards come in the night and kill us with their arrows, with which they would have us covered before we could perceive them; that furthermore, we ran a great risk along the Ohio River of encountering the Antastoez, who would unquestionably break our heads; that for this reason the Senecas were unwilling to come with us, for fear people might think they were the cause of the Frenchmen's death, and they had much difficulty in making up their minds to give us a guide, for fear Onontio should impute our death to them and afterward come to make war upon them in order to avenge it.

This kind of talk was going on without our knowing anything about it, but I was quite astonished to see the ardor of my Dutchman abating, who kept dinning into my ears that the Indians, where we wished to go, were no good and would kill us without fail. When I told him there was nothing to fear as long as we kept proper sentry, he answered me that the sentry, being near the fire, would not be able to perceive those coming in the night under cover of the trees and underbrush. In short, by all his talk, he showed me he was frightened. In fact, he no longer prosecuted the business of the guide with as much ardor as before, and, moreover, the Indians were given the cue. So they kept putting us off from day to day, saying that their people were slower in returning from trade than they expected. We suffered a great deal from this delay, because we were losing the favorable season for navigation, and could not hope to winter with any tribe if we delayed longer, a contingency that M. de la Salle regarded

[1] This was the route via Erie (formerly Presque Isle) and French Creek to the Allegheny River, which was sometimes called the Ohio, as being the headwaters of that stream.

as certain death, because we were not certain of being able to subsist in the woods. However, thank God, we experienced the contrary.

We were extricated from all these difficulties by the arrival of an Indian who came from the Dutch and camped at the place where we were. He was from a village of Iroquois of the Five Nations, collected at the end of Lake Ontario for the convenience of hunting roebuck and bear, which are plentiful at that place. This Indian assured us we should have no difficulty in finding a guide; there were a number of slaves there from the nations to which we desired to go, and he would willingly take us there. We thought it well to adopt this course, both because we were always making headway and nearing the place we wished to go to, and because, the village consisting of only eighteen or twenty cabins, we persuaded ourselves we should all the more easily become its masters and make them do through fear a part of what they would not be willing to do for friendship.

In that hope, we quitted the Senecas. We discovered a river one-eighth of a league wide and extremely rapid, which is the outlet or communication from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario.[1] The depth of this stream (for it is properly the River St. Lawrence) is prodigious at this spot; for at the very shore there are fifteen or sixteen fathoms of water, which fact we proved by dropping our line. This outlet may be forty leagues in length, and contains, at a distance of ten or twelve leagues from its mouth in Lake Ontario, one of the finest cataracts or waterfalls in the world; for all the Indians to whom I have spoken about it said the river fell in that place from a rock higher than the tallest pine trees; that is, about two hundred feet. In fact, we heard it from where we were. But this fall gives such an impulse to the water that, although we were ten or twelve leagues away, the water is so rapid that one can with great difficulty row up against it. At a quarter of a league from the mouth, where we were, it begins to contract and to continue its channel between two steep and very high rocks, which makes me think it would be navigable with difficulty as far as the neighborhood of the falls. As to the part above the falls, the water draws from a considerable

[1] The River Niagara.

distance into that precipice, and very often stags and hinds, elks and roebucks, suffer themselves to be drawn along so far in crossing this river that they find themselves compelled to take the leap and to see themselves swallowed up in that horrible gulf.

Our desire to go on to our little village called Ganastogué Sonontoua Outinaouatoua[1] prevented our going to see that wonder, which I regarded as so much the greater, as the River St. Lawrence is one of the largest in the world. I leave you to imagine if it is not a beautiful cascade, to see all the water of this great river, which at its mouth is three leagues in width, precipitate itself from a height of two hundred feet with a roar that is heard not only from the place where we were, ten or twelve leagues distant, but actually from the other side of Lake Ontario, opposite this mouth, from which M. Trouvé[2] told me he had heard it. We passed this river, accordingly, and at last, after five days' voyage, arrived at the end of Lake Ontario, where there is a fine large sandy bay, at the bottom of which is the outlet of another little lake discharging itself. This our guides made us enter about half a league, and then unload our canoes at the place nearest the village, which is, however, five or six good leagues away.

It was at that place, whilst waiting for the principal persons of the village to come to us with some men to carry our baggage, that M. de la Salle, having gone hunting, brought back a high fever which pulled him down a great deal in a few days. Some say it was at the sight of three large rattlesnakes he found in his path whilst climbing a rock that the fever seized him. It is certainly, after all, a very ugly sight; for these animals are not timid like other serpents, but wait for a man, putting themselves at once in a posture of defence, coiling half the body from the tail to the middle as if it were a cable, holding the rest of the body quite erect, and darting sometimes as much as three or four paces, all the time

[1] This small village is thought to have been situated in the Beverly swamp, near the village of Westover, Ontario. It is usually spoken of as Tinawatawa, see *post*.

