

to read in the *Relations des Jésuites*, and the manuscripts in the Library of the *Société Littéraire* of this city, and in that of the Canadian parliament, what is there found touching geographical discoveries, to be able to appreciate at its just value the part of each in the extension made year by year to the limits of New France.¹

Father Vimont, superior of the Jesuits of Canada from 1639 to 1645, and charged in that capacity with preparing the relations of his subordinates (*ses Pères*) reports, according to Mr. Shea himself, "that the Sieur Nicolet, who penetrated farthest into those distant countries, says that if he had gone three days more up a great river that leads out of Green Bay, he would have reached the 'Great Waters.'" It was thus the savages designated the Mississippi. The river that empties into Green Bay is the Fox River, the source of which is near that of the Wisconsin, which runs in an opposite direction, and falls into the Mississippi.

According to this, Nicolet did not even reach the Wisconsin; but, assuming the most liberal interpretation, I will admit that this traveler ascended the Fox to its source, that he re-crossed the high lands that separated that river from the Wisconsin, and that he descended the latter within three days distance of the Mississippi.²

But this does not mean that he discovered or saw that river. It was doubtless on the report of the Indians that he estimated that he was at that distance from the grand tributary of the ocean, glorified under the name of the Great Waters by the natives, who for a long time had announced it to the French.*

In such matters, precise evidence is demanded; and that cited in favor of Nicolet proves that he did not go to the Mississippi, though Mr. Shea takes it upon himself to assert

¹For the discoveries of Champlain, and those of Nicolet, see my *Mélanges*, pp. 423-425.—B. SULTE.

²We have as yet found no proof that Nicolet had seen the Wisconsin River.—B. SULTE.

*The natives could not have announced the existence of the Mississippi "for a long time," since all that had occurred before 1634 is condensed in what I have said of it, pp. 420, 427, 428 of my *Mélanges*.—B. SULTE.