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The Mississippi Voyage of Jolliet and Marquette, 1673

by Jacques Marquette

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The Mississippi Voyage of Jolliet and Marquette, 1673

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INTRODUCTION

FROM the days of Champlain the thoughts of the founders of New France had been haunted by the mystery of the Mississippi. Its discovery was the burning question of the day, and the successful accomplishment of that discovery has been ascribed to many of the early explorers. Nicolet is supposed to have visited westward-flowing streams that led ultimately to the Mississippi. Radisson no doubt crossed the great river somewhere in its upper reaches. Perrot, before the voyage of Marquette, was cognizant of its existence. La Salle, after leaving Dollier de Casson and Galinée at the head of Lake Ontario in 1669, may have ventured as far as the mouth of the Ohio. Allouez, in the same year, first mentioned the Mississippi by its present name. Whatever these earlier explorers may have accomplished, the first recorded voyage on the Mississippi is that of Jolliet and Marquette, who among their contemporaries stood accredited as the discoverers of the great river.

By 1673, the year of their departure, the time was ripe for a definite voyage of discovery. From Indian descriptions and the vague suggestions of early travellers and traders, all New France believed in the existence of a great river draining to the west or south, beyond the rim of the Great Lakes. Expectation of immediate access to the South Sea had diminished, and a route to China was less eagerly sought than a vast new hinterland to explore and occupy.

Count de Frontenac, who in 1672 came to New France as vice-regent for Louis XIV., had the imperial imagination of the great Frenchmen of his time. The pageant of St. Lusson,

at the outlet of the greatest of the Great Lakes, was to his mind a prophecy to be fulfilled by the annexation of the great interior valleys stretching north, west, and south, whose only boundaries should be the oceans, and whose perpetual sovereign should dwell in France. True, the Spaniards were somewhere in this vast domain, but just where no one knew, and Frontenac cared little, since Louis XIV. was already planning to annex their crown to his own.

The road that led to the great river was well known to Canadians. Perrot had traded up and down its length as far as the Mascoutin village; Allouez and Dablon had several times mounted the rapids of the lower Fox and gone far on the way to the portage; it only remained to choose qualified voyagers and prepare them for the journey. The choice fell upon Louis Jolliet, partly perhaps because of his Canadian birth, certainly because of his successful journey of 1668–1669, as narrated in Galinée above, and his connection with St. Lusson in the pageant of 1671. With all such enterprises it was customary that a priest should be associated. That the gentle Jacques Marquette was chosen for this mission seems to have been a response to his longing "to obtain from God the grace of being able to visit the nations who dwell along the Mississippi River," of which he had heard so frequently in his northern missions of St. Esprit de Chequamegon and St. Ignace de Michilimackinac.

Marquette seems to have been one of those gifted beings to whom the satisfaction of desires is granted, because in themselves the desires are so pure and altruistic. Born at Laon (1637), he cherished from childhood ideals of a religious life. Entering the Jesuit order in 1654, his longing to be sent to a foreign mission was gratified by a voyage to Canada in 1666. Thence he was detailed in 1669 to replace Allouez on the shores of the Chequamegon Bay. Two years later he followed his neophytes to Mackinac, where upon the northern

side of the strait he built the mission of St. Ignace. Thence he set forth for the Mississippi journey, never to return to his northern home, but to obtain his last and final wish to die a martyr to the cause he loved.

The accident of the loss of the journals of Jolliet made those of his fellow discoverer doubly valued, and secured his fame forever. The story is a pleasant one, of gentle rivers, wide landscapes, friendly Indians for the most part—an uneventful chronicle save for the vast significance of the discovery. Although perhaps the courage required for the voyage has been exaggerated, it is certain that the Indians tried to dissuade the travellers by tales of fierce enemies and horrid monsters. Instead, however, were only timid savages pacified or reassured by the powerful calumet, and painted dragons on the high cliffs that frowned as the canoes slipped by. Still more to be dreaded, once familiar shores were left behind, had been unknown rapids and falls, which, however, proved to be almost non-existent, lost in the full current of the onward-moving stream. The wide entrances of the two great tributaries—the Missouri and Ohio—were located and mapped; and finally at the Arkansas village, when the course of the great stream had been clearly determined as descending to the Mexican Gulf, the return journey was begun. Continued along the Illinois River, past the Kaskaskia Indian village, and over the Des Plaines-Chicago portage, skirting the western shore of Lake Michigan to Sturgeon Bay, the momentous voyage ended, the last of September, at the mission house at De Pere.

Thence Jolliet hastened to report to the governor at Quebec, while Father Marquette among his trusted and eager friends set himself to writing the story of the journey which we here present.

The autograph manuscripts of his account of his two voyages were kept for a century and a half in the Jesuit convent

at Montreal. An abridged form of Marquette's journal was early sent to Paris and published there in 1681 by Melchisédec Thévenot in his *Recueil de Voyages*. The Catholic historian John G. Shea first made known to historians the original manuscripts, publishing them with an English translation in 1852. Several other editions followed, until in 1899 Dr. R. G. Thwaites in *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, LIX., printed the definitive edition from the original documents, lent him by their custodian Father Arthur E. Jones of St. Mary's College, Montreal. We reprint from this edition, LIX. 87–163, the record of the Mississippi voyage; that of the final voyage follows.

THE MISSISSIPPI VOYAGE OF JOLLIET AND MARQUETTE, 1673

Of the first Voyage made by Father Marquette toward New Mexico, and how the Idea thereof was conceived.[1]

THE Father had long premeditated this undertaking, influenced by a most ardent desire to extend the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and to make him known and adored by all the peoples of that country. He saw himself, as it were, at the door of these new nations when, as early as the year 1670, he was laboring in the mission at the Point of St. Esprit, at the extremity of Lake Superior, among the Outaouacs;[2] he even saw occasionally various persons belonging to these new peoples, from whom he obtained all the information that he could. This induced him to make several efforts to commence this undertaking, but ever in vain; and he even lost all hope of succeeding therein, when God brought about for him the following opportunity.

In the year 1673, Monsieur the Count de Frontenac, our governor,[3] and Monsieur Talon, then our intendant, recognizing the importance of this discovery—either that they might seek a passage from here to the Sea of China, by the river that discharges into the Vermillion, or California Sea; or because they desired to verify what has for some time been

[1] This introduction was written by Father Claude Dablon, superior of the mission.

[2] For this mission, see Allouez's narrative, pp. 115–118, *ante*. Marquette superseded the former at La Pointe du St. Esprit in the autumn of 1669.

[3] Louis de Buade, Count de Frontenac, was the greatest governor of New France during the seventeenth century. Born in 1620, he entered the army at the age of fifteen, and was in active service for many years. In 1672 he was sent to Canada as governor-general. Recalled ten years later because of dissensions with the Jesuits, he was again in 1689 sent to save the colony from destruction by the Iroquois. In 1696 he invaded their territory, compelled them to peace, and returned triumphant. He died at Quebec, November 28, 1698.

said concerning the two kingdoms of Theguaio and Quivira,[1] which border on Canada, and in which numerous gold mines are reported to exist—these gentlemen, I say, appointed at the same time for this undertaking Sieur Jolyet, whom they considered very fit for so great an enterprise; and they were well pleased that Father Marquette should be of the party.

