

ascended the St. Lawrence river; one to build a fort in the place where to-day stands the city of Three Rivers; the other, under the direction of Father Brébeuf, to explore "the upper country" — to-day the Canadian province of Ontario — by ascending the Ottawa river. Nicolet was in the second fleet, and when the two expeditions met at Three Rivers, he, putting the stakes in place with his own hands,¹ helped in the foundation of the city where he was to pass the last years of his life. Allumette island was reached after a thousand sufferings had been endured by these travelers who were unaccustomed to the life of the woods and who were moreover hostilely received on the road by the natives; but this was no obstacle to a *coureur des bois*, a demi-savage such as Nicolet.² Leaving Brébeuf at Allumette island he went first among his old friends of Lake Nipissing to make preparations for his voyage. Then, descending the French river which issues from Lake Nipissing and empties into the Georgian bay (northeastern part of Lake Huron), he visits the Hurons who inhabit this region and with whom in all probability he came to execute some commission given him by Champlain. From this time he sets out for unknown lands in a birch-bark canoe — a forerunner of the many steamers and ships that now plow the great lakes in all directions — with only seven savages, Hurons, for his entire crew and escort into a region where now arise agricultural and industrial settlements and populous cities, but which were then the exclusive domain of tribes of redskins whose number or names no one knew, and where the traveler could depend only upon the hunting and fishing for his daily subsistence. He begins by coasting along the north shore of Lake Huron, then, following the strait that leads into Lake Superior, he pushes to the place since called Sault Sainte Marie, where he remains for some time to let his men rest; then, crossing the straits of Mackinaw³ he enters

¹ C. W. Butterfield, *loc. cit.* — H. J.

² "Jean Nicolet in the journey which he made with us to the island, sustained all the hard work of one of the most robust savages." *Relation* of 1635. — H. J.

³ Not crossing, but ascending. — Ed.