

# MAKERS OF AMERICAN HISTORY

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DANIEL BOONE

BY

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AND

FATHER MARQUETTE

BY

JARED SPARKS

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INCORPORATED

NEW YORK

1905

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LIFE OF  
**DANIEL BOONE**

THE PIONEER OF KENTUCKY

BY

JOHN M. PECK

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# DANIEL BOONE

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## CHAPTER I

Birth and Parentage.—Early Education and Training.—Removal to North Carolina.—Marriage.—Hunting Expeditions.—Affairs in North Carolina.—Emigration to the western Wilderness.—Boone, Finley, and others go to Kentucky.—Indian Claims.—Boone and Stewart taken Prisoners, and escape.—Unexpected Arrival of Squire Boone.—Stewart killed.—Excursion to Cumberland River.—Boone returns to North Carolina.—Notice of other hunting Parties in the West.

DANIEL BOONE, the pioneer of Kentucky, was born in Bucks county, Pennsylvania, in the month of February, 1735. His father, whose name was Squire Boone, was a native of England, his mother's name was Sarah Morgan. He was the father of eleven children. According to information received from the late Daniel Bryan, a grandson of Squire Boone, their births and names were in the following order: Israel, Sarah, Samuel, Jonathan, Elizabeth, DANIEL, Mary, (mother of Daniel Bryan,) George, Edward, Squire, and Hannah.

When Daniel was a small boy, his father removed to Berks county, Pennsylvania, not far from Reading, and at that period a frontier settlement, abound-

ing with game, and exposed to Indian assaults. It was here that young Boone, a mere boy, received those impressions of character that were so strikingly displayed in his subsequent life. From childhood, he delighted to range the woods, watch the wild animals, and contemplate the beauties of uncultivated nature.

Rude and unhewn log cabins, and hewn log houses, erected in the "clearings," and surrounded with blackened stumps and cornfields, were the residences of the frontier settlers. The school-house of that day, of which samples may still be seen in all the new settlements of the southwest, was constructed of rough logs, exactly square, with a chimney occupying one side, and wrought with sticks and clay; the door placed in front. A single log cut out from one side left an aperture, that answered the purpose of a window, under which a slab was placed for a writing desk. The surrounding forest furnished ample supplies of fuel, and a spring of water provided the refreshing and primitive draught for the thirsty. At such a rustic seminary young Boone received the rudiments of "book-learning." These embraced very little more than easy lessons in the spelling book and Psalter, and a brief space of time employed in writing and arithmetic.

In another kind of education, not unfrequent in the wilds of the west, he was an adept. No Indian could poise the rifle, find his way through the pathless forest, or search out the retreats of game, more readily than Daniel Boone. In all that related to Indian sagacity, border life, or the tactics of the skil-

ful hunter, he excelled. The successful training of a hunter, or woodsman, is a kind of education of mental discipline, differing from that of the school-room, but not less effective in giving vigor to the mind, quickness of apprehension, and habits of close observation. Boone was regularly trained in all that made him a successful backwoodsman. Indolence and imbecility never produced a Tecumthè, or a Daniel Boone. To gain the skill of an accomplished hunter requires talents, patience, perseverance, sagacity, and habits of thinking. Amongst other qualifications, knowledge of human nature, and especially of Indian character, is indispensable to the pioneer of the wilderness. Add to these, self-possession, self-control, and promptness in execution. Persons who are unaccustomed to a frontier residence know not how much, in the preservation of life, and in obtaining subsistence, depends on such characteristics.

Boone's father had relatives in Maryland, and it is probable that one of his sons lived there for some time, to acquire the trade of a gunsmith. When Daniel was about eighteen years old, his father removed the family to North Carolina, and settled on the waters of the Yadkin, a mountain stream in the northwestern part of that State. Here was a fine range for hunting, where young Daniel could follow his favorite employment. Here he formed an acquaintance with Rebecca Bryan, whom he married. One almost regrets to spoil so beautiful and sentimental a romance, as that which had had such extensive circulation in the various "Lives of Boone,"



and which represents him as mistaking the bright eyes of this young lady, in the dark, for those of a deer; a mistake that nearly proved fatal from the unerring rifle of the young hunter. Yet in truth we are bound to say, that no such event ever happened. Our backwoods swains never make such mistakes.

For several years after marriage, Boone followed the occupation of a farmer; hunting at such times as would not interfere with raising and securing a crop. In the meantime, the population along the Yadkin and its tributary streams increased, explorations were made to the northwest, and the valleys of the Holston and Clinch Rivers began to resound with the strokes of the woodman's axe, and the neighboring mountains to echo with the sharp crack of the rifle. The Cherokee Indians were troublesome to the frontier settlements for several years, instigated as they were by French emissaries from Louisiana; but in 1761 they sued for peace. Immediately upon this adjustment of Indian affairs, several companies of hunters, from Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina, hearing of the abundance of game in the valleys along the head waters of the Tennessee River, penetrated the wilderness in their favorite pursuit. At the head of one of these companies was Daniel Boone, from the Yadkin settlements, who ranged through the valleys on the head waters of the Holston, in the southwestern part of Virginia. In 1764, we find him, with another company of hunters, on the Rock Castle, a branch of Cumberland River, within the present boundaries of Kentucky, employed, as he stated, by a party of land speculators,



to ascertain and report concerning the country in that quarter.

It is here necessary to give some particulars concerning the state of affairs in North Carolina, which, together with the peculiarities of Boone's temper, influenced him to leave the settlement on the Yadkin, and become a pioneer in the wilds of Kentucky.

Daniel Boone, far from possessing an ungovernable temper, or exhibiting dissatisfaction with the charms of domestic and social life, was mild, humane, and charitable; his manners were gentle, his address conciliating, and his heart open to friendship and hospitality. The most prominent traits of his character were unshaken fortitude and self-command. Perfectly plain in dress and style of living, contented with frugal fare, accustomed to be much alone in the woods, he acquired the habit of contemplation, and was an enthusiastic admirer of nature in its primeval wildness. Adventures in hunting had become his ruling passion. He had a natural sense of justice and equity between man and man, and felt, throughout his whole life, repugnance to the technical forms of law, and the conventional regulations of society and of government, unless they were in strict accordance with his sense of right. He felt keenly opposed to all those customs and usages in social life that seemed to him at variance with the divine rule: "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."

For several years before his first excursion, with Finley and others, to the rich valley of the Louisa River, as Kentucky was then called, the customs and

fashions of North Carolina, had been in that process of change which was calculated to drive such men as Boone from the colony. The trade of the country was in the hands of Scotch adventurers, who came to the colony to acquire wealth and consequence. The people of the country, who had the ability to purchase, laid aside the rustic garments of domestic manufacture, and appeared in all circles clad in imported apparel. To dress otherwise was soon regarded as the sign of poverty and barbarism. The poor man felt himself treated with disdain, and those persons whose taste and inclination disposed them to habits of frugality, were disgusted with what they regarded as the progress of luxury and effeminacy.

The rich were led into extravagant modes of living, far beyond their income. Labor, among the opulent, was performed by slaves, and the industrious white man, who kept no servants, but who, with his sons, worked the farm, and whose wife and daughters were practical economists in domestic affairs, was less respected than his more opulent neighbor, who passed much of his time in frivolous amusements. Under these circumstances, men of quiet habits, opposed to luxury and oppression, migrated to the wilderness beyond the mountains, where they could enjoy independence and a share of respectability.

In 1767, a backwoods hunter, by the name of John Finley, with a few others like himself, made an excursion farther west than the previous hunting parties had gone, upon the waters of Kentucky River, where he spent the season in hunting and trading

with the roaming bands of Indians. Their course lay through a portion of Tennessee, where everything grand and picturesque in mountain scenery, or romantic and delightful in deep and sheltered valleys, existed. They found an exuberant soil, from which sprang giant forests. They saw the rich cane-brakes of Kentucky. To the hunter, here seemed a terrestrial paradise, for it abounded in all kinds of game.

Disgusted as Boone was with the growing fashions, and the oppressions of the rich in North Carolina, he was prepared to listen with eagerness and delight to the glowing descriptions of Finley, and his mind was soon made up to see this delectable land. But it was not till after the lapse of many months that arrangements could be made for the exploration. A party of six was formed, and Boone was chosen the leader. His companions were John Finley, John Stewart, Joseph Holden, James Moncey, and William Cool. In the language of Filson, to whom Boone dictated this part of his life, "It was on the 1st of May, in the year 1769, that I resigned my domestic happiness for a time, and left my family and peaceable habitation on the Yadkin River, in North Carolina, to wander through the wilderness of America, in quest of the country of Kentucky." Boone was not unfeeling or indifferent to the domestic relation. His affectionate wife, who was an excellent household manager, kindly and quietly consented to this separation, and called into requisition her skill as a housewife in assisting to provide the necessary outfit. He had sons large enough to raise



a crop and manage the business of the farm, under the supervision of their industrious mother.

It was on the 7th of June, 1769, that six men, weary and wayworn, were seen winding their way up the steep side of a rugged mountain in the wilderness of Kentucky. Their dress was of the description usually worn at that period by all forest rangers. The outside garment was a hunting shirt, or loose open frock, made of dressed deer skins. Leggings or drawers, of the same material, covered the lower extremities, to which was appended a pair of moccasins for the feet. The cape or collar of the hunting shirt, and the seams of the leggings, were adorned with fringes. The under garments were of coarse cotton. A leathern belt encircled the body; on the right side was suspended the tomahawk, to be used as a hatchet; on the left side was the hunting knife, powder-horn, bullet-pouch, and other appendages indispensable for a hunter. Each person bore his trusty rifle; and, as the party slowly made their toilsome way amid the shrubs, and over the logs and loose rocks, that accident had thrown into the obscure trail which they were following, each man kept a sharp look-out, as though danger or a lurking enemy was near. Their garments were soiled and rent, the unavoidable result of long traveling and exposure to the heavy rains that had fallen; for the weather had been stormy and most uncomfortable, and they had traversed a mountainous wilderness for several hundred miles. The leader of the party was of full size, with a hardy, robust, sinewy frame, and keen, piercing, hazel eyes, that

glanced with quickness at every object as they passed on, now cast forward in the direction they were travelling for signs of an old trail, and in the next moment directed askance into the dense thicket, or into the deep ravine, as if watching some concealed enemy. The reader will recognize in this man the pioneer Boone, at the head of his companions.

Towards the time of the setting sun, the party had reached the summit of the mountain range, up which they had toiled for some three or four hours, and which had bounded their prospect to the west during the day. Here new and indescribable scenery opened to their view. Before them, for an immense distance, as if spread out on a map, lay the rich and beautiful vales watered by the Kentucky River; for they had now reached one of its northern branches. The country immediately before them, to use a western phrase, was "rolling," and, in places, abruptly hilly; but far in the vista was seen a beautiful expanse of level country, over which the buffalo, deer, and other forest animals, roamed unmolested, while they fed on the luxuriant herbage of the forest. The countenances of the party lighted up with pleasure, congratulations were exchanged, the romantic tales of Finley were confirmed by ocular demonstration, and orders were given to encamp for the night in a neighboring ravine. In a deep gorge of the mountain, a large tree had fallen, surrounded by a dense thicket, and hidden from observation by the abrupt and precipitous hills. This tree lay in a convenient position for the back of their camp. Logs were placed on the right and left, leaving the front open,

where fire might be kindled against another log; and for shelter from the rains and heavy dews, bark was peeled from the linden tree.

From this point they reconnoitred the country, and hunted the buffalo, with which the wilderness abounded. This site was on the waters of the Red River, one of the principal branches of the Kentucky, and, so far as can now be ascertained, within the present boundaries of Morgan county. The buffaloes were very numerous, so that hundreds might be seen in one drove, dispersed in the cane-brakes, feeding in the glades, or gathered around the salt licks.

In this region the party hunted with much success till December, without seeing a single red man. Yet, to the experienced eyes of Boone and his companions, there were signs of the visitation of Indians. The Chaonanons, or Shawanoes, had lived and roamed, in their savage way, over that part of Kentucky, which bordered the Kentucky River at the south, near the middle of the seventeenth century, and their scattered settlements and hunting grounds extended to the Cumberland River, and to the present site of Nashville; but history has preserved no authentic memorials of the occupancy of that part of Kentucky \* where our pioneers were engaged in hunting. Strolling parties of Indian hunters or warriors passed over it, but not one Indian village existed in all that district, which lay between the Guyandot and Kentucky Rivers.

\* *Kain-tuck-ee* is a Shawanese word, and signified "at the head of the river." See "Trans. Amer. Antiq. Society," Vol. I. p. 299. The repeated statement, that it meant "dark and bloody ground," is a fiction.



The Chickasaws possessed that part of the State west of the Tennessee River, called the Cherokee, or Hogohege River. The Cherokees set up a sort of claim to the country, between the Kentucky and Cumberland Rivers, as hunting grounds. Whatever might be the equity of this claim, it was extinguished by a treaty held at Lochaber, in South Carolina, by John Stewart, superintendent of Indian affairs, acting under the auspices of the colony of Virginia. This treaty was made on the 5th of October, 1770, and, by a subsequent arrangement between the contracting parties, the boundaries were extended from "the head of Louisa [Kentucky] River to its mouth, and thence up the Ohio River to the mouth of the Great Kenhawa."

The Shawanoes migrated from the country bordering on the Atlantic Ocean south of James River, where they were found in the early part of the seventeenth century; but they were afterwards subjugated by the Iroquois, or Five Nations, and driven to the north of the Ohio River, in the latter part of the same century. The Iroquois, by a pretended right of conquest, claimed the country, as they did all the lands of the tribes they conquered, and at the treaty of Fort Stanwix, in 1768, they ceded their claim, such as it was, south of the Ohio River to Great Britain. Hence Boone and his associates did not intrude upon the rights of any Indian nation, as these rights were then understood.

For convenience of hunting, and that their observations might be extended over a much larger district, in December the explorers divided themselves

into parties. Boone and Stewart formed one party, and, on the 22d day of the month, they were near the banks of the main Kentucky River. Filson, in his attempt to record Boone's story, says, "At the decline of day, near Kentucky River, as we descended the brow of a small hill, a number of Indians rushed out of a thick cane-brake upon us and made us prisoners. The time of our sorrow was now arrived, and the scene fully opened." The Indians plundered them of what supplies they had, and detained them seven days.

Boone knew too well the character of Indians to manifest fear, uneasiness, or a desire to escape. The savages treated them with rude hospitality, intending, doubtless, after washing all the white blood out by the customary ablution, to adopt them as members of the tribe. At night, the party lodged by a large fire in a thick cane-brake. It is evident from Boone's story, defective as it is, that the Indians had no apprehension of an escape. They took no pains for security, set no watch, but all slept soundly. The seventh night had arrived, and Boone, while pretending to sleep, was forming his plans. The greatest caution was necessary lest the savages should awake. Any attempt to run away, where kindness and lenity have been shown to a captive, is a mortal offence to an Indian. Boone gently awakened Stewart, and, in a low whisper and a sign, gave the intimation necessary. Having secured their guns, and a few trifling articles, the two hunters left their captors in a profound slumber, and successfully made their escape. It is obvious, from the circumstances narrated, that this was a mere hunting party; for, had the



savages been on the "war-path," they would have guarded their prisoners with greater vigilance, nor could they have made so safe a retreat.

While wandering in darkness through the woods, the feelings of Boone and Stewart may be better imagined than described. They slept no more, but pursued their course all the next day in as direct a line and with as much rapidity as the dense forest and canes would permit, towards their old hunting camp, where they expected to meet their companions. But to their surprise and distress, they found it plundered; and their friends, Finley and his associates, as they supposed, had left the country. Of this party nothing more remains either in history or tradition. No intimation has been given, whether they returned to North Carolina or were taken prisoners by the Indians. Boone and his companion continued their hunting, but with more caution; their ammunition began to fail, and their adventure with the Indians increased their vigilance by day, and directed them to the most obscure retreats at night.

Early in January, 1770, the forms of two men were discerned in the distant forest. Whether they were hostile Indians, or their former associates, could not be determined at the first view, but they grasped their rifles, and took to the trees for shelter and further observation. It was evident that they had been observed, for the strangers approached cautiously and slowly, exhibiting signs that they were white men and friends. But this did not give the desired relief, for the wily Indian will make such signs of friendship and recognition, to throw his enemy off his guard. Boone gave the customary challenge,

“Holloa, strangers! who are you?” The response was, “White men and friends.” Judge of the surprise and delight of Boone upon embracing his brother, Squire Boone, and another adventurer from North Carolina, with tidings of his family and supplies of powder and lead. This party had left the settlement on the Yadkin, for the purposes of exploring these western wilds, engaging in a winter’s hunt, and finding, if alive, Daniel and his associates. They had seen repeatedly the “signs” and encampments of white men, and, only an hour before the meeting, had stumbled on their last night’s camp.

Shortly after this happy event, Daniel Boone and Stewart were on a second excursion, at some distance from their camp, when they were again attacked by a party of Indians, and Stewart was shot and scalped, while Boone succeeded in effecting his escape. None of the documents or reminiscences give any further particulars. The man, who came to the wilderness with Squire Boone, went into the woods and was missing, or, as Boone supposed, was lost in the woods; but, after several days of anxious search, they concluded he had taken this method to desert them, and return to the settlement. Long afterwards, a decayed skeleton and some fragments of clothing were found near a swamp, and, as this man never reached his friends, the supposition was that he perished at that place. But whether he fell a victim to savage cruelty or hunger, was never known.\*

\* The story, in some of the “Lives of Boone,” that this man was killed and devoured by wolves, is a fiction. The wolves of the western forests rarely attack and kill a man. They are bountifully supplied with game.

The brothers, thus left alone in this vast wilderness, were not oppressed with despondency or fear; nor were they indolent. They hunted by day, prepared the skins of the animals they killed for future use, cooked their game, and sang and talked by their bright camp-fires at night, and built a comfortable cabin as a shelter from the storms and frosts of winter. They were in want of many necessaries. Clothing and moccasins were easily made from dressed deer-skins. With bread and salt they had learned to dispense, but powder and lead were indispensable, and they fancied that horses would be of essential service. During the winter, they saw no Indians, and continued unmolested.

As Spring approached, it was decided that the younger brother, Squire Boone, should return to North Carolina for supplies, while Daniel remained to protect the peltry and increase the stock. On the 1st of May, the brothers gave to each other the parting hand. Squire took up the line of march of more than five hundred miles, to the Yadkin settlement, while Daniel was left in the cabin to his own solitary reflections. He thus remained alone in a vast wilderness, without bread, salt, or sugar, without the society of a fellow-creature, without the company of a horse, or even a dog, often the affectionate companions of the lone hunter. In reviewing this period of his life, he said, "I confess I never before was under greater necessity of exercising philosophy and fortitude. A few days I passed uncomfortably. The idea of a beloved wife and family, and their anxiety on account of my absence and exposed situation, made sensible impressions on my heart."



To relieve himself from the oppressive feelings of loneliness, he made a long tour of observation to the southwest, and explored the country along the waters of Salt and Green Rivers. The Indians were again abroad; and on his return he saw, by undoubted signs, that they had visited his cabin during his absence. Frequently at night he would retire to the woods, and lie in the cane-brake, without fire, that he might escape the vigilant observation of the wily savages.

On the 27th of July, his brother returned from North Carolina, and they met at the old camp on Red River. He rode one horse, and led another heavily laden with the necessaries required. The intelligence from his family was cheering. They were in good health and in comfortable circumstances.

Convinced that small parties of Indians were roaming over the country, hunting the buffalo, Boone and his brother well knew that two men, however skilful in the use of their weapons, could hardly escape if attacked; that their horses would betray them, and be tempting objects of Indian cupidity. Hence they resolved to leave that part of Kentucky and explore the country on Cumberland River. Here they found the hills more abrupt, the soil of an inferior quality, and the game less plentiful. They continued their exploration over a large district, between Cumberland and Greene Rivers, where the timber was scattering and stunted in growth, the surface uneven, and abounding in what are called *sink-holes*, or depressions produced in a cavernous

limestone country by the sinking of the earth, from the action of water after heavy rains. They continued on the waters of the Cumberland region until march, 1771, when they returned in a northeastern direction to the Kentucky River, where the soil appeared more fertile, and more heavily timbered. Here they resolved to fix the site of their projected settlement.

Having packed up as much peltry as their horses could carry, they departed for their families on the Yadkin, resolved to return and make this new country their future home. Daniel had been absent two years, during which time he had tasted neither bread nor salt, nor had he seen any other human being than his travelling companions, and the Indians who had taken him prisoner.

At the same period that Boone and his associates were exploring Kentucky, there were parties, without the knowledge of each other, on the waters of the Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers. In June, 1769, a company of about twenty men, from North Carolina and Western Virginia, assembled on Reedy Creek, a branch of New River, with their horses and equipments for an exploring and hunting tour. They departed, on the 2d of June, for the country of Tennessee, passed over the dividing ridge to Holston River, thence to Powell's Valley, and through the Gap of Cumberland Mountain to the river of the same name, into what is now Wayne county, in Kentucky, where they made a camp for a general rendezvous, to which each party was to return and make a deposit every five weeks. They

dispersed in small parties, and in different directions, and hunted throughout that district. At a later period, the whole party moved in a southwestern direction down the country, along the head waters of Roaring River and Caney Fork. After hunting for eight or nine months, they returned in April, 1770. The same year, a company of ten hunters built two boats and two trapping canoes, loaded them with furs, venison, and bear's meat, and went down the Cumberland, Ohio, and Mississippi Rivers, to Natchez, where they disposed of their venison and peltry. At the French Licks, now Nashville, they saw immense herds of buffaloes and other game, and an old fort, unoccupied, which they supposed had been erected by the Cherokees. Here had been a stockade and trading-post for several years, by a company of Frenchmen from Kaskaskia, at the head of which was Timothy de Monbrun.

In 1771, Casper Mansco, who had twice visited the Valley of the Cumberland, came out again in company with James Knox, John Montgomery, Isaac Bledsoe, and several others. They encamped on Russell's Creek, a branch of Powell's River, where they wintered. The next season, they traversed the country down the waters of the Cumberland, to the region north of Nashville, and into the "barrens" of Kentucky. Here they met with another body of hunters, and soon after returned to New River. This party passed through the same district of country, that, a few weeks after they had left it, was visited by Daniel and Squire Boone. From the period of their absence, they obtained the name of the "long hunters."

