

soon after Champlain's advent, if not co-eval with the Recollet missionaries, certainly during the regime of the Jesuits, as we learn that the Indians frequently offered furs in exchange for necessary trinkets, and that *donnes*, traders and *courier du bois* often accompanied the Fathers in their missionary expeditions. Parkman, in his "Jesuits in North America," page 364, mentions this fact, and in a note on page 365 says that Le Jeune in 1636 wrote a long letter in defence of the barter in furs. Traffic in furs at that time was a necessary condition of mission work. It is also known that French explorers and travellers and English adventurers in the fur trade penetrated these regions, following Champlain later on, and became familiar with the locality at various dates early in the French period. The fur industry, however, advancing apace, soon passed beyond mere missionary concern, the Huron region proving a prolific source of supply, and furnishing the bulk of the fur stream passing over the French River route to Quebec, at least till the advent of Jean Nicollet in 1620, who was the first secular adventurer in the Georgian Bay regions.

According to Benjamin Sulte, Nicollet was domiciled among the Indians on the Ottawa as one of themselves as early as 1618, and afterward two years with tribes on the borders of Lake Huron. (Wisconsin Historical Records, 1880-2, Vol. IX., pages 106-7). Nicollet is said to have spent ten years on the Ottawa and among the Nippisings in this way, his main object being fur gathering, his latter range apparently confined to the eastern and southern shores of the Georgian Bay and its environs. It must be remembered that Lake Superior had only been heard of by white men. Sault Ste. Marie had not yet been reached and Michillimakinack (Mackinaw) was as yet only a rumour. The Company of New France (the Hundred Associates) was formed May 7th, 1628, in Quebec (Canadian Archives, 1885, page XXIX.) This was the closing year of Nicollet's sojourn among the Nippisings. The next year, 1629, in which Kirkt captured Quebec, Nicollet coasted westward, and in the following years reached Sault Ste. Marie, Mackinaw, Lake Michigan, Green Bay and Wisconsin, then a part of the Canadian west, and the last of his fur explorations. French colonists formed the "Beaver Company" in 1630, according to John Macoun's History of Manitoba, page 429, and pushed the trade north and west. In 1635 Nicollet was made Fur Factor and Interpreter for the "Hundred Associates."

J. Gilmary Shea (History of Indian Missions, U.S., pages