

DE LIGNERY'S EXPEDITION, 1728

On the Seventeenth day of March, in the year of my departure from Quebec (1726), M. De La Croix De St. Valier, Bishop of that city, conferred upon me the degree of Priest, and gave me shortly afterward a mission, or curacy, called Sorel, situated south of the river St. Lawrence, between the city of the Three Rivers and Montreal. I was withdrawn from my curacy, where I had already remained two years, and appointed almoner to a party of four hundred Frenchmen, that the Marquis De Beauharnois had joined to eight or nine hundred savages, of all manner of nations, but principally Iroquois, Hurons, Nepissings and Outaouacs, to whom M. Pæzet, Priest, and Father De La Bertonniere, Jesuit, served as almoners. These troops, commanded by Monsieur Lignerie, were commissioned to go and destroy a nation called the Foxes, whose principal habitation was distant from Montreal about four hundred and fifty leagues.

We commenced our march on the 5th of June, 1728, and ascended nearly a hundred and fifty leagues up the great river which bears the name of the Outaouacs, and which is filled with falls and portages. We quitted it at Mataouan, to take the one which empties into lake Nepissing; it is about thirty leagues in length, and is obstructed by falls and portages like that of the Outaouacs. From this river we entered into the lake, the width of which is about eight leagues; and from this lake, French river very soon conducts us to Lake Huron, into which it empties, after traversing more than thirty leagues with great rapidity.

As it is not possible for many persons to travel together on these small rivers, it was agreed that those who first passed should wait for the others at the entrance of Lake Huron, at a place called the Prairie, and which is, indeed, a most beautiful prairie. It is there that I saw, for the first time, the rattle-snake, whose bite is mortal; none of our party were incommoded by them.