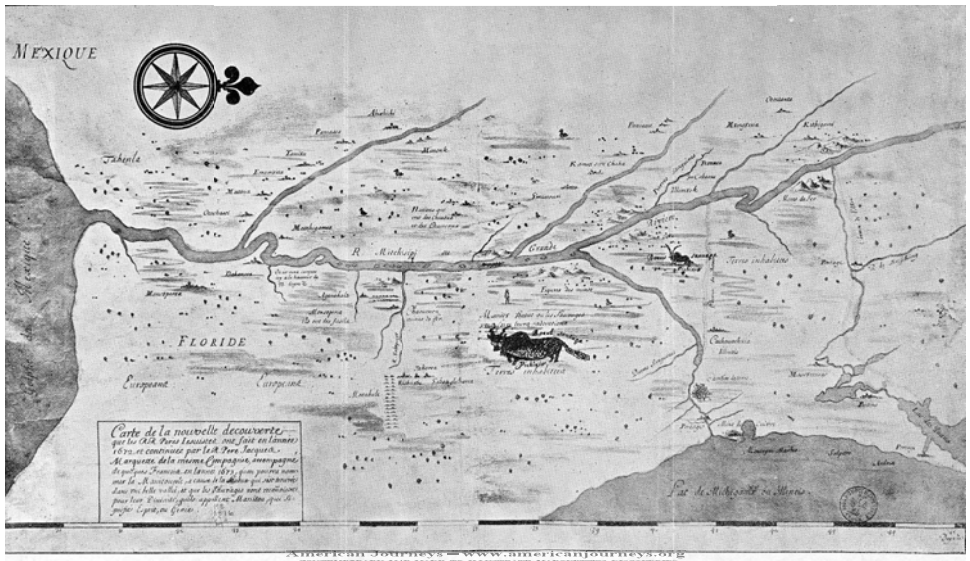
They were not mistaken in the choice that they made of Sieur Jolyet, for he is a young man, born in this country, who possesses all the qualifications that could be desired for such an undertaking. He has experience and knows the languages spoken in the country of the Outaouacs, where he has passed several years. He possesses tact and prudence, which are the chief qualities necessary for the success of a voyage as dangerous as it is difficult. Finally, he has the courage to dread nothing where everything is to be feared. Consequently, he has fulfilled all the expectations entertained of him; and if, after having passed through a thousand dangers, he had not unfortunately been wrecked in the very harbor, his canoe having upset below Sault St. Louys, near Montreal, where he lost both his men and his papers, and whence he escaped only by a sort of miracle, nothing would have been left to be desired in the success of his voyage.

Section 1. *Departure of Father Jacques Marquette for the Discovery of the Great River called by the Savages Missisipi, which leads to New Mexico.*

The feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin[2]—whom I have always invoked since I have been in this country of the Outaouacs, to obtain from God the grace of being able to visit the nations who dwell along the Missisipi River—was precisely the day on which Monsieur Jollyet arrived with orders from Monsieur the Count de Frontenac,

[1] The reference is to sixteenth-century Spanish accounts of explorations north from Mexico. Theguaio or Tiguex was a pueblo of New Mexico; see, in the present series, in the volume entitled *Spanish Explorers in the Southern United States*, 1528–1543, Mr. Frederick W. Hodge's edition of the *Journey of Coronado*, pp. 312–324. Quivira was the region sought by Coronado (Southern Kansas); *ibid.*, p. 337, note. See also the New Mexico section of Professor Herbert E. Bolton's *Spanish Exploration in the Southwest*, 1542–1706, in the same series.

[2] This feast falls on December 8.



CONTEMPORARY MAP MADE TO ILLUSTRATE MARQUETTE'S DISCOVERIES

our governor, and Monsieur Talon, our intendant, to accomplish this discovery with me. I was all the more delighted at this good news, since I saw that my plans were about to be accomplished; and since I found myself in the blessed necessity of exposing my life for the salvation of all these peoples, and especially of the Ilinois, who had very urgently entreated me, when I was at the Point of St. Esprit, to carry the word of God to their country.

We were not long in preparing all our equipment, although we were about to begin a voyage, the duration of which we could not foresee. Indian corn, with some smoked meat, constituted all our provisions; with these we embarked—Monsieur Jollyet and myself, with five men—in two bark canoes, fully resolved to do and suffer everything for so glorious an undertaking.

Accordingly, on the 17th day of May, 1673, we started from the mission of St. Ignace at Michilimakinac, where I then was.[1] The joy that we felt at being selected for this expedition animated our courage, and rendered the labor of paddling from morning to night agreeable to us. And because we were going to seek unknown countries, we took every precaution in our power, so that, if our undertaking were hazardous, it should not be foolhardy. To that end, we obtained all the information that we could from the savages who had frequented those regions; and we even traced out from their reports a map[2] of the whole of that new country; on it we indicated the rivers which we were to navigate, the names of the peoples and of the places through which we were to pass, the course of the great river, and the direction we were to follow when we reached it.

Above all, I placed our voyage under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Immaculate, promising her that, if she granted us the favor of discovering the great river, I would

[1] The mission of St. Ignace, founded by Marquette in 1671, was on the north shore of the Straits of Mackinac. It was maintained throughout the seventeenth century. See Thwaites, "The Story of Mackinac," in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, XIV. 1–16.

[2] This map, which is preserved with Marquette's manuscript in St. Mary's College, Montreal, was drawn, as Marquette says, from Indian information before the voyage was undertaken. See "Marquette's Map" in *Wis. Hist. Soc. Proceedings*, 1906, pp. 183–193.

give it the name of the Conception, and that I would also make the first mission that I should establish among those new peoples, bear the same name. This I have actually done, among the Ilinois.[1]

Section 2. The Father visits, in passing, the Tribes of the Folle Avoine. What that Folle Avoine is. He enters the Bay des Puants; some Particulars about that Bay. He arrives among the Fire Nation.

With all these precautions, we joyfully plied our paddles on a portion of Lake Huron, on that of the Ilinois and the Bay des Puants.

The first nation that we came to was that of the Folle Avoine.[2] I entered their river, to go and visit these peoples to whom we have preached the Gospel for several years, in consequence of which, there are several good Christians among them.

The wild oat, whose name they bear because it is found in their country, is a sort of grass, which grows naturally in the small rivers with muddy bottoms, and in swampy places. It greatly resembles the wild oats that grow amid our wheat. The ears grow upon hollow stems, jointed at intervals; they emerge from the water about the month of June, and continue growing until they rise about two feet above it. The grain is not larger than that of our oats, but it is twice as long, and the meal therefrom is much more abundant. The savages gather and prepare it for food as follows. In the month of September, which is the suitable time for the harvest, they go in canoes through these fields of wild oats; they shake its ears into the canoe, on both sides, as they pass through. The grain falls out easily, if it be ripe, and they obtain their supply in a short time. But, in order to clean it from the straw, and to remove it from a husk in which it is enclosed, they dry

[1] The name "Conception" for the Mississippi appears only on the map drawn by Marquette before the voyage. The name applied to the Illinois mission persisted—it was known throughout its existence as the Mission of the Immaculate Conception.

[2] The French name for the Menominee tribe, for whom see p. 76, note 1, *ante*.

it in the smoke, upon a wooden grating, under which they maintain a slow fire for some days. When the oats are thoroughly dry, they put them in a skin made into a bag, thrust it into a hole dug in the ground for this purpose, and tread it with their feet—so long and so vigorously that the grain separates from the straw, and is very easily winnowed. After this, they pound it to reduce it to flour, or even, without pounding it, they boil it in water, and season it with fat. Cooked in this fashion, the wild oats have almost as delicate a taste as rice has when no better seasoning is added.[1]

I told these peoples of the Folle Avoine of my design to go and discover those remote nations, in order to teach them the mysteries of our holy religion. They were greatly surprised to hear it, and did their best to dissuade me. They represented to me that I should meet nations who never show mercy to strangers, but break their heads without any cause; and that war was kindled between various peoples who dwelt upon our route, which exposed us to the further manifest danger of being killed by the bands of warriors who are ever in the field. They also said that the great river was very dangerous, when one does not know the difficult places; that it was full of horrible monsters, which devoured men and canoes together; that there was even a demon, who was heard from a great distance, who barred the way, and swallowed up all who ventured to approach him; finally that the heat was so excessive in those countries that it would inevitably cause our death.

