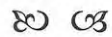


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Marquette's Last Voyage,
1674-1675

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INTRODUCTION

FOR a year Father Marquette recuperated at the mission of St. François Xavier. Then, in the autumn of 1674, there came to him from Canada the permission he so passionately desired to found a mission among the Illinois Indians. He embarked on Lake Michigan in the late autumn of 1674, but the rigors of an early winter and the weakness of disease incapacitated the Father for his chosen work. Nevertheless he struggled on, and wintered on the site of Chicago, teaching and baptizing such stray savages as came his way. As soon as spring opened he hastened to the Illinois village, where he spent Easter with his red children, after which his two attendants sought to take him home to St. Ignace. Day by day with patient devotion they paddled the sick man in his canoe along the eastern shore of the great lake. Finally, May 18, 1675, at the mouth of the river that now bears his name, they carried him reverently to land and his spirit escaped to the immortals. Two years later some Ottawa to whom he had ministered transplanted his remains to the chapel he had built at St. Ignace. To-day Marquette's statue in the Capitol at Washington typifies Wisconsin's remembrance of the discoverer, missionary, and martyr, Jacques Marquette.

The history of his manuscripts has been recounted in the introduction to the preceding piece. We reprint here, from Dr. Thwaites's edition of the *Jesuit Relations*, LIX. 165-211, Marquette's unfinished journal of his final voyage, and the general account of this last expedition and of his death, by Father Dablon, superior of the Jesuits in Canada, in a contemporary relation, of which the manuscript is in the archives of their College of St. Mary in Montreal.

MARQUETTE'S LAST VOYAGE, 1674-1675

*Unfinished Journal of Father Jacques Marquette, addressed to
the Reverend Father Claude Dablon, Superior of the Missions.*

+

*
My Reverend Father, Pax Christi.

Having been compelled to remain at St. Francois¹ throughout the summer on account of an ailment, of which I was cured in the month of September, I awaited there the return of our people from down below,² in order to learn what I was to do with regard to my wintering. They brought me orders to proceed to the mission of La Conception among the Illinois. After complying with Your Reverence's request for copies of my journal concerning the Missisipi River, I departed with Pierre Porteret and Jacque [*blank*], on the 25th of October, 1674, about noon. The wind compelled us to pass the night at the outlet of the river,³ where the Poutewatamis were assembling; for the elders would not allow them to go in the direction of the Illinois, lest the young men, after collecting robes with the goods that they brought from below, and after hunting beaver, might seek to go down in the spring; because they have reason to fear the Nadouessi.

October 26. On passing the village, we found only two cabins of savages, who were going to spend the winter at La Gasparde. We learned that five canoes of Poutewatamis, and four of Illinois, had started to go to the Kaskaskia.

27. We were delayed in the morning by rain; in the afternoon, we had fine, calm weather, so that at Sturgeon Bay we joined the savages, who travelled ahead of us.

¹ The mission of St. François Xavier at De Pere, Wisconsin.

² The ordinary term for lower Canada, whence the trading canoes went each year.

³ Fox River, emptying into Green Bay.

28. We reached the portage.¹ A canoe that had gone ahead prevented us from killing any game. We began our portage and slept on the other shore, where the stormy weather gave us much trouble. Pierre did not arrive until an hour after dark, having lost his way on a path where he had never been. After the rain and thunder, snow fell.

29. Being compelled to change our camping-ground, we continued to carry our packs. The portage covers nearly a league, and is very difficult in many places. The Illinois assemble in the evening in our cabin, and ask us not to leave them, as we may need them, and they know the lake better than we do. We promise them this.

30. The Illinois women complete our portage in the morning. We are delayed by the wind. There are no animals.

31. We start, with tolerably fair weather, and sleep at a small river. The road by land from Sturgeon Bay is very difficult. Last autumn, we were travelling not far from it when we entered the forest.

November 1. After I said holy mass, we came for the night to a river, whence one goes to the Poutewatamis by a good road. Chachagwessiou, an Illinois greatly esteemed among his nation, partly because he engages in the fur trade, arrived at night with a deer on his back, of which he gave us a share.

