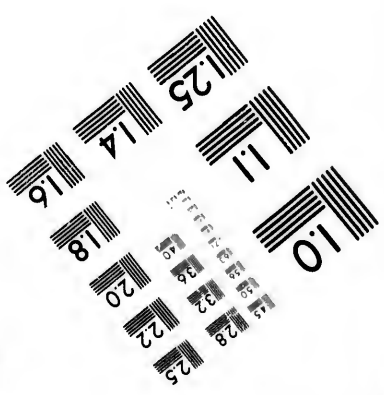
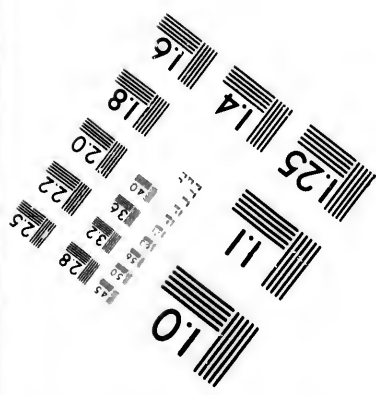
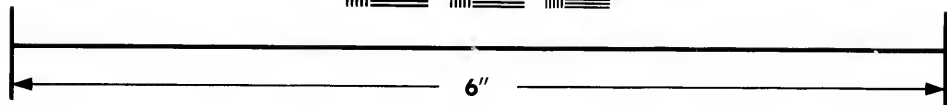
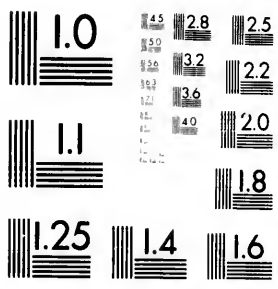


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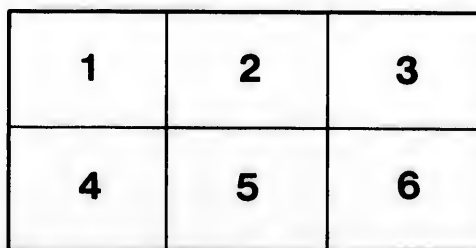
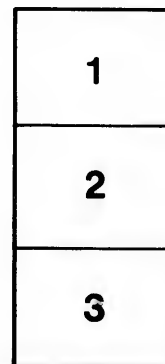
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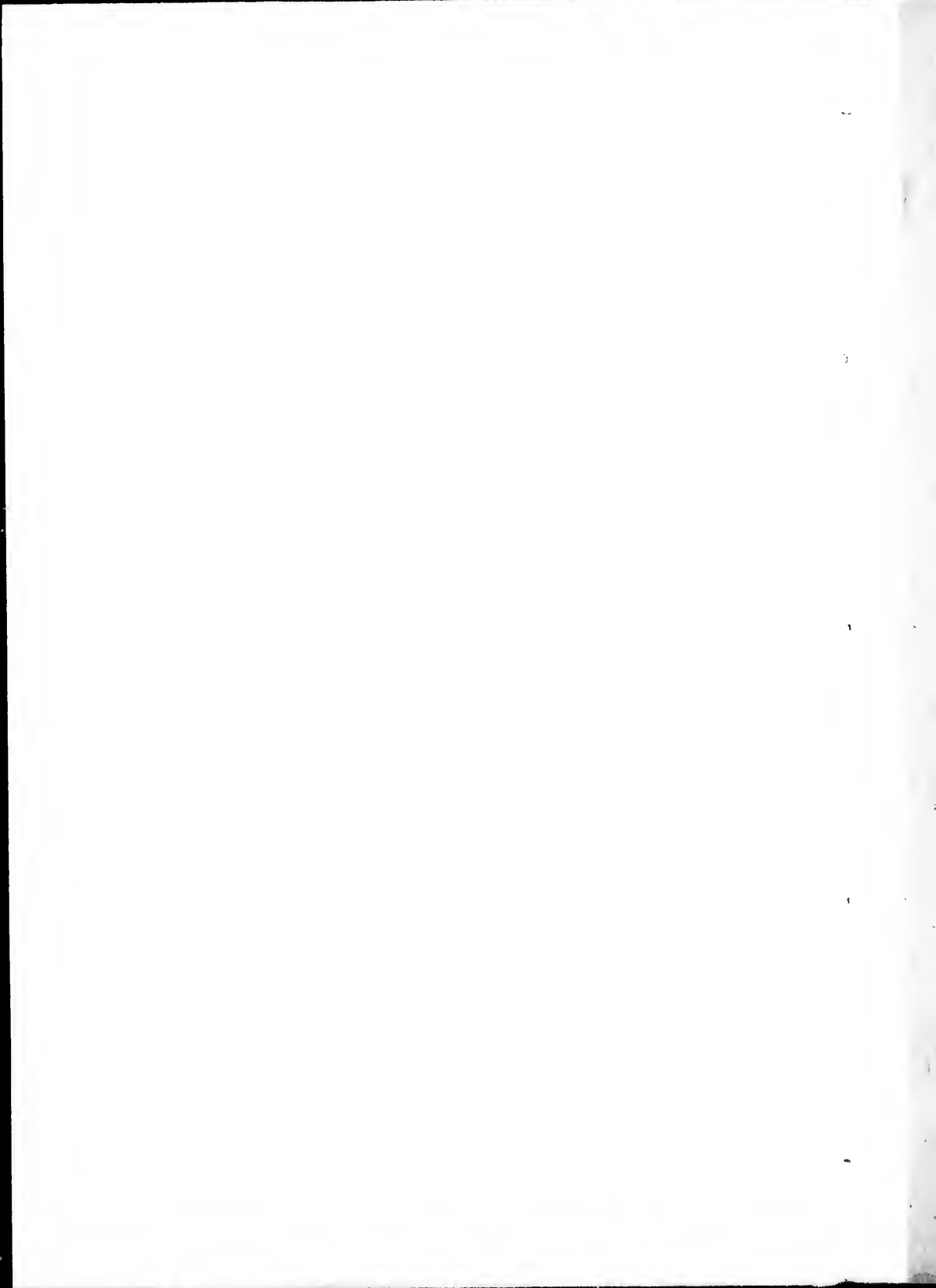
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SECOND SERIES—1898-99

VOLUME IV

SECTION II

ENGLISH LITERATURE, HISTORY, ARCHÆOLOGY, ETC.

# The Valley of the Grand River

1600-1650

By BENJAMIN SULTE

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J. S. S. S.

VIII.—*The Valley of the Grand River, 1600–1650.*

By BENJAMIN SULTE.

(Read May 25, 1898.)

The western branch of River St. Lawrence was first known as "River of the Algonquins," and by the end of the 17th century it was called "the route of the Outaouas," but the designation of "Grand River" covers the whole of that period, even the 18th century and part of our own time; it is therefore the fit term to be used when speaking of that river and valley during the early days of Canada.

## FIRST NOTION OF THE GRAND RIVER.

On the 3rd day of October, 1535, Cartier ascended the Mountain of Montreal and found that the St. Lawrence made a fork above that place, one branch coming from the south through a series of cascades, and the other one flowing from the west, without any apparent obstacle. He attached a great importance to the latter branch—which we now know as the Ottawa—because he expected to discover in that direction the fabulous kingdom of the Saguenay, which in his imagination existed somewhere between the Ottawa, the North Pole and Lake St. John on the Saguenay River.

The two Indians from Gaspé who had accompanied him to the mouth of the Saguenay during the preceding summer, had obtained from the people of Tadoussac some information concerning the Upper Saguenay, but they all made a mistake regarding the course and the directions of the waters running through that back country. Cartier wrote in his diary that the route of the Saguenay led to a rich kingdom which had an outlet in the west by means of another great river. When in Montreal, he fully believed that the Ottawa was that highway and his ambition grew in consequence. Unfortunately he could not utilize his Algonquin interpreters, because the tribe of Hochelaga (Montreal) spoke the Huron language only. He, therefore, had to resort to sign and pantomime to communicate with the Indians of that place. This made the matter worse, as he was already impressed with the idea that the kingdom of the Saguenay existed in that neighbourhood; he readily inferred from the gestures and signs of the savages that in the river before his eyes he had found the very door of that so-called wealthy region, and furthermore, that after navigating that stream to its sources he would reach Japan and China in a short journey.

In the autumn of 1885, 350 years later, the first locomotive of the Canadian Pacific Railway started on its trip across the continent.



The Indians, says Cartier in his narrative, "took my silver chain and also the leaden handle of a poignard of one of my men and showed that these metals could be obtained from the river of the west (the Ottawa), but that the passage was guarded by a ferocious nation called the Agojudas."

The settlement of Hochelaga was at that time the only one remaining in the hands of the Huron-Iroquois race on the St. Lawrence. All the north was occupied by the Algonquins, especially the Ottawa River and the territory extending from Allumette Island to Three Rivers. These Algonquins had dispersed the Iroquois from the shores of the St. Lawrence about 30 years before Cartier's visit.

The Island of Montreal was certainly more than sufficient in size to maintain the population of Hochelaga, because the Hurons lived mostly on their agricultural pursuits, whilst the Algonquins, who were hunters and consequently nomads, required an immense area of land to make a living. The Agojudas were evidently the Algonquins of the Ottawa.

We have no record of the second voyage made by Cartier at Hochelaga. In 1587, his grand nephew, Jacques Noel, came to the same spot and glanced towards the Occidental River, as he terms it, but he only quotes the following lines which he states were written by Cartier on a chart prepared by the latter. "The people of Canada (Quebec) and Hochelaga (Montreal) told me that the north-west branch of the St. Lawrence (the Ottawa) runs in the province of Saguenay, which is rich and abounds in precious stones."

We must also remember that Cartier had concluded from the expressions of the Indians that the Saguenay region was partly inhabited by a race of men walking on one leg—and other prodigies of that sort. He understood that if he could reach the far west of that land he would meet with white men dressed in cloth like the clothes he wore himself. These absurdities are very frequent in the narratives of the discoverers of the 16th and 17th centuries.

#### THE GREAT LAKES.

During his visit to the Island of Montreal, in the summer of 1603, Champlain obtained some information concerning the sources of the River St. Lawrence, but could not follow, as closely as he wished, the description given by the Indians.

"The Indians," he says, "on going from Montreal have five cascades to pass." These are the Cedars and Coteau cascades.

