

LA SALLE'S JOURNEY TO THE WESTERN PENINSULA.

Note 2, page 4.

I give below Dr. Winsor's account ("Cartier to Frontenac," pp. 214-219) of La Salle's journey of 1669 to Lake Ontario and the Indian villages in the Gore District:

"In following the events of the expedition, we must depend upon the journal which Galinée has left, now preserved in the great library at Paris. The contents of this journal were first made known to American scholars by Mr. O. H. Marshall in 1874, but the full text appeared later in Margry's documentary publication.

"The object of La Salle was first to go to Seneca villages, where he hoped to obtain guides for further progress. The canoes passed into Lake Ontario, and, following the southern shore, they reached Irondequoit Bay on August 26, 1669. On this same day, Fremin and Garnier, who were holding the Jesuit mission among the Senecas, left their post for Onondaga to attend a general council of the Jesuits then working in the Iroquois country. It has been suspected that they got word of the landing at Irondequoit and absented themselves conveniently, in order to harass the Sulpitians by depriving them of the means of communication with the Indians. From the landing, La Salle, Galinée, and a few others made their way to the mission, only to find that the Jesuits, to whom the letter of Laval accredited them for kind offices, were gone. What Fremin and his companion had anticipated—if the theory of wilful desertion is allowed—was soon apparent, for it does not appear that La Salle's acquaintance with the Iroquois tongue was of much service, and the strangers were sadly at a loss in trying to communicate their desire to secure guides. The savages could do nothing but feast the newcomers. They after their own fashion added to the entertainment by putting to the torture a prisoner whom it was supposed they had captured on the bank of the very river of which La Salle was dreaming. What intelligent intercourse the French had seems to have been brought about by the aid of a servant of Fremin, whom that missionary had left behind, and through him La Salle tried to ransom the poor prisoner, as likely to be such a guide as he wanted, but he could offer no inducement equal to the joys of torturing. Through the same interpreter the French got new descriptions of a broad prairie land to the south, which stretched a long distance without trees; and they heard, as Galinée's journal tells us, of a people who lived in a warm and fertile country, hard by a river which flowed so that it must run ultimately, as was thought, into the Mexican Gulf or the Vermillion Sea. Such were the reports of the yet undiscovered Ohio.

"The feasts, in which the visitors shared, resulted in drunken orgies, and the Frenchmen began to be alarmed at the possible dangers of inflamed passions. They had heard, moreover, that there was farther to the west a better way of finding this river. All this easily moved them to return to the lake, which they did without mishap.

"Once more afloat, the little flotilla moved on towards the setting sun. They passed the Niagara River without entering it, and noted the sound of the distant cataract, and Galinée's account of it is perhaps the earliest we