

of the climate, delight the travelers. They proceed until, as the Indians inform them, they are but fifty leagues distant from the sea. At this point, fearing that they may be detained as prisoners by the Spaniards, they conclude to go back to Quebec, to inform the governor, as soon as possible, of their discoveries. They return to De Pere (this time by the Illinois river route), and Joliet proceeds to Quebec; but he has the misfortune to wreck his canoe above Montreal, losing all his papers, and barely escaping with his life.

Dablon's first comment on this important voyage is, that it opens the way for missions to new tribes, among whom there is a bright prospect for success. He also observes that it is now tolerably certain that the Mississippi discharges into the Florida sea. This disappoints the hope of explorers that the river would offer a passage to the China sea; but they think that, by ascending the Missouri, some other river which flows westward may be reached. The writer—or, more probably, Joliet—suggests that a ship-canal might be cut across the Chicago portage, to connect the Illinois river with Lake Michigan, thus affording a short and inland route from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico.<sup>1</sup> Joliet recommends the Illinois prairies as suitable for French colonies.]—*Jes. Relations*, lix, pp 14-17, 87-163; lviii, 12, 13, 93-109.

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1673-76: JESUIT MISSIONS TO OTTAWAS AND WISCONSIN TRIBES.

[From the *Jesuit Relations* of 1673-74, 1675, and 1676-77.]

[Synopsis: At Sault Ste. Marie, the chapel first built, which was consumed by fire in 1671, has been replaced by a new and finer one. This, too, was in danger of the same fate, in the spring of 1674—the residence of the Fathers, which

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<sup>1</sup> The portage of the Chicago-Des Plaines route varied in length from one to nine miles, according to the season of the year. A canal between these rivers was opened in 1848, which is now replaced by the Chicago drainage canal; it is 36 miles long, and extends from Chicago to Joliet.—Ed.