[2] Claude Trouvé was one of the Sulpitian fathers who had charge of the mission on the Bay of Quinté. A native of Tours, he came to Canada in 1667, was five years at the Lake Ontario mission (1668–1673), later on the lower St. Lawrence.

making a great noise with the rattle that they carry at the end of their tails. There are a great many of them at this place, as thick as one's arm, six or seven feet long, entirely black. The rattle that they carry at the end of the tail, and shake very rapidly, makes a noise like that which a number of melon or squash seeds would make, if shut up in a box.

At last, after three days' waiting, the principal persons and almost everyone in the village came to find us. We held council in our camp, where my Dutchman succeeded better than we had done at the large village. We made two presents in order to obtain two slaves, and a third to get our packs carried to the village. The Indians made us two presents; the first of fourteen or fifteen dressed deer-skins, to tell us they were going to take us to their village, but were only a handful of people, incapable of resisting us, and begged us to do them no harm and not to burn them as the French had burnt the Mohawks.[1] We assured them of our good-will. They made us another present of about five thousand wampum beads, and, lastly, of two slaves for guides. One was from the nation of the Shawanons and the other from the Nez-Percés.[2] I have thought since that he was from a nation near the Pottawattamies; however, both were good hunters and showed that they were well disposed. The Shawanon fell to M. de la Salle and the other to us. They told us, besides, that on the following day they would help us to carry our baggage to their village, in order to go on from there to take us to the bank of a river, where we could embark for the purpose of entering Lake Erie.

We were very much pleased with the inhabitants of this little village, who entertained us to the best of their ability. M. Dollier could not contain the joy that he had in seeing himself with so favorable a prospect of arriving soon amongst the tribes to whom he wished to consecrate the rest of his days, for he had resolved never to return if he could find any nation willing to receive him. We conversed with our guide,

[1] Reference is here made to the signal punishment for treachery that Tracy in 1666 inflicted upon the Mohawk tribesmen.

[2] Nez Percés was one of the names given to the Ottawa Indians, for whom see p. 36, note 1, *ante*. This tribe should not be confused with the Nez Percés of the Far West, who are of the Shahaptian family.

who assured us that in a month and a half of good travelling we should be able to reach the first nations on the River Ohio . . . in the woods, because there was no means of reaching any nation before the snows. We devoured, in spirit, all these difficulties, and made no account of anything, provided we could go where we thought we were called of God.

We set out from this place with more than fifty Indians, male or female, about the 22nd of September, and our Indians, sparing us, obliged us to take two days in making our portage as far as the village, which was only, however, about five leagues away. We camped, accordingly, in the vicinity of the village, where our Indians went hunting and killed a roebuck, and it was in that place that we learned there had arrived two Frenchmen at the village we were going to, who were on their way from the Ottawas and were taking back an Iroquois prisoner belonging to the latter.

This news surprised us, because we did not think there was any Frenchman out on service in that direction. However, two of the most influential persons left us to go to receive these new guests, and we pursued our journey next day with the fatigue you may imagine; sometimes in the water up to mid-leg, besides the inconvenience of the packs, which get caught in the branches of trees and make you recoil three or four paces. But, after all, one is hardly sensible of those fatigues when he thinks that by them he is pleasing God and able to render Him service.

At last we arrived at Tinawatawa on the 24th of September, and found that the Frenchman who had arrived the day before was a man named Jolliet,[1] who had left Montreal before us with a fleet of four canoes loaded with goods for the Ottawas, and had orders from the Governor to go up as far as Lake Superior to discover the situation of a copper mine, specimens from which are seen here that scarcely need refining, so good and pure is the copper. After finding this mine

[1] Louis Jolliet was Canadian born, baptized at Quebec in September, 1645. He had been a student at the Jesuit college until 1666, took minor orders and served as clerk of the church. In 1667, however, he abandoned an ecclesiastical career, paid a visit to France, and on his return made the voyage of exploration here described. His later career will appear in subsequent pages of this volume.

he was to find out an easier route than the ordinary one to transport it to Montreal. M. Jolliet had not been able to see this mine, because time pressed him for his return; but having discovered amongst the Ottawas some Iroquois prisoners that these tribes had taken, he told them that Onontio's intention was that they should live at peace with the Iroquois, and persuaded them to send one of their prisoners to the Iroquois as a token of the peace they wished to have with them.

It was this Iroquois who showed M. Jolliet a new route, heretofore unknown to the French, for returning from the Ottawas to the country of the Iroquois. However, the fear this Indian had of falling again into the hands of the Antastoes led him to tell M. Jolliet he must leave his canoe and walk overland sooner than would have been necessary. Indeed, but for this terror on the part of the Indian, M. Jolliet could have come by water as far as Lake Ontario, by making a portage of half a league to avoid the great falls of which I have already spoken. In the end he was obliged by his guide to make fifty leagues by land and to abandon his canoe on the shore of Lake Erie.

Meanwhile M. de la Salle's illness was beginning to take away from him the inclination to push further on, and the desire to see Montreal was beginning to press him. He had not spoken of it to us, but we had clearly perceived it. Moreover, the route M. Jolliet had taken, with the news he brought us—that he had sent some of his party in search of a very numerous nation of Ottawas called the Pottawattamies, amongst whom there never had been any missionaries, and that this tribe bordered on the Iskoutegas and the great river that led to the Shawanons—induced M. Dollier and me to wish to go and search for the river into which we wished to enter by way of the Ottawas rather than by that of the Iroquois, because the route seemed to us much easier and we both knew the Ottawa language.