"From the beginning to the end of that series you may calculate eight leagues. The canoes are carried by land at two places only. Each of these falls contains about one-eighth of a league, sometimes one-quarter at the most. After that comes a lake which may measure in the neighbourhood of 15 or 16 leagues in length.

"From there the Indians enter into a river (the Long Sault), about one league wide and a few leagues long, and then they reach a lake of four or five leagues in length. At the other end of that lake are five rapids, measuring from the first to the last from 25 to 30 leagues: the canoes are carried by land at various places during travel through these rapids, and at two other places the men only disembark and push the vessels in shallow water. None of these are so hard to pass as is Sault St. Louis of Montreal.

"Arriving at a lake, which is about eighty leagues in length, there are a great number of islands, and up to the other end the water is drinkable and the winter mild. Past the lake is seen a rather high fall with a small volume of water. The portage by land is about one-quarter of a league. Then comes another lake, some sixty leagues long, of which the water is drinkable. The upper end of this last lake turns into a detroit or strait of two leagues wide and which goes inland about 15 or 16 leagues; but this is not sure, because the Indians who gave me the above information have not gone further than the detroit, and never saw any man who has seen the big lake from which the water flows towards the strait. That lake is so large that nobody would dare to navigate it, except near the shore. During the summer season the sun sets north of that lake, and in the winter about the middle of it. The water is like that of the ocean, not drinkable."

The reader has certainly recognized Lake St. Francis, the Galops Rapids, Thousand Islands, Lake Ontario, Niagara Falls, Lake Erie, Detroit River and Lake Huron. The salt water of the latter cannot be accounted for, unless the Indians spoke of the nation of Stinking Water, which was inhabited west of the lake. The Indians who explained these matters to Champlain were Algonquins from Quebec and Three Rivers, possibly some from Allumette Island also, but this is doubtful. None of the Hurons of Georgian Bay had any communication with the lower St. Lawrence before 1609. Therefore, those who spoke to Champlain merely expressed what had been told to them, added to their personal experience.

Niagara Falls is said to be sometimes without water, when a strong wind blows against the current of upper Niagara River, but this only happens once in fifty or one hundred years, and cannot be the reason why the Indians stated there was very little water at the famous cataract. I rather think that in using valapuk language, some misunderstanding was created between Champlain and the good Indians.

They told also, he says, that the St. Lawrence ran from Niagara Falls into the direction of Montreal, Quebec and Gaspé, but that Lake Erie, River Detroit and Lake Huron were somewhat of a standstill, likely because they had a discharge either north or south by which the water escapes the attraction of the Niagara. Champlain asked them whether any river flowed into Lake Erie, and they answered there were several

nice ones. Thence, Champlain drew his conclusion: Lake Erie is the source of the St. Lawrence, and Lake Huron is the south sea.

This immense problem being settled, Champlain was in a position to laugh at Henry Hudson, whose destiny was to come six years later, and take Hudson River for the road to China.

On revising his manuscript Champlain was struck by the curious fact that Detroit River, which empties in Lake Erie, is not a salt water stream, whilst its source is a salted ocean! This puzzled his imagination for a while, and he added the following remark respecting Lake Huron: "Yet, we should not believe this absolutely, for these appearances may be deceitful."

Eight years later he knew all about the water of Lake Huron, and he made up his mind that what is now the county of Bruce could be taken as the geographical centre of North America. This was a good deal of work done in a short time.

#### WHO SAW PARLIAMENT HILL FIRST?

Give me the name of the first white man who saw the majestic hill upon which now stand the government buildings! No direct answer to that question. The poet is perfectly free to imagine a tale and thus fill up a blank page in our history.

What would the reader say, for instance, if I were to suppose that the first visit took place during the thirteenth century and that the explorer was a Norwegian? Do not laugh, I pray. We all know that these daring navigators had planted several settlements on the Atlantic coasts from Newfoundland as far down as the Potomac, four centuries before Columbus landed on the island of San Salvador, and that the country around Quebec was occupied by them in the middle of the thirteenth century. Read the books, on that subject, in the library of Parliament. My supposition is that the white men of Quebec might have ascended the Ottawa, say about 100 years before the great invasion of the cold wave which changed Greenland into an icy field and made Canada what it is at present.

But supposition is not history. History deals with facts.

Give me the name of the first European who went up the Grand River!

The French archives are replete with detailed information on the various expeditions of their people in the early days of this colony, but no precise note has been kept of the first attempts, if any, made to discover the valley of this river before the year 1610-13.

I must mention the voyage of Samuel Champlain from Tadoussac to Montreal in 1603. At Tadoussac he spoke of the Occidental River to some Algonquins who had gone down the St. Lawrence during their

usual summer wanderings. Tessouat was the chief of that band, and his village was on Allumette Island. They had killed some Iroquois along the road, which gave them an opportunity to celebrate their victory in the presence of Champlain, with a view to show him the valour of the noble red man.

A few weeks afterwards, Champlain visited the Island of Montreal and inquired as to the origin of the St. Lawrence River, as already explained above, but his report says nothing concerning the west branch, except these two lines: "There is a river going to the country of the Algonquins who reside at a distance of some sixty leagues from the St. Lawrence."

The Island of Montreal was without inhabitants in 1603. According to some traditions, the Huron-Iroquois of the time of Cartier had been driven away by the Algonquins in the second half of the sixteenth century.

When Champlain came back five years later (1608) he met at Quebec the son of an Algonquin chief called Iroquet, whose tribe inhabited the territory situated between Soulanges, Kingston and the city of Ottawa at present. Later on, the Sagamos himself invited Champlain to accompany him on a campaign against the Iroquois, which proposal was accepted. Consequently, by the end of June, 1609, they met near Lake St. Peter and marched in the direction of River Chambly and then to Lake Champlain where they fought a battle.

On that occasion Iroquet was accompanied by a band of Indians under a chief named Ochateguin, great enemies of the Iroquois, and the same that Champlain had heard of in 1603, when the Algonquins described them as the "good Iroquois." Hurons is their name in our history. They lived on the south shore of Penetanguishene Bay, extending towards Lake Simcoe, and spoke the same language as the Iroquois, who belonged to the same race, but inhabited the south side of Lake Ontario from Buffalo to Albany.

From that time, the Hurons came to Montreal and the Lower St. Lawrence through what is now termed French River, Lake Nipissing, River Mattawan and the Grand River. No doubt Champlain obtained from those people a good deal of information concerning the west, and especially the valley of the latter river. He had already seen (in 1603) specimens of native copper, taken, as stated by the Indians, from the vicinity of a large sea, which is, no doubt, Lake Superior.

Now comes the expedition of Champlain from Quebec to Lake St. Peter, in 1610, marked by three important events: a battle with the Iroquois, a large trade with the tribes of the Upper St. Lawrence and Upper Ottawa, and the departure of a young man who followed the Algonquins on their return home.

Who was this young man? I cannot tell; we will try to find out.

Two-thirds of the men who had remained at Quebec the first autumn (1608) of the establishment of that post, died during the winter from the

effects of a scorbutic disease. In the spring seven men only were still living, with Champlain himself. One of them was a young man named Etienne (Stephen in English) Brulé, a native of Champigny, a small place near Paris. I believe he was the first white individual who saw the valley of the Grand River; this is how I explain it:

The object of Champlain in enlisting Brulé, Nicolet, Marsolet, Hertel, Margnerie and other grown up boys for service in Canada, from 1608 to 1620, was to educate them as interpreters. They all could read and write; some of them were even perfect scholars. In less than one year each of these young adventurers had learned an Indian language, and sometimes they mastered two or three idioms after a very short period. Brulé spent the years 1608-1610 amongst the Algonquins around Quebec; he must have acquired a practical knowledge of the tongue spoken by these savages and therefore was able, in 1610, to travel with any Algonquin, either of the St. Lawrence or the Ottawa regions.

During the summer of 1610 Iroquet attended the trading gatherings at Lake St. Peter. Champlain asked him to take a man with him in order to visit his country and report about it. The offer was accepted, provided an Indian would be chosen to embark for France for the same purpose. Savignon, who belonged to the Huron tribes, was selected to make the trip to Paris. Champlain recites on this occasion: "I had a young man who had already spent two winters at Quebec and who desired to go with the Algonquins to learn their language. I thought it well to send him in that direction, because he could see the country, also the great lake (Huron), observe the rivers, the people, the mines, and other rare things, so as to report truth about all these. He accepted the duty with pleasure."

No name is given. In all the narratives of Champlain, previous to this date, we find no trace of any white man attempting to visit the River of the Algonquins, as it was already styled. That one must be considered the first explorer. But who was he? If you turn to Champlain's "Journal," during the summer of 1618, you will read that Etienne Brulé had been at that date eight years amongst the Indians of Upper Canada, although coming back to the St. Lawrence nearly every summer. This assertion of Champlain corresponds exactly with the date of 1610.

Champlain alludes evidently to Etienne Brulé in 1610 when he says "the young man desired to go with the Algonquins to learn their language." Perhaps he meant "to perfect his knowledge of the language." Anyway, he mentions that "this young man had already spent two winters at Quebec." This is as much as was required to learn the language in question, unless the Huron language is the one Brulé wanted to acquire. I leave the puzzle to the readers.

The Hurons or Ojateguins lived between Lake Simcoe and Penetanguishene. They had adopted the route of the River of the Algon-

quins to travel to Montreal, in preference to that of the upper St. Lawrence, for fear of the Iroquois, but they used to communicate with the Bay of Kente in time of peace and thus navigate on Lake Ontario. In his map of 1613 Champlain places their residence at Prescott and Kingston, according to what he understood of the explanations furnished to him. The wars of the Iroquois had begun, but not on such a vast scale as after 1640: the Hurons and the Algonquins of Iroquet occupied virtually all the eastern and northern parts of the province of Ontario. That accounts for the joint visits of Hurons and Algonquins to the lower St. Lawrence, through the River of the Algonquins, during the year 1609-15 and afterwards.

The young interpreter sent by Champlain in 1610 may not have reached Allumette Island. The country of Chief Iroquet did not extend any further than the site of our city: the Hurons stood far to the southwest. My conjecture is that, considering he wished to study the Algonquin language, he entered their country by the Rideau River and went back of Kingston, in the country of Iroquet, whilst the Huron party continued their voyage on the Ottawa and passed by the Mattawan, the Nipissing, and French River to return home. But if Brulé, the one to learn the Huron language he must have followed the latter party.