2. After holy mass, we travel all day in very fine weather. We kill two cats, which are almost nothing but fat.

3. While I am ashore, walking on fine sand, the whole water's edge being covered with grass similar to that which is hauled up by the nets at St. Ignace, I come to a river which I am unable to cross.² Our people enter it, in order to take me on board; but we are unable to go out, on account of the waves. All the other canoes go on, excepting one, which came with us.

4. We are delayed. There seems to be an island out in the lake, for the game go there at night.

5. We had considerable difficulty in getting out of the river at noon. We found the savages in a river, where I seized the opportunity of instructing the Illinois, on account of a feast that Nawaskingwe had just given to a wolfskin.

¹ Sturgeon Bay portage through the Door County peninsula, Wisconsin.

² Probably Sheboygan River, Wisconsin.

6. We performed a good day's journey. While the savages were hunting, they discovered some tracks of men, and this compelled us to stay over on the following day.

9. We landed about two o'clock, because there was a good camping-ground. We were detained there for five days, on account of the great agitation of the lake, although without any wind; and afterward of the snow, which was melted on the following day by the sun, and a breeze from the lake.

15. After proceeding a sufficient distance, we camp at a favorable place, where we are detained three days. Pierre mends a savage's gun. Snow falls at night, and thaws during the day.

20. We sleep near the bluffs, and are very poorly sheltered. The savages remain behind while we are delayed two days and a half by the wind. Pierre goes into the woods, and finds the prairie twenty leagues from the portage. He also goes through a fine canal which is vaulted, as it were, to the height of a man, in which there is water a foot deep.

23. After embarking at noon, we experienced some difficulty in reaching a river.¹ Then the cold began, and more than a foot of snow covered the ground; it has remained ever since. We were delayed for three days, during which Pierre killed a deer, three bustards, and three turkeys, which were very good. The others proceeded to the prairies. A savage discovered some cabins, and came to get us. Jacques went there on the following day, with him; two hunters also came to see me. They were Maskoutens, to the number of eight or nine cabins, who had separated from the others in order to obtain subsistence. With fatigues almost impossible to Frenchmen, they travel throughout the winter over very bad roads, the land abounding in streams, small lakes, and swamps. Their cabins are wretched; and they eat or starve, according to the places where they happen to be. Being detained by the wind, we noticed that there were great shoals out in the lake, over which the waves broke continually. Here I had an attack of diarrhoea.

27. We had some trouble in getting out of the river; then, after proceeding about three leagues, we found the savages, who had killed some cattle, and three Illinois who

¹ Milwaukee River.

had come from the village. We were delayed there by a wind from the land, by heavy waves from the lake, and by cold.

December 1. We went ahead of the savages, so that I might celebrate holy mass.

3. After saying holy mass, we embarked, and were compelled to make for a point, so that we could land, on account of floating masses of ice.

4. We started with a favoring wind, and reached the river of the portage, which was frozen to the depth of half a foot; there was more snow there than elsewhere, as well as more tracks of animals and turkeys.

Navigation on the lake is fairly good from one portage to the other, for there is no crossing to be made, and one can land anywhere, unless one persist in going on when the waves are high and the wind is strong. The land bordering it is of no value, except on the prairies. There are eight or ten quite fine rivers. Deer-hunting is very good, as one goes away from the Poutewatamis.

12. As we began yesterday to haul our baggage in order to approach the portage, the Illinois who had left the Poutewatamis arrived, with great difficulty. We were unable to celebrate holy mass on the day of the Conception, owing to the bad weather and cold.¹ During our stay at the entrance of the river, Pierre and Jacques killed three cattle and four deer, one of which ran some distance with its heart split in two. We contented ourselves with killing three or four turkeys, out of many that came around our cabin because they were almost dying of hunger. Jacques brought in a partridge that he had killed, exactly like those of France except that it had two ruffs, as it were, of three or four feathers as long as a finger, near the head, covering the two sides of the neck where there are no feathers.

14. Having encamped near the portage, two leagues up the river, we resolved to winter there, as it was impossible to go farther, since we were too much hindered and my ailment did not permit me to give myself much fatigue.² Several Illinois passed yesterday, on their way to carry their furs to

¹ See p. 228, note 2, *ante*.

² A large cross has been erected in the southwestern district of Chicago to commemorate the site of Marquette's winter quarters in 1674-1675.

