

## DISCOVERY OF THE MISSISSIPPI

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT OF THE TRAVELS OF NICOLET, ALLOÛEZ, MARQUETTE  
HENNEPIN, AND LA SALLE IN THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY

The pioneer of French travellers to the country west of the great lakes, and the first white man who is reputed to have reached a northern tributary of the Mississippi, was Jean Nicolet, who in 1634, or thereabouts, made treaties with the Indians at Green Bay, and ascended Fox River.

The "Relation de ce qui s'est passé en la Nouvelle France, 1640," Paris, 1641, gives the earliest indication of this voyage, and a summary description is given in the Relation of 1642-43. These reports are reprinted in the "Relation des Jésuites," vol. i., Québec, 1858. Margry's "Découvertes et établissements des Français," vol. i., pp. 47-53, contains the portions of the above which refer to Nicolet, and a translation of the account in the Relation of 1640 is printed in Smith's "History of Wisconsin," vol. iii. Du Creux's "Historia Canadensis," Paris, 1664, gives the first connected history of the life and exploits of this explorer. A translation of Du Creux's narrative is appended to Butterfield's "History and Discovery of the Northwest, by John Nicolet," Cincinnati, 1881.

Shea states, in his "Discovery and Exploration of the Mississippi," that Nicolet descended the Wisconsin to the Mississippi. This opinion was adopted by Parkman in his "Jesuits in North America," p. 166, but his later judgment is given in the "Discovery of the Great West." A more careful examination of the evidence demonstrates the improbability that his travels extended farther than the Wisconsin, and in the opinion of Butterfield, the latest writer upon this voyage, he did not reach that river, but stopped at the country of the Mascoutins upon Fox River.

Benjamin Sulté, a Canadian historical writer, in writing upon Nicolet, in his "Mélanges d'Histoire et de Littérature," Ottawa, 1876, shows, for the first time, that this journey was probably made in 1634, instead of 1638 or 1639, as before thought.

Sulté's article, with notes by L. C. Draper, is printed in the "Wisconsin Historical Society Collections," vol. viii., pp. 188-194; also in the "Canadian Antiquarian," vol. viii., pp. 157-164.

Butterfield, who has carefully investigated the records, agrees with Sulté in assigning 1634 as the true date, and brings out additional, if not conclusive evidence to support this theory, in his monograph cited above. Margry, in the "Journal de l'Instruction publique," 1862, under the caption, "Les Normands dans les Vallées de l'Ohio et du Mississippi," describes Nicolet's travels and Gravier's "Découvertes et établissements de La Salle;" HARRISSE'S "Notes pour servir à l'Histoire [etc.] de