I thanked them for the good advice that they gave me, but told them that I could not follow it, because the salvation of souls was at stake, for which I would be delighted to give my life; that I scoffed at the alleged demon; that we would easily defend ourselves against those marine monsters; and, moreover, that we would be on our guard to avoid the other dangers with which they threatened us. After making them pray to God, and giving them some instruction, I separated from them. Embarking then in our canoes, we arrived

[1] Marquette's description of the wild rice (*zizania aquatica*) is very accurate. It formed an important article of food for Wisconsin tribesmen and is still harvested in inland lakes. See A. E. Jenks, "Wild Rice Gatherers of the Upper Lakes," in U. S. Bureau of Ethnology *Report*, XIX. 1072 *ff.*

shortly afterward at the bottom of the Bay des Puantz, where our Fathers labor successfully for the conversion of these peoples, over two thousand of whom they have baptized while they have been there.

This bay bears a name which has a meaning not so offensive in the language of the savages; for they call it *la Baye Sallée*[1] rather than Bay des Puans, although with them this is almost the same and this is also the name which they give to the sea. This led us to make very careful researches to ascertain whether there were not some salt-water springs in this quarter, as there are among the Hiroquois, but we found none. We conclude, therefore, that this name has been given to it on account of the quantity of mire and mud which is seen there, whence noisome vapors constantly arise, causing the loudest and most continual thunder that I have ever heard.

The bay is about thirty leagues in depth and eight in width at its mouth; it narrows gradually to the bottom, where it is easy to observe a tide which has its regular ebb and flow, almost like that of the sea. This is not the place to inquire whether these are real tides; whether they are due to the wind, or to some other cause; whether there are winds, the precursors of the moon and attached to her suite, which consequently agitate the lake and give it an apparent ebb and flow whenever the moon ascends above the horizon. What I can positively state is, that, when the water is very calm, it is easy to observe it rising and falling according to the course of the moon; although I do not deny that this movement may be caused by very remote winds, which, pressing on the middle of the lake, cause the edges to rise and fall in the manner which is visible to our eyes.[2]

We left this bay to enter the river that discharges into it; it is very beautiful at its mouth, and flows gently; it is full of bustards, ducks, teal, and other birds, attracted thither by the wild oats, of which they are very fond. But, after ascending the river a short distance, it becomes very difficult of passage, on account of both the currents and the sharp rocks, which cut the canoes and the feet of those who are obliged

[1] Salt Bay.

[2] This phenomenon was noted by many early travellers. The tides in the Great Lakes are small, but noticeable at certain points.

to drag them, especially when the waters are low. Nevertheless, we successfully passed those rapids; and on approaching Machkoutens, the Fire Nation, I had the curiosity to drink the mineral waters of the river that is not far from that village.[1] I also took time to look for a medicinal plant which a savage, who knows its secret, showed to Father Alloues with many ceremonies. Its root is employed to counteract snake-bites, God having been pleased to give this antidote against a poison which is very common in these countries. It is very pungent, and tastes like powder when crushed with the teeth; it must be masticated and placed upon the bite inflicted by the snake. The reptile has so great a horror of it that it even flees from a person who has rubbed himself with it. The plant bears several stalks, a foot high, with rather long leaves; and a white flower, which greatly resembles the wallflower.[2] I put some in my canoe, in order to examine it at leisure while we continued to advance toward Maskoutens, where we arrived on the 7th of June.

Section 3. *Description of the Village of Maskoutens; what passed there between the Father and the Savages. The French begin to enter a New and Unknown Country, and arrive at Missisipi.*

Here we are at Maskoutens.[3] This word may, in Algonquin, mean "the Fire Nation," which, indeed, is the name given to this tribe. Here is the limit of the discoveries which the French have made, for they have not yet gone any farther.

This village consists of three nations who have gathered there—Miamis, Maskoutens, and Kikabous. The former are the most civil, the most liberal, and the most shapely. They wear two long locks over their ears, which give them a pleasing appearance. They are regarded as warriors, and rarely

[1] For the location of this spring and illustration of its present condition see *Wis. Hist. Soc. Proceedings*, 1906, p. 168. It was southeast of the present town of Berlin, in Green Lake County, Wisconsin.

[2] Sufficient indications are not given by Marquette to enable botanists to identify this plant, which may be one of several "snake roots" found in this vicinity.

[3] This village was located not far from the spring mentioned above. See Perrot's description, *ante*, pp. 84–88.

undertake expeditions without being successful. They are very docile, and listen quietly to what is said to them; and they appeared so eager to hear Father Alloues when he instructed them that they gave him but little rest, even during the night. The Maskoutens and Kikabous are ruder, and seem peasants in comparison with the others. As bark for making cabins is scarce in this country, they use rushes; these serve them for making walls and roofs, but do not afford them much protection against the winds, and still less against the rains when they fall abundantly. The advantage of cabins of this kind is, that they make packages of them, and easily transport them wherever they wish, while they are hunting.[1]

When I visited them, I was greatly consoled at seeing a handsome Cross erected in the middle of the village, and adorned with many white skins, red belts, and bows and arrows, which these good people had offered to the great Manitou (this is the name which they give to God). They did this to thank him for having had pity on them during the winter, by giving them an abundance of game when they most dreaded famine.[2]

I took pleasure in observing the situation of this village. It is beautiful and very pleasing; for, from an eminence upon which it is placed, one beholds on every side prairies, extending farther than the eye can see, interspersed with groves or with lofty trees. The soil is very fertile, and yields much Indian corn. The savages gather quantities of plums and grapes, wherewith much wine could be made, if desired.

No sooner had we arrived than we, Monsieur Jollyet and I, assembled the elders together; and he told them that he was sent by Monsieur our governor to discover new countries, while I was sent by God to illumine them with the light of the holy Gospel. He told them that, moreover, the sovereign Master of our lives wished to be known by all the nations; and that in obeying His will I feared not the death to which

[1] The rushes are woven into mats which are easily rolled up and transported.

[2] This cross is supposed by some commentators to have been the symbol of a "Medicine" society among the Indians. It seems more natural to regard it as the sign of Allouez's mission, which the superstitious savages regarded as a "manitou."

I exposed myself in voyages so perilous. He informed them that we needed two guides to show us the way; and we gave them a present, by it asking them to grant us the guides. To this they very civilly consented; and they also spoke to us by means of a present, consisting of a mat to serve us as a bed during the whole of our voyage.

On the following day, the tenth of June, two Miamis who were given us as guides embarked with us, in the sight of a great crowd, who could not sufficiently express their astonishment at the sight of seven Frenchmen, alone and in two canoes, daring to undertake so extraordinary and so hazardous an expedition.

We knew that, at three leagues from Maskoutens, was a river which discharged into Missisipi.[1] We knew also that the direction we were to follow in order to reach it was west-southwesterly. But the road is broken by so many swamps and small lakes that it is easy to lose one's way, especially as the river leading thither is so full of wild oats that it is difficult to find the channel. For this reason we greatly needed our two guides, who safely conducted us to a portage of 2,700 paces, and helped us to transport our canoes to enter that river; after which they returned home, leaving us alone in this unknown country, in the hands of Providence.[2]

Thus we left the waters flowing to Quebeq, four or five hundred leagues from here, to float on those that would thenceforward take us through strange lands. Before embarking thereon, we began all together a new devotion to the blessed Virgin Immaculate, which we practised daily, addressing to her special prayers to place under her protection both our persons and the success of our voyage; and, after mutually encouraging one another, we entered our canoes.

The river on which we embarked is called Meskousing.[3] It is very wide; it has a sandy bottom, which forms various

[1] There is some mistake in the distance stated. Father Arthur E. Jones thinks it is intended for "three leagues from Maskoutens" River. See *Wis. Hist. Soc. Proceedings*, 1906, pp. 175–182.