## CHAPTER II

Boone attempts a Removal to Kentucky.—Attacked by the Indians.—Returns to Clinch River.—Sent by Governor Dunmore to bring in a Party of Surveyors from Kentucky.—Commands three Garrisons in Dunmore's War.—Commissioned to mark out a Road for the Emigrants.—Erects a Fort at Boonesborough.—Indians hostile.—Removes his Family to Kentucky.—Lexington.—Simon Kenton.—William Whitley.—Political Convention.—Capture of the Daughters of Boone, and their Rescue.—Indian Mode of Fighting.—Attack on Harrod's, Boone's, and Logan's Stations.

ANXIOUS as Boone was to remove his family to the hunting-grounds of Kentucky, more than two years elapsed before the necessary arrangements for the enterprise were effected. He sold his farm on the Yadkin, and made his preparations, having persuaded his wife and children to accompany him. This we might regard as a remarkable instance of indifference and hardihood, did we not know that Daniel Boone was as mild, humane, and affectionate, as he was bold and fearless, and did we not know that the wives of our western pioneers are as courageous, and as ready to enter on the line of march to plant the germ of a new settlement, as their husbands.

On the 25th of September, 1773, the two brothers bade adieu to their friends and neighbors on the Yadkin, and entered on the perilous task of travers-



ing the wilderness to the banks of the Kentucky. A drove of pack-horses carried their bedding, clothing, provisions, and other necessaries; a number of milch cows furnished refreshment for the children; and these cows, with some young cattle and swine, were intended to constitute the herd of the western wilderness. At Powell's Valley, through which their route lay, they were joined by five families and forty men, all well-armed. This accession of strength gave them courage, and the party advanced full of hope and confident of success. At night they encamped, as is still the custom of emigrating parties throughout the vast West.

The camping-place is near some spring or water-course; temporary shelters are made by placing poles in a sloping position, with one end resting on the ground, the other elevated on forks. On these, tent cloth, prepared for the purpose, or, as in case of these pioneers, articles of bed covering, are stretched. The fire is kindled in front against a fallen tree or log, towards which the feet are placed while sleeping. If the ground is wet, twigs or small branches, with leaves and dry grass, are laid under the beds. Each family reposes under a separate cover, and the clothing worn by day is seldom removed at night. Provided with such accommodations, Boone and his family never imagined that they were less happy than while reposing in the cabin they had left on the Yadkin.

The three principal ranges of mountains, over which their route lay, were then designated by the names they still bear, Powell's, Wallen's, and Cum-



berland. The last has a singular and romantic opening, called "The Gap," through which a well constructed road now passes. This Gap is near the junction of Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Over the other mountains nature has formed passes, which render their ascent not difficult. The trail marked out by the brothers on their return to North Carolina was found and followed. The party had passed Wallen's Ridge, and was approaching the Cumberland Gap. Seven young men, who had charge of the cattle, had fallen into the rear some five or six miles from the main body, when, unexpectedly, they were attacked by a party of Indians. Six were killed; the seventh, though wounded, made his escape, and the cattle were dispersed in the wilderness. This calamity happened on the 6th of October, and proved a sad and afflicting event to the pioneer; for his eldest son, James, a youth of about seventeen years of age, was one of the slain. The party in front heard the alarm, returned to the rescue of their friends and property, drove off the Indians, and buried the dead.

This calamity so disheartened and distressed the emigrants, that they gave up the expedition for the present, and returned back to the settlements on Clinch River, in the southwestern part of Virginia, a retreat of forty miles from the place of attack. Boone and his brother, with a few others, would have gone forward; but, having a large majority against them, they felt bound to submit. Here Boone remained till June, 1774, when a messenger from Governor Dunmore arrived in the settlement

with a request from him that Daniel Boone would immediately go to the wilderness of Kentucky, and conduct from thence a party of surveyors, who were believed to be in danger from Indian hostilities. Boone was now in the fortieth year of his age, in the full vigor of manhood, with physical powers capable of great endurance, and a mind thoroughly trained by experience. In this enterprise he was associated with Michael Stoner, another pioneer, who, in 1767, had hunted on Cumberland River, near the Hermitage, and who had explored the Cumberland Valley and the southern part of Kentucky. The enterprise was accomplished after encountering much difficulty. Of the journey no incidents whatever have been preserved, except the very imperfect statement of Boone himself, from which we learn that from the time he left home till he returned were sixty-two days, in which he travelled on foot eight hundred miles.

These surveyors had been sent out by the Governor some months previously, but longer stay was considered dangerous. Of this party, some of whom went to Kentucky the preceding year, were Thomas Bullett, Hancock Taylor, James Harrod, James, Robert, and George McAfee, and others. They descended the Ohio in canoes to the present site of Louisville, where they separated. Taylor and the McAfees went up the Kentucky River to Drennon's Lick, where, as at all the western salt springs, they saw immense numbers of buffaloes, deer, and other game, struggling and fighting for salt; and the paths made by these animals, in going and return-

ing, were beaten like travelled roads, and by the hunters called *streets*. The party took one of these roads, or *traces*, as they were more frequently called, which the buffaloes had made through the otherwise impassable cane-brakes, until they reached the Kentucky River, near the present site of Frankfort. Here they surveyed six hundred acres of land, being the first survey on the Kentucky River. They followed the ridge up that river, crossing the stream seven times, and making surveys and locations until they reached the mountains near the forks of the river; and from thence they returned through Powell's Valley, and across the mountains, to their friends in Botetourt county, Virginia.

Another party of surveyors went to Kentucky in the Spring of 1774, landed at Louisville, and travelled up the Kentucky River on the north side to Elkhorn, and on the south side to the present site of Danville. This was the party for which Boone and Stoner were sent. During the same season, James Harrod led out a company from the Monongahela, who descended the Ohio River in canoes, and thence up the Kentucky River to the present site of Harrodsburg, where they erected a log cabin, said to be the first one built for a family residence in Kentucky.

While Boone was gone to Kentucky, the threatening appearances of the Shawanoes and other Indians, northwest of the Ohio River, grew into open hostilities. The militia were called out, and Boone was appointed to the command of three contiguous garrisons on the frontier, with the commission of cap-



tain. The campaign terminated with the battle of Point Pleasant, at the junction of the Great Kenhawa and the Ohio Rivers; the severest and bloodiest battle ever fought with the Indians in Virginia. The colonial troops consisted of eleven hundred men, in three regiments, under the chief command of General Andrew Lewis. The Indians, who were more numerous than the whites, were commanded by the celebrated *Cornstalk*. The loss of the Virginians was seventy-five killed and one hundred and forty wounded. *Cornstalk* was the great chief of the Shawanese confederacy, and possessed talents and courage equal to those of any Indian chief.

Hostilities having ceased, the militia were discharged, and Boone returned to his family on Clinch River, and spent the following winter in hunting. The reports of Boone and others of the fertile lands in Kentucky excited certain persons in North Carolina to form a company, at the head of which was Richard Henderson, and to effect a purchase of the Cherokees, who they supposed held the Indian title south of the Kentucky River. After various attempts and failures at negotiation, the plan having been matured, they employed Daniel Boone to attend the proposed treaty at the Indian town of Watauga, situated on a south branch of the Holston. The object of the company in employing Boone was, to ascertain correctly the situation and quality of the tract in question. The purchase was successfully made, so far as the Indians were concerned; but the company was opposed by the authority of Virginia, which claimed by charter this country in the

west. Nor did the British or the colonial governments regard any purchase of the Indians valid, when made by private persons.

After a long period of litigation, the matter was compromised by granting to the company certain lands on Green River. But the company, not aware of the defect of their title, proceeded to make arrangements for its survey and settlement, and Captain Boone was regarded as the proper person to conduct the enterprise. A road had to be explored, marked, and opened, to which service Boone was appointed, with a company of men well-armed. The route was from the settlement on the Holston to the Kentucky River; much of the way was difficult. Abrupt hills to climb, thick cane-brakes and dense forests to penetrate, and exposure to attacks from hostile Indians, were amongst the difficulties to be encountered. The party had arrived within fifteen miles of Boonesborough, when they were fired on by the savages; two were killed, and two wounded. This was on the 22d of March, 1775. Three days afterwards they were again attacked; two more of the party were killed, and three wounded.

A site having been selected on the bank of the Kentucky River, on the 1st of April they commenced erecting a stockade fort, which was called *Boonesborough*. The Indians, stung to madness that white people should erect buildings on their hunting-grounds, repeated their attacks, but without success; for, on the 14th of June, the works were so far completed as to afford adequate defence. This fort was

built in the form of a parallelogram, and was about two hundred and fifty feet long, and one hundred and seventy-five feet broad. Houses of hewn logs, built in a square form, projected from each corner, adjoining which were stockades for a short distance; and the remaining space on the four sides, except the gateways, was filled up with cabins, erected of rough logs, placed close together, which made a sure defence. The gates, or doorways, were on opposite sides, constructed of slabs of timber, split several inches in thickness, and hung with stout wooden hinges.

The fort having been completed, Captain Boone left the men to guard it and prepare ground for a crop, while he returned to the settlement, on Clinch River, for his family. Other stations were made the same year.

It is here proper to inquire about the Indian claims to Kentucky, and whether there was any unfair or improper intrusion by Captain Boone and his associates on their territories. We have already seen, that whatever claim the Cherokees possessed they had transferred to Henderson and company. The Shawanoes, more than a century before, had roamed over Kentucky, but they do not appear to have been the original possessors of the country in the Indian sense. Their ancestors came from the southeast, where they resided when the Europeans first came to Virginia and Carolina. At what period they migrated to the northwest is uncertain.

A branch of the tribe was in Pennsylvania in 1680, and sent a deputation to the treaty of William



Penn. They were attacked and conquered by the Six Nations, and driven from Kentucky to the country northwest of the Ohio, then called the *Ouabache*, and their cousins, the Miamis, allowed them to occupy a part of Illinois and Indiana.

The Six Nations claimed territorial sovereignty over all the countries they conquered from the other tribes, and by virtue of this right, such as it was, they conveyed the whole district along and south of the Ohio, from the Cherokee River, (now the Tennessee,) to the eastern mountains, at the treaty of Fort Stanwix, in 1768. Hence it appears, that, according to Indian ideas of title and possession, their claims to Kentucky had passed over to the British government before the first visit of Boone. Again, in the treaty with the Shawanoes, at the close of Dunmore's war, in 1774, they relinquished all claims to Kentucky. In these treaties with the English, no coercion appears to have been employed. The Indians, for a valuable consideration, voluntarily relinquished all their supposed claims. The Delawares, Miamis, Piankeshaws, Kickapoos, and other bands from the country northwest of the Ohio, who continued for several years their marauding expeditions across the Ohio, never set up any claims to the territory in question, other than the common right of hunting wild animals wherever they could be caught. Hence, if in any part of the United States the white people had a fair and equitable right of settlement, it was in Kentucky.

On his return to Clinch River, Captain Boone soon made the necessary preparations for the re-

moval of his family. In his story, as told by Filson, he says, "We arrived safe, without any other difficulty than such as are common to this passage, my wife and daughters being the first white women that ever stood on the banks of Kentucky River."

Shortly after the arrival of Mrs. Boone and her family, the infant colony was reinforced by the arrival of three families more; Messrs. McGary, Hogan, and Denton, with their wives, reached Boonesborough. These families, with a number of men, making in all, in the language of the times, "twenty-seven guns," had started in company with Captain Boone from the settlement on Clinch River. On arriving at the head of Dick's River, a branch of the Kentucky, which interlocks with Salt and Green Rivers, Boone, with twenty-one men, went to Boonesborough, leaving his associates to find their way, by his directions, through the forest. This party, having got bewildered, left the horses and cattle with James Ray, John Denton, and John Hays, all youths from fifteen to eighteen years of age, while they attempted to find the trail. McGary, who commanded this party, finding no passage for the families and pack-horses about the junction of Dick's River with the main stream, owing to the lofty and precipitous cliffs, set off on foot to explore the way, and obtain a pilot.

He soon fell upon a trail, that led him to Harrod's Station, where he obtained the aid of James Harlan, as a pilot for the families. After three weeks had elapsed, the boys with the cattle were found, and conducted in safety to the fort. These



same families were with Captain Boone in his first attempt to remove to Kentucky, in 1773, and each had lost an eldest son by the attack of the Indians near Cumberland Gap.

The summer of 1775 deserves notice as the period of the establishment of other stations, and the arrival of many pioneers in the new territory. It is certainly singular, that, at the time of the outbreak of the revolutionary war, when it might seem that every arm able to strike a blow was specially needed for the defence of the Atlantic colonies, the colonization of the vast region on the waters of the Mississippi should have commenced. Surely wisdom and strength beyond that of man were concerned in the enterprise at such an eventful crisis. Harrod's Station and Logan's Fort, not far from Boonesborough, were at this time established. A party of hunters and land explorers were encamped on a delightful and fertile tract of country, on the head waters of the Elkhorn, when some emigrant, just arrived in the western wilderness, brought the news of the opening scenes of the war in the battle at Lexington. Patriotic feelings were instantly excited, and the name was transferred to the encampment as the embryo of a future city. Louisville had become a point of rendezvous for parties, who came down the Ohio in boats and canoes.

Among the numerous emigrants, who came to Kentucky this year, and who were soon identified with its history, were Simon Kenton, Colonel Benjamin Logan, John Floyd, William Whitley, and George Rogers Clarke. Simon Kenton was born in

Fauquier county, Virginia, of poor but respectable parents, in 1755. At the age of nineteen he could neither read nor write; but he was of large size, tall, erect, robust, athletic, and of great energy. The indecision of a sweetheart, and the jealousy of a rival, led to a personal combat, in which his antagonist was felled to the ground; and Kenton supposed he was killed. Alarmed at the consequences, he fled to Western Virginia, and changed his name to that of Butler. In that region, and in the neighborhood of Fort Pitt, he became distinguished as an expert woodsman, and was employed as a spy. He was a ranger and a spy in Lord Dunmore's campaign against the Indians, in 1774, and was present at the signing of the treaty.

In February, 1775, in company with two other men, he descended the Ohio, in a canoe, to the place where the town of Augusta is now situated, and spent the season in hunting along the waters of the Licking. Eventually he became identified with the history of Kentucky, and the Indian wars of the northwest. He was taken prisoner by the Indians, and repeatedly sentenced to be burnt. He ran the gauntlet thirteen times at different Indian villages. At one time he was tied to the stake, and a fire was kindled around him; but he was rescued by the notorious Simon Girty. He was with Colonel Clarke in the conquest of Illinois, and participated in Wayne's victory. After the treaty at Greenville, he settled in Ohio, where he sustained the character of a worthy citizen, was respected and beloved by all who knew him, and died some few years afterwards, with the faith and triumph of a sincere Christian.

William Whitley was a native of Rockland county, Virginia, born in 1749, and brought up to hard labor on a farm. He had very little education from books; but his corporeal powers were fully developed, and he exhibited mental faculties of a high order. Having married Esther Fuller, in the month of January, 1775, and commenced housekeeping in a backwoods cabin, being in high health and dependent on his labor for a subsistence, he told his wife one day, that he had heard a fine report about Kentucky, and he thought they could get a living there with less hard work than in Virginia. "Then, Billy, if I were you, I would go and see," was the encouraging reply of the young bride. In two days she had his clothes in order, and he was on his way to Kentucky, in company with George R. Clarke.\* Such were the men and women, who were the pioneers of this great and flourishing State; and such are the men and women now building their cabins along the vales of Oregon.

The period of these emigrations, four hundred miles beyond the frontier settlements of Virginia and the Carolinas, was an eventful one in the history of our country. Hostilities had commenced at Lexington and Concord, and the Atlantic colonies were buckling on their armor for the deadly conflict with the mother country. British power and influence controlled most of the Indian tribes of the continent, and British gold gave terrible energy to the tomahawk and scalping-knife. The western pioneers were deceived by the treaty of Lord Dunmore, in

\* Marshall's "Kentucky," Vol. I. p. 41.



1774, and flattered themselves that they could settle the country unmolested. But, in twelve months after that treaty, the Indians of the south and of the northwest were supplied with arms and ammunition by the traders at the British posts on the Mississippi, Wabash, and northern lakes, and aided and encouraged in hostile aggressions on the infant settlements of Kentucky. There was an unseen hand that directed the events of that period. An unseen, but infinite eye watched over the interests of the Great Valley of the west. The settlement of Kentucky led to the conquest of the British posts in Illinois and Indiana, in 1778, and eventually threw the wide valleys of the west under control of the American Union.

In connection with the events of 1775, we must not overlook the first political convention ever held in the Western Valley for the formation of a free government. At this period, the validity of the title of Henderson and Company to the Indian lands in Kentucky was not called in question by the settlers; and so many were the explorers, and so eager were the people to secure land, that, by the 1st of December, more than five hundred thousand acres had been entered in the office of the company. Leases were issued by "The Proprietors of the Colony of Transylvania, in America," by which the grantors were to receive "one moiety of all *gold*, silver, copper, lead, and sulphur mines;" and such rent as might be agreed upon, was to be paid "yearly and every year for ever." Had the title of this company been valid, a large portion of Kentucky would have

been subject to rent, paid to the heirs of these proprietors for ever. The decision against the rights of the company provided also for the settlers, by which their improvements and rights of settlement were secured. Acting, however, as they did, under the belief of the validity of the company's title, in the course of this year a convention of eighteen delegates, chosen by the people, assembled at Boonesborough, and, after acknowledging Henderson and company as lawful proprietors, "established courts of justice, and rules for proceedings therein; also a militia law, a law for the preservation of game, and for appointing civil and militia officers."

With the exception of one attack from a small party of Indians, in the month of December, in which one man was killed and another wounded, the winter and spring of 1776 wore away without any particular incident. The Indians, though by no means friendly, made no direct attack on the stations. The game of the woods produced an unfailing supply of provisions; the brush was cleared away and the timber "deadened" around the stations, preparatory to the summer's crop. Whenever any of the community had occasion to pass into the woods beyond rifle-shot from the fort, as the business of hunting and feeding their horses and cattle in the canes made it necessary, their steps were stealthy, their eyes glanced in every direction, and the faithful rifle was held in a position in which it could be used in the quickest manner for defence. The opening of Spring brought many other emigrants to the country, amongst whom were Colonel

Richard Callaway (an intimate friend of Boone) and his family, and also the family of Benjamin Logan, who had returned for them the preceding autumn.

On the 14th of July, 1776, Betsey Callaway, her sister Frances, and Jemima Boone, a daughter of Captain Boone, the two last about fourteen years of age, carelessly crossed the river opposite to Boonesborough, in a canoe, at a late hour in the afternoon. The trees and shrubs on the opposite bank were thick, and came down to the water's edge; the girls, unconscious of danger, were playing and splashing the water with the paddles, until the canoe, floating with the current, drifted near the shore. Five stout Indians lay there concealed, one of whom, noiseless and stealthy as the serpent, crawled down the bank until he reached the rope that hung from the bow, turned its course up the stream, and in a direction to be hidden from the view of the fort. The loud shrieks of the captured girls were heard, but too late for their rescue. The canoe, their only means of crossing, was on the opposite shore, and none dared to risk the chance of swimming the river, under the impression that a large body of savages was concealed in the woods. Boone and Callaway were both absent, and night set in before their return and arrangements could be made for pursuit. We subjoin the narrative of Colonel Floyd, who was one of the party, remarking that this story was narrated to the writer by one of the captured party, twenty-eight years since, in terms substantially the same.



Colonel Floyd says, "Next morning by daylight we were on the track, but found they had totally prevented our following them, by walking some distance apart through the thickest canes they could find. We observed their course, and on which side we had left their sign, and travelled upwards of thirty miles. We then imagined that they would be less cautious in travelling, and made a turn in order to cross their track, and had gone but a few miles before we found their tracks in a buffalo path; pursued and overtook them on going about ten miles, just as they were kindling a fire to cook. Our study had been more to get the prisoners, without giving the Indians time to murder them after they discovered us, than to kill them.

"We discovered each other nearly at the same time. Four of us fired, and all rushed on them, which prevented them from carrying away anything except one shot gun without ammunition. Mr. Boone and myself had a pretty fair shoot, just as they began to move off. I am well convinced I shot one through, and the one he shot dropped his gun; mine had none. The place was very thick with canes, and being so much elated on recovering the three little broken-hearted girls prevented our making further search. We sent them off without their moccasins, and not one of them with so much as a knife or a tomahawk."

It was now known that parties of hostile Indians were prowling through the forests, that their spies were watching each station, and that dangers were thickening fast over the infant settlements. In cul-

tivating their corn, or gathering in the harvest, guards were stationed, while the workmen labored in the field.

The Indian method of besieging a fort, village, or even a single cabin, is peculiar. They are seldom seen in any considerable force. They lie concealed in the bushes and weeds, or behind stumps and trees; they waylay the path, or the field, and in a stealthy manner cut off any persons that pass in their way. They will crawl on the ground, or assume and imitate the noise and appearance of swine, bears, or any other animal, in the dark. They will cautiously approach the gate or door in the night, and, concealed behind some object, stealthily and patiently watch for some one to pass out, when, with the arrow or the musket, they will cut him down, tear off his scalp, and disappear in the forest. Occasionally, as if to produce a panic, and throw their enemies off their guard, they will rush forward to the palisades, or walls, with fearful audacity, yelling frightfully, and even attempt to set fire to the buildings, or beat down the gateway. Sometimes they will make a furious attack on one side, as a feint to draw out the garrison, and then suddenly assault the opposite side. Indians very seldom fight when exposed in the open field. They take to the trees or other objects for protection. They are not brave, but cunning and wary; not cool and calculating, but sly and treacherous. Such was the enemy that assaulted the feeble garrisons of Kentucky. In the winter, they usually retreated to their villages and hunting-grounds northwest of the Ohio. Had they possessed skill, and practised concentration, and



unity of action, they could easily have cut off the stations in detail.

During the latter part of the summer, though a reinforcement was expected from Virginia, a panic prevailed. The land speculators and other adventurers, to the number of nearly three hundred, left the country; and it required all the address of the calmest and bravest of the pioneers to quell the fears of the new-comers, and prevent entire desertion. Terror and anxiety were general. Nor were quiet and safety restored in the following winter. It will be recollected that this was an eventful year throughout the American colonies. They had disowned allegiance to Great Britain, and announced to the world their independence; but the closing part of the year was one of the gloomiest periods of the American war.

The whole of the next year, 1777, was a dark and discouraging time to the settlements of Kentucky. Frequently the stations were assailed by large bodies of Indians. Individuals were cut off by a concealed foe. Most of the cattle and horses had been destroyed. Hostilities continued. Early in March, an attack was made on Harrodsburg. The invading party, on their approach, surprised a party of laborers engaged in making a new settlement about four miles from the fort, killed one, took another prisoner, while the third, James Ray, a youth of fifteen, made a fortunate escape, and gave the alarm. They then approached, and laid a regular siege to the fort in the Indian mode, but were beaten off with the loss of one of their number. At Boonesborough they killed one man and wounded four

others, but were driven away with some loss on their part. On the 4th of July, another party, of about two hundred, made a second attack on Boonesborough, which they besieged for two days, killing one man, wounding another, and, after a loss of seven of their party, raised the siege and retired.