Another accident confirmed us in this thought, which was, that after we had equipped the Indian, who was to serve as our guide, with a capote, a blanket, kettle, and knife, there arrived an Indian from the Dutch, who brought brandy, of which these people are very fond, and our guide took a strong desire to drink of it. Not having the wherewithal to

trade, he gave his capote in order to obtain six mouthfuls of it from a keg with a reed, and then threw it up into a wooden platter.

I was informed of this affair, which did not please me, because our guide, having traded his capote, would certainly ask us for another to get through the winter, and we had no more left. So I thought, that in order to make sure of our guide, it was necessary to put a stop to this business. I went to the cabin where the bar was kept, and there actually found our trader, from whose hands I took away the capote which he had already virtually pledged, causing him to be informed that I would return it to him when he was no longer drunk. The man was so angry at this affair that he went and hunted up all we had given him and handed it back to us; but he had no sooner left us than a Shawanon presented himself to conduct us, whom we took at the word. However, as this act had been noised about, the principal persons assembled, and came to make us a present of two thousand wampum beads so that we might not remember what had passed. We promised, and they feasted us handsomely.

If M. Dollier's mission had not been for the Ottawas, to the exclusion of the Iroquois, he would have stopped in this village, where he was indeed urged with all imaginable protestations to apply himself to prayers in good earnest. But we had to pass on, without being able to do them any good further than to confirm them in the good intentions they had, and we promised them that the black robes of Kenté should come to see them next winter; and in fact we wrote about it to M. de Fénelon,[1] who was carrying on a successful mission at Kenté, and M. Trouvé did us the favor to fulfil the promise we had given them and to come there to announce the Word of God as early as the month of November following. M. Jolliet offered us a description he had made of his route from the Ottawas, which I accepted, and I reduced it at the time to a marine chart, which gave us a good deal of information as to our way, God having deprived us of our second guide in the manner I shall mention hereafter.

[1] François de Salignac, Abbé de Fénelon (1641–1679), came to Canada in 1667; after his five years at the Quinté mission he taught an Indian school, but having displeased Frontenac was in 1674 sent back to France.

At last M. de la Salle, seeing us determined to depart in two or three days, in order to proceed to the bank of the river that was to take us to Lake Erie, explained himself to us, and told us that the state of his health no longer permitted him to think of the journey he had undertaken along with us. He begged us to excuse him if he abandoned us to return to Montreal, and added that he could not make up his mind to winter in the woods with his men, where their lack of skill and experience might make them die of starvation.

The last day of September, M. Dollier said holy mass for the second time in this village, where most of us, as well on M. de la Salle's side as on ours, received the sacrament in order to unite in our Lord at a time when we saw ourselves on the point of separating. Hitherto we had never failed to hear holy mass three times a week, which M. Dollier said for us on a little altar prepared with paddles on forked sticks and surrounded with sails from our canoes. We took the greatest possible care not to be seen by the Indians, who would perhaps have made a mockery of our holy ceremony. So we have had the happiness and the honor of offering the holy sacrifice of the mass in more than two hundred places where it never had been offered.

We had no trouble in persuading our men to follow us. There was not one at that time who desired to leave us; and it may be said with truth that more joy was remarked in those who were going to expose themselves to a thousand perils than in those who were turning back to a place of safety, although the latter regarded us as people who were going to expose themselves to death; as indeed they announced as soon as they arrived here, and caused a great deal of pain to those who took some interest in our welfare. M. Jolliet was kind enough to inform me likewise of the place where his canoe was, because mine was now almost worthless, which made me resolve to endeavor to get it at the earliest possible moment, for fear Indians should carry it off from us.

We set out then from Tinaouataoua on the 1st of October, 1669, accompanied by a good number of Indians, who helped us to carry our canoes and baggage, and after making about nine or ten leagues in three days we arrived at the bank of the river which I call the Rapid, because of the violence of its

current, although it had not much water, for in many places we did not find enough to float our canoes, which did not draw a foot of water.[1]

Holy mass was said on the fourth, St. Francis' Day, and that same day I asked all our men which of them would go by land as far as the place where the canoe was that had been given me, as it was impossible for twelve of us to embark in three canoes on a river where there is so little water as in this. My Dutchman offered himself, and said to me that he had thoroughly understood the route to go there and would find it without fail. As I knew none in our party more intelligent than he, I was glad he had proposed the thing to me. I told him to take our Shawanon Indian and the one we had from Montreal, with provisions and ammunition, and go on and wait for us at the place where the canoe was, and we should soon join him.

They left us that same day, the 3rd of October, and the rest of us set out on the 4th of the same month, two in each canoe, and the rest by land. It is marvellous how much difficulty we had in descending this river, for we had to be in the water almost all the time dragging the canoe, which was unable to pass through for lack of water, so that although this river is not more than forty leagues in length, we took eight whole days to descend it. We had very good hunting there.