[2] The Fox-Wisconsin portage at the site of Portage, Wisconsin, has now been cut by a government canal. In 1895 there was erected here on the old portage route a monument to Marquette.

[3] A variant for the name Wisconsin.

shoals that render its navigation very difficult. It is full of islands covered with vines. On the banks one sees fertile land, diversified with woods, prairies, and hills. There are oak, walnut, and basswood trees; and another kind, whose branches are armed with long thorns. We saw there neither feathered game nor fish, but many deer, and a large number of cattle. Our route lay to the southwest, and, after navigating about thirty leagues, we saw a spot presenting all the appearances of an iron mine; and, in fact, one of our party who had formerly seen such mines, assures us that the one which we found is very good and very rich. It is covered with three feet of good soil, and is quite near a chain of rocks, the base of which is covered by very fine trees.[1] After proceeding 40 leagues on this same route, we arrived at the mouth of our river; and, at 42 and a half degrees of latitude, we safely entered Missisipi on the 17th of June, with a joy that I cannot express.[2]

Section 4. *Of the Great River called Missisipi; its most notable Features; of various Animals, and especially the Pisikious or Wild Cattle, their Shape and Nature; of the First Villages of the Ilinois, where the French arrived.*

Here we are, then, on this so renowned river, all of whose peculiar features I have endeavored to note carefully. The Missisipi River takes its rise in various lakes in the country of the northern nations. It is narrow at the place where Miskous empties; its current, which flows southward, is slow and gentle. To the right is a large chain of very high mountains, and to the left are beautiful lands; in various places, the stream is divided by islands. On sounding, we found ten brasses of water. Its width is very unequal; sometimes it is three-quarters of a league, and sometimes it narrows to three arpents.[3] We gently followed its course, which runs toward the south and southeast, as far as the 42nd degree of latitude.

[1] The traces of a mine seen here were probably those of the lead mines of southwestern Wisconsin.

[2] In 1910 a monument to Marquette was dedicated at Prairie du Chien, near the point where he entered the Mississippi.

[3] *I. e.*, about 600 feet.

Here we plainly saw that its aspect was completely changed. There are hardly any woods or mountains; the islands are more beautiful, and are covered with finer trees. We saw only deer and cattle, bustards, and swans without wings, because they drop their plumage in this country. From time to time, we came upon monstrous fish, one of which struck our canoe with such violence that I thought that it was a great tree, about to break the canoe to pieces. On another occasion, we saw on the water a monster with the head of a tiger, a sharp nose like that of a wildcat, with whiskers and straight, erect ears; the head was gray and the neck quite black;[1] but we saw no more creatures of this sort. When we cast our nets into the water we caught sturgeon, and a very extraordinary kind of fish. It resembles the trout, with this difference, that its mouth is larger. Near its nose, which is smaller, as are also the eyes, is a large bone shaped like a woman's busk, three fingers wide and a cubit long, at the end of which is a disk as wide as one's hand. This frequently causes it to fall backward when it leaps out of the water.[2] When we reached the parallel of 41 degrees 28 minutes, following the same direction, we found that turkeys had taken the place of game; and the *pisikious*, or wild cattle, that of the other animals.[3]

We call them "wild cattle," because they are very similar to our domestic cattle. They are not longer, but are nearly as large again, and more corpulent. When our people killed one, three persons had much difficulty in moving it. The head is very large; the forehead is flat, and a foot and half wide between the horns, which are exactly like those of our oxen, but black and much larger. Under the neck they have a sort of large dewlap, which hangs down; and on the back is a rather high hump. The whole of the head, the neck, and a portion of the shoulders, are covered with a thick mane like

[1] The first monster was a catfish (*silurus Mississippiensis*), which grows to great size in western rivers; the second a wildcat, called by the Canadians *pichou du sud*.

[2] This has been identified as the *polyodon spatula*, a very rare Mississippi River fish, called by the French inhabitants *le spatule*.

[3] The buffalo or American bison. Marquette has drawn a picture of one of these animals on his map. See article cited in note 2 on p. 229, *ante*.

that of horses; it forms a crest a foot long, which makes them hideous, and, falling over their eyes, prevents them from seeing what is before them. The remainder of the body is covered with a heavy coat of curly hair, almost like that of our sheep, but much stronger and thicker. It falls off in summer, and the skin becomes as soft as velvet. At that season, the savages use the hides for making fine robes, which they paint in various colors. The flesh and the fat of the *pisikious* are excellent, and constitute the best dish at feasts. Moreover, they are very fierce; and not a year passes without their killing some savages. When attacked, they catch a man on their horns, if they can, toss him in the air, and then throw him on the ground, after which they trample him under foot, and kill him. If a person fire at them from a distance, with either a bow or a gun, he must, immediately after the shot, throw himself down and hide in the grass; for if they perceive him who has fired, they run at him, and attack him. As their legs are thick and rather short, they do not run very fast, as a rule, except when angry. They are scattered about the prairie in herds; I have seen one of four hundred.

We continued to advance, but, as we knew not whither we were going, for we had proceeded over one hundred leagues without discovering anything except animals and birds, we kept well on our guard. On this account, we make only a small fire on land, toward evening, to cook our meals; and, after supper, we remove ourselves as far from it as possible, and pass the night in our canoes, which we anchor in the river at some distance from the shore. This does not prevent us from always posting one of the party as a sentinel, for fear of a surprise. Proceeding still in a southerly and south-south-westerly direction, we find ourselves at the parallel of 41 degrees, and as low as 40 degrees and some minutes,—partly southeast and partly southwest,—after having advanced over 60 leagues since we entered the river, without discovering anything.

Finally, on the 25th of June, we perceived on the water's edge some tracks of men, and a narrow and somewhat beaten path leading to a fine prairie. We stopped to examine it; and, thinking that it was a road which led to some village of savages, we resolved to go and reconnoitre it. We therefore

left our two canoes under the guard of our people, strictly charging them not to allow themselves to be surprised, after which Monsieur Jollyet and I undertook this investigation—a rather hazardous one for two men who exposed themselves, alone, to the mercy of a barbarous and unknown people. We silently followed the narrow path, and, after walking about two leagues, we discovered a village on the bank of a river, and two others on a hill distant about half a league from the first.[1] Then we heartily commended ourselves to God, and, after imploring His aid, we went farther without being perceived, and approached so near that we could even hear the savages talking. We therefore decided that it was time to reveal ourselves. This we did by shouting with all our energy, and stopped, without advancing any farther. On hearing the shout, the savages quickly issued from their cabins, and having probably recognized us as Frenchmen, especially when they saw a black gown—or, at least, having no cause for distrust, as we were only two men, and had given them notice of our arrival—they deputed four old men to come and speak to us. Two of these bore tobacco-pipes, finely ornamented and adorned with various feathers. They walked slowly, and raised their pipes toward the sun, seemingly offering them to it to smoke, without, however, saying a word. They spent a rather long time in covering the short distance between their village and us. Finally, when they had drawn near, they stopped to consider us attentively. I was reassured when I observed these ceremonies, which with them are performed only among friends; and much more so when I saw them clad in cloth, for I judged thereby that they were our allies. I therefore spoke to them first, and asked them who they were. They replied that they were Ilinois; and, as a token of peace, they offered us their pipes to smoke. They afterward invited us to enter their village, where all the people impatiently awaited us. These pipes for smoking tobacco are called in this country *calumets*. This word has come so much into use that, in order to be understood, I shall be obliged to use it, as I shall often have to mention these pipes.

[1] The site of these villages has not been definitely determined. It was formerly supposed that they were on Des Moines River; some Iowa archaeologists, however, locate them on the river of that name.

Section 5. How the Ilinois received the Father in their Village.