Whoever was the young man in question, he could have claimed the first sight of Parliament Hill.

#### UP TO ALLUMETTE ISLAND.

Savignon did not conceal his admiration for Paris, "the town where men are as numerous as leaves on the branches of trees," he said, but he thought the civilized nations carried a lot of absurdities about them. Marc Lescarbot, an advocate, who saw him there, takes great pleasure in analysing the criticism of the witty Indian.

Brulé, or the lad sent to upper Canada by Champlain, had at the same time an opportunity of observing the usages of the barbarians: but contrary to Savignon's fancy, he took a delight in following them—such was often the case with the *Coueurs de Bois*.

When summer (1611) came bright again on the St. Lawrence, Champlain paddled his canoe from Quebec to Montreal and waited for the arrival of his friends of the forest. Savignon accompanied him, and his impatience to see his relatives was so great that he started ahead to meet them, but only went as far as Lake of Two Mountains. This shows that both the Algonquins and the Hurons were expected by the River of the Algonquins. It must be remembered that Savignon was a Huron and that Chief Iroquet who had taken charge of Brulé was an Algonquin. In his report of 1611, Champlain says positively: "Iroquet resides about eighty leagues from Montreal," and in 1615, he states that the chief and his people wintered (1615-16) with the Hurons at Penetan-

guishene. Therefore the Algonquin band under Iroquet, and the Hurons, occupied, as already noticed here, the east side and part of the north of the province of Ontario. Brulé could not find a better chance to obtain information about these countries than by going with the parties commanded by Iroquet as he had done.

Listen to Champlain's report: "On the 13th June, 1611, arrived 200 Charioquois (Hurons) with Captains Ochateguin and Iroquet, also Tregouaroti, a brother of Savignon, and they brought back my young man (Etienne Brulé?) who had mastered their language very well. Four of them assured me that they had seen the sea at a considerable distance from their own country."

There was a merchant named Boyer who traded alongside of Champlain on that occasion and who asked Iroquet to take another young man with him for one year or so. The offer was accepted. This second visitor to the Kingston, Rideau and Simcoe region, I am quite willing to accept as the one called afterwards "Thomas the interpreter," but it is not certain.

Champlain mentions that another young man belonging to his own party went with the Hurons that year. No name is given.

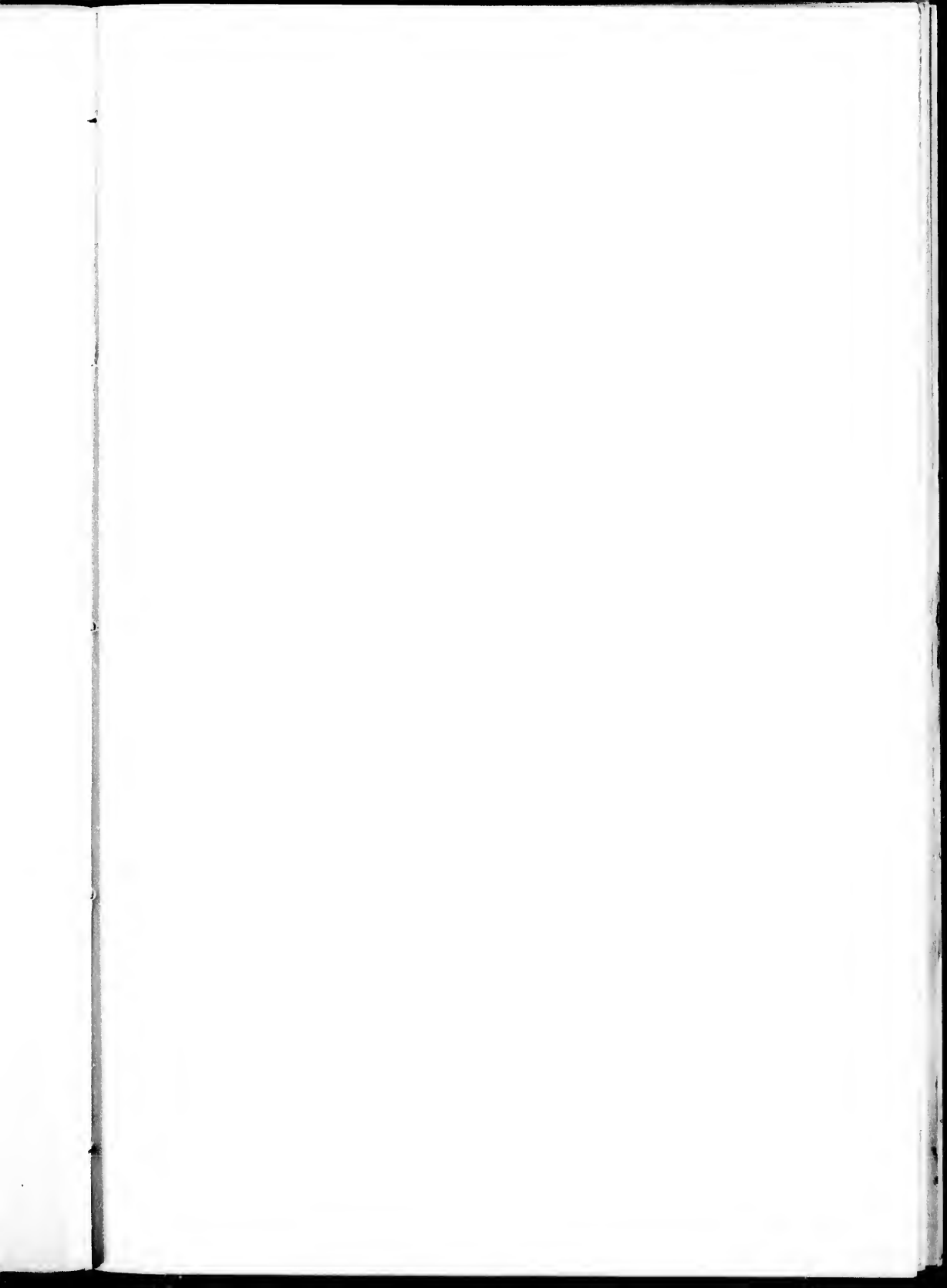
Another man left later on with the Indians, under the following circumstances: The second band of Algonquins arrived at Montreal on 12th July; the third one on the 15th. "At their demand," says Champlain, "I permitted them to bring to their country a young man, and when they started I gave him a memorandum detailing carefully the things he had to report upon. They left me on the 18th." We shall see further on that the last band were from Allumette Island and that the young wanderer's name was Nicolas du Vignau.

In none of the notes of Champlain can we trace a connection between the man who went with Iroquet in 1610 and the one this chief took for a similar trip in 1611. Champlain seems, on the contrary, to make a distinction between the two. Furthermore, the one of 1611 belonged to Boyer's company of traders, a well known association not at all under the control of Champlain, and somewhat in opposition to him.

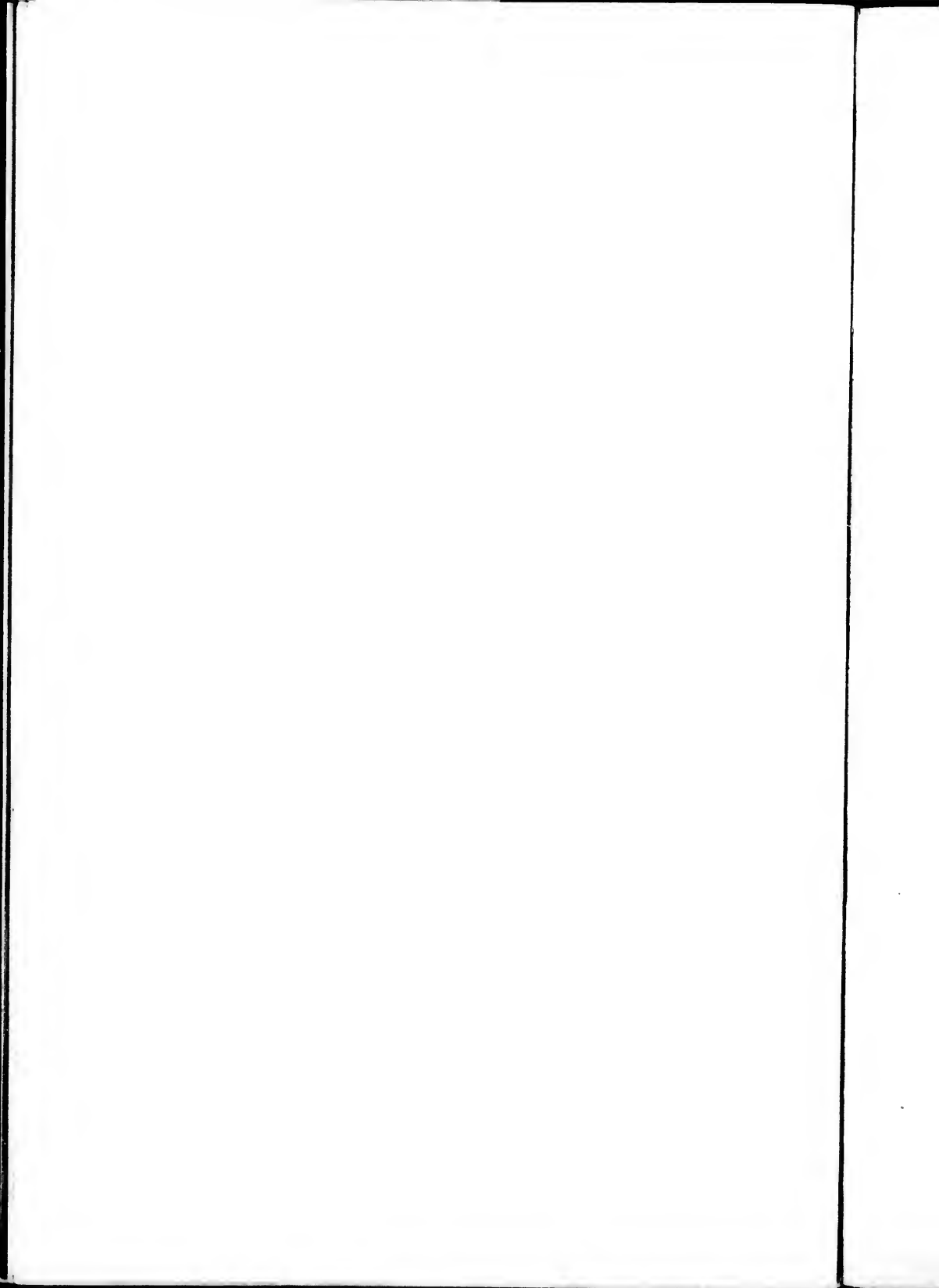
The second man who left with the Indians in 1611, although belonging to the party of Champlain, seems to have received no particular instructions for the trip he undertook, except, perhaps, to try to acquire a knowledge of the language.