At last we arrived, on the 13th or 14th, at the shore of Lake Erie, which appeared to us at first like a great sea, because there was a great south wind blowing at the time. There is perhaps no lake in the whole country in which the waves rise so high, which happens because of its great depth and its great extent. Its length lies from east to west, and its north shore is in about 42 degrees of latitude. We proceeded three days along this lake, seeing land continually on the other side about four or five leagues away, which made us think that the lake was only of that width; but we were undeceived when we saw that this land, that we saw on the other side, was a peninsula separating the little bay in which we were from the great lake, whose limits cannot be seen when one is in the peninsula. I have shown it on the map I send you pretty nearly as I saw it.

[1] Grand River of Ontario.

At the end of three days, during which we made only 21 or 22 leagues, we found a spot which appeared to us so beautiful, with such an abundance of game, that we thought we could not find a better in which to pass our winter. The moment we arrived we killed a stag and a hind, and again on the following day two young stags. The good hunting quite determined us to remain in this place. We looked for some favorable spot to make a winter camp, and discovered a very pretty river, at the mouth of which we camped, until we should send word to our Dutchman of the place we had chosen.[1] We sent accordingly two of our men to the place of the canoe, who returned at the end of a week, and told us they had found the canoe but seen neither the Dutchman nor the Indians. This news troubled us very much, not knowing what to decide. We thought we could not do better than wait in this place, which was very conspicuous, and which they must necessarily pass to go to find the canoe.

We hunted meanwhile and killed a considerable number of stags, hinds, and roebucks, so that we began to have no longer any fear of leaving during the winter. We smoked the meat of nine large animals in such a manner, that it could have kept for two or three years, and with this provision we awaited the winter with tranquillity whilst hunting and making good provision of walnuts and chestnuts, which were there in great quantities. We had indeed in our granary 23 or 24 minots[2] of these fruits, besides apples, plums and grapes, and alizes[3] of which we had an abundance during the autumn.

I will tell you, by the way, that the vine grows here only in sand, on the banks of lakes and rivers, but although it has no cultivation it does not fail to produce grapes in great quantities as large and as sweet as the finest of France. We even made wine of them, with which M. Dollier said holy mass all winter, and it was as good as vin de Grave. It is a heavy, dark wine like the latter. Only red grapes are seen here, but in so great quantities, that we found places where one could easily have made 25 or 30 hogsheads of wine.

[1] The exact site was identified in 1900 by the Ontario Historical Society, on Patterson's Creek, near Port Dover, Ontario.

[2] The *minot* was equivalent to about a bushel and a quarter.

[3] Cranberries.

I leave you to imagine whether we suffered in the midst of this abundance in the earthly Paradise of Canada; I call it so, because there is assuredly no more beautiful region in all Canada. The woods are open, interspersed with beautiful meadows, watered by rivers and rivulets filled with fish and beaver, an abundance of fruits, and what is more important, so full of game that we saw there at one time more than a hundred roebucks in a single band, herds of fifty or sixty hinds, and bears fatter and of better flavor than the most savory pigs of France. In short, we may say that we passed the winter more comfortably than we should have done in Montreal.

We stayed a fortnight on the lake shore waiting for our men; but seeing that we were at the beginning of November, we thought they had certainly missed the way, and so we could do nothing else than pray to God for them. We could not pass the winter on the lake shore because of the high winds by which we should have been buffeted. For this reason we chose a beautiful spot on the bank of a rivulet, about a quarter of a league in the woods, where we encamped. We erected a pretty altar at the end of our cabin, where we had the happiness to hear holy mass three times a week without missing, with the consolation you may imagine of finding ourselves with our good God, in the midst of the woods, in a land where no European had ever been. Monsieur Dollier often told us that that winter ought to be worth to us, as regards our eternal welfare, more than the best ten years of our life. We confessed often, received communion as well. In short, we had our parochial mass, holidays and Sundays, with the necessary instructions; prayer evening and morning, and every other Christian exercise. Orison was offered with tranquillity in the midst of this solitude, where we saw no stranger for three months, at the end of which our men while hunting discovered a number of Iroquois coming to this place to hunt beaver. They used to visit us and found us in a very good cabin whose construction they admired, and afterward they brought every Indian who passed that way to see it. For that reason, we had built it in such a fashion that we could have defended ourselves for a long time against these barbarians, if the desire had entered their minds to come to insult us.

The winter was very severe all over Canada in the year 1669, especially in February, 1670. However, the deepest snow was not more than a foot, which began to cover the ground in the month of January, whilst at Montreal there is usually seen three feet and a half of it, which covers the ground during four months of the year. I believe we should have died of cold, if we had been in a place where the weather was as severe as in Montreal. For it turned out that all the axes were worthless, and we broke almost all of them; so that, if the wood we were cutting had been frozen as hard as it is in Montreal, we should have had no axes from the month of January; for the winter passed off with all possible mildness.