At the door of the cabin in which we were to be received was an old man, who awaited us in a rather surprising attitude, which constitutes a part of the ceremonial that they observe when they receive strangers. This man stood erect, and stark naked, with his hands extended and lifted toward the sun, as if he wished to protect himself from its rays, which nevertheless shone upon his face through his fingers. When we came near him, he paid us this compliment: "How beautiful the sun is, O Frenchman, when thou comest to visit us! All our village awaits thee, and thou shalt enter all our cabins in peace." Having said this, he made us enter his own, in which were a crowd of people; they devoured us with their eyes, but, nevertheless, observed profound silence. We could, however, hear these words, which were addressed to us from time to time in a low voice: "How good it is, my brothers, that you should visit us."

After we had taken our places, the usual civility of the country was paid to us, which consisted in offering us the calumet. This must not be refused, unless one wishes to be considered an enemy, or at least uncivil; it suffices that one make a pretense of smoking. While all the elders smoked after us, in order to do us honor, we received an invitation on behalf of the great captain of all the Ilinois to proceed to his village where he wished to hold a council with us. We went thither in a large company, for all these people, who had never seen any Frenchmen among them, could not cease looking at us. They lay on the grass along the road; they preceded us, and then retraced their steps to come and see us again. All this was done noiselessly, and with marks of great respect for us.

When we reached the village of the great captain, we saw him at the entrance of his cabin, between two old men, all three erect and naked, and holding their calumet turned toward the sun. He harangued us in a few words, congratulating us upon our arrival. He afterward offered us his calumet, and made us smoke while we entered his cabin, where we received all their usual kind attentions.

Seeing all assembled and silent, I spoke to them by four presents that I gave them. By the first, I told them that we were journeying peacefully to visit the nations dwelling on the river as far as the sea. By the second, I announced to them that God, who had created them, had pity on them, inasmuch as, after they had so long been ignorant of Him, He wished to make himself known to all the peoples; that I was sent by Him for that purpose; and that it was for them to acknowledge and obey Him. By the third, I said that the great captain of the French informed them that he it was who restored peace everywhere; and that he had subdued the Iroquois. Finally, by the fourth, we begged them to give us all the information that they had about the sea, and about the nations through whom we must pass to reach it.

When I had finished my speech, the captain arose, and, resting his hand upon the head of a little slave[1] whom he wished to give us, he spoke thus: "I thank thee, black gown, and thee, O Frenchman," addressing himself to Monsieur Jollyet, "for having taken so much trouble to come to visit us. Never has the earth been so beautiful, or the sun so bright, as to-day; never has our river been so calm, or so clear of rocks, which your canoes have removed in passing; never has our tobacco tasted so good, or our corn appeared so fine, as we now see them. Here is my son, whom I give thee to show thee my heart. I beg thee to have pity on me, and on all my nation. It is thou who knowest the great Spirit who has made us all. It is thou who speakest to Him, and who hearest His word. Beg Him to give me life and health, and to come and dwell with us, in order to make us know Him." Having said this, he placed the little slave near us, and gave us a second present, consisting of an altogether mysterious calumet, upon which they place more value than upon a slave. By this gift, he expressed to us the esteem that he had for Monsieur our governor, from the account which we had given of him; and, by a third, he begged us on behalf of all his nation not to go farther, on account of the great dangers to which we exposed ourselves.

[1] Slavery among North American Indians arose from the treatment of captives taken in war. The position of slaves was not as a rule seriously different from that of other members of the tribe, except that they could be disposed of by their masters at will.

I replied that I feared not death, and that I regarded no happiness as greater than that of losing my life for the glory of Him who has made all. This is what these poor people cannot understand.

The council was followed by a great feast, consisting of four dishes, which had to be partaken of in accordance with all their fashions. The first course was a great wooden platter full of *sagamité*, that is to say, meal of Indian corn boiled in water, and seasoned with fat. The master of ceremonies filled a spoon with sagamité three or four times, and put it to my mouth as if I were a little child. He did the same to Monsieur Jollyet. As a second course, he caused a second platter to be brought, on which were three fish. He took some pieces of them, removed the bones therefrom, and, after blowing upon them to cool them, he put them in our mouths as one would give food to a bird. For the third course, they brought a large dog, that had just been killed; but, when they learned that we did not eat this meat, they removed it from before us. Finally, the fourth course was a piece of wild ox, the fattest morsels of which were placed in our mouths.

After this feast, we had to go to visit the whole village, which consists of fully three hundred cabins. While we walked through the streets, an orator continually harangued to oblige all the people to come to see us without annoying us. Everywhere we were presented with belts, garters, and other articles made of the hair of bears and cattle, dyed red, yellow, and gray. These are all the rarities they possess. As they are of no great value, we did not burden ourselves with them.

We slept in the captain's cabin, and on the following day we took leave of him, promising to pass again by his village, within four moons. He conducted us to our canoes, with nearly six hundred persons who witnessed our embarkation, giving us every possible manifestation of the joy that our visit had caused them. For my own part, I promised, on bidding them adieu, that I would come the following year, and reside with them to instruct them. But, before quitting the Ilinois country, it is proper that I should relate what I observed of their customs and usages.

Section 6. *Of the Character of the Ilinois; of their Habits and Customs; and of the Esteem that they have for the Calumet, or Tobacco-pipe, and of the Dance they perform in its Honor.*

When one speaks the word "Ilinois," it is as if one said in their language, "the men," as if the other savages were looked upon by them merely as animals. It must also be admitted that they have an air of humanity which we have not observed in the other nations that we have seen upon our route. The shortness of my stay among them did not allow me to secure all the information that I would have desired; among all their customs, the following is what I have observed.

They are divided into many villages, some of which are quite distant from that of which we speak, which is called Peouarea.[1] This causes some difference in their language, which, on the whole, resembles Allegonquin, so that we easily understood each other. They are of a gentle and tractable disposition; we experienced this in the reception which they gave us. They have several wives, of whom they are extremely jealous; they watch them very closely, and cut off their noses or ears when they misbehave. I saw several women who bore the marks of their misconduct. Their bodies are shapely; they are active and very skillful with bows and arrows. They also use guns, which they buy from our savage allies who trade with our French. They use them especially to inspire, through their noise and smoke, terror in their enemies; the latter do not use guns, and have never seen any, since they live too far toward the west. They are warlike, and make themselves dreaded by the distant tribes to the south and west, whither they go to procure slaves; these they barter, selling them at a high price to other nations, in exchange for other wares. Those very distant savages against whom they war have no knowledge of Europeans; neither do they know anything of iron, or of copper, and they have only stone knives. When the Ilinois depart to go to war, the whole village must be notified by a loud shout, which is uttered at the doors of their cabins, the night and the

[1] The Peoria were a branch of the Illinois whose later home was on the Illinois River near the lake of their name.

morning before their departure. The captains are distinguished from the warriors by wearing red scarfs. These are made, with considerable skill, from the hair of bears and wild cattle. They paint their faces with red ochre, great quantities of which are found at a distance of some days' journey from the village. They live by hunting, game being plentiful in that country, and on Indian corn, of which they always have a good crop; consequently, they have never suffered from famine. They also sow beans and melons, which are excellent, especially those that have red seeds. Their squashes are not of the best; they dry them in the sun, to eat them during the winter and the spring. Their cabins are very large, and are roofed and floored with mats made of rushes. They make all their utensils of wood, and their ladles out of the heads of cattle, whose skulls they know so well how to prepare that they use these ladles with ease for eating their sagamité.