As for Vignau, the real delegate of Champlain, he followed the Allumette Algonquins, who had never been visited by the Europeans, so far as is known. He carried important instructions in regard to the famous *North Sea* which Hudson had discovered the year before, but the fact was not yet known to the French.

My conclusion is that Brulé saw the Chaudière in 1610, that Vignau passed there in 1611, went further and reached Allumette Island.







Thomas, if such was his name, and the other man above mentioned, must have roamed through Upper Canada for eight or ten months at least; they and Brulé paved the way for the further voyage of Champlain.....and the Georgian Bay-Ottawa-Montreal Canal!

#### NEWS FROM HUDSON'S BAY.

As we are dealing with discoveries and discoverers it may be well to mention here two coincidences which happened in the years 1609 and 1612.

In the first instance, Hudson ascended the river now called after him, as far as Albany, during the summer of 1609, whilst Champlain was making the discovery of Lake Champlain. If the two explorers had pushed a little further on their respective way, they would have met in these wild solitudes, one coming from the Atlantic, the other from Canada.

When Champlain returned to France, in the fall of 1611, he did not know that Hudson had gone north and discovered Hudson's Bay in 1610, but some news of that successful expedition reached him in Paris, in 1612, when Nicolas Du Vignau, who had come down the River of the Algonquins and sailed for home, brought information concerning a certain sea situated towards the north and visited by the Algonquins of Allumette Island. Du Vignau added that he had been there himself, during the winter of 1611-12 and saw European vessels navigating on those waters. As a matter of fact Du Vignau had not gone further than Allumette Island, but he apparently had heard of the English coasting the south shore of the great bay, and made his report in accordance with the statements furnished by the Indians of that country during their intercourse amongst the tribes of the Upper Ottawa.

A direct line of communication existed in those days between Hudson's Bay Indians and those of the Saguenay, St. Maurice and Ottawa Rivers. During his visit to Tadoussac in 1603, Champlain wrote: "The savages, north of this place, maintain that they go to a salted sea at a certain period."

#### CHAMPLAIN EXPLORES THE GRAND RIVER.

The desire to find the Sea of Japan by way of the River of the Algonquins determined Champlain to bring back Du Vignau to Canada in the spring of 1613. Arriving at Quebec 17th May, 1613, he learned that the winter had not been at all severe. The St. Lawrence had not frozen. The trees were already showing their leaves, and the fields were full of flowers. This exceptional temperature would bring the Indian traders sooner than usual, as he thought—and he was right in so calculating. He, therefore, proceeded to Montreal with a view to meet the Upper Canada tribes. He arrived there on the 21st.

The war was raging all the time between the Algonquins and the Iroquois. Two of the latter had been taken prisoners. The Algonquins said that they wished to go back home in order to burn the victims at a solemn meeting, and that they would escort Champlain on the voyage if he cared for a visit to their country.

But the traffic was not yet over at that date. Champlain could not neglect the benefit of trade for the sake of making discoveries. This great man was under superior orders. And, this year particularly, the traders had brought an abundance of merchandise, expecting to dispose of their stock in a very few days, whilst the war had sent 1,200 men against the Iroquois, thus reducing the question of trade to a small matter. Considering these circumstances, says Champlain, "I asked the Indians to procure for me three canoes and three of their men as guides, the whole to be in readiness when I might be ready myself. After many objections I got two canoes and one man—but I had to give them presents all around." Each canoe would carry three men. Therefore Champlain, Du Vignau, three Frenchmen and the Indian guide filled the two bark vessels.

"Du Vignau," says Champlain, "is the most impudent liar you could meet with." I do not like to believe Du Vignau was such a man. What he pretended to know of the River of the Algonquins turned out to be correct, and what he said of Hudson's Bay, although he had not seen the locality, cannot be much contradicted now. He stated that the English had landed on the shores of the North Sea or Hudson's Bay—pretty correct, I think. He affirmed also that one of the vessels had been wrecked on the shore of the bay, and the sailors who did not get drowned were killed by the Indians. This is unknown to us.

Champlain understood that the route of the Grand River was a far easier one to reach the North Sea than that followed by Hudson, and he made his preparations in accordance with that belief.

Du Vignau erred in one sense, because he had not seen all the things he spoke of. But he was not without knowledge of the events which had taken place during the two or three previous years in the wilderness of North America.

It was on Monday, the 27th May, 1613, that Champlain left St. Helen's Island, near Montreal, to visit "the North River which comes from the country of the Algonquins and Nipissirinians." He crossed the Lake of Two Mountains on the 31st, and passed the Long Saut portage the next day with great difficulty, because his men could not manage their canoes by land and water as the Indians did.

On the 2nd of June, in the vicinity of Point au Chêne, he met 15 canoes of Quenongebin or Kinouchepirini Indians, a tribe residing south of Allumette Island. They all encamped for the night, and the following day Champlain bid them good-bye. These Indians took with them one

of the Frenchmen and gave one of their guides to assist the little party of explorers on their way up the Grand River.

Passing the mouth of River Petite-Nation (Papineauville) Champlain says: "The people here are called Ouescharini, and live about four days by canoe from the entrance of this river, in the direction of the North. The river is most pleasant on account of fine islands and the beautiful clear forest on each side; the land is fit for agriculture."

Arrived opposite to the Gatineau on the 4th of June, he describes it also: "This river comes from the North where the Algonquins reside, and it flows into the St. Lawrence three leagues below Montreal, thus making a great island of about forty leagues." There appears to be a double misprint in Champlain's text at this passage; the author meant evidently that the Gatineau communicates by portages with other rivers, which themselves emptied into the St. Maurice, and that these waters reached the St. Lawrence at Three Rivers, thirty (not three) leagues below Montreal.

Continuing his description, he states that the Gatineau is not wide, but full of rapids and falls, very difficult to pass. Often, he adds, the Algonquins use this river in order to avoid the Iroquois who do not dare to advance so far north. The lower part of the Grand River was not considered safe on account of the frequent expeditions of the Iroquois, especially, I believe, since the French had attracted the tribes of these territories and induced them to go to the St. Lawrence every summer to trade with them there.

As for the name of Gatineau, applied many years after Champlain's time to the river above mentioned, I will explain it in due course.

The Gatineau being noted down in his journal, the explorer turned his eyes towards the other shore of the Grand River, where the capital is now standing.

"There," he says, "opposite the first river, is another one, which comes from the south, and at the entrance it has an admirable fall of water, most impetuous, forming an arcade, and its width is about 400 paces. The Indians go underneath the falls for the fun without getting wet, except that they catch a little of the water spread in the atmosphere by the velocity of the cascade. There is an island in the middle of the river all covered with pine trees and white cedars, as well as all the land in the neighborhood. When the Indians enter this river, they climb the mountain and carry their canoes about half a league before finding navigable water. The vicinity abounds in game of all sorts; therefore, it is a favorite place, but the Iroquois infest the country. The fall has from 20 to 25 fathoms."

The real height of the Rideau Falls is 36 feet. Perhaps Champlain meant "feet" instead of "fathoms."

Rideau is certainly a name imposed by the French, as it signifies curtain, a word which describes the fall in question better than any long sentence.

The Honourable Louis Joseph Papineau told me that in the early years of this century he passed under the "curtain" formed by the falls, in the manner explained by Champlain. The destruction of forest on each bank of the Rideau River has rendered the "water regime" of the country surrounding more and more irregular, since 1820; the falls thus become very meagre in summer. So much lost for the picturesque; so much gained for the benefit of national industry—but the "shaving" of forests is overdone in our days.

Mark the expressions of Champlain, speaking of the mouth of the Rideau River. The spot was a chosen one by the Iroquois to prepare ambush against the Algonquins.

By reading Champlain's works we are confirmed in the idea that the Algonquins of the Kingston and Ottawa city regions had made a thoroughfare of the Rideau River, and that part of the Hurons also utilized that highway in their voyages towards the valley of the Grand River, where they traded with the northern tribes located between that river and the St. Maurice.

We cannot believe that the suggestion of intercourse from nation to nation was brought into this country by the Europeans. It existed in reality throughout the continent long before Columbus, Cartier and Champlain. The Indians of Quebec were smoking tobacco from Virginia when Cartier tried his first pipe—and got sick.

The shell-fish used by our tribes as monetary signs were brought, through exchange, from the Susquehanna and lower Mississippi. In the same manner, the Hurons sold their corn to the Algonquins of the north for produces which they could not procure from Upper Canada. Allumette Island was one "door" for this traffic, the Rideau was another one. Who, for instance, got the stone (obsidian) axes from the shores of the Mississippi and sold them to the Indians of the north of the province of Quebec? The Nipissirians and the Hurons, surely. Some of the colouring substances which the warriors and the women employed in the fixing of dresses and other ornaments came from foreign countries. We have seen the *Têtes-de-Boule* and the *Mackegong* of the vicinity of Hudson's Bay buying from the Indians of a more southern climate the bark with which they made their canoes. Vegetables, so plentiful with the Hurons, were a relish for other nations. Were not fibres of certain trees from the south of the Huron country much better to make rope with than those of the great forests of the north? All this had given rise to a regular commerce, before the white men ever dreamed of "prospecting for a road to China." Father Sagard, a missionary at Lake Nipissing in 1625, affirms that the Indians of those localities used to travel southwest during

five or six weeks in order to meet the tribes who had the goods which they looked for every summer, and that they brought back these articles, which they either consumed themselves or sold to other nations.

When a party of Indians from Virginia took a load of tobacco to the savages of Upper Canada, they expected something in return. They got fine skins of elk or beaver rendered as supple as a glove by the industry of the Hurons or the Algonquins.