Nawaskingwe; we gave them one of the cattle and one of the deer that Jacque had killed on the previous day. I do not think that I have ever seen any savages more eager for French tobacco than they. They came and threw beaver-skins at our feet, to get some pieces of it; but we returned these, giving them some pipefuls of the tobacco because we had not yet decided whether we would go farther.

15. Chachagwessiou and the other Illinois left us, to go and join their people and give them the goods that they had brought, in order to obtain their robes. In this they act like the traders, and give hardly any more than do the French. I instructed them before their departure, deferring the holding of a council until the spring, when I should be in their village. They traded us three fine robes of ox-skins for a cubit of tobacco; these were very useful to us during the winter. Being thus rid of them, we said the mass of the Conception. After the 14th, my disease turned into a bloody flux.

30. Jacque arrived from the Illinois village, which is only six leagues from here; there they were suffering from hunger, because the cold and snow prevented them from hunting. Some of them notified La Toupine¹ and the surgeon that we were here; and, as they could not leave their cabin, they had so frightened the savages, believing that we should suffer from hunger if we remained here, that Jacque had much difficulty in preventing fifteen young men from coming to carry away all our belongings.

January 16, 1675. As soon as the two Frenchmen learned that my illness prevented me from going to them, the surgeon came here with a savage, to bring us some blueberries and corn. They are only eighteen leagues from here, in a fine place for hunting cattle, deer, and turkeys, which are excellent there. They had also collected provisions while waiting for us; and had given the savages to understand that their cabin belonged to the black gown; and it may be said that they have done and said all that could be expected of them. After the surgeon had spent some time here, in order to perform his devotions, I sent Jacque with him to tell the Illinois

¹Pierre Moreau *dit* La Toupine was a noted wood-ranger of the seventeenth century, who had been a soldier in the garrison of Quebec. He was with St. Lussan at Sault Ste. Marie in 1671, and died at Quebec as late as 1727.

near that place that my illness prevented me from going to see them; and that I would even have some difficulty in going there in the spring, if it continued.

24. Jacque returned with a sack of corn and other delicacies, which the French had given him for me. He also brought the tongues and flesh of two cattle, which a savage and he had killed near here. But all the animals feel the bad weather.

26. Three Illinois brought us, on behalf of the elders, two sacks of corn, some dried meat, pumpkins, and twelve beaver-skins: first, to make me a mat; second, to ask me for powder; third, that we might not be hungry; fourth, to obtain a few goods. I replied: first, that I had come to instruct them, by speaking to them of prayer, etc.; second, that I would give them no powder, because we sought to restore peace everywhere, and I did not wish them to begin war with the Mui-amis; third, that we feared not hunger; fourth, that I would encourage the French to bring them goods, and that they must give satisfaction to those who were among them for the beads which they had taken as soon as the surgeon started to come here. As they had come a distance of twenty leagues, I gave them, in order to reward them for their trouble and for what they had brought me, a hatchet, two knives, three clasp-knives, ten brasses of glass beads, and two double mirrors, telling them that I would endeavor to go to the village, for a few days only, if my illness continued. They told me to take courage, and to remain and die in their country; and that they had been informed that I would remain there for a long time.

February 9. Since we addressed ourselves to the Blessed Virgin Immaculate, and commenced a novena with a mass, at which Pierre and Jacque, who do everything they can to relieve me, received communion, to ask God to restore my health, my bloody flux has left me, and all that remains is a weakness of the stomach. I am beginning to feel much better, and to regain my strength. Out of a cabin of Illinois, who encamped near us for a month, a portion have again taken the road to the Poutewatamis, and some are still on the lake-shore, where they wait until navigation is open. They bear letters for our Fathers of St. François.

20. We have had opportunity to observe the tides coming in from the lake, which rise and fall several times a day; and, although there seems to be no shelter in the lake, we have seen the ice going against the wind. These tides made the water good or bad, because that which flows from above comes from prairies and small streams. The deer, which are plentiful near the lake-shore, are so lean that we had to abandon some of those which we had killed.

March 23. We killed several partridges, only the males of which had ruffs on the neck, the females not having any. These partridges are very good, but not like those of France.