They are liberal in cases of illness, and think that the effect of the medicines administered to them is in proportion to the presents given to the physician. Their garments consist only of skins; the women are always clad very modestly and very becomingly, while the men do not take the trouble to cover themselves. I know not through what superstition some Ilinois, as well as some Nadouessi, while still young, assume the garb of women, and retain it throughout their lives. There is some mystery in this, for they never marry and glory in demeaning themselves to do everything that the women do. They go to war, however, but can use only clubs, and not bows and arrows, which are the weapons proper to men. They are present at all the juggleries, and at the solemn dances in honor of the calumet; at these they sing, but must not dance. They are summoned to the councils, and nothing can be decided without their advice. Finally, through their profession of leading an extraordinary life, they pass for Manitous, that is to say, for spirits, or persons of consequence.[1]

There remains no more, except to speak of the calumet. There is nothing more mysterious or more respected among them. Less honor is paid to the crowns and sceptres of kings than the savages bestow upon this. It seems to be the god

[1] These persons were known as "berdashes," their condition had some religious significance, and they received certain especial honors.

of peace and of war, the arbiter of life and of death. It has but to be carried upon one's person, and displayed, to enable one to walk safely through the midst of enemies, who, in the hottest of the fight, lay down their arms when it is shown. For that reason, the Ilinois gave me one, to serve as a safeguard among all the nations through whom I had to pass during my voyage. There is a calumet for peace, and one for war, which are distinguished solely by the color of the feathers with which they are adorned; red is a sign of war. They also use it to put an end to their disputes, to strengthen their alliances, and to speak to strangers. It is fashioned from a red stone, polished like marble,[1] and bored in such a manner that one end serves as a receptacle for the tobacco, while the other fits into the stem; this is a stick two feet long, as thick as an ordinary cane, and bored through the middle. It is ornamented with the heads and necks of various birds, whose plumage is very beautiful. To these they also add large feathers—red, green, and other colors—wherewith the whole is adorned. They have a great regard for it, because they look upon it as the calumet of the Sun; and, in fact, they offer it to the latter to smoke when they wish to obtain a calm, or rain, or fine weather. They scruple to bathe themselves at the beginning of summer, or to eat fresh fruit, until after they have performed the dance, which they do as follows:

The calumet dance, which is very famous among these peoples, is performed solely for important reasons; sometimes to strengthen peace, or to unite themselves for some great war; at other times, for public rejoicing. Sometimes they thus do honor to a nation who are invited to be present; sometimes it is danced at the reception of some important personage, as if they wished to give him the diversion of a ball or a comedy. In winter, the ceremony takes place in a cabin; in summer, in the open fields. When the spot is selected, it is completely surrounded by trees, so that all may sit in the shade afforded by their leaves, in order to be protected from the heat of the sun. A large mat of rushes, painted

[1] This peculiar red pipestone is now known as "catlinite" in honor of George Catlin, who was said to be the first white person to visit (in 1836) the sacred quarry in the present Pipestone County in southwest Minnesota. See his *North American Indians*, II. 164–177.

in various colors, is spread in the middle of the place, and serves as a carpet upon which to place with honor the god of the person who gives the dance; for each has his own god, which they call their Manitou. This is a serpent, a bird, or other similar thing, of which they have dreamed while sleeping, and in which they place all their confidence for the success of their war, their fishing, and their hunting. Near this Manitou, and at its right, is placed the calumet in honor of which the feast is given; and all around it a sort of trophy is made, and the weapons used by the warriors of those nations are spread, namely: clubs, war-hatchets, bows, quivers, and arrows.

Everything being thus arranged, and the hour of the dance drawing near, those who have been appointed to sing take the most honorable place under the branches; these are the men and women who are gifted with the best voices, and who sing together in perfect harmony. Afterward, all come to take their seats in a circle under the branches; but each one, on arriving, must salute the Manitou. This he does by inhaling the smoke, and blowing it from his mouth upon the Manitou, as if he were offering to it incense. Every one, at the outset, takes the calumet in a respectful manner, and, supporting it with both hands, causes it to dance in cadence, keeping good time with the air of the songs. He makes it execute many differing figures; sometimes he shows it to the whole assembly, turning himself from one side to the other. After that, he who is to begin the dance appears in the middle of the assembly, and at once continues this. Sometimes he offers it to the sun, as if he wished the latter to smoke it; sometimes he inclines it toward the earth; again, he makes it spread its wings, as if about to fly; at other times, he puts it near the mouths of those present, that they may smoke. The whole is done in cadence; and this is, as it were, the first scene of the ballet.

The second consists of a combat carried on to the sound of a kind of drum, which succeeds the songs, or even unites with them, harmonizing very well together. The dancer makes a sign to some warrior to come to take the arms which lie upon the mat, and invites him to fight to the sound of the drums. The latter approaches, takes up the bow and ar-

rows, and the war-hatchet, and begins the duel with the other, whose sole defense is the calumet. This spectacle is very pleasing, especially as all is done in cadence; for one attacks, the other defends himself; one strikes blows, the other parries them; one takes to flight, the other pursues; and then he who was fleeing faces about, and causes his adversary to flee. This is done so well, with slow and measured steps, and to the rhythmic sound of the voices and drums, that it might pass for a very fine opening of a ballet in France. The third scene consists of a lofty discourse, delivered by him who holds the calumet; for, when the combat is ended without bloodshed, he recounts the battles at which he has been present, the victories that he has won, the names of the nations, the places, and the captives whom he has made. And, to reward him, he who presides at the dance makes him a present of a fine robe of beaver-skins, or some other article. Then, having received it, he hands the calumet to another, the latter to a third, and so on with all the others, until every one has done his duty; then the president presents the calumet itself to the nation that has been invited to the ceremony, as a token of the everlasting peace that is to exist between the two peoples.

Here is one of the songs that they are in the habit of singing. They give it a certain turn which cannot be sufficiently expressed by note, but which nevertheless constitutes all its grace.

Ninahani, ninahani, ninahani, nani ongo.[1]

Section 7. Departure of the Father from the Ilinois; of the Painted Monsters which he saw upon the Great River Missisipi; of the River Pekitanoui. Continuation of the Voyage.

We take leave of our Ilinois at the end of June, about three o'clock in the afternoon. We embark in the sight of all the people, who admire our little canoes, for they have never seen any like them.

We descend, following the current of the river called

[1] The music for this chant is published in Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, LIX. 311.

Pekitanoui, which discharges into the Mississipy, flowing from the northwest. I shall have something important to say about it, when I shall have related all that I observed along this river.[1]

While passing near the rather high rocks that line the river, I noticed a simple which seemed to me very extraordinary. The root is like small turnips fastened together by little filaments, which taste like carrots. From this root springs a leaf as wide as one's hand, and half a finger thick, with spots. From the middle of this leaf spring other leaves, resembling the sconces used for candles in our halls; and each leaf bears five or six yellow flowers shaped like little bells.

We found quantities of mulberries, as large as those of France; and a small fruit which we at first took for olives, but which tasted like oranges; and another fruit as large as a hen's egg. We cut it in halves, and two divisions appeared, in each of which eight to ten fruits were encased; these are shaped like almonds, and are very good when ripe. Nevertheless, the tree that bears them has a very bad odor, and its leaves resemble those of the walnut-tree. In these prairies there is also a fruit similar to hazelnuts, but more delicate; the leaves are very large, and grow from a stalk at the end of which is a head similar to that of a sunflower, in which all its nuts are regularly arranged. These are very good, both cooked and raw.[2]

While skirting some rocks, which by their height and length inspired awe, we saw upon one of them two painted monsters which at first made us afraid, and upon which the boldest savages dare not long rest their eyes. They are as large as a calf; they have horns on their heads like those of deer, a horrible look, red eyes, a beard like a tiger's, a face somewhat like a man's, a body covered with scales, and so long a tail that it winds all around the body, passing above the head and going back between the legs, ending in a fish's tail. Green, red, and black are the three colors composing

[1] The Missouri River takes its present name from an Indian tribe that formerly dwelt upon its banks. The word by which Marquette knew it was an Indian word for "Muddy."