The Andastes of the Susquehanna transacted "business" with the Hurons of Penetanguishene, without paying any duty—this I say to please the free traders, but it is true all the same.

Now, consider that the Indians coming from the Gatineau territory met the "Upper Canadians" who had arrived by the Rideau, and that they traded under these very hills where the Houses of Parliament now stand, and how little they realized that a day would come when the spirits of "another world," condensed in our present Cabinet, would rule their country! What a change! Troquet, who thought he was supreme in Prescott, Glengarry, Carleton and Lanark; Tessouat, the reigning monarch of the Allumette kingdom, never imagined that the days of responsible government could come and constitute a progress in the form of administration.

#### FROM THE CHAUDIÈRE TO ALLUMETTE ISLAND.

We left Champlain at the foot of the Rideau Falls, after following him day by day from Montreal to that place. The journal of that explorer is before my eyes, and nothing is easier to understand,—provided you are acquainted with the French of the sixteenth century. For Champlain was a scholar of that period, and when he wrote, the new literary push had not yet taken place. It is surprising, though, how many of the expressions used in this journal sound like the English language—and even the form of the phrase has a resemblance to old English. This is, I believe, because the genius of the two languages had not been completely divided from one another at the time of Elizabeth. Mark that. Champlain's education was right in those years—the years of Shakespeare.

This is to say that Champlain was not at all a common individual in his writings. He possessed immense power of observation. Furthermore, his mind was ahead of all others in regard to colonies and colonization. The plans he submitted on several occasions to the French authorities were the first of that kind ever brought to light in Europe. If he had been supported by the proper influence—that is the highest of France—he would have made North America a French world. No man that I know of in history conceived such a plan as his, nor such a feasible one, either. Broad views and easy, practical means—these were too much for his time.

Since we left him at the foot of the Rideau Falls, we must continue to ascend the Grand River with him.

"Next," says he, "we passed a *saut* (a fall of water) distance one league from the Rideau. This fall is half a league wide."

By admeasurement this could be contested, but the river was then in its wild and primeval form, and the space from Hull to the other shore must have shown a grander aspect than now. The Chaudière only formed part of the chain of falls which extends across the torrentine current. Each island was covered with trees; the jets of water, through the channels situated between them, must have been magnificent. The line of these marvels barred the lower part of the horizon, like one of those sceneries now shown in our theatres with almost inconceivable beauty.

"The waters," he continued, "come down at a certain spot, with such impetuosity on a rock that, by succession of days, they have digged out a wide and deep basin, and then the waves running in it by a circular movement, cause the centre of it to be full of great bubbles; therefore, the Indians call it *Asticou*, signifying the Boiling Kettle."

Can we find a better definition of the name of the Chaudière than this first mention of it? Champlain uses the French word "Chaudière" which means Kettle, in translating the term *Asticou*. Quite correct. The Indians, in 1613, had already a knowledge of our iron boilers. And even if they had had no such an article in their possession, the habit with them was to boil water in bark vessels by putting into it hot stones taken direct from the fire—and thus the liquid would bubble in a few minutes.

"This fall of water produces such a noise," adds Champlain, "that it is heard more than two leagues from there. We experienced great difficulty in paddling our canoes to the foot of the cataract. At this spot, the Indians carried the embarkations, whilst the Frenchmen and myself took the arms, provisions, etc., over the portage, through the rocks for a quarter of a league."

No doubt the portage was made on the Hull side. At least, I cannot judge otherwise, seeing the locality.

Next, the explorer expresses, in a few brief words, the tiresome job he had undertaken: "Immediately jump in the canoe, soon after disembark: pass through the bush, say three hundred paces; again take the river on your legs, to push the canoe in shallow places, and all sorts of troubles."

Where is there a capital of the ancient kingdoms of the East or in Europe, which can recall a positive description of the first civilized man tramping its soil? No one has even kept a souvenir of the first white explorer who visited the region where the city of Washington now stands in the United States.

In our Canada, we have a Capital whose site attracted the attention of the earliest discoverer, and we have on record a long string of facts,

subsequent to that first visit, showing that a chrysolis had been deposited here, ready to develop in due time. This time has come.

In the afternoon of the same day, after passing the Chaudière, Champlain states that he entered a lake (Des Chênes) five leagues long by two wide, "where I found many fine islands full of vines, walnut trees, and other agreeable productions of the soil. About ten or twelve leagues further on, we passed some islands all covered with pine. The land is sandy. There is found a root which the Indians utilize to obtain a crimson tint, in the painting of their faces or some small articles of enjoyment. I noticed also a coast or mountain, alongside of the river; the country around is not very pleasant. We spent the rest of the day on an island most delectable.

"The day ensuing we travelled as far as a great fall (the Chats) measuring about three leagues in width, where the current comes down on an inclined plane with a marvellous noise. There are a number of islands, all crowned with pine and cedar trees. Here we had to abandon our corn and other victuals, together with some of our less necessary clothing, keeping only our arms and fishing apparatus—in order to make a living with by and by, according to the chance of the moment. This portage has a length of a league and a half. The Indians helped us a good deal in the work."

Champlain says he passed two other cascades, one by means of a landing or portage, the other without leaving his canoe. "Then," he recites, "we entered a lake (Chats) six or seven leagues long, in which empties a river (the Madawaska) coming from the south, the country of a people named Matouesca. The neighboring land is sandy, growing pine trees, almost all burnt by the Indians. In one of the few islands here we stopped for some moments, and seeing beautiful red cypress, the first I had observed in this country, I made a cross with the wood of one of them, which I planted at the extremity of the island, on an elevated site, decorated with the arms of France, as I had done in other places where we had passed, and I named the island the Holy Cross."

This shows that Champlain, on this voyage of discovery, repeated the ceremony of the navigators of his time on entering a new territory. It was the practice, as we know, to plant a cross on the land first visited by a Christian, and as Champlain was fully aware the St. Lawrence had been frequented before his travels, the words: "As I have done in other places" meant "on the Grand River," but this is all we know about it.

"On the 6th of June, we travelled from 8 to 10 leagues; after that we passed a small rapid and a number of islands of various sizes. Here our Indian guides left their bags of provisions and other articles, in order to carry less weight on the remainder of the route. Du Vignau had a consultation with our Indians, in which he claimed that we could go all the way without abandoning any of our baggage. The Indians said to Vignau,



"you are tired of this life, it seems," and to me: "Believe not in him, he is a liar." Therefore, as I had more than once observed that Du Vignau had no knowledge of the situation, I followed the advice of the Indians and in the long run found they were correct. We then crossed over to the west of the river flowing from the north." This was about Portage du Fort.

On the portage, Champlain says the trip proved to be a painful task. He had taken charge of three arquebuses, three paddles, one overcoat and some other articles. He tried to encourage his men by good and genial words, but the mosquitoes were against them. After passing four small lakes and walking two short leagues they were exhausted; in fact the party had only eaten a few slices of "roasted fish without any sauce" during the last twenty-four hours. Finally they stopped on the shore of a small lake, kindled a fire to chase the flies, and dipped their fishing nets into the water to prepare a bill of fare for the supper.

This was rather hard—was it not? Neither the Indians nor the Frenchmen could fight the mosquitoes combined with starvation. Few of these travellers thought of the Canadian Pacific Railway car arrangement for sleeping and dining. A long while after Champlain's time a missionary spoke of the Grand River route in the following terms: "This is not at all like the postal roads of Europe." Now, put the question to a common labourer coming from Montreal to see old Bytown, or paying a visit to Lake Temiscamingue!

I am inclined to think we have made a step forward. We were sent in here for that very purpose.

Champlain never ate ham, chicken and tongue sandwiches at the Calumet station, and for a cup of coffee he could not get it, because this precious beverage was not even known to the Parisians in 1613. Alas! poor Champlain.

From the spot where they had spent the night, our travellers reached Muskrat Lake after a journey amongst tumbled down trees and all sorts of debris of the forest. "This sheet of water," he says, "is renowned for its abundance of fish. Close by is a camp of Indians, who have cultivated fields where they raise corn. The chief's name is Nibachis; he came to see us and expressed his surprise at the manner we had overcome the falls, the rapids, and the portages on the route to him." Then they smoked, and afterwards the chief made a speech in which he tried to explain that Champlain was the Bismark of the period, because he could master the elements, the men of all races, and still live like a simple being amongst the natives of this strange continent. The fact of the matter was that the chief expected a return for his compliment. He added a good dish of meat to his peroration. This clever Indian understood the "coming days" and made up his mind to follow the market rate when plenty of Frenchmen would go up and down this Valley of the Grand River.

Before removing the table cloth as is still the use in our days, the explorer responded to the words of Nibachis, through Thomas the interpreter. He stated he was very much pleased to find himself in such respectable company; also that he intended to assist them in their war against the Iroquois, and that for this purpose he was determined to see other tribes of the upper region. No better policy could be submitted to these diplomats of the wilderness. War and war again and war always, suited the mind of the smallest as well as the largest tribe. The "fire sticks" of the French had caused an immense impression upon the intellect of the natives of Canada. Champlain saw perfectly well how far he could keep the ball rolling. Thomas was up to the mark; he managed to show that the French were natural allies of the Algonquins and that they had come because of their friendly feelings for them.

Nibachis took his visitors to the garden and showed them the products of the land, but Champlain observes that "these people could not compete with the Hurons because they had too great a passion for hunting and not enough for agricultural pursuits."

This is the whole key of the problem. Why have we so readily disposed of the Indians of old Canada? Because the only tribes actually living "on the soil"—the Hurons—were destroyed before we could implant our own flag in a permanent manner amongst them. The other Indians, the Algonquins, had no settled situation. They lived according to the requirements of the day—hunting where they could, and following the wild animals where they found a field for that pursuit. In the view of Champlain, every man on this new continent should adopt a trade or take a piece of land and start on business principles. No Indian was fit for such a programme except the Hurons—but, as I have already explained, these were defeated and dispersed before we could do anything for them or with them.

It is remarkable, anyhow, that Champlain so often comes again on that idea of an agricultural colony. In the early days of the 17th century no one supposed that a "plantation" if established in Canada could be anything else but a mere trading place for furs, or for minerals, or for pepper, monkeys, parrots, etc.—but not for wheat and grain. The plain fact that the new world was really a world full of novelties, could not be understood by those who ruled the old world and believed the scope within their small horizon was the universe itself.