It was fortunate for the infant settlements, that the Indians, who could have brought several hundred warriors into the field, chose to divide themselves into marauding parties, and attack the stations at the same time, so as to prevent one from relieving the other. Had they brought their whole force against one, they could have made a breach, massacred the families, proceeded to the next, and in this way cut off every settlement. On the 19th of July, about two hundred Indians attacked Colonel Logan's Fort, killed two persons and wounded one. The loss of the Indians was not ascertained, for they always carry off their dead, unless entirely routed and suddenly driven from the field.

At that period, the effective force, according to Boone's statement, did not much exceed one hundred men: Boonesborough had twenty-two, Harrodsburg sixty-five, and Logan's Fort fifteen. A reinforcement of forty-five men, from North Carolina, reached Boonesborough on the 25th of July; and on the 20th of August, Captain Bowman arrived with one hundred men from Virginia. Skirmishes continued almost daily; yet the Indians felt and acknowledged the superiority of the "Big Knives," as the Virginians were called, and became more circumspect and wary.

## CHAPTER III

Arrival of Colonel George Rogers Clark.—His Plan of defending Kentucky.—Plan adopted by the Governor and Council of Virginia.—Conquest of Illinois.—Habits of Boone.—Is taken Prisoner by the Indians.—Carried to Old Chillicothe, and thence to Detroit.—Brought back to the Indian Town, and adopted.—His sagacious Policy.—Escapes, and returns to Boonesborough.—Excursion to the Indian Country.—Siege of Boonesborough.

AT this period, Colonel George Rogers Clark, who then bore the title of major, was actively engaged in a well concerted plan for the defence of Kentucky. This was no less than the conquest of the British posts in the northwest, whence the Indians received their supplies and rewards for scalps and prisoners. It has been already noticed that his first visit to Kentucky was in 1775; and from that time he identified himself with its interests with an enthusiasm which no speculation in its wild lands, nor pecuniary consideration, could have awakened. His appearance, as described by Marshall, was well calculated to attract attention. It was rendered particularly agreeable by the manliness of his deportment, the intelligence of his conversation, the vivacity and boldness of his spirit of enterprise, and the determination he expressed of becoming an inhabitant of the country. He fixed on no particular residence, was much in the woods,

occasionally visiting the forts and camps, cultivating an acquaintance with the people, and acquiring accurate and extensive knowledge of the country.\* At his suggestion, a general meeting of the settlers was held at Harrod's station, to consult upon matters pertaining to their common interests. Clark and a man by the name of Jones were chosen delegates to the House of Burgesses of Virginia. Kentucky, at this period, had no representatives; but the appointment in this formal manner gave them consequence as the agents of the colony. They remained at Williamsburg after the adjournment, and obtained from the Governor and Council a quantity of ammunition, which they brought in safety to the country.

Clark saw that the main cause of Indian depredations in Kentucky existed in the British posts of Detroit, Vincennes, and Kaskaskia. If these could be taken, the streams of Indian barbarity, which spread desolation through the colony, would be dried up, and a counteracting influence be exerted over the savages. So strong was this impression, that, in the summer of 1777, he sent two trusty spies, Moore and Dunn, to reconnoitre those remote posts. These emissaries, who went under the guise of hunters and traders with the Indians, returned successful, having obtained important facts, which confirmed Clark in the practicability of his project.

The plan required the utmost secrecy, and Clark never intimated to the Kentuckians his design, nor the intelligence he had received. In the month of

\* Marshall's "Kentucky," Vol. I. p. 46.



October, he again visited Virginia, and divulged his project to Patrick Henry, the Governor, who took into his privy council George Wythe, George Mason, and Thomas Jefferson. To bring the direct object of the expedition before the House of Burgesses would defeat the enterprise; but, from that body, authority was obtained, and funds were appropriated, to raise troops for the defence of Kentucky; while private and confidential instructions from the Governor and Council were given to Clark, authorizing him, as a mode of defending Kentucky, to attack the British posts on the Wabash and Mississippi.

The boldness of this enterprise, the fortitude and perseverance of its prosecution, the secrecy and adroitness with which it was managed, and its triumphant success, render it one of the most remarkable incidents of the revolution. The conquest of the posts of Kaskaskia, Cahokia, and Vincennes, were accomplished in 1778, without the loss of an American.\*

During the campaign of Colonel Clark, in Illinois, Captain Boone was a prisoner with the Indians. To particularize all the services directly and indirectly rendered to the settlers, and to emigrants on the road, by this old pioneer, would extend this volume beyond reasonable dimensions. As dangers thickened and appearances grew more alarming, as scouts came in with rumors of Indians seen here and there, and as the hardy and bold woodsmen sat around

\* An accurate account, in detail, of this expedition may be seen in Butler's "Kentucky."

their camp-fires, with the loaded rifle at hand, rehearsing, for the twentieth time, the tale of noble daring, or the hair-breadth escape, Boone would sit silent, apparently not heeding the conversation, employed in repairing the rents in his hunting shirt and leggings, moulding bullets, or cleaning his rifle. Yet the eyes of the garrison were upon him. Concerning "Indian signs," he was an oracle. Sometimes, with one or two trusty companions, but more frequently alone, as night closed in, he would steal away noiselessly into the woods, to reconnoitre the surrounding wilderness; and in the daytime stealthily would he creep along, with his trusty rifle resting on his arm, ready for the least sign of danger; his keen, piercing eyes glancing into every thicket and cane-brake, or watching intently for "signs" of the wily enemy. Accustomed to range the country as a hunter and a scout, he would frequently meet the approaching travellers on the road, and pilot them into the settlement, while his rifle supplied them with provisions. He was ever more ready to aid the community, or engage in public services, than to attend to his private interests.

The people had suffered much for salt. The labor and cost of bringing it over the mountains on horseback were too great; and by that mode only could they obtain the necessaries which the wilderness did not furnish. It was decided, after due consultation, that thirty men, headed by Captain Boone, should take such kettles as could be spared, and proceed to the Lower Blue Licks, on Licking River, and there manufacture salt. The enterprise

was commenced on New Year's day, 1778. Boone was commander, scout, and hunter for the party. Three men had been despatched to Boonesborough with the pack-horses and salt, which they had made, when, on the 7th of February, Captain Boone, who was engaged in hunting at some distance from the lick, was discovered by a party of Indians, one hundred and two in number, including two Canadians. He attempted to escape, but their swiftest runners were on his trail. There was no alternative. He was their prisoner. Adept as he was in Indian character, he knew how to please and how to foil them. This party was on a winter's campaign, an unusual movement for Indians, to attack Boonesborough. It was a trying time for the pioneer. A fearful responsibility rested upon his sagacity and decision. After parleying with them, and professing to be pleased with their company for eight days, he succeeded in gaining their confidence, and obtained favorable terms for his men. On their approach to the lick, he made signs to the salt-makers to offer no resistance, but yield themselves prisoners of war, on the promise of generous usage.

Censure has been cast on Captain Boone for the surrender of his men; and at a subsequent period, as will be seen, his conduct in this affair was investigated by a court-martial. He well knew, that, if an attack was made on the garrison in their exposed and defenceless state, they would be overpowered, and the women and children would perish under the merciless tomahawk and scalping-knife, or be carried into a hopeless captivity. He could give the



salt-makers no warning that they might flee to the fort. The British commander of the northwest, Lieutenant-Governor Hamilton, of Detroit, traded in human victims. For each prisoner and for each scalp rewards were given. Captain Boone, with intuitive discernment, regarded it a far less evil for him and his company to be made prisoners, than to risk the almost certain loss of Boonesborough, with the destruction of life that would follow. The issue proved his foresight.

Captain Boone says, "The generous usage the Indians had promised before, in my capitulation, was afterwards fully complied with, and we proceeded with them as prisoners to Old Chillicothe, the principal Indian town on Little Miama, where we arrived, after an uncomfortable journey in very severe weather, on the 18th of February, and received as good treatment as prisoners could expect from savages. On the 10th day of March following, I and ten of my men were conducted by forty Indians to Detroit, where we arrived on the 30th day, and were treated by Governor Hamilton, the British commander at that post, with great humanity." \*

The Governor offered one hundred pounds sterling for his ransom, intending, as he said, to liberate him on parole, which the Indians positively refused. They fancied, from the contentment he manifested as a prisoner, and the interest he seemed to take in their affairs, that he would be a valuable acquisition

\* Boone's Narrative by Filson, in Imlay's "Discovery and Settlement of Kentucky," p. 341.



to the tribe as a hunter and warrior. They entertained him well, showed him much affection, but persisted in taking him back to their town. A situation more vexatious to a spirit like his can hardly be imagined; yet so perfect were his habits of self-control, that he betrayed not the least uneasiness in presence of his captors. The least attempt to escape would have alarmed the Indians, and made them vigilant in guarding him.

Several English gentlemen at Detroit made pressing offers of money and other necessaries, which Boone refused, with many thanks for their kindness, alleging that he should never have it in his power to repay them, but in reality because he suspected it was their intention, by such favors, to seduce him to desert the standard of his country. He parted with his companions in Detroit, and returned to Chillicothe, after a long and fatiguing march, in the month of April, where he was adopted by Blackfish, a distinguished Shawanese chief, after the Indian fashion, to supply the place of a deceased son and warrior. He wisely and cheerfully appeared to be reconciled to his new way of life.

The forms of the ceremony of adoption were often severe and ludicrous. The hair of the head is plucked out by a tedious and painful operation, leaving a tuft, some three or four inches in diameter, on the crown, for the scalplock, which is cut and dressed up with ribbons and feathers. The candidate is then taken into the river in a state of nudity, and there thoroughly washed and rubbed, "to take all his white blood out." This ablution is usually

performed by females. He is then taken to the council-house, where the chief makes a speech, in which he expatiates upon the distinguished honors conferred on him, and the line of conduct expected from him. His head and face are painted in the most approved and fashionable style, and the ceremony is concluded with a grand feast and smoking.

The Indian father and mother of Boone regarded him with the kindness of a natural relation, and he was soon made aware, by proofs not to be mistaken, that he was actually beloved and trusted, as if the adoption had, to all intents, made him a member of the family and of the tribe. Regarded as a mighty hunter and a distinguished *brave*, he soon had the confidence and affections of the whole village. He was exceedingly familiar and friendly with them, frequently engaged with them in hunting, and gained much applause at their contests in musket- and rifle-shooting. In these exercises he was careful not to excel them too frequently, lest he should excite their envy. He found it an easy matter to ingratiate himself with the chief, or Shawanese *king*, as he was called, and was treated by him with great respect. Still the cherished recollection of his wife and children at Boonesborough caused great anxiety, and prompted him to meditate on plans of escape, while, to avoid suspicion, he appeared as if happy and contented with his Indian relations. Whenever he was allowed to leave the village on a hunting excursion, the balls for his gun were carefully counted, and he was required to account in game for each ball and charge of powder. He ingeniously divided a

number of balls, with the halves of which he could kill turkeys, raccoons, squirrels, and other small game, and, by using light charges of powder, he contrived to save several charges for his own use, if he should find an opportunity to escape.

Early in June, he was taken to the salt springs, on the Scioto, to assist in the manufacture of salt, where he was employed ten days. On his return to Chillicothe, he was alarmed to see four hundred and fifty warriors, painted and armed in a fearful manner, preparing to march against Boonesborough. He had so far learned the Shawanese language, as to understand what they said; yet he sagaciously kept them ignorant of his proficiency. By mixing with the crowd, and seeming pleased with the war-dances and other ceremonies, he learned their projected route, and decided at once to escape, and defeat their enterprise.

On the morning of the 16th of June he arose, and, without suspicion, went forth on his morning's hunt as usual. He contrived to secrete some jerked venison, which he could eat while travelling. The distance to Boonesborough exceeded one hundred and sixty miles, which he travelled in less than five days, eating but one regular meal on the road, which was a turkey he shot after crossing the Ohio River. Until he left that river behind him, his anxiety was great. He knew the Indians would follow him, and it required all his skill and tact as a backwoodsman to throw them off the trail. His route lay through forests, swamps, and across numerous rivers. Every sound in the forest struck his ear as the signal of



approaching Indians. He was not an expert swimmer, and he anticipated serious difficulty in crossing the Ohio, which at that time, from continued rains, was swollen, and was running with a strong current. On reaching its bank, he had the good fortune to find an old canoe, which had floated into the bushes. A hole was in one end, but this he contrived to stop, and it bore him safely to the Kentucky side. His appearance before the garrison at Boonesborough was like one risen from the dead. His captivity and journey to Detroit were known by the report of prisoners that had escaped, and it was supposed he was held by the British authorities in Canada. His wife, despairing of his return to Kentucky, had transported herself and some of the children, on pack-horses, to her father's house in North Carolina.

The men, who had occupied the fort, had dispersed into the neighborhood, and, engaged in their ordinary avocations, had let the works get out of repair. Not a moment was to be lost. The intelligence brought by Captain Boone, and the activity he inspired, soon produced the necessary repairs. New gates and double bastions were constructed, and, in the short space of ten days, each part was strengthened so as to stand a siege. One of the prisoners, who had escaped from the Indians, reported, that, in consequence of the elopement of Boone, they had postponed their expedition three weeks. The Indians had spies in the country, watching every movement, and were alarmed at the increase of the settlements and the strength of their fortifications. Councils were held by the confederated tribes northwest



of the Ohio River, and aid was sought from the British authorities. They apprehended, that, if they should not exterminate the "Big Knives" during the season, they would grow too formidable by the next.

Early in August, Captain Boone, with nineteen men, made an excursion into the Indian country, to destroy a village on Paint Creek, a branch of the Scioto. When within four miles of the town, they met a war-party of thirty Indians on their march for Kentucky; a battle ensued; one Indian was killed, and two wounded, when they gave way and fled. In such skirmishes, in almost all cases, the parties fight, each man singly with his adversary, from behind trees; and much adroitness is used by each to gain the advantage of the other. Three horses and all their baggage were taken, and no loss was sustained by the Kentuckians. Learning that the Indians had abandoned their town, and that a strong party of several hundred were on their way to Boonesborough, Captain Boone and his men immediately returned, and had the dexterity to spy out and pass this army of Indians and Canadians, and reach the fort in safety, and in season to give the alarm. The object of Boone, in this expedition, was to alarm the Indians for the safety of their own towns, and divert their attention from their premeditated attack on Boonesborough. It was a gallant and heroic affair for twenty men to march one hundred and fifty miles into the heart of the Indian country, surprise and defeat thirty warriors, and then effect a successful retreat in face of an enemy twenty times more numerous than their own force.

Shortly after their return, on the 7th of September,\* the whole force of the Indians, four hundred and forty-four in number, with Captain Duquesne and eleven other Canadians, having British and French colors flying, appeared before Boonesborough. The Indians were commanded by the noted Shawanese chief Blackfish; the Canadians were under the command of Captain Duquesne, who acted as interpreter, and represented the British authority on the occasion. This was the most formidable force ever arrayed against Boonesborough, and could not fail to fill the garrison with alarm. They now had to deal, not only with Indians, but officers and soldiers supposed to be skilled in the art of attacking fortified places; sufficiently numerous to direct, but too few to restrain, their savage allies. The summons was, "to surrender the fort in the name of his Britannic Majesty," with assurances of liberal treatment. It was a critical moment. The garrison contained between sixty and seventy men, with a large number of women and children. A powerful force was before them, whose appearance proclaimed inevitable death, in the most horrid and

\* Filson says, from Boone's dictation, that it was the 8th of August; and so say Marshall, Butler, Flint, and others, following the same authority. This is evidently a mistake, as Boone and his party, by his own showing, were in the Indian country at that time. We have followed, in this case, the date given by Colonel Bowman, in his letter to Colonel G. R. Clark. The party was commanded by Blackfish, the Shawanese chief, and Boone's adopted father while a prisoner, and not by Duquesne, who acted as interpreter, and commanded the Canadians. Doubtless Duquesne had much to do, as a British officer, in dictating the terms of peace. Filson took notes from Colonel Boone, and wrote his book at leisure. Hence there are some mistakes in the "Narrative."

cruel form, if they should be captured after resistance.

Even death might be preferable to a long and hopeless captivity. Their cattle and horses were not dispersed in the woods, and they were not prepared to stand a siege many days. A gleam of hope shone out amidst the darkness that surrounded them. Soon after the return of Boone from his captivity, an express had been sent for assistance to Colonel Arthur Campbell, on the Holston; and if time could be gained, the aid might arrive, and the assailants be beaten off. This fact, overlooked by most writers, explains the course of Captain Boone and his party in parleying with their enemies by treaty. Two days were requested by Captain Boone, that the garrison might consider the summons to surrender. So confident were the leaders of the enemy of success, that the time was granted. This period was employed to collect the cows and horses within the walls of the fort, to fill every vessel with water from the spring, which was done by females, and to prepare for a vigorous defence. Being unanimous in their decision to sustain the terrible conflict to the last moment, near the close of the second day, Captain Boone, from one of the bastions, announced to Captain Duquesne the determination of the garrison; adding, "We laugh at your formidable preparations, but thank you for giving notice and time to prepare for defence."

Contrary to all expectations, Captain Duquesne did not abandon the idea of a capitulation. He declared his orders from Colonel Hamilton were to



take the garrison captives, to treat them as prisoners of war, and not to injure, much less to murder them; and that they had horses to take the women and children, and all others who could not bear the fatigue of travelling on foot. He then proposed, that, if the garrison would depute nine persons to come out of the fort and hold a treaty, the terms should be liberal. It is impossible at this time, after the demise of every person concerned in the affair, to account for the singular course of Captain Duquesne and his Indian allies.

The project of the treaty was intended as a feint, yet managed with very little art. It appears, that, with ordinary skill, with scaling ladders, or other suitable means, they could have entered the fort. The British officer and soldiers, with a strong force of Indians, ought to have taken this fort in less time than they were parleying. The heroism of the garrison deserves applause. Captain Boone was undaunted; yet he was cool, cautious, and ready to adopt any expedient with hope of success. Every incident that would postpone a direct attack, and increase the chances of the arrival of a reinforcement from the *Holston*, was regarded as important.

Though suspecting treachery, it was determined, after consultation, to accede to the proposition of Duquesne, and hold a treaty. Eight persons, besides Captain Boone, were selected for the hazardous and responsible duty. The parties met on the plat of ground in front of the fort, and at the distance from it of about sixty yards. The terms offered were exceedingly liberal; too liberal, as Boone and his asso-



ciates saw, to come from honest intentions. The proposition was, that they should remain unmolested, and retain all their property, only submitting to the British authorities in Canada, and taking the oath of allegiance to the King. At the conclusion, the Indians proposed, that, on so great an occasion, to make the chain of peace more strong and bright, they should revive an ancient custom, and that two Indians should shake hands each with a white man, and that this should be the token of sincere friendship. Captain Boone and his associates were, from the first, prepared for treachery. Before they left the fort, twenty men were stationed with loaded rifles, so as to command a full view of all the proceedings, and ready for the slightest alarm. The parties on the treaty ground had no weapons, and were divested of all outside garments. As they had agreed to hold the treaty, it would have been regarded as a breach of confidence and a direct insult to refuse the proffered ceremony at the close. When the Indians approached, each pair grasped the hand and arm of their white antagonist. A scuffle ensued, for the Indians attempted to drag them off as prisoners. The Kentuckians either knocked down, tripped, or pushed off their antagonists, and fled into the fort. The fire from the vigilant guard at the same time threw them into confusion. The Indians rushed from their camp, and made a vigorous attack on the fort. One person, Squire Boone, was wounded, but not severely.

The usual form of warfare was now kept up; the Indians firing incessantly at the fort, but doing little

damage; while the besieged were cautious not to waste their ammunition, and only fired when execution could be done. The siege continued with very little intermission for nine days. At one period, they attempted to set fire to the fort, by throwing combustibles on the roof, which took fire, and threatened destruction to the garrison. A heroic young man took his station there, exposed to a shower of balls, while others handed up buckets of water till the fire was extinguished. The besieged had the advantage in the situation of the fort, for the Indians could not approach under cover nearer than one hundred yards, and their musket balls could not reach the fort, so as to do much execution; whereas the besiegers could not show themselves, without feeling the effect of the sharp-shooting rifles of the Kentuckians. The women, no less heroic than the men, were actively employed in moulding bullets, loading the rifles, and providing refreshments.

The Indians tried another experiment, suggested probably by the Canadians, to enter the fort by a mine. The fort stood about sixty yards from the bank of the river. They began an excavation into the bank, which sheltered them from the rifles in the fort. Their project was detected by the muddy water seen at a little distance below, and it was defeated by the besieged, who began a countermine within the fort, and threw the dirt over the palisades.

On the 20th day of the month, Captain Duquesne and his Indian allies raised the siege, and departed to the Indian country to tell the story of their defeat in stratagem and fighting. They had thirty-seven

killed, and many more wounded, while the Kentuckians had two men killed and four wounded, besides losing a number of cattle. The men in the garrison were sparing of their ammunition, for they fired their rifles only when an object was in sight, and then with a deadly aim, while their assailants exhausted their ammunition to very little purpose. According to the statement of Captain Boone, one hundred and twenty-five pounds of musket balls were picked up around the fort, besides those that penetrated and were made fast in the logs.

This was the last direct invasion of Boonesborough. It exhibits the imbecility of mere physical force, destitute of science and military art. For what could have been easier for men of military skill and enterprise, with the knowledge and experience of constructing ladders, than to scale stockades twelve feet high, or mount cabin roofs, when their numbers were six times greater than those of the garrison? Such cowardice and imbecility might have been expected of Indians; but here were a dozen Canadians, one claiming the rank of captain, yet without skill or military enterprise. The fact that the garrison gathered up at least two thousand five hundred musket balls, which were so far spent that they could not penetrate oak logs, shows that the Indians fought at a respectful distance in order to obtain a covert.\*

\* During the siege, Jemima, the eldest daughter of Boone, afterwards Mrs. Callaway, received a contusion in her hip, from a spent ball, while she was supplying her father with ammunition. While the parley was in progress, an unprincipled negro man deserted, and went over to the Indians, carrying



The singular treaty with the besiegers, after so prompt and decided a refusal, and the still more singular ceremony of allowing two Indians to shake hands with one white man, have been the subject of suspicion and censure. McClung remarks on the incidents of the siege, "We look here in vain for the prudence and sagacity, which usually distinguished Boone;" and Mr. Butler quotes McClung, and expresses a similar sentiment.

with him a large, far-shooting rifle. He crossed the river, ascended a tree on its bank, and so placed himself that he could raise his head, look through a fork of the tree, and fire into the fort. One man had been killed and another wounded from that direction, when Captain Boone discovered the negro, by his head peering above the fork. The old hunter fired, and the negro was seen to fall. After the Indians had retreated, his body was found, and his forehead was pierced with the ball, fired at the distance of one hundred and seventy-five yards. The Indians, who buried or carried off their own dead, would not touch his body.