However, we could not help longing for the season of navigation, so as to get to the Pottawattamies at an early date, and that I might be able to return this year to Montreal, in order to send back to M. Dollier the things he would require in his mission.

On the 23rd of March, Passion Sunday, we all went to the lake shore to make and plant a cross in memory of so long a sojourn of Frenchmen as ours had been. We offered our prayers there, and seeing that where we were was almost clear of ice we resolved to set out on the 26th March, the day after Annunciation.

But as the river by which we had gone to the place of our wintering was not so exposed either to the wind or sun as the lake, it was still entirely frozen, so that it was necessary to portage all our baggage and our canoes as far as the lake, where we embarked after living in that place five months and eleven days.

We made six or seven leagues that day, and were met by so heavy a wind that we had to stop and wait two days, during which the wind continued so strong that, catching my canoe which my men had not taken care to fasten securely, it carried it out so far before we perceived it, that it was more than a good quarter of a league distant from the shore. Two men got into another canoe to go and rescue it, and actually reached it; but the violence of the wind came very near drowning them. Unable to manage their own canoe because of mine, which was playing at the sport of the wind and which they were unable to hold, they were obliged to cut the line with

which they had attached it to their own, in order to save themselves. The wind was off land, therefore it did not appear to me very strong, so I thought they were letting the canoe go because they were not strong enough to bring it. I embarked accordingly with two men in the canoe that remained to us. We were no sooner far enough out to be caught by the wind than we knew well there was no means of saving my canoe. So I was constrained to let it go where the wind was carrying it and to get myself back to shore.

This accident caused us a great deal of trouble, for I had a large quantity of baggage. M. Dollier, who was going for the purpose of establishing himself, had his two canoes very heavily loaded. So there we were, consulting what we should do. At length we decided to withdraw one man from each of the remaining canoes and to put my baggage in their places. Thus, of nine men remaining, we went five by land and two in each canoe until we should reach the one that had been given me.

We reckoned on only two days' walking to reach it, so we made up our minds to suffer hardship for one of them, for the land route was very bad, because of four rivers that had to be crossed and a number of great gulches that the water from the snows and rains had scooped out in many places on its way to the lake—to say nothing of the difficulty there always is in walking in these woods, because of the obstructions caused by the trees that fall from time to time, either from age or being uprooted by the impetuosity of the winds. We set out accordingly, and decided it was necessary, in order to cross the rivers that we had to pass, to go a good distance into the woods, because the farther the rivers run into the woods the narrower they are, and, indeed, one usually finds trees, which, having fallen in every direction, form bridges over which one passes.

We plunged then about four leagues into the woods, loaded with provisions, ammunition, and our blankets. We passed the first river easily by this method, but when we came to the second, far from stopping in the woods, it widened in the form of a marsh and flowed with great rapidity. There is no safety in crossing the rivers of this country by fording unless one knows them well, because there are a great many

quicksands, in which one sinks so far that it is impossible to get out. This river seems very deep, as in reality it is. When we reached its bank we held a council as to what we should do, and in the first place resolved to go on for some time longer towards its mouth, in order to cross it on a raft.

We slept that night on the bank of this river, about two leagues from its mouth, and it was at this place that we heard towards the east voices that seemed to us to be of men calling to each other. We ran to the river bank to see if it was not our men looking for us, and at the same time we heard the same voices on the south side. We turned our heads in that direction, but at last were undeceived, hearing them at the same time towards the west, which gave us to understand that it was the phenomenon commonly called the *hunting of Arthur*. I have never heard it, nor have any of those who were of our company, which was the reason we were deceived by it.

Next day we arrived at the mouth of the river, which was very deep and rapid, and bordered on both sides by large submerged meadows.[1] Notwithstanding the difficulty of the crossing, we resolved to make a raft to take all five of us over. This conveyance is very dangerous, for it is nothing but pieces of wood fastened together with ropes. We were an entire day preparing our wretched boat and putting it into the water, but that is the day we suffered most during our whole journey, for it snowed frightfully, with an extremely cold northeaster, so that there fell in fourteen or fifteen hours' time a good foot of snow. Notwithstanding this, as soon as the snow had ceased, we embarked on our machine with the water up to mid-leg, and landed in a meadow more than 200 paces wide, which we had to cross, loaded as we were, in mud, water, and snow up to the middle.

We pursued our way afterward as far as the shore of the great lake of which I spoke before, and, contrary to all expectation, found it still quite filled with floating ice, which made us think our people had not been able to set out upon it. We were by this time in Holy Week, and very glad to suffer something at that season in order to conform ourselves to our Lord; but we were afraid we should not succeed in rejoining our party before the approaching festival of Easter.

[1] Identified by Coyne as Big Creek, Norfolk County, Ontario.

Meanwhile we went and awaited them on a ridge of sand, which joins the peninsula of Lake Erie to the mainland, and separates the great from the little Lake Erie. As they must necessarily make a portage over this ridge,[1] we decided we could not miss them. We had no provisions left, and M. Dollier and myself had deprived ourselves of part of our share to give to our men, so that they might have more strength to go hunting, and God willed that they should kill a stag, which did us much honor, although it was very lean.