This valley of the Grand River was occupied by the Algonquins, divided into three distinct groups: the little Algonquins or Petite-Nation at Papineauville, the Algonquins of Cataraqui, the great Algonquins of Allumette Island. The Algonquins of Cataraqui extended from there to Ottawa and Vaudreuil. That part of the country comprised between the Chaudière and Muskrat Lake was left rather unoccupied on account of the difficulty of navigation, but still the hunters sometimes passed through it.

The Algonquins were all hunters, and nothing more, unfortunately. Their number did not exceed five thousand souls, but they required an immense territory to make a living. The consequence of this state of things was that they were without any discipline, besides being dispersed in all directions. As soon as a well disciplined enemy could get at them, they were destroyed.

On the map prepared by Champlain in 1629, Lake of Two Mountains is called Lake Soissons, in honour of Charles de Bourbon, comte de Soissons, who had been viceroy of Canada during one year, namely 1612. Champlain saw the lake for the first time in 1613, therefore my conclusion is that the name of Soissons was bestowed during the voyage I am now trying to describe, *i. e.* 1613.

On the north shore of the Ottawa, nearly half way between Lake of Two Mountains and Carillon, is a cross placed on the map by Champlain, no doubt one of those crosses he mentioned in 1613, as I have already stated.

The word "sault" is plainly written on the Carillon side of the Grand River. After that comes a sketch of the village of La Petite Nation Indians, situated at some distance inland, at the rear of Pupineauville. Red River and River au Lièvre are traced, but no name attached. Next comes the Gatineau, strongly delineated; no name given. The mouth of the Rideau is equally indicated. On the site of upper town, Ottawa City, is the word "sault"; this means the Chaudière; four small islands are visible in the river, but they are placed in succession ascending the current, instead of in a line as they exist from shore to shore.

The Chats are represented as a very large fall of water, with many islands at their foot. On the north land is a second cross.

From Lake des Chats, the travellers of 1613 went by land to Muskrat Lake. The map shows the line of march they followed by a chaplet of ten round spots stringed by a small tracing in their centre.

On the Grand River is written, "Sault des pierres a calumet qui sont comme albatre." That is to say: Rapid, where are stones to make pipes with; they resemble alabaster.

Allumette Island is called Tessouat Island, because the chief who ruled that place was named Tessouat.

The distance between the point where Champlain had met Nibachis on Muskrat Lake to Allumette Island is twenty-five miles. Nibachis conducted his new friend throughout the journey and they all arrived safely at the big island, where Tessouat told them he felt as though he was dreaming, because he never believed Champlain (whom he had seen at Tadoussac in 1603) could undertake with success such a dangerous voyage. "Do I see you!" he exclaimed, "no! it is a vision!" I must remark here that Tessouat had only one eye and that he was commonly known as Le Borgne or One-Eyed Chief. Singularly enough, his successor enjoyed the same infirmity.

The island, says Champlain, has a strong situation, the waters all round are full of fish, but the game in the forest is insignificant. The wigwams are covered with bark, and not very well either. Their cemetery is a wonder, for the great attention they pay to it; everything is kept in order and after established regulations. The soil of the island is not fit for cultivation, although these Indians plant some corn and raise pumpkins. The fear of the Iroquois has forced them to select this place, on account of its natural defences.

A state dinner followed the visit to the island. Indian corn, fish and meat, badly cooked together; then a smoke of abominable tobacco—such was the *menu*. Champlain made half a dozen after-dinner speeches, with a view to induce the Allumette people to take him to Lake Nipissing; but with no good result. He was assured that the tribes of that region were nothing but a set of sorcerers, full of mischief, and that Allumette Island was the end of the world in so far as he wished to meet decent Indians. The fact of the matter was that Tessouat, the Emperor of the great island, had made up his mind to trade with the French on the Grand River, or at Montreal, and to exchange the merchandise thus obtained for the peltries of the other nations. He knew that his island was the key of the upper part of the river, and during the last few years had levied a tax upon all canoes passing alongside of his domains. Some of his guardsmen were constantly on the watch to stop travellers passing by one of the two arms of the river which encircle the island. This toll gate business was abolished in 1650, when the last One-Eyed Chief had to escape for his life with all his warriors. We will come to that in due time.

I have in vain looked for information concerning the number of Algonquins composing the three groups of the Grand River valley as above explained, and find I must base my statistics upon the figures disseminated through the chronicles of those days. Bands of trading Algonquins, fifty men strong, are mentioned on several occasions, but this is not sufficient to appreciate the strength of the race. On two or three occasions, between 1608 and 1613, a war cry was heard and twelve hundred men responded to it. This is, I believe, the highest number of warriors that could be put in the field—therefore I adopt five thousand souls as the approximate figure representing all these Algonquins. At one time, it is true, two thousand men entered the war path, but the Hurons of Lake Simcoe and the Algonquins of Lake Nipissing had joined with the Algonquin groups of the Grand River. It is considered an impossibility now-a-days to frame a correct calculation on this subject.

"Nicolas," said Tessouat, pointing at Du Vignau, "is it true that you told my brother Champlain, that you had seen the North Sea during your first visit here? Is it true also that you said you had gone to Lake

Nipissing?" Du Vignau remained speechless for a few minutes, then said: "I was there." The Indians stood up and proffered all sorts of vituperations against him, until the Chief proclaimed that Du Vignau was a liar and that he had never left the camp on Allumette Island. Some of them simply expressed the opinion that this man was fit to be slaughtered and eaten by the good Algonquins, who never uttered a lie. One of them said that the imposter might have dreamed all the story he had told Champlain about his experiences in this country. Seeing the bad example thus exhibited of French honesty, Champlain made up his mind that Du Vignau should perish, but the Indians, changing their mind, asked him to be mild and to despise such a scoundrel. Du Vignau acknowledged his falsehood and was pardoned.

Notwithstanding all these hard words, it seems Du Vignau had given Champlain a map of the unknown regions of the north, and when the same was put under the unique eye of Tessouat, he recognized readily that the French imposter had pretty well pencilled the physical shape of the country described to him in his conversations with the hunters and others who had roamed in the vicinity of Hudson's Bay. Du Vignau received his pardon a second time.

Considering the impossibility of any further exploration at this moment, Champlain determined on returning to Montreal. Before leaving the island he erected a cross made of white cedar on the shore of the lake, adorned with the arms of France, and he asked the Indians to preserve it there, as well as those previously planted by him along the Grand River—stating in connection with this that the destruction of these emblems would bring the Iroquois to their doors.

On the 19th June, they started for the return journey, with the son of Tessouat and forty canoes. On the way they met a good number of Indians coming from the trade at Montreal, otherwise Saut St. Louis, for the Island of Montreal was not then considered a place of any importance in itself. The trading ground was a little above the site of Victoria bridge, and sometimes as low as the Allan's steamship wharf at the foot of the Laehine Canal. Champlain came down by the Grand River, instead of Muskrat Lake. He mentions the rapids and the difficulties of navigation they had to contend with, also the fear of the Algonquins who dreamed every night they were attacked by the Iroquois and sometimes in a panic ran into the bush or threw themselves into the river for refuge. One of the Frenchmen got frightened in the same fashion and gave a great deal of trouble to Champlain.

As they came again to the Chaudière a solemn ceremony was performed. First, the canoes were taken to the lower part of the fall. Next, all the Indians gathered near the "boiling pot," and there passed the hat, this is to say collected as much tobacco bits as the generosity of each individual would procure, according to the intensity of his religious sentiments.

Then they had a dance, after which a chief made a speech, showing this was an old custom and that so long as they would observe it, they would be free from their enemies. The speaker took the bark dish in which the tobacco had been collected and threw the contents of it into the Chaudière. And, observes Champlain, these poor people think the voyage could not be without danger unless such a superstition be followed. On the 17th they arrived at Montreal.

This is the end of the second known voyage made on the Grand River by a white man.

#### A TRADE RENDEZ-VOUS.

Some three centuries ago the Indians in the territories comprised between the St. Maurice and the Ottawa used to meet every summer at a certain place on the latter river to carry on their traffic with the southerly nations, especially the Algonquins of Three Rivers and also the Hurons of Georgian Bay.

Necessity is the mother of invention. When the Muskegongs of the heights of land, towards James Bay, wanted birch-bark for making canoes, they had to go south and obtain the article from the Algonquins. When the people of Lake Temiscamingue wished for bread or melons or pumpkins, the Hurons were ready to barter the flour and the vegetables for their fine bearskins and the strong bones of the sea-fish which became a variety of tools in the hands of the industrious Hurons.

For the above purpose a rendez-vous was designated a year in advance on a selected spot, in the valley of the Ottawa, where the different nations gathered with their products.

This was before the Iroquois had given any trouble to their neighbours.

All the tribes distributed from the upper St. Maurice to Temiscamingue, Nipissing and the northeast shore of Lake Huron spoke dialects of the Algonquin language, and the great Algonquins, as they styled themselves, resided on the shores of the upper Ottawa, especially at Allumette Island. None of these tribes ever did much in the way of cultivating the soil; most of them never thought of doing so.

The Hurons appeared quite a different people. Their population of about 30,000 souls, resided on a territory of 50 miles in length by 40 miles wide—consequently they lived on their agriculture and cared very little for hunting at large. This situation had made them a kind of civilized nation compared with the roving bands above mentioned.

It is said that the Algonquin and Huron languages have no affinity, no relation, except for one word—sack, but they used it very differently, that is to say, the Algonquin never realized the importance of the article called by that name. They were too roving to put anything in the sack. The Hurons, on the contrary, knew very well how to fill it up.

No sooner had the French shown themselves in the country looking for furs, furs again and furs always, than the Hurons enlarged their previous business and bought the rich skins from right to left from the northern nations in order to sell them to the white men. They in return got the European goods which the far-away tribes appreciated so much. It is to be noticed that the Algonquin never kept an extensive trade with the French direct. The bands coming from the north during the 17th century had a great dread for any region where the Iroquois could be seen.

The great Algonquins were driven by the Iroquois from the Ottawa valley in 1650.

Hardly any Indians from the St. Maurice dared go down to Three Rivers before 1645.