The following sketch is interesting as having been written near the time when these events happened.

It is part of a letter from Colonel John Bowman to Colonel George Rogers Clark, dated Harrodsburg, October 14th, 1778.

"The Indians have pushed us hard this summer. I shall only begin at the 7th of September, when three hundred and thirty Indians, with eight Frenchmen, came to Boonesborough, raised a flag, and called for Captain Boone, who had lately come from them, and offered terms of peace to the Boonesborough people. Hearing that the Indians gladly treated with you at the Illinois, gave them reasons to think that the Indians were sincere; two days being taken up in this manner, till they became quite familiar with one another; but finding the Boonesborough people would not turn out, and having Colonel Callaway, Major Smith, Captain Boone, Captain Buchanan, and their subalterns, eight in number, in the lick, where they had their table, (you know the distance is about eighty yards,) the Indians getting up, Blackfish made a long speech, then gave the word, 'Go.' Instantly a signal gun was fired; the Indians fastened on the eight men, to take them off; the white people began to dispute the matter, though unarmed, and broke loose from the Indians, though there were two or three Indians



The fact of an express having been sent to Colonel Campbell for aid, and the importance of gaining time, appear not to have been known to these authors. Captain Boone and his men knew that there was less danger in flattering the Indians, by a seeming compliance with their wishes and pretended customs, than in giving direct offence by a refusal. We can see prudence and sagacity in the whole management. That Boone and his friends should have signed a treaty, in which the main condition was subjection to the authorities of Canada, and allegiance to the King of Great Britain, appears at first view a little more questionable. For the character and terms of the treaty, we rely upon the testimony of Stephen Hancock and Flanders Callaway, orally given to the writer.

But before we judge harshly of this act, we must consider the circumstances under which they were placed. The colonies had disowned all allegiance to Great Britain by the declaration of independence; but the question was far from being decided. Kentucky was then a remote part of Virginia, which at

to one white man. On running the above distance, upwards of two hundred guns were fired from each side; and yet every man escaped but Squire Boone, who was badly wounded, though not mortally. He got safe to the fort. On this a hot engagement ensued for nine days and nights; constant fire without any intermission; no more damage was done, however, but one killed and two wounded. The Indians then dispersed to the different forts, where they still remain in great numbers, and waylaying our hunters."

Colonel Bowman was not present at the siege, and derived his information from hearsay; hence there are several mistakes in his letter; especially in the number of the invaders, and the number and names of the men engaged in the proposed treaty.

that period was unable to render the settlement any efficient aid. The troops raised by Colonel Clark were on a hazardous and doubtful enterprise into the country of the Illinois. Boonesborough was a feeble garrison, with about fifty effective fighting men, now besieged by a force nine times their number. Terms of a most favorable kind were offered; the only onerous condition being that which required allegiance to the King. No requisition was made that they should take up arms against their country. Hundreds of persons, whose patriotism remained unquestioned, under the pressure of circumstances, had been compelled to give in their adhesion to British authority. Besides, Boone and his men were anxiously and hourly expecting a reinforcement, which would have turned the scale. And they saw in the terms of the treaty evidence of fraud. They knew well that the treaty would never be carried into effect. Every moment of time they gained was precious. No end could be gained by resistance till the enemy should commit some overt act that would nullify the whole procedure, and give them an opportunity to fight on the defensive. This was soon given in the treachery of the Indians while shaking hands.

The termination of the affair in the discomfiture of such an unequal force, by a handful of resolute men, was manifestly a signal interposition of divine Providence, and was so regarded by the besieged party. We have heard some persons, who were on the treaty ground, and among these the old pioneer himself, speak of their deliverance in terms of devout gratitude.

## CHAPTER IV

Boone tried by a Court-martial, and honorably acquitted and promoted.—Visits North Carolina and Virginia.—Lexington settled.—Indian Assaults.—Colonel Bowman's Expedition against Old Chillicothe.—Colonel Clark commands an Expedition into the Indian Country.—Major Boone returns with his Family.—Attacked by Indians, and his Brother killed.—Receives the Commission of Lieutenant-Colonel.—Indian Skirmishes.—The McAfees.—Characters of McKee and of Simon Girty.

AT some time subsequent to the siege of Boonesborough, Captain Boone was summoned before a court-martial, where sundry charges were exhibited and investigated. The court assembled at Logan's Station. The charges were brought forward by Colonel Richard Callaway, aided by Colonel Benjamin Logan, and were in substance as follows:

1. Surrendering the company of salt-makers, when he was taken prisoner at the Blue Licks.

2. Manifesting friendly feelings towards the Indians while a prisoner, and offering to surrender Boonesborough, have the people removed to Detroit, and live under British protection and jurisdiction.

3. Taking off a party of men from Boonesborough, in his expedition to the Scioto, and thus weakening the garrison, when he had reason to believe the Indians were about to invade the fort.

4. That, at the siege of Boonesborough, he was willing to take the officers to the Indian camp, on the invitation to make peace, and thus endanger the garrison.

Captain Boone made his own defence, assigned reasons why he surrendered the party who were making salt, and added, that his friendly conduct towards the Indians, and his offer of surrendering Boonesborough, was to deceive them, and find out their intentions; that the expedition to the Scioto was to alarm them, by putting them on the defence of their own towns, and, by this method, divert them from Boonesborough; and that, during the siege of that garrison, his main object was to gain time, in the hope that a reinforcement would arrive for their relief. After a full investigation, he was honorably acquitted, and the confidence of the people in his patriotism and sagacity was confirmed and increased. He was also promoted to the rank of major.\*

In the autumn of 1778, Major Boone went to his wife and family in North Carolina. During his absence in the Indian country, his wife, supposing him to be dead, or in hopeless captivity, had returned to her father's house, on the Yadkin, with some of her children. The establishment of a Court of Commissioners, by the legislature of Virginia, in 1779, to hear and determine all disputes relative to land

\* The fact of this court-martial is not found in any history of the time. The authority for the statement is the late Colonel Daniel Trabue, of Kentucky, who was present at the trial, and furnished the account from memory to Mr. L. C. Draper, from whose manuscript records we have copied the particulars.



claims in Kentucky, and to grant certificates of settlement and preëmption to such persons as were entitled to them, brought out a large number of families and single persons, who were interested in such claims. Major Boone "laid out the chief of his little property to procure land warrants, and, having raised about twenty thousand dollars in paper money, with which he intended to purchase them, on his way from Kentucky to Richmond he was robbed of the whole, and left destitute of the means of procuring more. This heavy misfortune did not fall on himself alone. Large sums had been intrusted to him by his friends for similar purposes, and the loss was extensively felt." \* No further particulars of this robbery can be found. Doubtless suspicion rested on him, not for dishonesty, but for carelessness; yet his friends, and those who suffered by his misfortune, retained entire confidence in his integrity, sympathized in his calamity, and cheerfully gave up their claims.

The following extract from a letter written by Colonel Thomas Hart, late of Lexington, Kentucky, to Captain Nathaniel Hart, dated Grayfields, August 3d, 1780, is a proof of this confidence, and is, moreover, an important tribute to the character of Boone.

"I observe what you say respecting our losses by Daniel Boone. I had heard of the misfortune soon after it happened, but not of my being a partaker before now. I feel for the poor people, who, perhaps, are to lose even their preëmptions; but I must say I feel more for Boone, whose character, I am told,

\* Governor Morehead's "Address," p.104. Boone's "Memorial to the Legislature of Kentucky," 1812.

suffers by it. Much degenerated must the people of this age be, when amongst them are to be found men to censure and blast the reputation of a person so just and upright, and in whose breast is the seat of virtue, too pure to admit of a thought so base and dishonorable. I have known Boone in times of old, when poverty and distress held him fast by the hand; and in these wretched circumstances I have ever found him of a noble and generous soul, despising everything mean; and therefore I will freely grant him a discharge for whatever sums of mine he might have been possessed of at that time." \*

Boone says, according to Filson, "The history of my going home, and returning with my family, forms a series of difficulties, an account of which would swell a volume, but being foreign to my purpose, I shall omit them."

Unacquainted with the niceties of law, the few lands he was enabled afterwards to select, he informs us, "were, through his ignorance, generally swallowed up and lost by better claims." The law itself was vague, and the proceedings of the court, and the certificates granted to the claimants under the law, were far more indefinite and uncertain. The descriptions of tracts were general, the boundaries not well defined, and consequently the claims interfered one with another. Each family that settled on any waste or unappropriated lands belonging to Virginia, upon the western waters, was entitled to a preëmption right and any quantity of land not exceeding four hundred acres; and, upon the payment of two dol-

\* Morehead's "Address," p. 105.

lars and twenty-five cents on each one hundred acres, a certificate was granted, and a title in fee simple confirmed.

Each settler could select and survey for preëmption any quantity of waste or unappropriated lands, not exceeding one thousand acres to each claimant, for which forty dollars for each hundred acres were required. Payments could be made in the paper currency of Virginia, which had depreciated greatly. The officers and soldiers of the Virginia Continental line were allowed bounty lands in the same district, and were allowed, one year after their resignation or discharge, to claim their rights and make their location. The effects of these privileges were retrospective, and tended to destroy previously allowed claims. The results of these arrangements were a long series of lawsuits on land titles in Kentucky; and many a worthy claimant, besides Boone, after exhausting his vigor of life in settling and defending the soil of Kentucky, was divested of an improved farm and the uncultivated lands intended for his children. Subsequent acts of the Virginia legislature made still more liberal provision for the poor, by allowing credit upon the cost of the land; but the same ruinous consequences from conflicting claims were the result.\*

\* The following specimen of the record of the court illustrates the vague manner in which tracts of land were described in the certificate of entry.

“ Michael Stoner this day appeared, and claimed a right of a settlement and preëmption to a tract of land lying on Stoner’s Fork, a branch of the south fork of Licking, about twelve miles above Licking Station, by making corn in the country in the year 1775, and improving said land in the year 1776.



In April, 1779, a block-house was erected on the site of Lexington, which at that time contained "three rows of cabins." The town was settled under the auspices of Colonel Robert Patterson, John Morrison, James Masterson, the M'Connells, and other families. Bryan's Station, about five miles distant, in a northeastern direction, was established the same year. Many other "stations" were made south and west of Kentucky River, from Boonesborough to Louisville, and also on the forks of the Licking. Annoyances from the Indians still continued. Repeated attacks were made upon boats, as they descended the Ohio River, and occasional depredations were committed on the settlements. To pun-

Satisfactory proof being made to the court, they are of opinion that the said Stoner has a right to a settlement of four hundred acres of land, including the above-mentioned improvement, and a preëmption of one thousand acres adjoining the same, and that a certificate issue accordingly."

"Joseph Combs this day claimed a right to a preëmption of one thousand acres of land lying on Comb's, since called Howard's Creek, about eight miles above Boonesborough, on both sides of the creek, and about three or four miles from the mouth of it, by improving the said land, by building a cabin on the premises, in the month of May, 1775. Satisfactory proof being made to the court, they are of opinion that the said Combs has a right to a preëmption of one thousand acres, including the said improvement, and that a certificate issue accordingly."

The Court of Commissioners were appointed by the Governor, with the advice of the Council of State, consisting of four persons, three of whom made a quorum. The sessions were held at different places in Kentucky, to accommodate the settlers, for the space of one year, during which about three thousand certificates were granted. The foregoing cases from the record illustrate the vague and indefinite descriptions of localities. Many were rendered null from a more definite and specific survey, covering the same land. Many of the old pioneers, besides Boone, lost the lands they had entered and improved, and subsequently left the state.



ish these assaults, an expedition was planned and authorized against Old Chillicothe, on the Little Miami, to be commanded by Colonel John Bowman. The rendezvous was fixed at Harrodsburg. Some of the most efficient men in the country were engaged in the expedition, both as officers and private soldiers. About three hundred men were raised, who marched to the Indian country, in the month of July, with their provisions on their backs. The movement was conducted with secrecy, and the party was not discovered until they approached the town in the night. Captain Benjamin Logan, who commanded the advanced corps, was ordered to invest the town on one side, while the main party, under Colonel Bowman, surrounded it on the other. Logan executed his task with skill and heroism. The alarm was first given by an Indian dog, and by an imprudent act of a soldier in discharging his gun.

This happened at the dawn of day. The women and children fled to the woods; the men took shelter in a strong cabin, while Captain Logan and his men occupied other cabins, and were about constructing a movable breastwork of the planks of the floors for their defence. At this crisis, Colonel Bowman at a distance ordered a retreat; a negro prisoner having told him that Simon Girty, with one hundred Mingoes, was at the Pickaway town, and would soon appear for the rescue of the Shawanoes. This was a most unlucky movement; for, on their retreat, Captain Logan's men were exposed to a destructive fire while crossing the arm of a prairie, and sustained the loss of eight or nine men. They succeeded in burn-

ing the town and capturing one hundred and sixty horses. The celebrated chief Blackfish, who had commanded the party which made Boone prisoner near the Blue Licks, and again at the siege of Boonesborough, was chief of this town. He followed the retreating army with about thirty warriors, and was killed. Colonel Bowman had proved himself a gallant and experienced officer on former occasions. He had been with Colonel Clark in his conquest of Illinois the preceding year; but in this expedition he committed a serious mistake. He was afterwards esteemed as a worthy and useful citizen, but his military exploits ended with this campaign.

The success of Colonel Clark in the Illinois country, and his recapture of Vincennes, and taking Colonel Hamilton prisoner, aroused the British authorities at Detroit, and a formidable expedition was prepared against Kentucky. This force consisted of six hundred Indians and Canadians, commanded by Colonel Byrd. Two field-pieces were brought from Detroit to the waters of the Great Miami, and down that river and up the Ohio to the mouth of the Licking, thence up that stream to a landing-place, whence a road was cut towards Ruddle's Station. This party were not discovered until they appeared before the station. This happened on the 22d of June. The formidable force, with artillery, the first ever brought into Kentucky, with the summons "to surrender at discretion to the arms of his Britannic Majesty," left no alternative. Resistance was hopeless. The gates were opened, and the Indians rushed in to secure the prisoners and to plunder the property. This post

was on the south fork of the Licking River. Higher up was Martin's Station, which was also taken in the same manner.

The prisoners and plunder being collected, a rapid retreat was made, which many of the prisoners, and especially the women and children, could not sustain, loaded as they were with the property taken. The tomahawk and scalping-knife soon relieved the party of all such encumbrances, which Colonel Byrd, a British officer, had neither the will nor the power to prevent. The survivors were dispersed amongst the Indians, or carried to Detroit, whence they returned after an absence of several years. It was a merciful Providence that prevented this force from continuing its depredations on the other forts; for at that time not three hundred fighting men could be mustered at all the stations north of the Kentucky River, and their united force could scarcely have resisted such a formidable invasion.

Colonel Clark having returned to his post at Louisville, an expedition was fitted out under him for another invasion of the Indian country. Volunteers were raised in addition to the regular force under his command. The direct object of attack was a principal town of the Shawanoes, called Pickaway, on a branch of the Great Miami. This expedition was conducted with prudence and despatch. The conflict was sharp, but, seventeen of their warriors having fallen, the rest fled. Their town was burnt, and their gardens and fields were destroyed. Colonel Clark lost seventeen of his men, and several were disabled by wounds.



With all these difficulties, the emigration continued to increase, and new stations were formed. After the misfortune of being robbed, as already narrated, Major Boone returned with his family to Boonesborough, in 1780. In October, he went to the Blue Licks, accompanied by his brother, and on returning they were fired on by Indians lying in ambuscade. His brother was killed and scalped; and he was pursued, by the scent of an Indian dog, which he dexterously shot, and by that means escaped. This calamity was heavy, and for a time preyed on his mind. The feelings of fraternal attachment were strong, and increased by fellowship in wanderings and sufferings for many years.

The uncommon severity of the following winter, remembered throughout the country as the "hard winter," kept the Indians in their own territory; but it caused great distress in the settlements of Kentucky. Much of their corn had been destroyed the preceding summer, and the inhabitants lived chiefly on the flesh of the buffalo.

Kentucky having been divided into three counties by the legislature of Virginia, a civil and military organization became necessary. John Todd, an estimable and popular man, was made colonel, and Major Boone lieutenant-colonel, for Lincoln county. Each county formed a regiment, and the militia of the whole territory a brigade. Colonel Clark received the commission of brigadier-general. His mode of defending the country was by dispersing spies and scouting parties over the frontiers, who reported to headquarters at Fort Nelson, now Louis-



ville. He also constructed a row-galley to move up and down the Ohio River, between the Licking and the Falls.

Towards the autumn of 1781, marauding parties of Indians again visited the frontier settlements of Kentucky. Boonesborough being now interior, and surrounded with stations, was unmolested. In September, the people at a station made near the present site of Shelbyville became alarmed at the signs of Indians, and attempted to remove to Fort Nelson. They were attacked by a large body of the enemy, defeated, and dispersed. Colonel Floyd raised twenty-five men, which he divided into two parties; and, though a leader of prudence and caution, he was drawn into an ambuscade, and lost nearly half his men. About ten savages were killed. Their numbers were three times greater than those of Floyd. An incident occurred in this action illustrative of the generosity and magnanimity which was not unusual amongst the rude men of the frontier. Colonel Floyd and Captain Samuel Wells had not been friendly, the latter alleging that he had sustained an injury from the former. Colonel Floyd was retreating on foot; being closely pursued, and nearly exhausted, he must, without aid, have fallen into the hands of the Indians. Captain Wells, who was on a spirited horse, and making a successful retreat, saw his situation, dismounted, helped him on his own horse, ran on foot by his side, and thus enabled him to escape. No man knew better than Colonel Floyd how to value a generous action. They lived and died firm friends from that day.

Amongst the resolute and active men of Kentucky were three brothers, Samuel, James, and Robert McAfee, who founded a station in the neighborhood of Harrodsburg. They were vigorous, athletic men, of honorable principles, and members of the Presbyterian church. Their lot was like that of other pioneers, in being brought repeatedly into deadly conflict with the Indians. On a beautiful morning in May, 1781, Samuel McAfee and another man, being on their way from the station of James McAfee to that of a neighbor, were fired upon by an Indian, and the man fell. McAfee turned, and ran towards the fort, and in a few yards met another Indian in the path. Each attempted to fire at the same moment; but the Indian's gun missed fire, while the ball from McAfee's rifle pierced his heart. Still continuing his retreat, McAfee met his two brothers, Robert and James. The first, though warned of his danger, rushed forward to have a look at the dead savage; but several Indians sprang into the path, and intercepted his retreat. His energy and activity were now put to a severe test, for he had to run from tree to tree, as he approached the fort. He succeeded in reaching a field, and threw himself over the fence, which served for a shelter, while an Indian took to a tree; but the instant he cast his eye around to obtain a view of his antagonist, a ball from McAfee's rifle pierced his skull. James McAfee was in equal peril. Five Indians, in ambush, fired at him in succession, but missed him; and after a perilous exposure he reached the fort. In a few moments, the fort was assailed, and while the men handled their rifles,

the women cast the bullets. The firing was heard at the other stations, and Major McGary and forty men were soon on the trail of the Indians, whom they overtook and routed. Such were the incidents of Indian warfare in Kentucky, and such the fortunate escape of the brothers.

The year 1782 was attended with several marauding enterprises into Kentucky by the Indians, and with considerable fatality to the whites. Amongst other calamities was that of the defeat of Captain Laughery, who was coming down the Ohio River to aid the Kentuckians, with one hundred and seven men. He was attacked near the mouth of a creek, a few miles below the Miami River, which still bears his name, and the whole party were killed or captured.

But one of the most disastrous incidents in the heart of Kentucky, in May, 1782, was the defeat of Captain Estill. The station called by his name was situated on the south side of the Kentucky River, above Boonesborough. A party of twenty-five Wyandots made an attack on it, killed one white man, took a negro prisoner, killed the cattle, and then retreated. Captain Estill raised a company of twenty-five rangers, and pursued the Indians, whom he overtook on Kingston Fork of the Licking River. They had just crossed a creek, and were ascending the hill, as Estill's party came in sight, and fired on them. Their chief, though wounded, was a brave fellow, and gave orders to his men to stand and fight. As usual in such skirmishes, each party took to the trees for defence, within sixty yards of each other.



The firing was deliberate. Each man watched his antagonist, who looked out with caution; but no sooner was any portion of the head or body exposed, than it was a fatal mark for a rifle ball. Such was the bravery and determination on both sides, that one-half of each party fell, and several more were severely wounded. Estill's men were the sharpest shooters, but the Indians were the most expert at hiding. After two hours of cool, deliberate fighting, the survivors of each party retreated. The brave Captain Estill was among the slain. This desperately fought action, and the loss sustained, produced serious alarm throughout the colony. Various other skirmishes took place; and scarcely a week passed without loss of life among the inhabitants.

Amongst the Indians northwest of the Ohio were two white men of the names of McKee and Girty, whose agency and influence were most disastrous to the frontier settlements. Colonel McKee was an official agent of the British government, and obtained great influence over the tribes of the northwest, and had an infamous notoriety for the atrocities committed under his sanction, and the success of his intrigues. His name must ever remain associated with the darkest deeds recorded in western history. Doubtless the barbarities committed on the defenceless inhabitants, and even on prisoners, in his presence and by his sanction, have been exaggerated by rumor, and magnified by the resentment of those who have suffered by his cruelties; yet enough appears of known, official conduct, attested by American officers of high station, and by witnesses of un-



impeachable character, to blast his reputation and cause his name to be held in abhorrence. His wretched policy of exciting the Indians to most bloody and ferocious attacks on the defenceless settlers, furnishing them with arms and ammunition, and paying them for prisoners and scalps, and then suffering them to torture their prisoners in his presence, was as destructive to the peace of the American settlements, as it was ruinous in the end to the unhappy savages who were made the instruments of his vengeance. Nor were these acts confined to the War of the Revolution. They were followed up in that disastrous period of Indian hostilities that succeeded, till their entire subjugation by Wayne, and the relinquishment of the western posts by the British government.

