

PREFACE TO VOL. LXVIII

Following is a synopsis of the documents contained in this volume:

CCII. Pierre Laure writes to his superior a report (dated March 13, 1730) of the Saguenay mission, of which he has charge; it covers the nine years which he has spent there. He begins with a general description of the Saguenay region, which has but four permanent posts—Tadoussac, Chicoutimi, the Jérémie Islets, and the Moisie River. Laure notes in detail the peculiar characteristics of the Saguenay River, and graphically describes some of his experiences in traveling on "this capricious river" in stormy weather. He also describes Lake St. John and some of its tributaries—especially one which rolls down in its waters many curiously-shaped stones. He gives an account of the Mistassin Indians and their religious beliefs; among them he finds a tradition of the deluge, and the assertion that on one of their mountains still lie some remains of "the great Canoe." Laure praises their gentleness and simplicity, and especially admires their sobriety—for, unlike other savages, they neither desire nor relish "fire-water." One of the curiosities of their country is a cave of white marble, regarded with superstitious reverence by the savages. There are numerous medicine-men among this tribe, who