Notwithstanding this state of things, the Hurons brought an enormous quantity of furs to the French, from 1608 to 1627 and from 1633 to 1648, because they had the sack, commercially speaking, and the courage on their side.

The localities where the meetings of the traders took place must have been between Allumette Island and Papineauville, at the mouth of Du Moine, Coulonge, Gatineau or Lièvre rivers. Out of these streams the Gatineau offers not only a central point, but all facilities of communication with the inland country.

Even Coulonge is too far west, and Du Moine is still worse. The Lièvre is a good deal to the east, and, after 1635, could not be adopted on account of the frequent visits of the Iroquois around the place. The writings of those days show the Hurons passing from the Ottawa to the St. Maurice by means of the lakes and rivers, in order to reach Three Rivers and escape their enemies, the Iroquois.

The latter had at one time nearly complete possession of the Ottawa, and the trade from the west and the north utilized the River Du Moine to penetrate to the headwaters of the St. Maurice.

All considered, I believe the Gatineau was the doorway east and west by which the Indian tribes communicated with one another for the purpose of exchange and ordinary commercial transactions.

#### TRAVELLERS ON THE GRAND RIVER.

The voyage of 1615 to the Huron country need only to be mentioned. Champlain, the Recollet Joseph Le Caron, twelve Frenchmen and ten Indians passed through the Grand River, the Mattawin, Lake Nipissing, French River, and arrived safely at the Huron villages. Etienne Brulé was sent from there to a people called Andastes, one hundred and fifty leagues southeast, where he roamed during thirty months and explored most parts of Pennsylvania, including the River Susquhanna. Later on, in June, 1623, we find Brulé trading with three hundred Hurons at the fall

of the Chaudière, probably on the Hull side of the Grand River. When Champlain left Quebec in 1629, Brulé remained there and sided with the English. In 1632 or 1633 he was killed by the Hurons in Upper Canada.

A young man by the name of Jean Nicolet, born at Cherbourg, Normandy, arrived at Quebec and was sent to the west with the Algonquins of Allumette Island as early as 1618 in order that he might learn their language, which was in general use upon the north banks of the St. Lawrence and the Ottawa. With these Indians he remained two years, following them in their wanderings, partaking of their dangers, their fatigues and their privations, with a courage and fortitude equal to the boldest and the bravest of the tribe. During all this time he saw not the face of a single white man. On several occasions he passed a number of days without a morsel of food, and he was sometimes fain to satisfy the cravings of hunger by eating bark.<sup>1</sup> While residing at Allumette Island he once accompanied four hundred of these savages upon a mission of peace to the Iroquois, as Father Vimont styles this extraordinary sending of four hundred armed ambassadors. The voyage proved a successful one. Afterwards, Nicolet went among the Nipissings with whom he remained eight or nine years. He was recognized as one of the nation and took part in their councils. He had his own cabin and establishment, doing his own fishing and trading. Father Le Jeune said in 1636 that Nicolet had given him his written memoirs concerning the Nipissings and others, and we may fairly infer from this that the information spread in the Jesuits Relations on the same subject partly came from that source.

During the fall of 1632 news reached the Nipissings that the French had come back to Quebec, and the following summer they formed a party for the purpose of trading furs with them. The Allumette people did the same, and also the Hurons, who gathered one hundred and fifty bark canoes by themselves, with over seven hundred men, to open up the road, as they expressed it. On the St. Lawrence, between Montreal and Three Rivers, a few of these travellers were killed by the Iroquois. In June, 1633, Jean Nicolet thus arrived at Quebec after an absence of fifteen years with the barbarian tribes of the west. He met Champlain who had just returned from France, and told him all about the geography of the vast regions seen by him, as well as varied information in regard to the Indians, trade, etc., throwing an immense flash of light upon the "dark continent." Such was the first white man who resided in the valley of the Ottawa and on the shore of the Georgian Bay canal (scheme of 1898).

From 1610 to 1628 regular commercial intercourse took place between the Hurons of Georgian Bay, the Algonquins of Allumette Island, the other Algonquins (Petite Nation) of Papineauville, and the French on the St.

<sup>1</sup> Written in 1643 by Father Vimont. Translated by C. W. Butterfield in his *Discovery of the Northwest*, Cincinnati, 1881, p. 28.



Lawrence. The taking of Quebec by Kertk in 1629 caused these communications to stop for a while, but they were resumed in 1634 by the arrival in the Huron country of three Jesuit Fathers: Jean de Brébœuf, Antoine Daniel, Ambroise Davost and six hired Frenchmen, whose names were Petitpré, Simon Baron, Dominique Scot, Robert Lecoq, and the two others unknown.

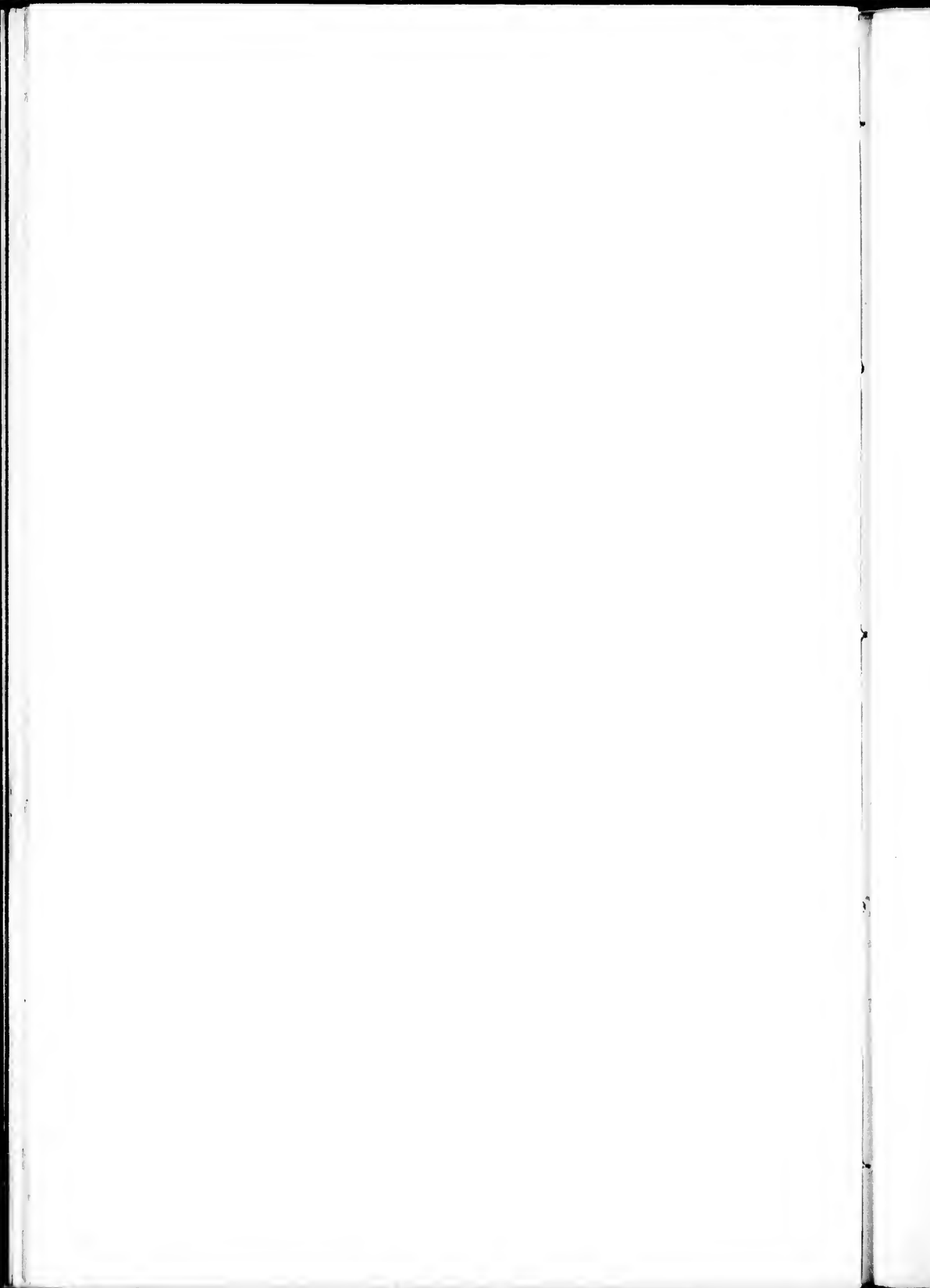
Brébœuf in his report states that they passed by Petite Nation and Nipissing, "a long, weary, dangerous route, but still preferable to that of Lake Ontario for fear of the Iroquois. The rivers of Canada are full of cascades and cataracts, more especially the St. Lawrence after passing River Des Prairies which was our route." The left branch of the Ottawa encircling the Island of Montreal, was called Des Prairies because a trader by that name (from St. Malo) was drowned there about 1615. The text of Brébœuf is very explicit and shows that the Ottawa, in 1634, was considered as the west arm of the St. Lawrence and that Montreal was the Khartoum of this new Nile.

Nicolet had embarked at Three Rivers with Father Brébœuf under special instructions from Champlain. These two men conceived the idea of exploring the unknown western country, the door of which they had themselves opened in their previous travels. Etienne Brulé was no more, otherwise it is likely that he would have had a share in this adventurous enterprise. Brébœuf, on his way to Georgian Bay, parted with Nicolet at Allumette Island. The latter hired eight or ten Indians and proceeded to Sault Sainte Marie, where it is believed Brulé had paid a visit some ten years before. Then, entering the Wisconsin territory, Nicolet reached what is now Green Bay and ascended it to the mouth of Fox River. He explored that stream up to the elbow, where, by a short and easy portage, he could have met the Wisconsin River and gone down to the Mississippi. He understood readily that, instead of being near to Japan and China as was his first conception of the Great Waters (the Mississippi) mentioned by the aborigines, he merely stood in the centre of a continent—but he remained convinced that the Pacific Ocean could not be very far west of him. In the summer of 1635, he returned to Quebec where he communicated the result of his observations to Champlain. Father Le Jeune wrote in 1636, that this remarkable man (Nicolet) asked permission to withdraw from amongst the savages as he could not live without the sacraments, which were denied him so long as he stayed with them, there being no mission established in their country. He was employed as commissary of the fur trade and Indian interpreter at Three Rivers until he died by being drowned accidentally in 1642, while in the act of going to the rescue of some Iroquois that the Algonquins were burning at the stake.