Simon Girty was a native of Pennsylvania, a soldier and spy under Lord Dunmore, and a companion of Simon Kenton, in the campaign of 1774.\* Either

\* Governor Morehead's "Address," p. 90.

There were four brothers by the name of Girty, who were natives of Shennan's Valley, in Pennsylvania. Their father had been killed by the Indians, and their mother had married again, when their house was burnt, and the whole family taken prisoners by the Indians, in 1755, and brought to Fort Kitanning, where the stepfather of the Girtys was burnt at the stake in their presence. The brothers' names were Simon, George, James, and Thomas. After the horrid massacre of their stepfather, the mother and four brothers were sent off among the different tribes of northwestern Indians. Thomas made his escape, fell in with General Armstrong, and got back to Western Pennsylvania, where he remained a worthy citizen to the close of his life, which took place on the 3d of November, 1820, in the ninetieth year of his age.

The remainder of the family were exchanged, in the year 1758, at General Forbes's treaty. Simon, George, and James left Pennsylvania about the commencement of the Revolutionary War, probably being Tories, took up their residence

as a consequence of crimes, or of some injury which he alleged he had received, he fled from his native country and the abodes of civilization, and became an Indian in principle and manners, as much as in habit. His life was spent in a series of acts of unparalleled atrocity against his countrymen. He professed allegiance to the British government, and had a trading house on the Sandusky River, where he resided for many years. It is not known that he held any commission from the British; yet he was the companion and the subordinate of Colonel McKee, and was known to have the countenance and protection of that officer. Many of the marauding expeditions on the frontier settlements were of his planning, and some of them he led in person. He became an Indian by adoption, imbibed their ferocious and bloodthirsty temper, acquired their habits, participated in their councils, inflamed their passions to madness by his speeches, and goaded them to deeds of cruelty and vengeance. He seemed to delight in all the refinement of Indian torture, and witnessed and aided in the burning of many a prisoner. The shrieks and groans of helpless women and children, while butchered in the most horrid forms by ruthless savages, were music to his soul.\*

But, as if to afford testimony that he was really a man, and not a demon incarnate, a solitary act of humanity stands out in bold relief on the page of his

among the Indians, and became the most bitter enemies of their race.

\* See the account of the burning of Colonel Crawford, in the narrative of Dr. Knight, contained in "Incidents of Border Life," pp. 134, 135.

history. The capture of Simon Kenton by the Indians has already been mentioned. When brought into the council-house, Girty, as the common interpreter, questioned him about the number of men in Kentucky and other particulars. He had just returned from an unsuccessful expedition against the frontier settlements of Pennsylvania, and, burning with disappointment and revenge, he determined to wreak his vengeance on the prisoner. On inquiring his name, he was answered in reply, "Simon Butler." Kenton, under that name, and Girty, had served as spies, been companions in Dunmore's campaign, and had become warmly attached to each other; for, at that time, the latter had not abandoned his countrymen for the society of savages. The feelings of former friendship were awakened in Girty. He threw his arms around the neck of Kenton; then turned and addressed the astonished warriors in a short speech, and, with energy and entreaty, claimed the prisoner as his ancient comrade and friend; saying that they had shared the same blanket, travelled on the same war-path, and slept in the same wigwam.

The speech was listened to with entire silence. Several warriors expressed their approbation by their customary guttural interjection. Others opposed his release, and urged the decision of the council already made known. Besides, Kenton had been guilty of a crime, which, in Indian ethics, was scarcely pardonable; for he was taken in the act of attempting to cross the Ohio, with a drove of horses, which he and others had stolen from their village.



True it is, the horses were first stolen from the stations in Kentucky; but this was, in their council, no apology for the act. Had he fallen upon their village, and killed or scalped a dozen families, he might have been honorably spared; but to retake the horses they had risked so much to obtain was too much. He was sentenced to the severest torture. The great council had decided that he must "eat fire." Girty again spoke, urged his own prowess and faithful services; the scalps he had brought home on his late expedition; that he had never before asked the life of a prisoner, and never would again. Fresh speakers arose on each side, and the debate continued two hours. At length the war-club was produced, and the final vote decided in favor of Kenton. Girty then led him to his own cabin, and from his stock of merchandise furnished him with necessary clothing.\*

Simon Girty's two brothers, James and George, were also adopted by the Indians, but were of less notoriety in savage exploits. Many of the murderous invasions of Kentucky may be traced to the influence and agency of McKee, Girty, and other abandoned white men in the Indian country. In some cases, captives taken in childhood were adopted into some family of braves, to supply the place of a deceased warrior; and they afterwards became adepts in robbery and murder.

\* The mode of voting, on such occasions, is to pass the war-club round the circle to each brave. They who strike it on the floor of the council-house vote for his death, while these who decide to spare the prisoner let the club pass them in silence.



Early in the summer of 1782, Colonel McKee and Simon Girty were putting forth all their strength and influence to invade Kentucky with a large force, and strike an effectual blow. The combination of warriors consisted of Shawanoes, Cherokees, Wyandots, Miamis, Pottawatamies, and Ottawas, who were commanded by Simon Girty, and stimulated by the councils. McKee was in the expedition, but professed to act a subordinate part. They rallied at the old town of Chillicothe, about the 1st of August, and marched with such celerity and secrecy, that they were undiscovered until the night of the 14th of August, when Bryan's Station, about five miles from Lexington, was surrounded by nearly five hundred Indian warriors.

The fort was situated on the southern bank of the Elkhorn, and on the left of the present road to Maysville. It contained about forty cabins, placed in parallel lines, and connected by strong palisades. The garrison consisted of about fifty men. The enemy was discovered early in the morning, by some of the men in an adjacent cornfield, who reached the fort in safety; and expresses were sent off to Lexington and other stations for aid. Girty concealed his main force near the spring, which supplied the station with water, while a smaller party were directed to make a furious attack on the fort, in order to draw out the garrison in pursuit. In that case, the main party, with Girty at their head, would storm one of the gates, obtain possession, and kill or capture the whole garrison.

But in the fort were some of the most experienced

persons in Indian artifice that Kentucky could furnish. The designs of the enemy were perceived. Veteran backwoodsmen were at no loss as to the feint of the enemy, and preparations were made to turn it to their own advantage. Thirteen fearless young men were selected, and sent out to attack and pursue the assailants, while the main body of the garrison placed themselves at the gates and bastions to meet the assault. The stratagem was successful. The small party of Indians retreated to the woods, followed by the corps of young men. Girty heard the firing, and supposing the main force to have left the fort, rushed with fury to the nearest gate with the main troop of warriors at his heels. Volley after volley of the Kentucky rifles soon convinced the leader, that he was the dupe of an artifice, and, struck with consternation, the Indians fled precipitately. Again they rallied to the attack, and the siege was kept up by a regular fire from both parties, with but little execution, for several hours. About two o'clock in the afternoon, a reinforcement of fifty men on horseback and on foot from Lexington arrived to the relief of the garrison. The Indians, aware of their approach, lay in ambush near the road. The horsemen rushed through, amidst a shower of balls, and reached the fort without the loss of a man. Those on foot were not so fortunate. They first entered a cornfield, through which they ought to have passed to the fort, sheltered as they were from the fire of the enemy; but, from some mistake, they turned into the road, fell into the ambuscade, and lost six of their number.

The chiefs, alarmed at this reinforcement, and expecting the arrival of other and more formidable parties, were in favor of an immediate retreat to their own country. But Girty, the most furious of all, having been foiled in his efforts to subdue the station by force, had the vanity to think he could succeed by negotiation. He had been wounded by a ball that day, which entered his shot-pouch, while engaged with the footmen from Lexington. He crawled to a stump near one of the bastions, and demanded a parley. Commending their manly defence of the station, he urged that further resistance was impracticable, alluding to the number and fierceness of his followers, and affirmed that he had a reinforcement near, with several pieces of artillery, with which he threatened the garrison.

He forewarned them, that, if they did not then surrender, he could not restrain the savages from a general massacre, when the fort should be taken by violence, as it would be, but promised them life and safety now, with a solemn declaration "upon his honor," if they would submit as prisoners of war. He was heard patiently and without fear, and answered, not by the commander, who would not pay him the least respect, but by a courageous and facetious young man, by the name of Reynolds, in the most pungent and taunting style. Girty returned crestfallen to his camp, which was found deserted the next morning.\*

\* To Girty's inquiry, "whether the garrison knew him," Reynolds replied, "that he was very well known; that he (the speaker) had a worthless dog, to which he had given the

Girty, McKee, and the Indians, took the great buffalo trace towards Ruddle's and Martin's Stations, on a circuitous route to the Lower Blue Licks. Their camp-fires were left burning; their trail was plainly marked; and every indication showed that they desired a pursuit, for they even marked the trees with their tomahawks along their path.

name of Simon Girty, in consequence of his striking resemblance to the man of that name; that if he had artillery or reinforcements, he might bring them up; but that if either he, or any of the naked rascals with him, found their way into the fort, they would disdain to use their guns against them, but would drive them out again with whips, of which they had collected a large number for that purpose;" and, finally, he declared, "that they also expected reinforcements; that the whole country was marching to their assistance; and that, if Girty and his gang of murderers remained twenty-four hours longer before the fort, their scalps would be found drying in the sun upon the roofs of their cabins." McClung's "Sketches," p. 77.



## CHAPTER V

Troops raised to follow the Indians.—Colonel Boone, his Son, and Brother, of the Party.—Council of Officers and Boone's Advice.—Imprudence of Major McGary.—Disastrous Battle at the Blue Licks.—Campaign of General George Rogers Clark.—Female Heroism.—Preliminaries of Peace.

INFORMATION of the attack on Bryan's Station having spread with great rapidity through the country, the militia were summoned to its defence. Early in the day after the retreat of the Indians, reinforcements began to come in, and before night one hundred and eighty-two men had repaired to Bryan's Station. Colonel Daniel Boone, with his son Israel and brother Samuel, headed a strong party from Boonesborough; Colonel Stephen Trigg brought up the forces from Harrodsburg; and Colonel John Todd came with the militia from Lexington. Majors Harlan, McGary, McBride, and Levi Todd were of the party.

Colonel Benjamin Logan, who resided at a greater distance, raised a large reinforcement within his command, but did not arrive in season. Colonel Todd, as senior officer, took the command. A council of officers was held under circumstances the reverse of cool, deliberate decision. A large majority were for instant pursuit. The more cautious, of whom Boone was one, deemed it advisable to

wait for the arrival of Colonel Benjamin Logan and his force.

Colonel Todd was heard to say, that Boone was a coward, and if they waited till Colonel Logan came up, he would gain all the laurels, but if they pressed forward, they would gain all the glory. The opinions of the majority prevailed, and they proceeded on the trail. The more experienced of the party, and particularly Colonel Boone, soon became convinced that their enemies were employing means for a decoy. The trees were marked with their tomahawks, the ground much trampled, while their campfires were few; showing a design to mask their numbers. Still no Indians were seen until they reached the bluffs of the Licking, opposite the Lower Blue Licks. A few were then discovered, marching over a ridge on the opposite side.

The country around was singularly wild and romantic. The licks, for ages, had been the resort of buffaloes and other wild animals, which had cropped the herbage from the surrounding hills. Near their base, the rains had swept away the soil, and left the rocks bare for a long distance. The river, by forming an abrupt curve on the north, or opposite side from the army, encircled a ridge for a mile or more in extent. Two ravines commenced near the top of this ridge, and, covered with timber and brushwood, passed on each side of the ridge in nearly opposite directions, down to the river, forming an admirable covert for the enemy. In these ravines the main body of the Indians, consisting of four or five hundred warriors, headed by Girty and

McKee, were concealed, unknown to the Kentucky troops. The buffalo and Indian trace, which they were following, and on which they saw the Indians, led across this ridge, so as to enclose the party as in a net, while they passed between the ravines.

Colonel Todd ordered a halt, for further consultation, before they passed the river, and especially solicited the views of Colonel Boone. The opinion of one distinguished for his prudence, circumspection, and perfect knowledge of Indian tactics, ought to have had weight. Boone was familiar with the country. He knew every ravine and place of ambuscade about the Licking. He had hunted amongst its romantic cliffs, made salt at the licks, and had been surprised by the wily Indians, and taken prisoner in 1778. His opinion was, that the Indian force of some four or five hundred warriors, taking the route they did, and marking their trail so distinctly, would lay an ambuscade, and he recommended waiting until Colonel Logan should arrive with his reinforcement; but, in the event of a determination to proceed, he advised a division of the troops into two parties, one of which should proceed above the bend of the river, cross so as to pass round the ravine, and be prepared to attack them in the rear; while the other party should cross the ford at the licks, and follow the trail over the ridge. By this manœuvre, the Indians would be surprised in their concealment, attacked on both sides, and defeated. Should both of these suggestions be rejected, Colonel Boone then proposed, that, before they resumed their march, an effort should be made

to ascertain the numbers and exact position of the enemy, by sending scouts to examine the surrounding country.

Before any judgment was pronounced by the council, on either of these propositions, all further deliberations were arrested by the imprudence of one of the officers, who had expressed dissatisfaction at the tardy movements of Boone and others who advised caution. Major McGary, in defiance of all due subordination, and with rashness wholly unbecoming a brave officer, raised the war-whoop, and called out, "Those who are not cowards, follow me; I will show you where the Indians are;" and rushed with his horse into the river. In the impulse of the moment about two-thirds of the party followed McGary. The remainder lingered a few moments with Colonels Todd and Boone, who soon followed across the stream, and ordered a halt. Colonel Boone again proposed that the army should remain in its present position until scouts could reconnoitre the ground in front. This was acceded to, and two bold and experienced men were selected to proceed from the lick along the buffalo trace, half a mile beyond the ravines, where the path branched off in various directions. They were instructed to examine the country with the utmost care on each side of the trace, especially where it passed between the ravines, and, on discovery of the enemy, to return in haste to the army.

The scouts performed the hazardous and responsible service, passed over the ridge, proceeded to the place designated, and returned in safety. No



Indians were seen; and yet more than four hundred warriors were lying in the ravines. The orders were given to march, and the appalling truth was soon known. The vigilance of the scouts had been eluded. The troops marched within forty yards of the ravines before a gun was fired, and then the Indians commenced the battle with great fury. Colonel Todd commanded the centre, Colonel Trigg the right, and Colonel Boone the left. Major Harlan advanced in front, Major McGary was in the centre, and Major Levi Todd brought up the rear. The overwhelming numbers and concealed position of the enemy gave them great advantage.

The first fire was peculiarly severe on the right. Colonel Trigg fell, and with him a large number of the Harrodsburg troops. Colonel Boone sustained himself manfully on the left. Major Harlan's advanced guard maintained their ground until three men only remained. This gallant and highly respected officer fell covered with wounds. Colonel John Todd was soon mortally wounded, being shot through the body; and the last time he was seen, he was reeling on his horse, with the blood streaming from his wounds. The Indians now rushed upon them with their tomahawks and the most frightful yells, while others, still concealed, kept up a deadly fire. The troops gave way, and made a precipitate and disorderly retreat to the ford, some on horseback, others on foot, and the Indians in close pursuit. The fugitives hurried with tumultuous rapidity down the naked slope of the ridge to the ford at the lick. Here, on the rocky bank, and in

the river, the execution was horrible. In this extremity, a single fortunate incident checked the savages, and gave an opportunity for many of the troops to escape.

A man by the name of Netherland, who on former occasions had been called a coward, displayed presence of mind and self-control that gave him the character of a hero. Being mounted on a spirited horse, he had outrun the fugitives, and, with twelve or fifteen other horsemen, had gained the opposite bank. His comrades were disposed to consult their own safety; but, casting his eyes around, and seeing the Indians rushing into the water to kill those who were struggling in the ford, he called with a loud voice, as though he was in command, to his panic-stricken companions, "Halt! Fire on the Indians, and protect the men in the river." The command was instantly obeyed, and a volley from a dozen rifles checked the savages, and gave opportunity for many to escape. This resistance was but momentary. Many of the Indians crossed the river by swimming above and below the ford. The Kentuckians, who escaped on foot, plunged into the thickets, and made their way to Bryan's Station, thirty-six miles distant, and the nearest place of shelter. But little loss was sustained after recrossing the river, although the pursuit continued for twenty miles.

From the head of the ravines to the river, for more than a mile, the loss was severe. During that part of the retreat, an instance of heroism and generous magnanimity was displayed, which every his-

torian of this disastrous battle has recorded with credit to the parties. The reader will recollect young Reynolds, who made the taunting reply to Girty at Bryan's Station. He had been in the thickest of the fight, and was making a successful retreat to the ford, and his situation was critical, when he overtook Captain Robert Patterson, exhausted, and lame from wounds received from the Indians on a former occasion. The Indians were but a few yards behind, and his fate seemed inevitable. Reynolds, on coming up with this brave and infirm officer, sprang from his horse, and aided Captain Patterson to mount, resolved to risk his own escape on foot. Being remarkably vigorous and active, he contrived to elude his pursuers, and swam the river below the ford; but he was overtaken by a party of Indians, and made prisoner. In the eagerness of pursuit, they became separated; till a single stout Indian, armed with a tomahawk and rifle, had him in charge. The Indian stooped down to tie his moccasin, when Reynolds, who had watched for an opportunity, knocked him down, seized his gun, and effected his escape. For this generous act Captain Patterson presented him with two hundred acres of land.

Colonel Boone maintained his ground until the rout became general, when his whole attention was directed to preserve as many lives as possible. He knew the country in every direction, and, with his son, who was mortally wounded, and whom he endeavored to bring off, he made his way to a place on the river below the curve and the ravine, where he could easily swim the current. Before he



reached the bank, his son was in the agony of death, and he was obliged to leave his body to be mutilated by the tomahawk of the savages, that he might save his own life. Narrow indeed was his chance of escape on that ill-fated day. To him the incidents of the day must have been extremely distressing and vexatious. In the morning, he was engaged in persuading the commander and his brother officers to a course, which, if adopted, would have changed the fate of the day, and probably turned its disasters on the enemy. In the evening, he was exhausted with fatigue, mourning the untimely death of a beloved son, mortified by defeat, painfully ignorant of the extent of the loss, and making his way through the wilderness to Bryan's Station.\* His brother Samuel was severely wounded, but made his escape.

Of one hundred and eighty-two persons who went out to the battle, about one-third were killed, twelve wounded, and seven carried off prisoners, who were put to the torture after they reached the Indian towns. The loss of the Indians was not known, but was supposed to be equal in number; and so the Indians afterwards represented it.\* The loss to Kentucky, in this battle, was greater and more

\* The death of his son and the disasters of this day were never effaced from the mind of the old pioneer. Nearly forty years after the sad event, he could not rehearse the story without tears. While on the retreat with his son, a very large Indian sprang towards him with his uplifted tomahawk, and, when but a few feet distant, received the contents of the Colonel's gun in his body.

\* Marshall's "Kentucky," Vol. I. p. 141. Boone's "Narrative," by Filson. The Indians, unless driven from the battlefield by defeat, always carry off and bury or secrete their dead.



afflicting than any before experienced in the colony. The melancholy intelligence spread through the country, and covered the land with mourning. A large proportion of the troops from Harrod's Station, with Colonel Trigg and Major Harlan, were left among the slain. Colonels Todd and Trigg were particularly deplored for their eminent social and private worth, intelligence, and urbanity. Of Major Harlan it has been justly said, "No officer was more brave and none more beloved in the field." With his friend McBride, he accompanied McGary across the river, and both fell in the early part of the conflict.

McGary, by whose imprudence the action was brought on, contrary to the advice of Boone, though in advance at first, escaped without the slightest injury to his person. Various statements concur in representing him to have been a man of fierce and daring courage, but of a fiery and ferocious temper, void of humane and gentle qualities, a quarrelsome and unpleasant man in civil life. It has been reported by those, who were well acquainted with him, that he frankly acknowledged he was the immediate cause of the disasters of the day, and said, in his justification, that, when at Bryan's Station, he urged delay in marching until Colonel Logan should come up with his reinforcement; but that Colonels Todd and Trigg were for immediate pursuit, alleging, that, if they waited for Colonel Logan, he would bear off the laurels of victory; and being nettled that his advice was not taken, when they parleyed at the lick about crossing, and talked about waiting,

he was determined they should have a fight, or be disgraced.

True courage consists not in rash and brutal force, but in that command of the passions by which the judgment is enabled to act with promptitude and decision on any emergency. By such rash men as McGary, Colonel Boone was charged with want of courage, when the result proved his superior wisdom and foresight. All the testimony gives Boone credit for his sagacity and correctness in judgment before the action, and his coolness and self-possession in covering the retreat. His report of this battle to Benjamin Harrison, Governor of Virginia, is one of the few official documents that remain from his pen.

" Boone's Station, Fayette County,  
" August 30th, 1782.

" SIR,

" Present circumstances of affairs cause me to write to your Excellency as follows. On the 16th instant, a large number of Indians, with some white men, attacked one of our frontier stations, known by the name of Bryan's Station. The siege continued from about sunrise till about ten o'clock the next day, when they marched off. Notice being given to the neighboring stations, we immediately raised one hundred and eighty-one horsemen, commanded by Colonel John Todd, including some of the Lincoln county militia, commanded by Colonel Trigg, and pursued about forty miles.

" On the 19th instant, we discovered the enemy

lying in wait for us. On this discovery, we formed our columns into one single line, and marched up in their front within about forty yards, before there was a gun fired. Colonel Trigg commanded on the right, myself on the left, Major McGary in the centre, and Major Harlan the advanced party in front. From the manner in which we had formed, it fell to my lot to bring on the attack. This was done with a very heavy fire on both sides, and extended back of the line to Colonel Trigg, where the enemy was so strong they rushed up and broke the right wing at the first fire. Thus the enemy got in our rear, with the loss of seventy-seven of our men, and twelve wounded. Afterwards we were reinforced by Colonel Logan, which made our force four hundred and sixty men. We marched again to the battle-ground; but, finding the enemy had gone, we proceeded to bury the dead.

“ We found forty-three on the ground, and many lay about, which we could not stay to find, hungry and weary as we were, and somewhat dubious that the enemy might not have gone off quite. By the sign, we thought that the Indians had exceeded four hundred; while the whole of this militia of the county does not amount to more than one hundred and thirty. From these facts your Excellency may form an idea of our situation.

“ I know that your own circumstances are critical; but are we to be wholly forgotten? I hope not. I trust about five hundred men may be sent to our assistance immediately. If these shall be stationed as our county lieutenants shall deem neces-

sary, it may be the means of saving our part of the country; but if they are placed under the direction of General Clark, they will be of little or no service to our settlement. The Falls lie one hundred miles west of us, and the Indians northeast; while our men are frequently called to protect them. I have encouraged the people in this county all that I could; but I can no longer justify them or myself to risk our lives here under such extraordinary hazard. The inhabitants of this county are very much alarmed at the thought of the Indians bringing another campaign into our country this fall. If this should be the case, it will break up these settlements. I hope, therefore, your Excellency will take the matter into your consideration, and send us some relief as quickly as possible.

