

1676-8.

He  
undertakes  
to complete  
the  
discovery  
of the  
Mississippi.

The first project which he formed,\* and which induced him to cross the ocean,<sup>1</sup> was to seek a passage to Japan and China, by the north or west of Canada; and although in general destitute of every thing necessary for such an enterprise, and during his first years, much straitened in a country to which he had brought nothing, and where there was no resource against poverty, he was not discouraged; he made friends and protectors, and devoted himself with incredible application to acquire the information, and to procure the other aids necessary for his enterprise.

He was thus engaged when Joliet arrived at Montreal with the tidings of his discovery.<sup>2</sup> When he had con-

<sup>1</sup> La Salle's brother, John Cavellier, was a priest of the congregation of Saint Sulpice, and he was thus apparently led to come to Montreal as he states in a memoir to Frontenac in 1666. His name appears as witness to a marriage, November 1, 1667 (Faillon, iii., p. 228). The Sulpitians received him favorably, and the Abbé de Queylus gave him a grant of the seigneurie of la Chine, which he styled St. Sulpice. But he sold all his rights to this grant early in 1669, after having had difficulties with the Jesuits who owned on the other side of the river at the rapids, of which a bundle of papers is still preserved. Furnished with letters of de Courcelles to the governors of Virginia and Florida, he set out with Dollier de Casson (Ante, p. 123) to find a way to China, but after going as far as the Seneca country, where he met Joliet, he left it in September, 1669, and returned to St. Sulpice, which then got in mockery the name of China—Lachine. In the spring of 1670, Perrot met him hunting on the Ottawa (Mœurs et Costumes, p. 120). In spite of this authentic statement, Mr. Margry (Journal de l'Instruc-

tion Publique, August 20, 1862. Dus-sieux, Le Canada, p. 37) pretends that, in 1669, la Salle penetrated through the Seneca country to the Ohio, and descended that river and the Mississippi to the falls. Now that it was before he started with Dollier de Casson, is utterly inconsistent with that clergyman's narration. That he did it between his return to Lachine and the spring of 1670, when he was quietly hunting on the Ottawa, is equally improbable. That he did reach the Ohio and descend it as far as the falls at Louisville, 37° N., as he states in a memoir to Frontenac in 1677, is probable (Cartes du Sieur Joliet), but the date is evidently wrong. Indeed, from Margry's third article, la Salle could seem to assign it elsewhere to 1671, which is more probable. See Tailhan's Perrot, pp. 279-289. That he went down beyond the falls or reached the Mississippi there is no evidence. The theory set up by Margry is doubted by Tailhan, by Ferland (Cours d'histoire, ii., p. 78), and by Canadian scholars generally. See note, p. 122, ante.

<sup>2</sup> Joliet reached Green Bay in