

pursued his route toward the West, ascended the Fox River, passed by a short portage to the Wisconsin, and thus passed upon the waters that belong to the vast basin of the Mississippi.<sup>1</sup> He rested about forty leagues from the fort of Quebec, after having seen the northern coast of Lake Huron, and a part of the countries which compose the States of Michigan and Wisconsin. This voyage and these discoveries would have sufficed to make the reputation of five or six traders among our neighbors.

The governors had on divers occasions to complain of the *coureurs de bois*; this class nevertheless served to discover the greater part of North America, for our *voyageurs* of the upper countries were the successors and substitutes of the former. If some of these men brought shame upon the French name, others succeeded in establishing the good opinion that the savage tribes long held for all that belonged to France.

The talents and capacity of Nicolet were highly appreciated by the governors, since on three occasions he was charged with negotiating peace between the French and the savages, first with the Iroquois, then with the tribes about Lake Michigan, and, finally, in company with P. Raguenaud, with the Iroquois at the fort of Three Rivers.

As an interpreter, he was of the rank of the founders of several of the first families of the country. Charles Le Moyne, since Lord of Longueuil, as well as others, acquired their titles of nobility by the services they rendered in this capacity. The handwriting of Nicolet, as well as his nomination to the position of commissaire,<sup>2</sup> which demanded an aptitude for accounts, prove that he had received a good education.

Moreover, his marriage with the daughter of Guillaume Couillard, the title of Honorable given him in several documents, the marriage of his daughter with a member of the

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<sup>1</sup> We have no proof of this. Ferland never saw anything on the subject except the text of Père Vimont cited above.—B. SULTE.

<sup>2</sup> Nicolet was never commissaire. See my *Mélanges*, p. 448.—B. SULTE.