“These are my sentiments, without consulting any person. Colonel Logan will, I expect, immediately send you an express, by whom I humbly request your Excellency’s answer. In the meanwhile, I remain, &c.

“DANIEL BOONE.”

On the day that this rash and unfortunate battle was fought, Colonel Logan reached Bryan’s Station with four hundred and fifty men. He learned that the little army of one hundred and eighty-two had set out the preceding day; and, fearful of some disaster, he had made a forced march, and set forward on their trail. Within a few miles from Bryan’s Station he met the first party of fugitives. As usual with men after defeat, they magnified the



number of the enemy, and the loss on their side; for no one then knew the extent of their loss, and each separate party supposed all the rest were slain. Colonel Logan now resolved to return to the fort he had just left, and wait until more of the survivors should come in. By night, both horse and foot had reassembled at the station, and the extent of their loss became known.

At a late hour that night, Colonel Logan, with his reinforcement, accompanied by Colonel Boone and a few of the survivors, started for the battle-ground. Stopping once to rest and refresh his men for two or three hours towards morning, he was enabled to reach the place of slaughter by noon the next day. The enemy were gone, but the sight was horrible. Dead and mutilated bodies were strowed through the scattering timber, submerged in the river, and spread over the rocky ridge. Immense flocks of vultures were perched on the trees, hovering in the air, or moving over the field among the slain, gorged with the horrid repast. The savages had mangled and scalped many; the wolves had torn others; and the oppressive heat of August had so disfigured their remains, that the persons of but few could be distinguished by their friends. They were interred as decently as the circumstances would admit, and Colonel Logan, believing that the Indians had made a rapid retreat to their own country, as is their custom after a successful engagement, retraced his course to Bryan's Station, where he dismissed his men.

The Indian army having been composed of parties from different tribes, and satisfied with the result

of their expedition, the largest part recrossed the Ohio. A few scattering savages had the boldness to take a western route through Jefferson county, with the intention of increasing the number of scalps and prisoners. About the 1st of September, they killed several persons, and took a number of prisoners. Colonel Floyd ordered out a party of militia, and scoured the country about Salt River; but they had departed.

As soon as the intelligence of the defeat at the Blue Licks reached the fort at Louisville, General George R. Clark made arrangements for a formidable expedition into the Indian country. Impressed with feelings of sympathy for the distress of the sufferers, and convinced of the necessity of active measures to arouse the country from despondency, he invited the principal officers of the militia to a council, and laid before them the plan of a campaign. Volunteers were first to be called for, and, should this method fail of furnishing the requisite number, then they would resort to a draft. The expedition being announced, and the conditions made known, the call was made for volunteers. The confidence of the officers in the patriotism of the people was not disappointed. Both officers and privates turned out, to the number of one thousand mounted riflemen; while pack-horses, beeves, and other supplies were sent by those who could not go themselves.

Bryan's Station was selected as the place of rendezvous for the upper country, and the Falls of Ohio for the lower settlements. Each division, under the immediate command of Colonels Floyd and Logan,

met at the mouth of the Licking, opposite the present site of Cincinnati, ready for the campaign. Here General Clark took the command in person. Colonel Boone was along, of course; probably as a volunteer, for no mention is made of any command. The expedition was conducted with that dispatch for which General Clark, on former occasions, had obtained celebrity. The supplies of provisions, generously furnished by the inhabitants, could not be carried on the march, except what each soldier could take with him for temporary subsistence. The woods abounded with game; but the secrecy and rapidity of their march did not allow them to send out hunting-parties. Hence the troops suffered from hunger and fatigue.

They came within half a mile of the rear of Girty's party, returning from their expedition to Kentucky, and were discovered by two Indians, that gave the alarm of "a mighty army on its march." Their camp was immediately evacuated, the alarming intelligence was spread by runners through their towns, and dismay and flight were the result. Empty cabins and deserted fields were to be seen, and occasionally a scouting party, which fled on being discovered. On entering the town of Old Chillicothe, the houses gave signs of a recent abandonment. Fires were burning, and provisions were in process of being cooked. These were acceptable to the half-famished Kentuckians. Boone says, "The savages fled in the utmost disorder, evacuated their towns, and reluctantly left their territory to our mercy. We immediately took possession of the



town of Old Chillicothe without opposition, it being deserted by its inhabitants. In this expedition we took seven prisoners and five scalps, with the loss of only four men, two of whom were accidentally killed by our own army."

The troops destroyed four other towns, two of which also were called Chillicothe, and Pickaway, and Willstown, all which they reduced to ashes. They cut up and destroyed the fields of corn, and desolated the whole country. Amongst the prisoners was an old chief, of much distinction in his tribe, who was clandestinely murdered by some of the party, much to the regret of General Clark and his officers.

This campaign, by the destruction of their towns and provisions, paralyzed the Indians more than the loss of a battle. It convinced them of the superiority of the whites, and so disheartened them that no more formidable invasions of Kentucky were attempted. Their confederacy was dissolved, and their army dispersed; yet small parties continued to make attacks on individual families in the exposed parts of the country.

While the army of General Clark was spreading terror and desolation amongst the northern tribes, a small party of southern Indians made an incursion into the settlement called Crab Orchard, where an incident took place, which, for its novelty rather than its importance, and as an illustration of the energy and fortitude of the female sex in these times of exposure, captivity, and death, is here narrated.

A party of savages approached a single cabin, in



which were the mother, children, and a negro man, from whom they expected no resistance. One of the number entered in advance of the rest, thinking doubtless to secure the whole as prisoners, or at least to obtain their scalps. He seized the negro man, expecting no resistance from the others. In the scuffle, both fell, when the children shut and bolted the door, and with an axe the mother cut off the Indian's head. The remainder of the party, hearing the scuffle, rushed to the door, which they found barricaded against them, and they assailed it with their tomahawks. The mother seized an old rusty gun, without a lock, which lay in the corner, and put it through a crevice in the logs, which so alarmed them, that they left the place.

The defeat of the British army at Yorktown, Virginia, and the capture of Lord Cornwallis, prepared the way for the preliminaries of peace with Great Britain, and put a check upon their Indian allies; and for a time the country was not molested. The expedition under General Clark, above described, was the last in which Colonel Boone was engaged for the defence of the settlements of Kentucky.

## CHAPTER VI

Cessation of Indian Hostilities.—Colonel Boone on his Farm.—Incident with four Indians.—Retrospect of Society and the former Condition of the People.—The Kentuckians and Western People generally.—Social Feelings of Colonel Boone.—Frontier Hunters.—Their Modes of Hunting.

IN the year 1783, a new era opened in Kentucky. The Indians of the northwest had felt severely the effects of the expedition of General Clark. The cessation of hostilities with Great Britain, and the expectation of the surrender of the northern military posts within the boundaries of the United States, filled the minds of the ignorant savages with apprehension of the consequences to themselves if they continued their assaults upon Kentucky. Nothing could be more opportune to the feelings of the people than the prospect of peace with the Indians. They were now intent upon the acquisition of lands, establishing farms, and providing themselves with the comforts of life.

The loss sustained by Colonel Boone in the means of purchasing lands has been mentioned already. Still, by the amounts due for military service rendered to the commonwealth of Virginia and the proceeds of his own industry, he was enabled to pay for several locations of land, on one of which he constructed a comfortable log-house and established a

farm, intended for his future and permanent residence. He was never idle or thriftless, and his industry soon provided the necessities and many of the comforts of frontier life. For several succeeding years he cultivated his farm, and, during the season of game, followed his favorite amusement of hunting; and this, not as a mere amusement, but as a source of profit and the means of subsistence.

In the meantime, the settlements were rapidly increasing in number and extent; the forest gave place to cultivated farms, towns and villages arose, and civilization made rapid advances in this wilderness. In the Spring of 1783, an important change took place in the judiciary system, of the first importance to the administration of justice and the prosperity of the country. The three counties already formed in Kentucky, by a law of the legislature of Virginia, were erected into a district, and a new court of common law and chancery jurisdiction was established. This court was invested with the powers of *oyer* and *terminer* for criminal cases, and for hearing and determining land causes. Harrodsburg at first was the seat of justice; but, for want of accommodations, the court was removed to a meeting-house six miles distant. The construction of a log-house at this site, large enough for a courtroom and two jury-rooms, and another building for a prison, drew attention to the spot, and the town of Danville soon arose on the site. Here the court continued to hold its sessions until Kentucky became a State.

Though no hostile attacks from Indians disturbed

the settlements, still there were small parties discovered, or *signs* seen in the frontier settlements. On one occasion, about this period, four Indians came to the farm of Colonel Boone, and nearly succeeded in taking him prisoner. The particulars are given, as they were narrated by Boone himself, at the wedding of a granddaughter, a few months before his decease, and they furnish an illustration of his habitual self-possession and tact with Indians. At a short distance from his cabin, he had raised a small patch of tobacco, to supply his neighbors, (for Boone never used the weed himself,) the amount, perhaps, of one hundred and fifty hills.

As a shelter for curing it, he had built an enclosure of rails, a dozen feet in height, and covered it with cane and grass. Stalks of tobacco are usually split and strung on sticks about four feet in length. The ends of these were laid on poles, placed across the tobacco-house, and in tiers, one above the other, to the roof. Boone had fixed his temporary shelter in such a manner as to have three tiers. He had covered the lower tier, and the tobacco had become dry, when he entered the shelter for the purpose of removing the sticks to the upper tier, preparatory to gathering the remainder of the crop. He had hoisted up the sticks from the lower to the second tier, and was standing on the poles that supported it while raising the sticks to the upper tier, when four stout Indians, with guns, entered the low door and called him by name. "Now, Boone, we got you. You no get away more. We carry you off to Chillicothe this time. You no cheat us any



more." Boone looked down upon their upturned faces, saw their loaded guns pointed at his breast, and recognizing some of his old friends, the Shawanoes, who had made him prisoner near the Blue Licks, in 1778, coolly and pleasantly responded, "Ah! old friends! Glad to see you." Perceiving that they manifested impatience to have him come down, he told them he was quite willing to go with them, and only begged they would wait where they were, and watch him closely, until he could finish removing his tobacco.

While parleying with them, inquiring after old acquaintances, and proposing to give them his tobacco when cured, he diverted their attention from his purpose, until he had collected together a number of sticks of dry tobacco, and so turned them as to fall between the poles directly in their faces. At the same instant, he jumped upon them with as much of the dry tobacco as he could gather in his arms, filling their mouths and eyes with its pungent dust, and blinding and disabling them from following him, rushed out and hastened to his cabin, where he had the means of defence. Notwithstanding the narrow escape, he could not resist the temptation, after retreating some fifteen or twenty yards, to look round and see the success of his achievement. The Indians, blinded and nearly suffocated, were stretching out their hands and feeling about in different directions, calling him by name, and cursing him for a rogue, and themselves for fools. The old man, in telling the story, imitated their gestures and tones of voice with great glee.

The formation of new settlements in Kentucky was no longer a military enterprise, but a mere act of civil life. Emigration poured in to augment the population. The arts connected with agriculture became established in the country. Money was more abundant, and labor of every description met its reward. Horses, cattle, and swine multiplied rapidly, and the fields were loaded with maize and other kinds of grain. Trade and barter sprang up among the citizens, amusements followed, schools were opened for teaching the elementary branches of education, and provision was made for a seminary of higher learning, which eventually grew into Transylvania University. Merchandise, which hitherto had been brought hundreds of miles on pack-horses, was transported from Philadelphia to Fort Pitt in wagons, and thence to the Falls of the Ohio in flat-bottomed boats; and small retail stores were established in the rising towns. Companies of land speculators were organized in Philadelphia and other eastern cities, which poured their accumulations of paper currency on Virginia for land warrants, and had their agents in Kentucky for the purpose of selecting the lands.

In reference to the changes that rapidly took place in the manners, customs, and modes of living, as population and improvements in domestic economy advanced, it may be interesting to look at the state of things during the period of Indian hostilities. It is no reproach, or disparagement, to the first settlers of a new country to say, that they were inured to danger, to labor, and to rough living. Such have

been the circumstances of every State in the Union, of every civilized country on the globe, in its early history. A large majority of the emigrants to Kentucky were from frontier settlements in Virginia, North Carolina, and other States, and, by early habits, were well fitted to be pioneers in the wilderness. Few others could have encountered the dangers and difficulties, or sustained the hardships, of planting the standard of civilization in the wilds of the west. The duties of the household were discharged by the females, who attended the dairy, performed the culinary operations, spun, wove, and made up the clothing for the whole family, carried the water from the spring, and did much other laborious service, from which the sex in a more advanced condition of society is happily exempted. The building of forts and cabins, clearing of land, hunting game in the woods, defending the stations from Indian assaults, and planting, cultivating, and gathering the crops, were the appropriate business of the men; though the other sex not infrequently furnished aid in the farmer's fields. During a siege, it was not unusual for females to mould and prepare bullets, and even load the rifles for their husbands, brothers, or fathers.

For clothing, deer-skins were extensively used for hunting-shirts, pantaloons, leggings, moccasins, and handkerchiefs; and the skin of the wolf, or fox, was frequently the covering for the head. Strips of buffalo-hide were used for ropes, and the dressed skins of the buffalo, bear, and elk furnished the principal covering for the beds at night. Wooden



vessels, either dug out or coopered, were in common use for the table. A gourd formed the drinking cup. Every hunter carried his knife, while not infrequently others of the family had one or two between them. If a family chanced to have a few pewter dishes and spoons, knives and forks, tin cups and platters, this was in advance of their neighbors. Corn was beaten into meal in a hominy mortar, or ground in a hand-mill, of a construction similar to one in use amongst the Jews in ancient times.

*Cabin* is the name, throughout the west, for a plain, rough log-house, constructed in the cheapest and simplest form. Nails and glass were unknown in buildings in the early settlements of Kentucky. Split slabs of timber, rough hewn, made the floor, and clapboards split from logs formed the covering of the roof. The table was constructed of the same materials. Stools and blocks supplied the place of chairs; and sticks inserted in the logs of the house, and supported by a corner post, or fork, constituted the bedstead. Other furniture and utensils were of like description. The food, in general, was of the most nutritious kind, and was had in great profusion. Milk, butter, and meat of various kinds, especially that of buffaloes, bears, and venison, was within the reach of every family. During the first few years, and under the pressure of Indian alarms, but little maize and other grain could be raised; but, when peace came, plenty smiled, and the phrase, "children crying for bread," used as a figure of speech in other countries, lost its meaning in the west. The meal of maize, prepared in many differ-



ent forms, and the finest of wheat, constituted the bread of every family.

The two prominent characteristics of the Kentuckians, formed in these early times, and still marking the population, and which, indeed, have spread over the new States of the western valley, are generous hospitality and social equality.

“Hospitality and kindness are among the virtues of the first settlers. Exposed to common dangers and toils, they become united by the closest ties of social intercourse. Accustomed to arm in each other’s defence, to aid in each other’s labor, to assist in the affectionate duty of nursing the sick, and the mournful office of burying the dead, the best affections of the heart are kept in constant exercise; and there is, perhaps, no class of men in our country who obey the calls of friendship, or the claims of benevolence, with such cheerful promptness, or with so liberal a sacrifice of personal convenience.

“We read of marvellous stories of the ferocity of western men. The name of Kentuckian is continually associated with the idea of fighting, dirking, and gouging. The people of whom we are now writing, do not deserve this character. They live together in great harmony, with little contention, and less litigation. The backwoodsmen are a generous and a placable race. They are bold and impetuous; and when differences do arise among them, they are more apt to give vent to their resentment at once, than to brood over their wrongs, or to seek legal redress. But this conduct is productive of harmony; for men are always more guarded in their

deportment to each other, and more cautious of giving offence, when they know that the insult will be quickly felt, and instantly resented, than when the consequences of an offensive action are doubtful, and the retaliation distant. We have no evidence that the pioneers of Kentucky were quarrelsome or cruel; and an intimate acquaintance with the same race, at a later period, has led the writer to the conclusion, that they are a humane people; bold and daring when opposed to an enemy, but amiable' in their intercourse with each other and with strangers, and habitually inclined to peace." \*

The various tales told of the prejudices of Colonel Boone against civilization and social enjoyments are fictitious. He was not anti-social in his feelings and sympathies. He loved his fellow-creatures; he loved his children; he sympathized with suffering and oppressed humanity; he rejoiced in the prosperity of others, provided they were honest, industrious, and virtuous. The indolent and vicious he abhorred and despised. Yet, unquestionably, he delighted in rural frontier life. Hunting was a ruling passion. As soon as the frosts had killed the undergrowth, and the leaves of autumn had fallen, and the weather had become rainy, with an occasional light snow, Boone began to feel uneasy at home. The passion for hunting became excited. Everything was unpleasant. The house was too warm, the bed too soft, and even the good wife not the most desirable companion. The chase occupied

\* Hall's "Sketches of History, Life, and Manners in the West," Vol. II. p. 70.

the thoughts of the hunter by day, and his dreams by night.

The late Reverend Joseph Doddridge has given an exact and graphic portraiture of the feelings of the backwoods hunter. "I have often seen them get up early in the morning at this season, walk hastily out, and look anxiously to the woods, and snuff the autumnal winds with the highest rapture; then return into the house, and cast a quick and attentive look at the rifle, which was always suspended to a joist by a couple of buck's horns, or little forks. The hunting dog, understanding the intentions of his master, would wag his tail, and, by every blandishment in his power, express his readiness to accompany him to the woods. A day was soon appointed for the march of the little cavalcade to the camping-place. Two or three horses, furnished with pack-saddles, were loaded with flour, Indian meal, blankets, and everything else requisite for the use of the hunter." \*

Hunting is not merely a ramble through the woods in pursuit of game, in which there is no task imposed on the intellect. The experienced hunter, before he leaves his camp in the morning, learns, by habits of observation, to judge accurately, and almost with prescience, of the state of the weather for the day, the course and changes of the wind, and in what situation he may expect to find game, whether in the low grounds near watercourses, the close thicket, or open forest, on the slope of the hills,

\* Doddridge's "Notes on the Settlement and Indian Wars of the Western Parts of Virginia and Pennsylvania," p. 124.



or on their summits. This is specially necessary in hunting deer; for their habits are affected by the weather. In cold, blustering storms, and high winds, they always seek the most sheltered thickets, the river bottoms, or the leeward sides of the hills. If it rains without much wind, and the temperature of the atmosphere is mild, they are found in the open woods and on the highest ground. The habits of animals are various, and the successful hunter must be a practical zoölogist, well versed in the habits and instincts of the animal he seeks. In every situation, it is necessary for him to know the course of the wind, that he may be on the leeward side of his game, however slight, and, to inexperienced persons, insensible may be the motion of the air. All wild animals, but especially deer, scent the hunter, if he be on the windward side. The course of the wind, when it is calm, is ascertained by the hunter by putting his finger in his mouth until it becomes warm, and then holding it in the air above his head. The side that first feels the sensation of cold denotes the point from whence the wind comes.

It is also necessary for the hunter to know the cardinal points in a cloudy day, which he learns from the bark of trees and other signs. On an aged tree, the bark and moss are rougher and thicker on the north, than on the south side. The business of hunting must be managed by artifice. The hunter is continually watchful and active "to gain the wind" of the game he is pursuing. Not unfrequently some cunning old buck, by his superior tact and watchfulness, will elude the hunter's skill, and



give his companions timely notice of danger. The sagacity of the animal and that of the hunter are pitted against each other; and no small efforts are made by each party to gain the point, the one to save his life, and the other to take it.

The camp of the hunter is open in front, where the fire is kindled. The back part is frequently a large log, or fallen tree. The sides are constructed of poles, sustained by stakes or posts set upright, and the interstices filled up with leaves and moss. The covering, or roof, which slopes back, is made of the bark of trees, or split clapboards. Occasionally, the skins of animals are employed for this purpose. Leaves and grass, with one or two blankets, furnish lodging for the night. Sometimes several men occupy the camp in company; but in the daytime each one moves in a separate direction. Frequently two men are in partnership. Sometimes a hunter takes a boy with him to keep the camp. Some persons, as Boone often did, camp and hunt alone. The night is the only time for social enjoyment in a company of hunters, except when preparing their skins and peltry at the camp.

Old hunters seldom eat more than one regular meal during the twenty-four hours, and that after night, when the party have returned to camp, and kindled the fire. The choicest bits of venison, or other meat, are selected, and the slices placed on sharpened sticks and set perpendicularly before the fire, when eating and conversation usually continue for some hours. The adventures of the day furnish materials for social intercourse at night. The num-

ber and circumstances of the game, the "signs" discovered, the character of the country which has been traversed, the curiosities seen, the incidents of success or failure, are subjects of conversation. The Indians, though taciturn when in the company of white people, or when engaged in business, are loquacious at their hunting-camps at night.

Trapping for beaver and other animals, that inhabit watercourses, has its peculiarities, and is managed differently from ordinary hunting. The trapper selects his watercourse, makes his camp, and hunts deer and other animals for provisions, of which he lays in a store for the season, that the noise of his gun and the smell of powder may not alarm the animals he purposes to decoy to his traps. Skill, experience, and sagacity are all necessary qualifications in the trapper. In decoying and deceiving animals, all his resources are called into requisition, amongst which is a particular knowledge of the habits and instincts of the animals of which he is in pursuit.

Hunting in new settlements, and where game is plenty, is a profitable employment. Many persons, who are now affluent and thrifty farmers, enjoying all the comforts and many of the luxuries of life, obtained the means of purchasing their lands, and providing for their families, in former days, from the avails of the chase.

## CHAPTER VII

Troubles with the Indians renewed.—Litigation about Land Titles.—Colonel Boone loses his Land.—Removes from Kentucky to Kenhawa.—Resolves on a Removal to the “Far West.”—Arrives in Upper Louisiana with his Family.—Receives Encouragement from the Spanish Authorities.—Appointed Commandant.—Colonial Government of Upper Louisiana.—Character of the Population.

WHAT part of Kentucky, which lies to the north of the Licking River, from its proximity to the Indian country, remained unsettled. Surveys had been suspended, and after several years resumed. Simon Kenton, who had begun a settlement here in 1775, again returned and pitched his cabin near the present site of Washington, a few miles from Limestone, as Maysville was then called. This enterprise prepared the way for other settlements. Apprehensions of an invasion from the Cherokee Indians on the southern borders of the district, in the autumn of 1784, induced Colonel Logan to call a public meeting at Danville, the seat of justice for the district. This assembly found that no legal authority existed in the district to call out the militia in case of an invasion; that there were no arms or ammunition, except such as were private property; and that adequate and timely protection, by the gov-

ernment of Virginia, at the distance of several hundred miles, could not be afforded.