We went and camped near the animal, and next day our men found us at this place, where we met again with much joy, and resolved not to leave the place until we should receive the Easter sacrament together, which we did with much consolation.[2]

On Tuesday after Easter, we set out after hearing holy mass, and notwithstanding the ice which still lined the entire lake, we launched our canoes and proceeded, still five by land, for two days, to the place of the canoe. As the cold was still very severe, the game was still in the depth of the woods and did not come towards the shore of the great lake. Thus we were short of meat, and were five or six days eating nothing but a little Indian corn cooked in water.

We arrived at last at the place where our people had placed the canoe in question and we found it no longer there, because the Iroquois having come upon it during the winter, while hunting, had carried it off. I leave you to imagine whether we were embarrassed. We were without provisions, in a very severe season, at a place where there was no means of obtaining any at the time, and without being able to get away for lack of canoes. We could do nothing else than recommend the matter to God and prepare for great misery and suffering. We sent our people hunting for a day, and they did not see so much as one animal. We could not as yet strip bark to make a canoe, because the wood was not in sap, and would not become so for a month and a half, and we were unable to wait that time for want of provisions.

In short, we were in this perplexity when one of our men, going in search of dry wood to put on the fire, came upon

[1] Now called Long Point Portage; Little Lake Erie was Long Point Bay.
[2] Easter in 1670 fell on April 6.

the canoe that we wanted hidden between two large trees. The Indians had placed it on the other side of a river[1] and hidden it so well that it was impossible to find it without a special providence of God. Everybody was delighted over this discovery; and although we were without provisions, we thought we were in a condition to reach some good hunting spot soon. And in fact at the end of one day's travel we found ourselves in a place that appeared very suitable to put animals in and where there was plenty of game. We stopped there in the thought that we should not die of hunger, there being always a certainty of killing game enough to keep body and soul together, whilst the others were off looking for some animal.

Our men went hunting accordingly, and after missing their aim at a herd of more than two hundred does that they came upon, vented their wrath on a poor wolf, which they skinned and brought to camp, and which was just about to be put in the kettle, when one of our men on the look-out told us that he perceived on the other side of a little lake, on the shore of which we were encamped, a herd of twenty or thirty does. We rejoiced at this news, and after we had arranged a plan for securing them, they were surrounded from behind so successfully that they were obliged to take to the water. They were immediately overtaken with the canoes, so that not a single one should have escaped if we had desired: but we selected those that appeared to us the best, and killed ten, letting the rest go.

We loaded ourselves in this place with fresh and smoked meat, and proceeded as far as a long point, which you will find marked on the map of Lake Erie.[2] We landed there on a beautiful sand beach on the east side of the point. We had made that day nearly twenty leagues, so we were all very much tired. That was the reason why we did not carry all our packs up on the high ground, but left them on the sand and carried our canoes up on the high ground.

Night came on, and we slept so soundly that a great northeast wind rising had time to agitate the lake with so much violence that the water rose six feet where we were, and carried

[1] Probably Kettle Creek, of Elgin County, Ontario.
[2] Point Pelee, of Essex County, Ontario.

away the packs of M. Dollier's canoe that were nearest the water, and would have carried away all the rest if one of us had not awoke. Astonished to hear the lake roaring so furiously, he went to the beach to see if the baggage was safe, and seeing that the water already came as far as the packs that were placed the highest, cried out that all was lost. At this cry we rose and rescued the baggage of my canoe and of one of M. Dollier's. Pieces of bark were lighted to search along the river, but all that could be saved was a keg of powder that floated; the rest was carried away. Even the lead was carried away, or buried so deep in the sand that it could never be found. But the worst of all was that the entire altar service was lost. We waited for the wind to go down and the waters to retire, in order to go and search along the water, whether some débris of the wreck could not be found. But all that was found was a musketoon and a small bag of clothes belonging to one of our men; the rest was lost beyond recall. Even our provisions were all lost except what was in my canoe.

This accident put it out of our power to have the aid of the sacraments or to administer them to the rest. So we took counsel together to know whether we ought to stop with some tribe to carry on our mission there, or should return to Montreal for another altar service, and other goods necessary to obtain provisions, with a view to returning afterwards and establishing ourselves in some spot, and this suggestion seemed to us the best. As the route to the Ottawas seemed to us almost as short from the place where we were as the way we had come, and as we purposed to reach Sainte-Marie of the Sault, where the Ottawas assemble in order to descend in company, before they should leave, we thought we should descend with them more easily. Add to this, moreover, that we were better pleased to see a new country than to turn back.