30. The north wind delayed the thaw until the 25th of March, when it set in with a south wind. On the very next day, game began to make its appearance. We killed thirty pigeons, which I found better than those down the great river; but they are smaller, both old and young. On the 28th, the ice broke up, and stopped above us. On the 29th, the waters rose so high that we had barely time to decamp as fast as possible, putting our goods in the trees, and trying to sleep on a hillock. The water gained on us nearly all night, but there was a slight freeze, and the water fell a little, while we were near our packages. The barrier has just broken, the ice has drifted away; and, because the water is already rising, we are about to embark to continue our journey.

The Blessed Virgin Immaculate has taken such care of us during our wintering that we have not lacked provisions, and have still remaining a large sack of corn, with some meat and fat. We also lived very pleasantly, for my illness did not prevent me from saying holy mass every day. We were unable to keep Lent, except on Fridays and Saturdays.

31. We started yesterday and travelled three leagues up the river without finding any portage. We hauled our goods probably about half an arpent. Besides this discharge, the river has another one by which we are to go down. The very high lands alone are not flooded. At the place where we are, the water has risen more than twelve feet. This is where we began our portage eighteen months ago. Bustards and ducks pass continually; we contented ourselves with seven. The ice, which is still drifting down, keeps us here, as we do not know in what condition the lower part of the river is.

April 1. As I do not yet know whether I shall remain next summer in the village, on account of my diarrhœa, we leave here part of our goods, those with which we can dispense, and especially a sack of corn. While a strong south wind delays us, we hope to go to-morrow to the place where the French are, at a distance of fifteen leagues from here.

6. Strong winds and the cold prevent us from proceeding. The two lakes over which we passed are full of bustards, geese, ducks, cranes, and other game unknown to us. The rapids are quite dangerous in some places. We have just met the surgeon, with a savage who was going up with a canoe-load of furs; but, as the cold is too great for persons who are obliged to drag their canoes in the water, he has made a cache of his beaver-skins, and returns to the village to-morrow with us. If the French procure robes in this country, they do not disrobe the savages, so great are the hardships that must be endured to obtain them.¹

[Addressed: "To my Reverend Father, Father Claude Dablon, Superior of the Missions of the Society of Jesus in New France. Quebec."]

[Endorsed: "Letter and Journal of the late Father Marquette."]

[Endorsed: "Everything concerning Father Marquette's Voyage."]

ACCOUNT OF THE SECOND VOYAGE AND THE DEATH OF FATHER JACQUES MARQUETTE

The mission of the Illinois was founded in the year 1674, after the first voyage which Father Jacques Marquet made to discover new territories and new peoples who are on the great and famous river Missisipi.

The year following, he made a second voyage in order to establish there the mission; it is that one which we are about to relate.

¹This was Marquette's last entry. The succeeding part of the relation, describing his last voyage, death, and burial, was written by Father Dablon.

Section 1. Narrative of the Second Voyage that Father Marquet made to the Illinois. He reaches them, notwithstanding his Illness, and begins the Mission of La Conception.

Father Jacques Marquette, having promised the Illinois on his first voyage to them, in 1673, that he would return to them the following year, to teach them the mysteries of our religion, had much difficulty in keeping his word. The great hardships of his first voyage had brought upon him a bloody flux, and had so weakened him that he was giving up the hope of undertaking a second. However, his sickness decreased; and, as it had almost entirely abated by the close of the summer in the following year, he obtained the permission of his superiors to return to the Illinois and there begin that fair mission.

He set out for that purpose, in the month of November of the year 1674, from the Bay des Puants, with two men, one of whom had made the former voyage with him. During a month of navigation on the Lake of the Illinois, he was tolerably well; but, as soon as the snow began to fall, he was again seized with his bloody flux, which compelled him to halt in the river which leads to the Illinois. It was there that they constructed a cabin in which to pass the winter, amid such inconveniences that, his malady increasing more and more, he saw clearly that God was granting to him the favor which he had so many times besought from Him; and he even told his two companions very plainly that he would certainly die of that malady, and during that voyage. Duly to prepare his soul, despite the severe indisposition of his body, he began this so severe winter sojourn by the retreat of St. Ignatius, which he performed with every feeling of devotion, and many celestial consolations; and then he passed the whole of the remaining time in holding communion with all Heaven, having, in these deserts, no intercourse with the earth except with his two companions. He confessed them and administered communion to them twice in the week, and exhorted them as much as his strength permitted him. A short time after Christmas, that he might obtain the favor of not dying without having taken possession of his dear mission, he in-

vited his companions to make a novena in honor of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. His prayer was answered, against all human probability; and, his health improving, he prepared himself to go to the village of the Illinois as soon as navigation should open, which he did with much joy, setting out for that place on the 29th of March. He spent eleven days on the way, during which time he had occasion to suffer much, both from his own illness, from which he had not entirely recovered, and from the very severe and unfavorable weather.