The result of this meeting of the people was a communication addressed to the militia companies, requesting each to elect one representative for a political convention. The measure was approved, and the representatives assembled at Danville, on the 28th of December. The deliberations of the body were conducted with decorum, and the proceedings were regulated by parliamentary rules. There was a general opinion favorable to the organization of an independent State. The question was referred to the people, and authority was given for electing members to another convention in the Spring of 1785. This convention met, accordingly, and resolutions were adopted, proposing a petition to the legislature of Virginia, to grant the district of Kentucky the legal right to form a separate State government. Several conventions were subsequently held to promote this measure, and to look after the interests of the district.

In 1786, the legislature of Virginia enacted the preliminary provisions for the separation of Kentucky as an independent State, provided Congress would receive it into the Union. The measure was not consummated until after the adoption of the Constitution of the United States. In 1792, Kentucky came into the Federal Union as a sovereign State.

Previous to this event, Indian hostilities had been renewed in the northwest, and depredations were committed on the frontier settlements of Kentucky;



families were murdered, and scalps taken. Nor was peace restored until the treaty of Greenville, after the subjugation of the Indians by General Wayne.

As courts of justice were established, litigation in regard to land titles increased, until it was carried to a distressing extent. We have already referred to the laws of Virginia for the sale of lands in Kentucky, and the defective forms of entry. A wide field of speculation was opened, and Colonel Boone, with hundreds of others, lost his lands from defective titles. His antipathy to the technical forms of law was great. He loved simple justice, was rigidly honest in all his engagements, and thought that all others, including the State, should act towards him on the same principles of natural equity. The law that prescribed the manner of entering lands was vague and defective, and its administration by the commissioners was still more so. Boone, and many other deserving persons, who had made their locations, and in some instances valuable improvements, lost their property in suits at law. The old hunter employed counsel, attended the courts from term to term, and listened to the quibbles of the lawyers; but, on account of imperfect entries and legal flaws, he was ejected from the land he had defended so resolutely in the perilous times of savage invasion. After the vigor of life was spent, he found himself not the legal owner or possessor of a single acre of the vast and rich country he had so fully explored. His beautiful farm near Boonesborough, and several other tracts, were wrested from him by the forms of law. His recorded descriptions of loca-

tion and boundary were defective, and shrewd speculators had the adroitness to secure legal titles by more accurate and better defined entries.

No wonder, that, till the close of his life, he entertained strong prejudices against all legal adjudications, which were not in accordance with the strictest rules of justice. He felt aggrieved at the treatment he had received by the operation of the land laws; and no one could convince him, that it was not by the cunning and contrivance of the lawyers and land speculators. With these impressions he resolved to leave Kentucky, abjure all its interests and privileges, and seek a new home in the wilderness.

In a memorial to the legislature of Kentucky, in 1812, he says, "Unacquainted with the niceties of the law, the few lands I was enabled to locate were, through my ignorance, generally swallowed up by better claims."

Leaving Kentucky, he removed to the Kenhawa in Virginia, and settled on that river, not far from Point Pleasant. Here he resided for a time, cultivating a farm, raising stock, and, at the proper season, following his favorite employment of hunting. The note appended to the early part of this memoir mentions his visit, in 1790, to the place of his nativity in Pennsylvania. It is supposed that this was the period of his settlement on the Kenhawa.

It was during his residence there, in 1794, that he met with some persons, who had been on a hunting expedition to Upper Louisiana, and who gave a glowing description of the fine country bordering

on the Missouri River. His oldest son, then living, had migrated to that country.

The vast prairies, the herds of buffaloes, the bears, deer, and other game of that remote region, fired his imagination, aroused the feelings of the old hunter, and produced a resolution to remove thither. He also learned, that the manners and habits of the people were simple, their laws few and promptly administered, without the chicanery and technicalities of lawyers. Accordingly, in 1795, he gathered up such articles as were convenient to carry, and, with his trusty rifle, his family and chattels on pack-horses, driving his stock of cattle, he made his way to this land of promise. His fourth son, Jesse, was left in the Kenhawa Valley, where he had married; but he followed his father to the "Far West" a few years later.

At that period, and for several years after, the country of his retreat belonged to the crown of Spain. His fame had reached this remote region before him, and he received of the Lieutenant-Governor, who resided at St. Louis, "assurance that ample portions of land should be given to him and his family." His first residence was in the Femme Osage settlement, in the District of St. Charles, about forty-five miles west of St. Louis. Here he remained with his son Daniel M. Boone until 1804, when he removed to the residence of his youngest son, Nathan Boone, with whom he continued till about 1810, when he went to reside with his son-in-law, Flanders Callaway. A commission from Don Charles D. Delassus, Lieutenant-Governor,



dated July 11th, 1800, appointing him commandant of the Femme Osage District, was tendered and accepted. He retained this command, which included both civil and military power; and he continued to discharge its duties with credit to himself, and to the satisfaction of all concerned, until the transfer of the government to the United States. The simple manners of the frontier people of Missouri exactly suited the peculiar habits and temper of Colonel Boone.

Louisiana was discovered, settled, and held in possession by the French until 1762, when, by a secret treaty, it was transferred to the crown of Spain. This treaty not being published, its stipulations were unknown to the governments of Europe, or the inhabitants of the country. Under both the French and Spanish governments, the settlers held their lands by allodial tenures. Titles derived immediately from the crown, and those sanctioned by the proper authority at New Orleans, were deemed *complete*. Those derived from the concessions of the lieutenant-governors, or the commandants, were held *incomplete*, until sanctioned by the highest representative of the crown. In Upper Louisiana the proprietor was obliged to clear a portion of the land and build a house within a year and a day, or his claim was forfeited, and liable to revert to the domain.\*

The *Livre Terrien*, or land book, was provided under the administration of M. de St. Ange, in which grants of land were not only recorded, but

\* Stoddard's "Sketches of Louisiana," p. 243.



originally written; and a copy of the entry in this book constituted the evidence of title in the hands of the grantee.

Spain, on taking possession of the country, which was not consummated until 1769, changed the French colonial jurisprudence in most particulars, but retained the principle of *allodium* in the grants of lands.

Ten thousand arpents\* of choice lands were marked out and given to Colonel Boone, on the north side of the Missouri River, in consideration of his official services; but, being Syndic, the title could not be completed without application to the immediate representative of the crown at New Orleans. His actual residence on the land, which the Spanish law required to complete the title, the Commandant at St. Louis promised to dispense with, in consequence of his official duties requiring his residence elsewhere. But he neglected to obtain the confirmation of his grant by application to New Orleans; and when the country passed into the possession of the United States, and commissioners were appointed to decide on unconfirmed claims, they were compelled by their instructions to reject the application of Colonel Boone, for the want of legal formalities.

The colonial officers of Upper Louisiana were invested with civil and military powers. By those, who were unacquainted with its character, the administration of the laws seemed arbitrary; but the Spanish colonial code contained a complete system

\* An arpent of land is 85-100ths of an English acre.

of wise and unexceptionable rules, calculated to insure justice and promote the happiness of the people. It was founded on the principles of the Roman code.

A large majority of the population of the District of St. Charles were Americans, as emigrants from the United States were denominated. The French population, most of whom were natives or Canadians, inhabited the villages of St. Charles and Portage de Sioux. On the surrender of the Illinois country to the British government, which was consummated in 1769, many of the French inhabitants left the country, and passed across the Mississippi into Upper Louisiana. St. Charles, called at that time *Petite Cote*, was founded in 1780. The leaders in all the French colonies on the Mississippi were gentlemen of education and talent; while the large majority were peaceable and illiterate *paysans*, who possessed little property and less enterprise. They were a contented race, unambitious, ignorant of the prolific resources of the country, and destitute of the least perception of its future destiny. They never troubled themselves with the affairs of government, never indulged in schemes of aggrandizement, nor showed the least inclination for political domination. They were a frank, open-hearted, unsuspecting, joyous people, careless of the acquisition of property.

“Finding themselves in a fruitful country, abounding in game, where the necessaries of life could be procured with little labor, where no restraints were imposed by government, and neither tribute nor personal service was exacted, they were content to live in unambitious peace and comfortable

poverty. They took possession of so much of the vacant land around them as they were disposed to till, and no more. Their agriculture was rude; and even to this day some of the implements of husbandry and modes of cultivation, brought from France a century ago, remain unchanged by the '*march of mind*,' or the hand of innovation. Their houses were comfortable, and they reared fruits and flowers; evincing, in this respect, an attention to comfort and luxury, which has not been practised among the English or American first settlers; but in the accumulation of property, and in all the essentials of industry, they were indolent and improvident, rearing only the bare necessities of life, and living from generation to generation without change or improvement."

The American settlers, in general, were of the class that had been the associates of Boone in North Carolina and Kentucky. Many had come from those States, drawn by his example and influence. Their character and habits have been described already. A small number had fled from their country to avoid the consequences of crime, or improvidence. But a very large majority were peaceable, industrious, moral, and well-disposed persons, who, from various motives had crossed the "Great Water;" \* some from the love of adventure; some from that spirit of restlessness, which belongs to a class of frontier emigrants; but a much larger number with the expectation of obtaining large donations of land, which the government gave to each settler at the trifling

\* This is the aboriginal meaning of the name *Mississippi*.



expense of surveying and recording. A very general impression existed amongst the American emigrants, that in a short time the country would be annexed to the United States. Colonel Boone declared that he would never have settled in the country, had he not firmly believed it would become a portion of the American republic

Probably the efforts in Kentucky, for several years, to obtain the navigation of the Mississippi gave rise to this opinion. And yet these settlers in the Spanish country were quiet and peaceable, and made no movements towards revolution. They entertained the impression that the Congress of the United States would obtain the country by negotiation. This impression existed several years before the purchase of Louisiana, and was doubtless known to Mr. Jefferson at the commencement of his administration.

It was the policy of the Spanish authorities in Upper Louisiana to encourage emigration from the United States. The distance of this province from New Orleans, the capital of the whole country, was a thousand miles; and intervening were a wilder-

\*The writer has been intimately acquainted with many of these settlers, and knows their views, feelings, and objects in expatriating themselves for a period. No greater mistake is made than in supposing that the class of emigrants, who have advanced westward, and even beyond the boundaries of the American government and laws, are indolent and vicious. Some are of this description, as may be found in all communities; but the mass are virtuous, kind, hospitable, and ardently attached to the free institutions of the United States. From 1794 to 1803, emigration to Upper Louisiana, as Missouri was then called, was constant until several thousand persons had found their way to that remote region.



ness and a river difficult to navigate. Fears were entertained of an invasion of the country by the British and Indians from Canada. The American people were regarded as the natural adversaries of the British, and it was supposed that they would readily protect the country.

In 1780, an expedition was fitted out by the British commander, at Mackinac, to attack St. Louis, as a retaliation for the part the King of Spain had taken in favor of the independence of the United States. Fifteen hundred Indians, including a small party of British soldiers, made up the invading force, which came down the Mississippi. History records, that upwards of sixty of the inhabitants were killed, and about thirty taken prisoners. At this crisis, General George R. Clark, who was at Kaskaskia with several hundred men, including the Illinois militia, appeared on the opposite side of the river. The British took the alarm, raised the siege, and retired; and the Indians, declaring that they had no hostile intentions against the Spanish government, but had been deceived by the British, soon dispersed to their villages. This event caused the Spanish authorities, contrary to their usual policy, to encourage emigration from the American side. Advantageous prospects were held out, and pains taken to disseminate them through the western settlements. At the transfer of the government in 1804, more than three-fifths of the population of the upper province were English-Americans.

The people and the circumstances of the country were congenial to the habits and temper of Boone,

and he soon felt himself at home in this remote region.

Under the Spanish government, the Roman Catholic faith was the established religion of the province, and no other Christian sect was tolerated by the laws. Each emigrant was required to be *un bon Catholique*, as the French expressed it; yet, by the connivance of the commandants of Upper Louisiana, and by the use of a pious fiction in the examination of the Americans, toleration in fact existed.

Many Protestant families, communicants in Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and other churches, settled in the province, and remained undisturbed in their religious principles. Protestant itinerant clergymen passed over from Illinois, and preached in the log-cabins of the settlers unmolested, though they were occasionally threatened with imprisonment in the *calabozo* at St. Louis. Yet these threats were never executed.

As in most Catholic countries, the Sabbath was a day of hilarity and rejoicing. The Catholic population, being chiefly French, attended mass in the morning, with much regularity and devotion, and in the afternoon assembled in parties at private houses for social and merry intercourse. Cards, billiards, dances, and various sports, made up the pastime. The French population were not intemperate in eating or drinking on such occasions. The wealthier classes used, moderately, light red wines, especially claret; the poorer classes, in convivial parties, drank *tafia*, and a liquor called *noyau*, but very rarely to inebriation. The writer has often

heard the old French settlers deplore the change of government, and the influx of emigrants from the United States, by whom, as they alleged, the vices of intoxication and fraud were introduced. Theft and dishonesty were rarely known. Only two doorlocks were regarded as necessary in St. Louis; one on the *calabozo*, and the other on the Government House.

## CHAPTER VIII

**Boone's official Duties.—Journey to Kentucky.—Difficulties with Indians.—Transfer of Louisiana to the United States.—Tenacity of the old Inhabitants to the Customs of their Ancestors.—Claim of Colonel Boone for Land.—Petition to Congress and to the Legislature of Kentucky.—Grant of one thousand Arpents.—Death of Mrs. Boone.—Hunting Excursions.**

THE office of syndic, or commandant, held by Colonel Boone, made but small demands on his time, and did not interfere with his customary employment of the winter months in hunting and trapping.\* For two or three seasons he was not successful. Besides the losses sustained by his friends in funds intrusted to his charge, which they generously relinquished, he left small debts unpaid in Kentucky. His creditors would have made no claims on him; yet he felt unhappy to be in debt and unable to pay, and he fondly hoped he should procure the means in his first winter's hunt. At length he made a successful excursion, and obtained a valuable supply of peltry, which he turned into cash, and then visited Kentucky. He had kept no book accounts, and knew not how much he owed, nor to whom he was

\* The office of syndic, under the Spanish government, was somewhat analogous to that of a county justice in some of the States, but more extensive, as it combined a portion of military with the civil power.



indebted; but, in the honest simplicity of his nature, he went to all with whom he had had dealings, and paid whatever was demanded. When he returned to his family in Upper Louisiana, he had half a dollar left. To his family and a circle of friends, who had called to see him, he said, "Now I am ready and willing to die. I am relieved from a burden that has long oppressed me. I have paid all my debts, and no one will say, when I am gone, 'Boone was a dishonest man.' I am perfectly willing to die."

In his hunting excursions, he occasionally went alone; sometimes with a friend, neighbor, or a relative; and more frequently with a negro boy, to keep his camp. On one expedition, the Osages attempted to rob him, but met with such prompt and determined resistance from Boone and his negro boy, that the party fled with precipitation. One winter he went on a trapping excursion up the Grand River, a stream that rises in the south part of Iowa, and, running a southerly course, enters the Missouri between Carroll and Ray counties. He was alone this season, and paddled his canoe up the Missouri, and then up the Grand River, until he found for his camp a retired place in a cove among the bluffs. He then proceeded to make the necessary preparations for trapping beaver. His camp was erected in so obscure a place that even an experienced hunter could not have found it. The next step was to lay in a winter's supply of venison, turkeys, and bear's meat. The Indians of the northwest had manifested hostile demonstrations, and Boone was too well ac-

quainted with Indian tactics to be surprised in his camp. He had commenced his trapping operations, and each morning visited his traps to secure his prey. One morning, he had the mortification to discover a large encampment of Indians in his vicinity, engaged in hunting.

A retreat to his camp was the next movement, where he secreted himself during the day. Fortunately, a deep snow fell that night, and securely covered his traps. He continued for twenty days in his camp, till the Indians departed. To prevent discovery, his method was to keep no fire in the daytime, lest the smoke should reveal his hiding-place, and to kindle it and cook his food in the middle of the night. He stated to the writer, that he never felt so much anxiety in his life for so long a period, lest they should discover his traps and search out his camp. He was not discovered by the Indians; and when the snow melted away they departed.

On another occasion, he took pack-horses, and went to the country on the Osage River, taking for a camp-keeper a negro boy about twelve or fourteen years of age. Soon after preparing his camp and laying in his supplies for the winter, he was taken sick, and lay a long time in camp. The horses were *hobbled* out on the range. After a period of stormy weather, there came a pleasant and delightful day, and Boone felt able to walk out. With his staff, (for he was quite feeble,) he took the boy to the summit of a small eminence, and marked out the ground in the shape and size of a grave, and then gave the following directions. He instructed the

boy, in case of his decease, to wash and lay his body straight, wrapped up in one of the cleanest blankets. He was then to construct a kind of shovel, and with that instrument and the hatchet to dig a grave, exactly as he had marked it out. He was then to drag the body to the place, and put it in the grave, which he was directed to cover up, placing posts at the head and foot. Poles were to be placed around and over the surface; the trees to be marked, so that it could be easily found by his friends; the horses were to be caught; the blankets and skins gathered up; with some special instructions about the old rifle, and various messages to the family. All these directions were given, as the boy afterwards declared, with entire calmness, and as if he was giving instructions about ordinary business. He soon recovered, broke up his camp, and returned homeward without the usual spoils of a winter's hunt.

He rarely hunted two successive seasons in the same range, and seldom went further west than the present boundary of Missouri.

The treaty of cession of Louisiana to the United States, conducted by Barbé Marbois, under the direction of Napoleon, then First Consul of France, and Robert R. Livingston and James Monroe on the part of the United States, closed on the 30th of April, 1803. The Spanish authorities delivered the lower province to M. Laussat early in the same year, and by him it was duly and formally transferred to William C. C. Claiborne and James Wilkinson, commissioners of the United States, on the 20th of December of the same year. The change of authority



in Upper Louisiana took place at St. Louis, on the 9th of March, 1804. The late Major Amos Stoddard, of the United States army, officiated on the occasion, and was constituted, for the time being, lieutenant-governor and commandant of the province. As a temporary arrangement, the Spanish laws continued in force for a short time, until Congress could introduce a system of government congenial to that of the United States. Soon afterwards, the laws, courts, customs, and whole system of American policy and jurisprudence spread over the country. The American population was prepared for this change. It was congenial to their habits and feelings, and they rejoiced in it as the consummation of their hopes and wishes. Not so the French, and the few Spaniards intermingled with them. In every particular, the change was an innovation on their former habits. The payment of taxes, going to the polls and voting for rulers and law-makers, proving and recording titles to their lands, were burdens, which, though borne with patience and submission, were no less really such in their estimation. By degrees, however, the general character of the country, the features of society, and manners of the people were changed.

Life and vigor were diffused into the body politic, and that restless spirit of speculation and improvement, so common to the people of the United States, was introduced. The tide of emigration soon swept by the residence of Boone; and, as early as 1810, settlements were formed in what is now Central Missouri, called Boone's Lick. Here the old hunter



once pitched his winter's camp, and subsequently his son made salt at the lick, which still bears his name. His son Jesse, whom he had left in the Kenhawa country, followed with his family to Missouri. Daniel Morgan Boone, his eldest son then living, had gone to Upper Louisiana before his father, and Nathan, with his wife, followed about 1800. Flanders Callaway made several annual visits to the hunting-grounds of Missouri before he removed his family thither, which was about the period of the change of government. His other daughters had married and settled in Kentucky. His children in Missouri were settled within half a day's travel of his residence.

By his removal to Missouri, and becoming a citizen of the Spanish government, he was entitled to one thousand arpents of land, and, according to usage in other cases, by virtue of his official station, he was also entitled to ten thousand arpents.

By a declaration from M. Delassus, lieutenant-governor at St. Louis, he was exempted from the customary terms of settlement and cultivation. The United States government instituted a commission to receive applications and adjudicate on the validity of titles. Colonel Boone brought his claims before the commissioners on the 13th of February, 1806, and the Board decided on the 1st of December, 1809, "that this claim ought not to be confirmed." The decision had no respect to the equity of the case; the law under which the Board acted required, in express terms, "evidence of settlement and cultivation."

By the advice of his friends, in 1812, he sent a petition to Congress to obtain confirmation of his claim. The concession from Don Zenon Trudeau was dated January 24th, 1798, for one thousand arpents, and the certificate of survey and location was dated January 9th, 1800. The concession for the larger claim, which had been promised to him by the Spanish authority, could only be obtained from the highest representative of the crown at New Orleans, and this formality he had neglected. Thus Boone, who had explored, defended, and aided in settling the country from the Alleghany Mountains to the frontier of Missouri, was left, at the age of fourscore years, without a rood of land, which he could call his own. He naturally turned his thoughts to Kentucky, a State that then contained nearly half a million of people, rich in resources, and whose voice had weight and influence in the national Congress. A memorial was presented to the General Assembly of that State, on the 18th of January, 1812, soliciting the aid and influence of that body in obtaining from Congress the redress he sought.

This memorial contained a sketch of his labors in the wilderness, and "of his claims to the remembrance of his country in general." He spoke of his struggles "in the fatal fields, which were dyed with the blood of the early settlers, amongst whom were his two eldest sons, and others of his dearest connections." "The history of the settlement of the western country," he said, "was his history." He alluded to the love of discovery and adventure,

which had induced him to expatriate himself, "under an assurance of the Governor at St. Louis, that ample portions of land should be given to him and to his family." He mentioned the allotment of land, his failure to consummate the title, and his unsuccessful application to the commissioners of the United States.\* Of the vast extent of the country, which he had discovered and explored, "he was unable to call a single acre his own," and "he had laid his case before Congress." "Your memorialist" he added, "cannot but feel, so long as feeling remains, that he has a just claim upon his country for land to live on, and to transmit to his children after him. He cannot help, on an occasion like this, to look towards Kentucky. From a small acorn she has become a mighty oak, furnishing shelter to upwards of four hundred thousand souls. Very different is her appearance now from the time when your memorialist, with his little band, began to fell the forest, and construct the rude fortification at Boonesborough."

The venerable pioneer found a cheerful response in the legislature of Kentucky. The memorial was referred to a committee of the Senate, who made a favorable report, which passed both branches of the legislature without a division. The application to Congress was successful, and one thousand arpents of land were confirmed to him, in the Femme Osage District, where he first settled. The act passed for

\* These commissioners were the late John B. C. Lucas, Clement Penrose, and Frederic Bates, each of whom exercised a rigid but faithful trust in behalf of the United States.



the confirmation of the title on the 10th of February, 1814.

