

THE FRENCH REGIME IN WISCONSIN—I.

1634: JEAN NICOLET'S VISIT TO WISCONSIN.

[From the Jesuit *Relation* of 1642-43.]

He came to New France in the year sixteen hundred eighteen; and forasmuch as his nature and excellent memory inspired good hopes of him, he was sent to winter with the Island Algonquins, in order to learn their language.¹ He tarried with them two years, alone of the French, and always joined the Barbarians in their excursions and journeys—undergoing such fatigues as none but eyewitnesses can conceive; he often passed seven or eight days without food, and once, full seven weeks with no other nourishment than a little bark from the trees. He accompanied four hundred Algonquins, who went during that time to make peace with the Hyroquois, which he successfully accomplished; and would to God that it had never been broken, for then we would not now be suffering the calamities which move us to groans, and which must be an extraordinary impediment in the way of converting these tribes. After this treaty of peace, he went to live eight or nine years with the Algonquin Nipissiriniens, where he passed for one of that nation, taking part in the very frequent councils of those tribes, having his own separate cabin and household, and fishing and trading for himself. He was finally recalled, and appointed Agent and Interpreter. While in the exercise of this office, he was delegated to make a journey to the nation called People of the sea, and arrange peace between them and the Hurons, from whom they are distant about three hundred

¹Regarding Jean Nicolet and his explorations, see *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, viii, pp. 188-194; x, pp. 41-46; xi, pp. 1-25.—Ed.