We pursued our journey accordingly towards the west, and after making about 100 leagues on Lake Erie arrived at the place where the Lake of the Hurons, otherwise called the Fresh Water Sea of the Hurons, or Michigan, discharges into this lake. This outlet is perhaps half a league in width and turns sharp to the northeast, so that we were almost retracing our path. At the end of six leagues we discovered a place

that is very remarkable, and held in great veneration by all the Indians of these countries, because of a stone idol that nature has formed there. To it they say they owe their good luck in sailing on Lake Erie, when they cross it without accident, and they propitiate it by sacrifices, presents of skins, provisions, etc., when they wish to embark on it. The place was full of camps of those who had come to pay their homage to this stone, which had no other resemblance to the figure of a man than what the imagination was pleased to give it. However, it was all painted, and a sort of face had been formed for it with vermillion. I leave you to imagine whether we avenged upon this idol, which the Iroquois had strongly recommended us to honor, the loss of our chapel. We attributed to it even the dearth of provisions from which we had hitherto suffered. In short, there was nobody whose hatred it had not incurred. I consecrated one of my axes to break this god of stone, and then having yoked our canoes together we carried the largest pieces to the middle of the river, and threw all the rest also into the water, in order that it might never be heard of again. God rewarded us immediately for this good action, for we killed a roebuck and a bear that very day.

At the end of four leagues we entered a small lake, about ten leagues in length and almost as many in width, called by M. Sanson the Salt Water Lake, but we saw no sign of salt in this lake.[1]

We entered the outlet of Lake Michigan, which is not a quarter of a league in width. At length, after ten or twelve leagues, we entered the largest lake in all America, called the Fresh Water Sea of the Hurons, or in Algonkin, "Michigan." It is 660 or 700 leagues in circumference. We travelled about 200 leagues on this lake, and were really afraid of being in want of provisions because the animals of this lake appear very unprolific. However, God did not will that we should lack in His service; for we were never more than a day without food. It is true that we happened several times to have

[1] Nicolas Sanson d'Abbeville's map of 1656 is here referred to. Lake St. Clair was spoken of as "Salt Water Lake" from the time of Champlain, possibly because of a knowledge of Michigan salines in the neighborhood. The present name was assigned by Father Hennepin, who passed through this lake August 12, 1679, the fête-day of Ste. Claire.

nothing left, and to pass an evening and a morning without having anything whatever to put in the kettle; but I did not see that anyone became discouraged or troubled on that account. For we were so accustomed to see God aiding us mightily on these occasions, that we awaited with tranquillity the effects of His bounty, in the thought that He who nourished so many barbarians in these woods would not abandon His servants.

Although this lake is as large as the Caspian Sea, and much larger than Lake Erie, storms do not arise in it either so violent or so long, because it is not very deep. Thus in many places, after the wind has gone down, it does not require more than five or six hours, whilst it will be necessary sometimes to wait one or two days until Lake Erie is calmed down.

We crossed this lake without any danger and entered the Lake of the Hurons,[1] which communicates with it by four mouths, each of them nearly two leagues in width. At last we arrived on the 25th May, the Day of Pentecost, at Sainte-Marie of the Sault, the place where the Reverend Jesuit Fathers have made their principal establishment for the missions of the Ottawas and neighboring tribes. They have had two men in their service since last year, who have built them a pretty fort, that is to say, a square of cedar posts twelve feet high, with a chapel and house inside the fort so that now they see themselves in the condition of not being dependent in any way on the Indians. They have a large clearing well planted, from which they ought to gather a good part of their sustenance; they are even hoping to eat bread there within two years from now. Before arriving here, we fell in with three canoes of Indians, with whom we arrived at the fort of the Fathers. These men informed us of the custom they had when they reached the fort, of saluting it with several gunshots, which we also did very gladly.

We were received at this place with all possible charity. We were present at a portion of vespers on the day of Pentecost, and the two following days. We received the communion with so much the more joy, inasmuch as for nearly a month and a half we had not been able to enjoy this blessing.

The fruit these Fathers are producing here is more for the

[1] Georgian Bay.

French, who are here often to the number of 20 or 25, than for the Indians; for although there are some who have been baptized, there are none yet that are good enough Catholics to be able to attend divine service, which is held for the French, who sing high mass and vespers on saints' days and Sundays. The Fathers have, in this connection, a practice which seems to me rather extraordinary, which is, that they baptize adults not in danger of death, when they have manifested any good-will toward Christianity, before they are capable either of confessing or of attending holy mass, or keeping the other commandments of the Church; so that at Pointe du Saint-Esprit, a place at the head of Lake Superior, where the remnant of the Hurons retired after the burning of their villages, the Father who passed the winter with them told me that although there was a large portion of them who had been baptized when the Fathers had been amongst the Hurons, he had never yet ventured to say mass before them, because these people regard this service as jugglery or witchcraft.

I saw no particular sign of Christianity amongst the Indians of this place, nor in any other country of the Ottawas, except one woman of the nation of the Amikoues, who had been instructed formerly at the French settlements, and who, being as she thought in danger of death, begged M. Dollier to have pity on her. He reminded her of her old instructions and the obligation she was under of confessing herself, if she had offended God since her last confession, a very long time before, and he confessed her with great testimonies of joy on both sides.

When we were with the Fathers we were still more than 300 leagues from Montreal, to which, however, we wished to proceed at once, in order to be able to return at an early day to some of the Ottawa tribes and winter there, and in the following spring to go in search of the River Ohio and the races settled there, in order to carry the Gospel to them.