On at last arriving at the village, he was received as an angel from Heaven. After he had assembled at various times the chiefs of the nation, with all the old men, that he might sow in their minds the first seeds of the Gospel, and after having given instruction in the cabins, which were always filled with a great crowd of people, he resolved to address all in public, in a general assembly which he called together in the open air, the cabins being too small to contain all the people. It was a beautiful prairie, close to a village, which was selected for the great council; this was adorned, after the fashion of the country, by covering it with mats and bearskins. Then the Father, having directed them to stretch out upon lines several pieces of Chinese taffeta, attached to these four large pictures of the Blessed Virgin, which were visible on all sides. The audience was composed of 500 chiefs and elders, seated in a circle around the Father, and of all the young men, who remained standing. They numbered more than 1500 men, without counting the women and children, who are always numerous, the village being composed of five or six hundred fires. The Father addressed the whole body of people, and conveyed to them ten messages, by means of ten presents which he gave them. He explained to them the principal mysteries of our religion, and the purpose that had brought him to their country. Above all, he preached to them Jesus Christ, on the very eve [of that great day] on which he had died upon the Cross for them, as well as for all the rest of mankind; then he said holy mass. On the third day after, which was Easter Sunday,¹ things being prepared in the same manner as on Thursday, he celebrated the holy mys-

¹ April 14, 1675.

teries for the second time; and by these two, the only sacrifices ever offered there to God, he took possession of that land in the name of Jesus Christ, and gave to that mission the name of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin.

He was listened to by all those peoples with universal joy; and they prayed him with most earnest entreaty to come back to them as soon as possible, since his sickness obliged him to return. The Father, on his side, expressed to them the affection which he felt for them, and the satisfaction that they had given him; and pledged them his word that he, or some other of our Fathers, would return to carry on that mission so happily inaugurated. This promise he repeated several times, while parting with them to go upon his way; and he set out with so many tokens of regard on the part of those good peoples that, as a mark of honor, they chose to escort him for more than thirty leagues on the road, vying with each other in taking charge of his slender baggage.

Section 2. The Father is compelled to leave his Illinois Mission. His Last Illness. His Precious Death in the Heart of the Forest.

After the Illinois, filled with great esteem for the Gospel, had taken leave of the Father, he continued his journey, and shortly after reached the Lake of the Illinois, upon whose waters he had to journey nearly a hundred leagues, by an unknown route, whereon he had never before travelled; for he was obliged to coast along the southern shore of the lake, having come by the northern.¹ But his strength was so rapidly diminishing that his two men despaired of being able to bring him alive to the end of their journey. Indeed, he became so feeble and exhausted that he was unable to assist or even to move himself, and had to be handled and carried about like a child.

Meanwhile, he preserved in that condition an admirable equanimity, resignation, joy, and gentleness, consoling his dear companions and encouraging them to suffer patiently all the hardships of that voyage, in the assurance that God

¹ This southern or rather eastern route was taken by voyagers in order to take advantage of the currents setting northwardly.

would not abandon them after his death. It was during this voyage that he began to make more special preparation for death. He held communion, sometimes with our Lord, sometimes with his holy Mother, or with his guardian angel, or with all Paradise. He was often overheard repeating these words, *Credo quod redemptor meus vivit*; or *Maria, Mater Gratiae, Mater Dei, memento mei*.¹ In addition to the spiritual exercise, which was read to him every day, he requested toward the close that they would read to him his meditation preparatory for death, which he carried about with him. He recited every day his breviary; and although he was so low that his sight and strength were greatly enfeebled, he continued to do so to the last day of his life, despite the remonstrance of his companions.