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## THE NAME OF THE RIVER.

Here again we have to inquire about the name of the Grand River during the years 1600-1650. It has been seen that Father Brebœuf takes it for the St. Lawrence and that the branch which separates the Island of Montreal from Jesus Island was known as Des Prairies. The other branch running between Jesus Island and *terra firma* was designated as River St. Jean, on account of Jean Nicolet. All the canoes from the Grand River used to pass by those two roads to reach the St. Lawrence.

M. de Montmagny, governor-general, visited the island in 1637, and his name was given to it. The Jesuits had expressed the wish to settle on Des Prairies River, but in 1641 another company came to occupy the present site of the city of Montreal, and the former scheme was abandoned. In 1642, the term of "Isle Jésus" is applied to the Montmagny Island and has remained since.

Champlain and Sagard, who both produced their last writings in 1632, invariably said *rivière des Algonquins* when speaking of the Grand River. In the Jesuit *Relations*, 1627-1667, we find but one expression: *Rivière des Prairies*.

The *Relation* of 1642, has a strange definition: "Le grand sault de la Chaudière est un fleuve qui se précipite tout à coup dans la rivière des Trois-Prairies." No doubt that the Grand River was known as Des Prairies, but the *Three Prairies* are never mentioned anywhere else. It may be a misprint. Nevertheless, the intention of calling the Grand River *Des Prairies* is evident. The *Relation* of 1640 observes that "ascending river Des Prairies, we met with the Ouzouechkairini, named by us Petite Nation des Algonquins; and further on we find the Kichesipirini of Allumette Island. Kijesipürineaak means the men of the Grand River." In the absence of more comprehensive documents this will suffice to show that several terms were applied to that "branch of the St. Lawrence."

## TRADE AND WAR.

The reading of the Jesuit *Relations* is not sufficient to explain the "persecution" of that religious order by the Iroquois, because it is all put upon the supposed animosity of these people on account of their hatred for the christian religion. The real facts are quite different from such a supposition. The Dutch of Albany, and other Europeans of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, induced the Iroquois to procure the beaver skins of Upper Canada for which they offered high prices, and this was done in a rather easy way until 1635, when the French re-opened communications with Georgian Bay through the Grand River. It was made clear that the monopoly of the fur trade of all those regions would soon be in the hands of the French by their alliance with the Hurons. A new

policy originated from this change in the aspect of affairs; the Dutch and others furnished the Iroquois with firelocks and equipped them for war. Since the skins of the wild animals could not be obtained in the ordinary commercial manner, they must be had otherwise, and if the Hurons continued to join with the French, the Hurons must be destroyed.

The hostilities commenced in 1636, by several patrols who terrified the Huron villages, and the news concerning this alarming state of things was brought down to Quebec just at the moment when letters from France reported the financial difficulties of the Hundred Partners, and the impossibility for them to help Canada in any way. Nevertheless, an expedition was sent to trade on the Grand River, under Duplessis-Bochart, the chief factor of the Company, who planted a cross in the neighbourhood of Petite Nation. This officer gives an enthusiastic description of the Grand River, in the Relation of that year. Two Jesuit Fathers, Charles Garnier and Guillaume-Pierre Chastellain, stopped for a few days at Petite Nation, and when their mission was over they proceeded with some Frenchmen and Hurons to the country of the latter. I have found no trace of any missionary attached to the Algonquins of the Grand River. Those whose names here follow were sent to the Hurons and merely delivered flying missions at Allumette Island and Petite Nation whilst passing up and down the river:

1634, Jean de Brebœuf, Ambroise Davost, Antoine Daniel.

1635, Pierre Pijart, François Lemercier.

1636, Isaac Jogues, Charles Garnier, Guillaume-Pierre Chastellain.

1637, Paul Ragueneau, Jérôme Lalemant, François Dupéron.

1638, Simon Lemoine, Joseph Dupéron.

1639, Joseph Poncet, Pierre-Joseph-Marie Chaumonot.

1640, Claude Pijart, Charles Raymbaut.

1641, René Ménard.

1644, Leonard Garreau, Noël Chabanel, Gabriel Druillets, Claude Dablon.

1646, François-Joseph Bressani.

1648, Gabriel Lallemand, Jacques Bonin, Adrien Grelon.

Brebœuf, Garnier, Daniel, Jogues, Chabanel, Garreau, Gabriel Lallemand were killed by the Iroquois with about 60 other Frenchmen during the twelve years in question.

The Hurons, going down the Grand River to trade at Three Rivers in the summer of 1637, were attacked and defeated by the Iroquois, near Petite Nation, and 30 of them burned at the stake. The cross erected by Duplessis-Bochart was removed. In 1638 a party of Algonquins and Hurons, numbering 300, surprised the Iroquois in Upper Canada, killed 17, captured 80, and only four or five escaped. The prisoners were put to death with all the refinements of barbarous nations. Next year (1639) the smallpox disease prevailing amongst the Algonquins, spread over the

Huron country and caused many deaths, which were attributed to the supernatural influence of the missionaries.

During the fall of 1640, the grand caravan of the Huron traders was completely destroyed near Vaudreuil by the Iroquois, who carried away a mass of rich peltries to Fort Orange (Albany). Two Frenchmen were taken prisoners on that occasion. The number of white men roving through the Nipissing and Huron districts was between 40 and 50, Jesuits included.

The year 1642 is full of the successes of the Iroquois. The French had no means of resisting them. The Algonquins shared the misfortunes of the situation. It is said that a woman captured below Allumette Island saw her children roasted and eaten by the Iroquois, and that on arriving at Chaudière Falls she threw herself into the water, but the current was so strong that it carried her to the shore, where the savages tomahawked her because she was too weak to follow them.

Paul Tessouat, the sovereign of Allumette Island, "this famous one-eyed captain, the orator of the century in this part of the world, and the most clever in diplomacy," according to the Relations, made up his mind in 1643 to become a convert to the Christian faith, and he went to Montreal with that object in view. This might have had the effect of bringing the Algonquins and the French closer together, but the weakness of the latter and the increasing military operations of the Iroquois made things worse from that moment until the whole of Upper Canada and the north of the Grand River became Iroquois hunting grounds (1652).

From 1636 to 1642 the attacks of the Iroquois took place invariably during the summer. From 1643 they happened all the year round; five, seven, ten parties, of 20 to 50 men, were constantly on the move, covering the St. Lawrence and the Grand River, so as to prevent the French, the Montagnais, the Algonquins, and Hurons, from travelling outside of their own camps, thus reducing all these people to an utmost state of privation. The Dutch were determined to force the French to leave Canada, and it is a wonder that they did not succeed in doing so, when we consider the miserable lack of organization which rendered the colony fit for no purpose except to furnish victims to the cruelty of the Iroquois. There were about 300 French, comprised in Quebec, Beauport, Three Rivers and Montreal, and no troops to protect them.

The increase of the disasters consequent upon the operations of the Iroquois is a fact fully recorded in the annals of Canada. The Grand River from Montreal to Temiscauingue witnessed many of the horrors which mark that period of desolation. In 1650 the Iroquois owned the whole of Upper Canada, to accomplish which they had ruined every village and annihilated every tribe occupying these territories. Ninetenths of the Frenchmen that were there perished in the same manner. Knowing as we do that the main purpose of the Iroquois was to secure

for themselves the fur trade of the north, and considering that these savages were totally ignorant of what is understood by religious matters, it is clear that they looked upon the missionaries as chief-clerks of the fur trade, and this explains their rashness in aiming directly at the posts where the priests resided. The other Frenchmen, though ranking as subordinates in the eyes of the Iroquois, were doomed all the same, for "commercial reasons."

#### ALLUMETTE ISLAND.

The last stand of the Algonquins was made here. Paul Tessouat had 400 warriors with him, and imagined that the Iroquois would not dare to face them in a battle, but his usual sagacity was absent at that hour, otherwise he would have realized that when the rest of the country had passed into the hands of the enemy the situation of his island would become precarious. Such was his confidence in himself that he continued to live in the same high style as before, ruling the environs of the island by exacting taxes and fees from foreigners when entering his kingdom, marching with an armed guard of selected men, receiving salutes and honours of various kinds, playing in fact the part of a potentate. He firmly believed that the Great Algonquins were the masters of the earth and that his sole name was a terror amongst the Iroquois.

The summer of 1650 Father Paul Ragueneau gathered a band of Hurons on the north and east shores of Lake Huron, with whom he started en route for Quebec. Coming to Allumette Island he was told to take the south channel where the officers of Tessouat kept the toll-gate above referred to. The missionary was quite opposed to that sort of management, so he addressed the Hurons, telling them that the French being the masters of all the country, he intended to pass straight without noticing Tessouat, and he ordered the band to follow the north channel. This was soon reported to the chief, who sent a detachment after them, and they were brought back to the capital, where the Hurons charged Father Ragueneau with the responsibility for the attempt. Tessouat solemnly proclaimed his rights over all nations, and condemned the priest to be suspended to a tree by the means of ropes adjusted under both arms—after that he allowed him with his party to proceed on their journey.

The advance of the Iroquois upon Allumette Island was preceded, in 1651, by their occupation of Lake Nipissing. This made Tessouat uneasy. He left for Quebec where he expected to form an alliance with the French—travelling in state as suitable to a man of his rank. For instance, when in the act of embarking in or disembarking from his canoe, he was raised on the shoulders of his servants, and walked, dined and slept surrounded by his body guard. His sumptuous arrival at Quebec did not

intimidate Mr. d'Ailleboust, for in a few moments Tessouat found himself under lock and key, notwithstanding his protestations and those of his court. The humbled chief apologized for his conduct towards Father Ragueneau and was released after a few days in jail. What became of him from that time, we cannot say. He may have been captured by the Iroquois on his way home. Anyhow, Allumette island was deserted in 1652 by its last inhabitants and the Iroquois reigned supreme on the Grand River.

Here we must close the first period of the history of the valley explored by Champlain. It is done with the Algonquins and the Hurons. Other nations will come to the front in the subsequent years. This necessitates fresh studies embracing events somewhat different from those enumerated in the present paper, and the Grand River will become known as the River of the Ottawas, or, rather, Outaouas, according to the saying of the time.