We learned that two days previously a fleet of 30 Ottawa canoes had set out for Montreal, and that there was still another of Kilistinons which was to leave shortly. As we were not certain at what time the latter were to come, and knew, besides, the trouble there is in being obliged to follow Indians,

we judged it more convenient to look out for a guide to conduct us to Montreal, because the routes are more difficult and toilsome than can be imagined. We succeeded in finding one at an expense of 25 or 30 crowns' worth of goods, which we simply had to promise, so we took leave of Fathers d'Ablon and Marquette, who were then at this place, it being the 28th of May.

Hitherto the country of the Ottawas had passed in my mind, and in the minds of all those in Canada, as a place where there was a great deal of suffering for want of food. But I am so well persuaded of the contrary that I know of no region in all Canada where they are less in want of it. The nation of the Saulteaux, or in Algonkin Waoüitiköungka Entaöuakk or Ojibways, amongst whom the Fathers are established, live from the melting of the snows until the beginning of winter on the bank of a river nearly half a league wide and three leagues long, by which Lake Superior falls into the Lake of the Hurons. This river forms at this place a rapid so teeming with fish, called white fish, or in Algonkin *attikamegue*, that the Indians could easily catch enough to feed 10,000 men. It is true the fishing is so difficult that only Indians can carry it on. No Frenchman has hitherto been able to succeed in it, nor any other Indian than those of this tribe, who are used to this kind of fishing from an early age. But, in short, this fish is so cheap that they give ten or twelve of them for four fingers of tobacco. Each weighs six or seven pounds, but it is so big and so delicate that I know of no fish that approaches it. Sturgeon is caught in this small river, close by, in abundance. Meat is so cheap here that for a pound of glass beads I had four minots of fat entrails of moose, which is the best morsel of the animal. This shows how many these people kill. It is at these places that one gets a beaver robe for a fathom of tobacco, sometimes for a quarter of a pound of powder, sometimes for six knives, sometimes for a fathom of small blue beads, etc. This is the reason why the French go there, notwithstanding the frightful difficulties that are encountered.

In going there from Montreal it is necessary to ascend a river[1] in which thirty portages must be made in order to

[1] Ottawa River.

avoid a like number of falls or rapids, in which, if one ran them, he would incur the danger of losing a thousand lives. From this river, which is as large as the River St. Lawrence, one passes, half by land and half by water, the space of twenty-five or thirty leagues, to get to the Lake of the Nipissings, from which one descends by French River, where there are four or five more waterfalls, to the Lake of the Hurons.

The greatest difficulty is in descending; for if one does not know exactly where the landings are, to make the portages, he runs the risk of being swallowed up in the falls and perishing, to say nothing of the difficulty of the portages, which are generally amongst stones and gravel. One often ventures into the less difficult channels, in which if the man who steers the canoe or the man in front were to fail sometimes by the thickness of a silver crown to pass between rocks and whirlpools that are found in these channels, the canoe would be wrecked or fill with water, and one would see himself swallowed up in places that look horrible. This is only too common, and a Jesuit brother who descended after us, wrecked his canoe in one of these channels; and few canoes are seen belonging to Indians who have made the Montreal trip which are not well patched. God protected us so especially that no harm happened to us, although of forty-five or fifty portages that are made going up, we saved seventeen or eighteen coming down. However, we had a very good guide and men who were not novices in these channels.

We arrived at last at Montreal on the 18th of June, after twenty-two days of the most fatiguing travelling that I have ever done in my life. Moreover, I was attacked towards the end of the journey with a tertian fever, which somewhat moderated the joy I should have had in arriving at Montreal, on seeing myself at last back in the midst of our dear brethren, if I had been in full health. We were received by everybody, and especially by the Abbé de Queylus, with demonstrations of particular kindness. We were looked upon rather as persons risen from the dead than as common men.

Everybody desired me to make the map of our journey, which I have done accurately enough; however, I recognize rather serious faults in it still, which I will correct when I have time. I send it to you such as it is, and beg you to have

the goodness to accept it, because I have made it just now for you. I have marked in it nothing but what I saw. Thus you will find only one side of each lake, since their width is so great that one cannot see the other. I have made it as a marine chart, that is to say, the meridians do not converge near the poles, because I am more familiar with these maps than with the geographical ones, and, moreover, the former are commonly more exact than the others.[1]

[1] Faillon, *Histoire de la Colonie Française en Canada*, III. 305 (1866), gives a reproduction of this map and says that it is in the Archives de la Marine at Paris. Parkman, *La Salle*, pp. 449–450, describes it. Harrisse, in his *Notes sur la Nouvelle France* (1872), No. 200, says that he could not find it there, and it is not in De la Roncière's *Catalogue* of the manuscripts of the Marine. There is a copy of it, made in 1856 from the original at Paris, in the Library of Parliament at Ottawa. This is reproduced and compared with other copies by James H. Coyne in the Ontario Historical Society's *Papers and Records*, IV.