Eight days before his death, he was thoughtful enough to prepare the holy water for use during the rest of his illness, in his agony, and at his burial; and he instructed his companions how it should be used.

The evening before his death, which was a Friday, he told them, very joyously, that it would take place on the morrow. He conversed with them during the whole day as to what would need to be done for his burial: about the manner in which they should inter him; of the spot that should be chosen for his grave; how his feet, his hands, and his face should be arranged; how they should erect a Cross over his grave. He even went so far as to counsel them, three hours before he expired, that as soon as he was dead they should take the little hand-bell of his chapel, and sound it while he was being put under ground. He spoke of all these things with so great tranquillity and presence of mind that one might have supposed that he was concerned with the death and funeral of some other person, and not with his own.

Thus did he converse with them as they made their way upon the lake, until, having perceived a river, on the shore of which stood an eminence that he deemed well suited to be the place of his interment, he told them that that was the place of his last repose.² They wished, however, to proceed

¹ "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and "Mary, Mother of Grace, Mother of God, remember me."

² Now known as Pere Marquette River, at whose mouth is the city of Ludington, Michigan.

farther, as the weather was favorable, and the day was not far advanced; but God raised a contrary wind, which compelled them to return, and enter the river which the Father had pointed out. They accordingly brought him to the land, lighted a little fire for him, and prepared for him a wretched cabin of bark. They laid him down therein, in the least uncomfortable way that they could; but they were so stricken with sorrow that, as they have since said, they hardly knew what they were doing.

The Father, being thus stretched on the ground in much the same way as was St. Francis Xavier, as he had always so passionately desired, and finding himself alone in the midst of these forests, for his companions were occupied with the disembarkation, he had leisure to repeat all the acts in which he had continued during these last days.

His dear companions having afterward rejoined him, all disconsolate, he comforted them, and inspired them with the confidence that God would take care of them after his death, in these new and unknown countries. He gave them the last instructions, thanked them for all the charities which they had exercised in his behalf during the whole journey, and entreated pardon for the trouble that he had given them. He charged them to ask pardon for him also, from all our Fathers and brethren who live in the country of the Outaouacs. Then he undertook to prepare them for the sacrament of penance, which he administered to them for the last time. He gave them also a paper on which he had written all his faults since his own last confession, that they might place it in the hands of the Father Superior, that the latter might be enabled to pray to God for him in a more special manner. Finally, he promised not to forget them in Paradise. And, as he was very considerate, knowing that they were much fatigued with the hardships of the preceding days, he bade them go and take a little repose. He assured them that his hour was not yet so very near, and that he would awaken them when the time should come, as, in fact, two or three hours afterward he did summon them, being ready to enter into the agony.

They drew near to him, and he embraced them once again, while they burst into tears at his feet. Then he asked for holy water and his reliquary; and having himself removed

his crucifix, which he carried always suspended round his neck, he placed it in the hands of one of his companions, begging him to hold it before his eyes. Then, feeling that he had but a short time to live, he made a last effort, clasped his hands, and, with a steady and fond look upon his crucifix, he uttered aloud his profession of faith, and gave thanks to the Divine Majesty for the great favor which he had accorded him of dying in the Society, of dying in it as a missionary of Jesus Christ, and, above all, of dying in it, as he had always prayed, in a wretched cabin in the midst of the forests and bereft of all human succor.

After that, he was silent, communing within himself with God. Nevertheless, he let escape from time to time these words, *Sustinuit anima mea in verbo ejus*;¹ or these, *Mater Dei, memento mei*—which were the last words that he uttered before entering his agony, which was, however, very mild and peaceful.

He had prayed his companions to put him in mind, when they should see him about to expire, to repeat frequently the names of Jesus and Mary, if he could not himself do so. They did as they were bidden; and, when they believed him to be near his end, one of them called aloud, "Jesus, Mary!" The dying man repeated the words distinctly, several times; and as if, at these sacred names, something presented itself to him, he suddenly raised his eyes above his crucifix, holding them riveted on that object, which he appeared to regard with pleasure. And so, with a countenance beaming and all aglow, he expired without any struggle, and so gently that it might have been regarded as a pleasant sleep.