[2] These fruits have been identified respectively as the cactus or prickly pear, the persimmon, and the chincapin.

the picture. Moreover, these two monsters are so well painted that we cannot believe that any savage is their author; for good painters in France would find it difficult to paint so well, and besides, they are so high up on the rock that it is difficult to reach that place conveniently to paint them. Here is approximately the shape of these monsters, as we have faithfully copied it.[1]

While conversing about these monsters, sailing quietly in clear and calm water, we heard the noise of a rapid, into which we were about to run. I have seen nothing more dreadful. An accumulation of large and entire trees, branches, and floating islands, was issuing from the mouth of the river Pekistanouï, with such impetuosity that we could not without great danger risk passing through it. So great was the agitation that the water was very muddy, and could not become clear.

Pekitanouï is a river of considerable size, coming from the northwest, from a great distance; and it discharges into the Missisipi. There are many villages of savages along this river, and I hope by its means to discover the Vermillion or California Sea.

Judging from the direction of the course of the Missisipï, if it continue the same way, we think that it discharges into the Mexican Gulf. It would be a great advantage to find the river leading to the Southern Sea, toward California; and, as I have said, this is what I hope to do by means of the Pekitanouï, according to the reports made to me by the savages. From them I have learned that, by ascending this river for five or six days, one reaches a fine prairie, twenty or thirty leagues long. This must be crossed in a northwesterly direction, and it terminates at another small river, on which one may embark, for it is not very difficult to transport canoes through so fine a country as that prairie. This second river flows toward the southwest for ten or fifteen leagues, after which it enters a lake, small and deep, which

[1] These pictographs on a rock near Alton, Illinois, were called "piasa," and supposed to represent the "thunder bird." They were quite distinct when described by Stoddard in 1803; when visited in 1838 only one could be seen, of which traces were discernible as late as 1848, soon after which the rock was quarried down.

flows toward the west, where it falls into the sea. I have hardly any doubt that it is the Vermillion Sea, and I do not despair of discovering it some day, if God grant me the grace and the health to do so, in order that I may preach the Gospel to all the peoples of this new world who have so long grovelled in the darkness of infidelity.

Let us resume our route, after escaping as best we could from the dangerous rapid caused by the obstruction which I have mentioned.

Section 8. *Of the New Countries discovered by the Father. Various Particulars. Meeting with some Savages. First News of the Sea and of Europeans. Great Danger avoided by means of the Calumet.*

After proceeding about twenty leagues straight to the south, and a little less to the southeast, we found ourselves at a river called Ouaboukigou,[1] the mouth of which is at the 36th degree of latitude. Before reaching it, we passed by a place that is dreaded by the savages, because they believe that a manitou is there, that is to say, a demon, that devours travellers; and the savages, who wished to divert us from our undertaking, warned us against it. This is the demon: there is a small cove, surrounded by rocks twenty feet high, into which the whole current of the river rushes; and, being pushed back against the waters following it, and checked by an island near by, the current is compelled to pass through a narrow channel. This is not done without a violent struggle between all these waters, which force one another back, or without a great din, which inspires terror in the savages, who fear everything. But this did not prevent us from passing, and arriving at Waboukigou. This river flows from the lands of the East, where dwell the people called Chaouanons in so great numbers that in one district there are as many as twenty-three villages, and fifteen in another, quite near one another. They are not at all warlike, and are the nations whom the Iroquois go so far to seek, and war against without any reason; and, because these poor people cannot defend them-

[1] The present Ohio River was usually known as the Wabash (Ouaboukigou) below its confluence with the latter stream.

selves, they allow themselves to be captured and taken like flocks of sheep; and, innocent though they are, they nevertheless sometimes experience the barbarity of the Iroquois, who cruelly burn them.

A short distance above the river of which I have just spoken are cliffs, on which our Frenchmen noticed an iron mine, which they consider very rich. There are several veins of ore, and a bed a foot thick, and one sees large masses of it united with pebbles. A sticky earth is found there, of three different colors—purple, violet, and red. The water in which the latter is washed assumes a bloody tinge. There is also very heavy, red sand. I placed some on a paddle, which was dyed with its color, so deeply that the water could not wash it away during the fifteen days while I used it for paddling.

Here we began to see canes, or large reeds, which grow on the bank of the river; their color is a very pleasing green; all the nodes are marked by a crown of long, narrow, and pointed leaves. They are very high, and grow so thickly that the wild cattle have some difficulty in forcing their way through them.

Hitherto, we had not suffered any inconvenience from mosquitoes; but we were entering into their home, as it were. This is what the savages of this quarter do to protect themselves against them. They erect a scaffolding, the floor of which consists only of poles, so that it is open to the air in order that the smoke of the fire made underneath may pass through, and drive away those little creatures, which cannot endure it; the savages lie down upon the poles, over which bark is spread to keep off rain. These scaffoldings also serve them as protection against the excessive and unbearable heat of this country; for they lie in the shade, on the floor below, and thus protect themselves against the sun's rays, enjoying the cool breeze that circulates freely through the scaffolding.

With the same object, we were compelled to erect a sort of cabin on the water, with our sails as a protection against the mosquitoes and the rays of the sun. While drifting down with the current, in this condition, we perceived on land some savages armed with guns, who awaited us. I at once offered them my plumed calumet, while our Frenchmen prepared for defense, but delayed firing, that the savages might be the

first to discharge their guns. I spoke to them in Huron, but they answered me by a word which seemed to me a declaration of war against us. However, they were as frightened as we were; and what we took for a signal for battle was an invitation that they gave us to draw near, that they might give us food. We therefore landed, and entered their cabins, where they offered us meat from wild cattle and bear's grease, with white plums, which are very good. They have guns, hatchets, hoes, knives, beads, and flasks of double glass, in which they put their powder. They wear their hair long, and tattoo their bodies after the Hiroquois fashion. The women wear head-dresses and garments like those of the Huron women. They assured us that we were no more than ten days' journey from the sea; that they bought cloth and all other goods from the Europeans who lived to the east; that these Europeans had rosaries and pictures; that they played upon instruments; that some of them looked like me, and had been received by these savages kindly. Nevertheless, I saw none who seemed to have received any instruction in the faith; I gave them as much as I could, with some medals.[1]

This news animated our courage, and made us paddle with fresh ardor. We thus push forward, and no longer see so many prairies, because both shores of the river are bordered with lofty trees. The cottonwood, elm, and basswood trees there are admirable for their height and thickness. The great numbers of wild cattle, which we heard bellowing, led us to believe that the prairies are near. We also saw quail on the water's edge. We killed a little parroquet, one half of whose head was red, the other half and the neck yellow, and the whole body green.[2] We had gone down to near the 33rd degree of latitude having proceeded nearly all the time in a southerly direction, when we perceived a village on the water's edge called Mitchigamea.[3] We had recourse to our

[1] The explorers were now in the Chickasaw country; but the similarity of this band with the Iroquois, their language and customs, would indicate that they were either Tuscarora or Cherokee—both tribes of Iroquoian origin.

[2] A small species of paroquet was very abundant in the Mississippi and Ohio valleys in early days.

[3] The Michigamea Indians were of Algonquian origin, allied to the Illinois, from whom they were temporarily separated. Their habitat was probably above

patroness and guide, the blessed Virgin Immaculate; and we greatly needed her assistance, for we heard from afar the savages who were inciting one another to the fray by their continual yells. They were armed with bows, arrows, hatchets, clubs, and shields. They prepared to attack us, on both land and water; part of them embarked in great wooden canoes, some to ascend, others to descend the river, in order to intercept us and surround us on all sides. Those who were on land came and went, as if to commence the attack. In fact, some young men threw themselves into the water, to come and seize my canoe; but the current compelled them to return to land. One of them then hurled his club, which passed over without striking us. In vain I showed the calumet, and made them signs that we were not coming to war against them. The alarm continued, and they were already preparing to pierce us with arrows from all sides, when God suddenly touched the hearts of the old men, who were standing at the water's edge. This no doubt happened through the sight of our calumet, which they had not clearly distinguished from afar; but as I did not cease displaying it, they were influenced by it, and checked the ardor of their young men. Two of these elders even, after casting into our canoe, as if at our feet, their bows and quivers, to reassure us, entered the canoe, and made us approach the shore, whereon we landed, not without fear on our part. At first, we had to speak by signs, because none of them understood the six languages which I spoke. At last, we found an old man who could speak a little Ilinois.