His two poor companions, shedding many tears over him, composed his body in the manner which he had prescribed to them. Then they carried him devoutly to burial, ringing the while the little bell as he had bidden them; and planted a large Cross near to his grave, as a sign to passers-by.

When it became a question of embarking, to proceed on their journey, one of the two, who for some days had been so heartsick with sorrow, and so greatly prostrated with an internal malady, that he could no longer eat or breathe except with difficulty, bethought himself, while the other was making

¹ "My soul hath endured in his word."

all preparations for embarking, to visit the grave of his good Father, and ask his intercession with the glorious Virgin, as he had promised, not doubting in the least that he was in Heaven. He fell, then, upon his knees, made a short prayer, and having reverently taken some earth from the tomb, he pressed it to his breast. Immediately his sickness abated, and his sorrow was changed into a joy which did not forsake him during the remainder of his journey.

Section 3. What occurred at the Removal of the Bones of the late Father Marquette, which were taken from his Grave on the 19th of May, 1677, the same Day as that on which he died in the Year 1675.¹ A Brief Summary of his Virtues.

God did not permit that a deposit so precious should remain in the midst of the forest, unhonored and forgotten. The savages named Kiskakons,² who have been making public profession of Christianity for nearly ten years, and who were instructed by Father Marquette when he lived at the Point of St. Esprit, at the extremity of Lake Superior, carried on their last winter's hunting in the vicinity of the Lake of the Illinois. As they were returning in the spring, they were greatly pleased to pass near the grave of their good Father, whom they tenderly loved; and God also put it into their hearts to remove his bones and bring them to our church at the mission of St. Ignace at Missilimakinac, where those savages make their abode.

They repaired, then, to the spot, and resolved among themselves to act in regard to the Father as they are wont to do toward those for whom they profess great respect. Accordingly, they opened the grave, and uncovered the body; and, although the flesh and internal organs were all dried up, they found it entire, so that not even the skin was in any way injured. This did not prevent them from proceeding to dissect it, as is their custom. They cleansed the bones and exposed them to the sun to dry; then, carefully laying them

¹ May 18, 1675, was the true date of his death, since Dablon expressly relates that it befell on Saturday.

² For the Kiskakon Ottawa see p. 121, note 1, *ante*.

in a box of birch-bark, they set out to bring them to our mission of St. Ignace.¹

There were nearly thirty canoes which formed, in excellent order, that funeral procession. There were also a goodly number of Iroquois, who united with our Algonquin savages to lend more honor to the ceremonial. When they drew near our house, Father Nouvel, who is its Superior, with Father Piercon, went out to meet them, accompanied by the Frenchmen and savages who were there; and having halted the procession, he put the usual questions to them, to make sure that it was really the Father's body which they were bringing. Before conveying it to land, they intoned the *De profundis*² in the presence of the thirty canoes, which were still on the water, and of the people who were on the shore. After that, the body was carried to the church, care being taken to observe all that the ritual appoints in such ceremonies. It remained exposed under the pall, all that day, which was Whitmonday, the 8th of June; and on the morrow, after having rendered to it all the funeral rites, it was lowered into a small vault in the middle of the church, where it rests as the guardian angel of our Outaouas missions. The savages often come to pray over his tomb. Not to mention more than this instance, a young girl, aged nineteen or twenty years, whom the late Father had instructed, and who had been baptized in the past year, fell sick, and applied to Father Nouvel to be bled and to take certain remedies. The Father prescribed to her, as sole medicine, to come for three days and say a *pater* and three *ave's* at the tomb of Father Marquette. She did so, and before the third day was cured, without bleeding or any other remedies.

Father Jaques Marquette, of the province of Champagne, died at the age of thirty-eight years, of which twenty-one were passed in the Society—namely, twelve in France and nine in Canada. He was sent to the missions of the upper Al-

¹ The site of this mission chapel and the remains of Marquette were discovered two hundred years after his burial by the priest of the village, Rev. Edward Jacker. The remnants of a birch-bark box, a number of bones, and part of a skull were unearthed. Most of these relics are now in the possession of Marquette University at Milwaukee.

² Psalm 130.

gonquins, who are called Outaouacs; and labored therein with the zeal that might be expected from a man who had proposed to himself St. Francis Xavier as the model of his life and death. He resembled that great saint, not only in the variety of barbarian languages which he mastered, but also by the range of his zeal, which made him carry the faith to the ends of this new world, and nearly 800 leagues from here into the forests, where the name of Jesus Christ had never been proclaimed.

He always entreated God that he might end his life in these laborious missions, and that, like his dear St. Xavier, he might die in the midst of the woods, bereft of everything. Every day, he interposed for that end both the merits of Jesus Christ and the intercession of the Virgin Immaculate, for whom he entertained a singular tenderness.

Accordingly, he obtained through such powerful mediators that which he solicited with so much earnestness; since he had, like the apostle of the Indies, the happiness to die in a wretched cabin on the shore of Lake Illinois, forsaken by all the world.

We might say much of the rare virtues of this noble missionary: of his zeal, which prompted him to carry the Faith so far, and proclaim the Gospel to so many peoples who were unknown to us; of his gentleness, which rendered him beloved by all, and made him all things to all men—a Frenchman with the French, a Huron with the Hurons, an Algonquin with the Algonquins; of the childlike candor with which he disclosed his heart to his superiors, and even to all kinds of persons, with an ingenuousness which won all hearts; of his angelic chastity; and of his uninterrupted union with God.

But that which apparently predominated was a devotion, altogether rare and singular, to the Blessed Virgin, and particularly toward the mystery of her Immaculate Conception. It was a pleasure to hear him speak or preach on that subject. All his conversations and letters contained something about the Blessed Virgin Immaculate—for so he always called her. From the age of nine years, he fasted every Saturday; and from his tenderest youth began to say the little office of the Conception, inspiring every one with the same devotion. Some months before his death, he said every day with his two

men a little corona of the Immaculate Conception which he had devised as follows: After the *credo*, there is said once the *pater* and *ave*, and then four times these words: *Ave Filia Dei Patris, ave Mater Filii Dei, ave Sponsa Spiritus Sancti, ave Templum totius Trinitatis: per sanctam Virginitatem et Immaculatam Conceptionem tuam, purissima Virgo, emunda cor et carnem meam: in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti,*¹—concluding with the *Gloria Patri*, the whole repeated three times.

He never failed to say the mass of the Conception, or, at least, when he could do so, the prayer of the Conception. He hardly meditated upon anything else day and night. That he might leave us an ever-enduring testimony of his sentiments, it was his desire to bestow on the mission of the Illinois the name of La Conception.

So tender a devotion toward the Mother of God merited some singular grace; and she accorded him the favor that he had always requested—to die on a Saturday. His companions never doubted that she appeared to him at the hour of his death, when, after pronouncing the names of Jesus and Mary, he suddenly raised his eyes above his crucifix, holding them fixed on an object which he regarded with extreme pleasure, and a joy that showed itself upon his features; and they had, at that time, the impression that he had rendered up his soul into the hands of his good Mother.

One of the last letters that he wrote to the Father Superior of the missions before his great voyage, is sufficient evidence that such were his sentiments. He begins it thus: “The Blessed Virgin Immaculate has obtained for me the favor of reaching this place in good health, and with the resolve to correspond to the intentions which God has respecting me, since He has assigned me to the voyage toward the south. I have no other thought than that of doing what God wills. I dread nothing—neither the Nadoissis, nor the reception awaiting me among the nations, dismay me. One of two things will happen: either God will punish me for my crimes and cowardice, or

¹“Hail, Daughter of God the Father; hail, Mother of God the Son; hail, Bride of the Holy Spirit; hail, Temple of the whole Trinity; by thy Holy Virginity and Immaculate Conception, most pure Virgin, cleanse my heart and flesh; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

else He will give me a share in his Cross, which I have not yet carried since my arrival in this country. But this Cross has been perhaps obtained for me by the Blessed Virgin Immaculate, or it may be death itself, that I may cease to offend God. It is that for which I try to hold myself in readiness, surrendering myself altogether into His hands. I entreat Your Reverence not to forget me, and to obtain for me of God that I may not remain ungrateful for the favors which He heaps upon me."

There was found among his papers a manuscript entitled "The directing Care of God over a Missionary," in which he shows the excellence of that vocation, the advantages which it affords for self-sanctification, and the care that God takes of Gospel laborers. One sees in this little abstract the spirit of God which possessed him.