We informed them, by our presents, that we were going to the sea. They understood very well what we wished to say to them, but I know not whether they apprehended what I told them about God, and about matters pertaining to their salvation. This is a seed cast into the ground, which will bear fruit in its time. We obtained no other answer than that we should learn all that we desired at another large village, called Akamsea, which was only eight or ten leagues

St. Francis River, in the neighborhood of the present Big Lake that takes its name from this tribe—Michigame, or Big Lake. About the end of the seventeenth century the Michigamea were driven north and coalesced with the Kaskaskia branch of the Illinois.

lower down.[1] They offered us sagamité and fish, and we passed the night among them, with some anxiety.

Section 9. Reception given to the French in the Last Village which they saw. The Manners and Customs of those Savages. Reasons for not going farther.

We embarked early on the following day, with our interpreter; a canoe containing ten savages went a short distance ahead of us. When we arrived within half a league of the Akamsea, we saw two canoes coming to meet us. He who commanded stood upright, holding in his hand the calumet, with which he made various signs, according to the custom of the country. He joined us, singing very agreeably, and gave us tobacco to smoke; after that, he offered us sagamité, and bread made of Indian corn, of which we ate a little. He then preceded us, after making us a sign to follow him slowly. A place had been prepared for us under the scaffolding of the chief of the warriors; it was clean, and carpeted with fine rush mats. Upon these we were made to sit, having around us the elders, who were nearest to us; after them, the warriors; and, finally, all the common people in a crowd. We fortunately found there a young man who understood Ilinois much better than did the interpreter whom we had brought from Mitchigamea. Through him, I spoke at first to the whole assembly by the usual presents. They admired what I said to them about God and the mysteries of our holy Faith. They manifested a great desire to retain me among them, that I might instruct them.

We afterward asked them what they knew about the sea. They replied that we were only ten days' journey from it—we could have covered the distance in five days; that they were not acquainted with the nations who dwelt there, because their enemies prevented them from trading with those Europeans; that the hatchets, knives, and beads that we saw

[1] Akamsea was a village of the Quapaw tribe, of the great Siouan stock, allied to the tribes of the Missouri and upper Mississippi regions. The name Akamsea means "down-stream people" and their early habitat is supposed to have been on the Ohio. The village visited by Marquette appears to have been above the Arkansas River, near the site where De Soto died in 1541.

were sold to them partly by nations from the East, and partly by an Ilinois village situated at four days' journey from their village westward. They also told us that the savages with guns whom we had met were their enemies, who barred their way to the sea, and prevented them from becoming acquainted with the Europeans, and from carrying on any trade with them; that, moreover, we exposed ourselves to great dangers by going farther, on account of the continual forays of their enemies along the river, because, as they had guns and were very warlike, we could not without manifest danger proceed down the river, which they constantly occupy.

During this conversation, food was continually brought to us in large wooden platters, consisting sometimes of sagamité, sometimes of whole corn, sometimes of a piece of dog's flesh. The entire day was spent in feasting. These people are very obliging and liberal with what they have; but they are wretchedly provided with food, for they dare not go and hunt wild cattle, on account of their enemies. It is true that they have an abundance of Indian corn, which they sow at all seasons. We saw at the same time some that was ripe, some other that had only sprouted, and some again in the milk, so that they sow it three times a year. They cook it in great earthen jars, which are very well made. They have also plates of baked earth which they use in various ways. The men go naked, and wear their hair short; they pierce their noses, from which, as well as from their ears, hang beads. The women are clad in wretched skins; they knot their hair in two tresses which they throw behind their ears, and have no ornaments with which to adorn themselves. Their feasts are given without any ceremony. They offer the guests large dishes, from which all eat at discretion and offer what is left to one another. Their language is exceedingly difficult, and I could succeed in pronouncing only a few words notwithstanding all my efforts. Their cabins, which are made of bark, are long and wide; they sleep at the two ends, which are raised two feet above the ground. They keep their corn in large baskets made of canes, or in gourds as large as half-barrels. They know nothing of the beaver. Their wealth consists in the skins of wild cattle. They never see snow in their country, and recognize the winter only through the

rains, which there fall more frequently than in summer. We ate no other fruit there than watermelons. If they knew how to till their soil, they would have fruits of all kinds.

In the evening, the elders held a secret council, in regard to the design entertained by some to break our heads and rob us; but the chief put a stop to all these plots. After sending for us, he danced the calumet before us, in the manner I have already described, as a token of our entire safety; and, to relieve us of all fear, he made me a present of it.

Monsieur Jolliet and I held another council, to deliberate upon what we should do—whether we should push on, or remain content with the discovery which we had made. After attentively considering that we were not far from the Gulf of Mexico, the basin of which is at the latitude of 31 degrees 60 minutes, while we were at 33 degrees 40 minutes, we judged that we could not be more than two or three days' journey from it; and that, beyond a doubt, the Missisipi River discharges into the Florida or Mexican Gulf, and not to the east in Virginia, whose sea-coast is at 34 degrees latitude,—which we had passed, without, however, having as yet reached the sea,—or to the west in California, because in that case our route would have been to the west, or the west-southwest, whereas we had always continued it toward the south. We further considered that we exposed ourselves to the risk of losing the results of this voyage, of which we could give no information if we proceeded to fling ourselves into the hands of the Spaniards who, without doubt, would at least have detained us as captives. Moreover, we saw very plainly that we were not in a condition to resist savages allied to the Europeans, who were numerous, and expert in firing guns, and who continually infested the lower part of the river. Finally, we had obtained all the information that could be desired in regard to this discovery. All these reasons induced us to decide upon returning; this we announced to the savages, and, after a day's rest, made our preparations for it.

Section 10. *Return of the Father and of the French. Baptism of a Dying Child.*

After a month's navigation, while descending Missisipi from the 42nd to the 34th degree, and beyond, and after preaching the Gospel as well as I could to the nations that I met, we start on the 17th of July from the village of the Akensea, to retrace our steps. We therefore reascend the Missisipi which gives us much trouble in breasting its currents. It is true that we leave it, at about the 38th degree, to enter another river, which greatly shortens our road, and takes us with but little effort to the Lake of the Ilinois.[1]

We have seen nothing like this river that we enter, as regards its fertility of soil, its prairies and woods; its cattle, elk, deer, wildcats, bustards, swans, ducks, parroquets, and even beaver. There are many small lakes and rivers. That on which we sailed is wide, deep, and still, for 65 leagues. In the spring and during part of the summer there is only one portage of half a league. We found on it a village of Ilinois called Kaskasia,[2] consisting of 74 cabins. They received us very well, and obliged me to promise that I would return to instruct them. One of the chiefs of this nation, with his young men, escorted us to the Lake of the Ilinois, whence, at last, at the end of September, we reached the Bay des Puantz, from which we had started at the beginning of June.

Had this voyage resulted in the salvation of even one soul, I would consider all my troubles well rewarded, and I have reason to presume that such is the case. For, when I was returning, we passed through the Ilinois of Peouarea, and during three days I preached the Faith in all their cabins; after which, while we were embarking, a dying child was brought to me at the water's edge, and I baptized it shortly before it died, through an admirable act of Providence for the salvation of that innocent soul.

[1] The Illinois River, leading via the Chicago portage to Lake Michigan, then frequently called Lake of the Illinois.

[2] The Kaskaskia village, removed later to the stream bearing that name in southern Illinois. In Marquette's time it was on the Illinois, not far from the present village of Utica in La Salle County.