Boone was now far advanced in years; but his iron frame, after so many years of exposure and suffering, retained an unusual degree of elasticity; his mind was still vigorous, his memory tenacious, and his temper as mild and placid as that of an infant. In March, 1813, he had the misfortune to lose his wife, at the age of seventy-six years. She had been the companion of his toils for more than half a century, participating in the same generous and heroic nature as himself. A grave was prepared at a chosen spot, on the summit of a ridge, that, when the forest was cleared away, overlooked the turbid Missouri, selected by himself; and the place was marked where he was to be laid by her side. Soon after this event, he gave directions to a cabinet-maker in the settlement to prepare a coffin of black walnut for himself, which was done accordingly, and it was kept in his dwelling for several years. He fancied it was not of the exact size he required, and appropriated it to the funeral of a stranger, who died in the settlement. Another of cherry was prepared, and placed under his bed, where it continued until it received his mortal remains.

The closing part of his life was devoted to the society of his children, and to the employments of the chase. When age had enfeebled the energies of his once athletic frame, he would make an excursion twice a year to some remote hunting-ground, employing a companion, whom he bound by a written contract to take care of him, and, should he die in



the wilderness, to bring his body to the cemetery, which he had selected as a final resting-place.\*

In April, 1816, he went to Fort Osage, near the mouth of the Kansas River, where he spent two weeks, and then extended his tour to the Little Platte.

His time at home was usually occupied in some useful manner. He made powder-horns for his grandchildren, neighbors, and friends, many of which were carved and ornamented with much taste. He repaired rifles, and performed various descriptions of handicraft with neatness and finish. After the decease of Mrs. Boone, his home was with his eldest daughter, Mrs. Callaway, though he passed much of his time with his other children, particularly in the family of his youngest son, Major Nathan Boone. He evinced great attachment to his children and grandchildren, and before his decease he was surrounded by many of the fifth generation. On their part nothing was too good for grandfather Boone, as he was familiarly called.

\* Governor Morehead's "Address," p. 109. Niles's "Register," Vol. IV. p. 33.

## CHAPTER IX

Visit of the Author to Boone.—Impressions formed.—Conversation.—His general Character.—Religious Sentiments.—His Portrait taken.—Illness and Recovery.—Visits his Son.—His Death.—Removal of his Remains to Kentucky, in 1845.—His Character, as described by Governor Morehead.

IT was in the month of December, 1818, that the author of this memoir, while performing the duty of an itinerant minister of the gospel in the frontier settlements of Missouri, saw for the first time this venerable pioneer. The preceding day had been spent in the settlement of Femme Osage, where Mr. Callaway, with whom Boone lived, met and accompanied the writer to Charrette village, a French hamlet, situated on the north side of the Missouri River, adjacent to which was his residence. On his introduction to Colonel Boone, the impressions were those of surprise, admiration, and delight. In boyhood, he had read of Daniel Boone, the pioneer of Kentucky, the celebrated hunter and Indian-fighter; and imagination had portrayed a rough, fierce-looking, uncouth specimen of humanity, and, of course at this period of life, a fretful and unattractive old man. But in every respect the reverse appeared. His high, bold forehead was slightly bald, and his silvered locks were combed smooth; his countenance was ruddy and fair, and exhibited the simplicity of a

child. His voice was soft and melodious. A smile frequently played over his features in conversation. At repeated interviews, an irritable expression was never heard. His clothing was the coarse, plain manufacture of the family; but everything about him denoted that kind of comfort, which was congenial to his habits and feelings, and evinced a happy old age. His room was part of a range of log cabins, kept in order by his affectionate daughter and granddaughters.

Every member of the household appeared to delight in administering to his comforts. He was sociable, communicative in replying to questions, but not in introducing incidents of his own history. He was intelligent, for he had treasured up the experience and observations of more than fourscore years. In these interviews, every incident of his life might have been drawn from his lips; but, veneration being the predominant feeling which his presence excited, no more than a few brief notes were taken. He spoke feelingly, and with solemnity, of being a creature of Providence, ordained by Heaven as a pioneer in the wilderness, to advance the civilization and the extension of his country. He appeared to have entered into the wilderness with no comprehensive views or extensive plans of future improvement; he aimed not to lay the foundations of a state or nation; but still he professed the belief, that the Almighty had assigned to him a work to perform, and that he had only followed the pathway of duty in the course he had pursued. He gave no evidence of superstition, manifested no religious credulity,

told of no remarkable dreams and strange impressions, as is common with superstitious and illiterate people, but only expressed an internal satisfaction that he had discharged his duty to God and his country by following the direction of Providence.

The impression on the mind of the writer, before a personal acquaintance, that he was moody, unsocial, and desired to shun society and civilization, was wholly removed. He was the archetype of the better class of western pioneer; benevolent, kind-hearted, liberal, and a true philanthropist. That he was rigidly honest, and one of nature's noblemen, need not be here said. It is seen in his whole life. He abhorred a mean action, and delighted in honesty and truth. While he acknowledged that he used guile with the Indians, he excused it as necessary to counteract their duplicity, but despised in them this trait of character. He never delighted in shedding human blood, even that of his enemies in war, and avoided it whenever he could.

He was not destitute of religious sentiments, though a large portion of his life was spent without the influence of the gospel ministry. His father was an Episcopalian, and taught his children the rudiments of faith and forms of worship used in that church; yet he retained no predilections for that communion. In a general sense, he was a believer in Christianity as a revelation from God in the sacred Scriptures, but never joined any church. His habits of mind were contemplative, and he revered the Diety in his works. His habits of roaming and encamping alone in the forest doubtless tended to un-



fold this trait of his character. He was strictly moral, temperate, and chaste.

During the summer of 1820, a patriotic solicitude prompted a distinguished American artist, Mr. Harding, to take his portrait, and for that purpose he made a visit to the residence of Mr. Callaway. Colonel Boone was feeble, and required to be supported by a friend, the Reverend J. E. Welch, while sitting for the sketch.

Soon afterwards, he had an attack of fever, from which he recovered, so far as to make a visit to the house of his son, Major Nathan Boone; for all his children and grandchildren delighted to see him, and minister to his comfort, and he was happy in their society. From a little indiscretion in eating sweet potatoes, a vegetable which he was exceedingly fond of, and which his friends had prepared for him; he had an attack from which he never recovered. He gradually sank, and, after three days' illness, expired, on the 26th day of September, 1820, in the eighty-sixth year of his age.

His remains were enclosed in the coffin he had provided, and were deposited by the side of his deceased wife. The funeral called forth a large circle of relatives, neighbors, and friends, from many miles distant; for he was beloved and respected by all who knew him.

The State of Missouri had been organized by the adoption of a Constitution in the same year; and the first legislature was in session in St. Louis, when the intelligence of his decease reached that place. A resolution was passed, that the members should wear

the usual badge of mourning twenty days, in respect to his memory, and adjourn for one day.

Colonel Boone had nine children, five sons and four daughters. The two eldest sons, James and Israel, were slain by the Indians, as mentioned in the proper place. His third son, Daniel Morgan Boone, who preceded him to Upper Louisiana, for many years lived on the bank of the Missouri, in the Femme Osage settlement. He was an industrious farmer, a respectable citizen, and attained to the rank of colonel in the militia. He sold his farm for ten thousand dollars, and removed to Jackson county, where he died about four years ago, past the age of fourscore. Jesse Boone, the fourth son, came to Upper Louisiana about 1806, settled on the Loutre, and died in St. Louis a few years after. Major Nathan Boone, the youngest child, married in Kentucky at an early age, and removed to Upper Louisiana in 1800. For many years he resided in the upper part of Femme Osage settlement. After the organization of the United States dragoons, he received the commission of captain in that department of the army, which post he still occupies. His family reside in Greene county, Missouri. He had attained to a majority in the militia many years before he entered the regular army. The names of Daniel Boone's daughters were Jemima, Susanna, Rebecca, and Lavinia. The last three married, lived, and died in Kentucky.

The Boone family have been noted for longevity. Of the brothers and sisters of Colonel Boone, we can

only give the following particulars of their decease. George Boone died in Shelby county, Kentucky, in November, 1820, at the age of eighty-three; Samuel died at the age of eighty-eight; Jonathan at the age of eighty-six; Mrs. Wilcox, a sister, at the age of ninety-one; Mrs. Grant, another sister, at the age of eighty-four; Mrs. Smith, a third sister, at the age of eighty-four. Squire Boone, the father, died at the age of seventy-six.\*

When Colonel Boone made choice of a place of sepulture for himself and family, and was so particular as to enjoin his friends, if he died from home, to remove his remains to the hill near Charrette, he had no anticipation of an event, which occurred a quarter of a century after his burial. He little thought, that, before the coffins were mouldered away, his relics and those of his wife would find a resting-place on the bank of the Kentucky River.

The citizens of Frankfort, having prepared a tasteful rural cemetery, projected, as an appropriate consecration of the ground, the removal of the remains of Colonel Boone and his wife. The consent of surviving relatives having been obtained, a deputation visited Missouri in the summer of 1845, exhumed the relics, and transported them to Frankfort, where they were reinterred, with appropriate ceremonies, on the 20th of August. An oration was delivered by Mr. Crittenden.

Scarcely a county in Kentucky was without its representation, and many persons from the Western and Southwestern States were also in attendance, to

\* Niles's "Register," Vol. XIX. p. 262.

pay the last funeral honors to these pioneers of the great western valley. Some of the contemporaries of the great hunter were present, and took part in the ceremonies.

In the procession, tottering along with extreme age, was the first black man that ever trod the soil of Kentucky. And his steps were sustained by another, also of African descent, who was the first child of other than Indian parentage ever born in that commonwealth, now containing more than a million of souls, and from which has gone out as many more to other states and territories of the great west.

We shall close this memoir with an extract from the Address of Governor Morehead, at Boonesborough, in 1840, on the commemoration of the first settlement of Kentucky. The preceding remarks will show, that, in a few slight particulars, the author of this work differs in his estimate of Boone's character; yet he is happy to corroborate the views, in general, of the distinguished author of the Address.

“The life of Daniel Boone is a forcible example of the powerful influence, which a single absorbing passion exerts over the destiny of an individual. Born with no endowments of intellect to distinguish him from the crowd of ordinary men, and possessing no other acquirements than a very common education bestowed, he was enabled nevertheless to maintain, throughout a long and useful career, a conspicuous rank among the most distinguished of his contemporaries; and the testimonials of the public gratitude and respect, with which he was honored after his



death, were such as were never awarded by an intelligent people to the undeserving.

“ In his narrative, dictated to Filsor in 1784, he describes himself as ‘ an instrument *ordained* to settle the wilderness.’ There are certain passages in his history corroborative of this conclusion. His preservation during a solitary sojournment of three months in the wilderness; the marked forbearance and lenity of the savages toward him, especially on the last occasion of his being their prisoner; his escape at a most important juncture for the defence of his station; would seem to indicate the interposition of a superior agency on his behalf. In 1778, when such formidable preparations were making at the old town of Chillicothe for the invasion of Kentucky, his seasonable return to Boonesborough saved the inhabitants from the grasp of savages; and if Boonesborough had fallen, little doubt can be entertained that every station on the frontier would have shared its fate. But it is needless to speculate upon a subject about which contradictory opinions may be formed. There are those who will coincide with the pioneer in the judgment which he has passed on his own pretensions.

“ His instrumentality in the settlement of the wilderness, great and efficacious as it most unquestionably was, may be traced to other and more proximate causes, having their origin in the elements of his own peculiar character. He came originally to the wilderness, not to settle and subdue it, but to gratify an inordinate passion for adventure and discovery; to hunt the deer and buffalo; to roam through the

woods; to admire the 'beauties of nature;' in a word, to enjoy the lonely pastimes of a hunter's life, remote from the society of his fellowmen. He had heard, with admiration and delight, Finley's description of the 'country of Kentucky,' and, high as were his expectations, he found it 'a second paradise.' Its lofty forests, its noble rivers, its picturesque scenery, its beautiful valleys, but, above all, the plentifulness of 'beasts of every American kind,' these were the attractions that brought him to it. He came, therefore, not to establish the foundations of a great state, nor to extend the empire of civilization, but because it *was* a wilderness; and *such* a wilderness as realized, in its adaptation to his inclination and habits, the bright visions of his fancy. Having, for reasons like these, chosen it for his abode, nothing was more natural than that he should be willing to risk much to defend it; and the peculiar warfare by which the settlements were to be preserved put in requisition precisely such powers of body and mind, as those that he possessed. He united, in an eminent degree, the qualities of shrewdness, caution, and courage, with uncommon muscular strength. He was seldom taken by surprise; he never shrunk from danger, nor cowered beneath the pressure of exposure and fatigue.

"In every emergency, he was a safe guide and a wise counsellor, because his movements were conducted with the utmost circumspection, and his judgment and penetration were proverbially accurate. Powerless to originate plans on a large scale, no individual among the pioneers could execute, with

more efficiency and success, the designs of others. He took the lead in no expedition against the savages; he disclosed no liberal views of policy for the protection of the stations; \* and yet it is not assuming too much to say, that without him, in all probability, the settlements could not have been upheld, and the conquest of Kentucky might have been reserved for the emigrants of the nineteenth century.

“ With all his qualities as an antagonist of the red man, Boone was no lover of war. He took no delight in the glory of a conqueror. If he idolized his rifle, it was because it contributed to the enjoyment of his darling pastimes, not because it was an instrument for shedding human blood. His character, on the contrary, was pacific. But, at the same time, it was unsocial. He had few sympathies that bind men and families together, and consecrate the relations of society. During two whole years, he abandoned his family for no other purpose than to amuse himself in the wilderness. Yet he was not an unkind husband. On one occasion, we know, he endangered his own to save the life of his son; and I am not aware that he was ever suspected of treachery in his friendships.

“ At the period of his greatest vigor and usefulness, he was remarkable for his taciturnity; but, as he grew older, he became an agreeable companion, remembering with distinctness remote events, especially those with which he was connected, and dwell-

\* General George Rogers Clark was the master spirit, as he was the senior officer, in the military enterprises of Kentucky against the Indians.



ing upon them with manifest satisfaction. His manners were simple and unobtrusive, exempt from the rude characteristic of the backwoodsman. In his person there was nothing peculiarly striking. He was five feet ten inches in height, and of robust and powerful proportions. His countenance was mild and contemplative; indicating a frame of mind altogether different from the restlessness and activity that distinguished him. His ordinary habiliments were those of the hunter; a hunting shirt and moccasins uniformly composing a part of them. Throughout his life he was careless of his pecuniary interests. The loss of his lands was chiefly attributable to inattention. When he emigrated to Louisiana, he omitted to secure a title to a princely estate on the Missouri, because it would have cost him the trouble of a trip to New Orleans.

“ He would have travelled a much greater distance to indulge his cherished propensities as an adventurer and a hunter. He died, as he had lived, in a cabin; \* and perhaps his trusty rifle was the most valuable of his chattels.

“ Such was the man to whom has been assigned the principal merit of the discovery of Kentucky, and who filled a large space in the eyes of America and Europe. Resting on the solid advantages of his services to his country, his fame will survive when the achievements of men greatly his superiors in rank and intellect will be forgotten.”

\* The dwelling of his son, where he died, was a commodious edifice built of stone.



LIFE OF  
FATHER MARQUETTE

BY

JARED SPARKS

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## FATHER MARQUETTE

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It is generally believed, that the Mississippi River was first discovered by Ferdinand de Soto, as early as 1541. The accounts of his expedition in Florida are so highly exaggerated, so indefinite, and in many parts so obviously false, that little more can be inferred from them, than that he passed far into the country, had many combats with the natives, and finally died in the interior. The probability is so strong, however, that he and his party actually crossed the Mississippi, that it has usually been assumed as a historical fact.

De Soto had distinguished himself as a military leader under Pizarro, in the conquest of Peru. He returned to Spain, renowned for his exploits, and enriched by the spoils of the Peruvians and of their unfortunate monarch Atahualpa, extorted by iniquity and violence. He appeared in much splendor at the court of Spain, and, becoming acquainted with one of the companions of Narvaez, who had made an unsuccessful attempt to conquer Florida, he formed the project of achieving the conquest of that country. He solicited permission from Charles the Fifth to undertake the enterprise at his own expense, and his request was granted. The fame of De Soto, the

great wealth he had acquired in Peru, and the hope of making similar acquisitions in Florida, drew around him many adventurers, some of whom belonged to the first families in Spain. Several persons also joined him from the town of Elvas, in Portugal. In a short time he procured seven ships, and supplied them with everything necessary for the voyage. The fleet sailed from St. Lucar, in the month of April 1538, proceeding first to St. Jago, in Cuba, and thence to Havana. The number of men that accompanied him is not precisely known. The most authentic account states it to have been six hundred; according to others it was much larger.

The Emperor had appointed De Soto governor of Cuba, with the title of General of Florida, and Marquis of all the lands he might conquer. Leaving his wife at Havana, he sailed from that port on the 18th of May, 1539, and landed at the Bay of Espiritu Santo, in Florida. After many wanderings and adventures, he arrived at the *Great River*, so called in the narrative, (supposed to be the Mississippi,) and crossed it in June or July, 1541. He died the next year, on the 21st of May; and his followers, under Moscoso, as the story relates, constructed brigantines, in which they sailed down the river to its mouth, and, after a voyage of fifty days, they entered the river Panuco, in Mexico, on the 10th of September, 1543.

The first account of De Soto's expedition purports to have been written by one of the Portuguese adventurers, who accompanied it throughout, and returned to his native country; and who styles him-



self in the titlepage of his narrative, "Fidalgo d'Elvas," rendered by Hakluyt, "*A Gentleman of Elvas.*" The name of the writer has never been ascertained. The book was first published at Evora, in 1557, more than fifteen years after the principal events occurred which it narrates. There is much show of exactness in regard to dates, but the account was evidently drawn up for the most part from memory, being vague in its descriptions, and indefinite as to localities, distances, and other points usually noted by journalists. This account was translated into English by Hakluyt, and published in 1609, with a very long title, beginning, "Virginia richly valued, by the Description of the Main Land of Florida," &c. This little volume is extremely rare, not being included in either of the editions of Hakluyt's celebrated collection, though reprinted in the Supplement to that of 1809. The translator's object was to advance the purposes of the "Virginia Company," which had then recently been formed. Another English translation was published anonymously in the year 1686, entitled "A Relation of the Conquest of Florida by the Spaniards under the command of Fernando de Soto." This was translated from the French version of Citri de la Guette, which appeared in Paris the year before.

The Inca Garcilaso de la Vega completed his work on Florida in the year 1591. It was first printed at Lisbon in 1605. The author's style is flowing and agreeable, but his fancy constantly takes the lead of his judgment, and no tale is too marvellous for his pen. It was one of his chief objects, as stated in

his Preface, "to render justice to the memory of the brave Ferdinand de Soto, which has been cruelly defamed by certain English, French, and Italian writers." Hence a large portion of his work is taken up with the adventures of De Soto. Although he wrote more than forty years after the death of his hero, yet he had no other written materials for his guidance, than those which had been furnished by the "*Gentleman of Elvas*"; and in fact, the narrative of this unknown person is the only authority, which can be considered of any value, respecting the wanderings of De Soto. In several points Garcilaso differs from his original. Citri de la Guette says, that he took his account chiefly from the narration of a common soldier, who was in De Soto's expedition, and this at least forty years after the events. Little could be gathered from such a source, which is worthy of confidence. Both of the accounts are too romantic and vague for history; yet some of the names of places and of Indian tribes, and descriptions of the country, in the narrative of the anonymous Portuguese writer, could hardly have been given except from personal observation; and they render it in the highest degree probable, that De Soto crossed the Mississippi near the thirty-fourth degree of latitude.

It may be doubted, at least, whether either of these works can be trusted, as affording genuine historical materials. They have been cited by respectable writers in default of other authorities; but they border so closely upon the regions of romance, that they may as justly be ranked in this class of compositions,

as in that of history. This is generally conceded in regard to Garcilaso. His predecessor, the "*Gentleman of Elvas*," is thought to have higher claims; and perhaps he has; yet whoever follows him closely will be likely to run into ten errors in arriving at a single truth, with the additional uncertainty of being able to distinguish the former from the latter. The narrative is moreover disfigured with descriptions of atrocious acts of injustice, oppression, and cruelty committed against the natives, as revolting to humanity as they were disgraceful to the adventurers. The thirst for gold, which was the stimulating motive to this enterprise, seems to have absorbed every other passion and every generous sentiment. Robbery, slavery, mutilation, and death were practiced, not only without compunction, but apparently as means supposed to be justified by the cause in which they were engaged. In short, if this narrative is worthy of credit, few readers will be inclined to dissent from the remark of Philip Briet, in his "*Annales Mundi*," that it is difficult to decide whether cruelty or avarice was the predominant trait in the character of De Soto.

British writers have mentioned a subsequent discovery of the Mississippi, in 1654, by an Englishman named Wood. It will be difficult, if not impossible, to find any proofs, that the Mississippi was ever seen by this person.\*

\* Professor Keating says, "This is not the same Colonel Wood of Virginia, whom Coxe mentions as having discovered several branches of the great rivers Ohio and Meschasebe."—LONG'S "*Expedition*," Vol. I. p. 236. But he gives us no clue for ascertaining what Wood it was.



In short, the first Europeans, who are certainly known to have discovered and explored this river, were two Frenchmen, Father MARQUETTE and M. Joliet, in the year 1673. Marquette was a native of Picardy, and Charlevoix calls him "one of the most illustrious missionaries of New France," adding, that he travelled widely, and made many discoveries besides that of the Mississippi. He had resided some time in Canada, and attained a proficiency in the languages of the principal native tribes, who resided in the regions bordering on the Upper Lakes. The first settlement of the old town of Michillimackinac, in 1671, is ascribed to his exertions and influence.

The Indians had given many accounts of a great river at the West, which flowed southwardly, and which they called *Mississipy*, as the word is written by Marquette. It became a matter of curious speculation what course this river pursued, and at what place it disembogued itself into the sea. There were three opinions on this subject. First, that it ran towards the southwest, and entered the Gulf of California; secondly, that it flowed into the Gulf of Mexico; and thirdly, that it found its way in a more easterly direction, and discharged itself into the Atlantic Ocean somewhere on the coast of Virginia. The question was not less important in a commercial and political view than interesting as a geographical problem.

To establish the point, and to make such other discoveries as opportunities would admit, M. de Frontenac, the governor of Canada, encouraged an expedition to be undertaken. The persons, to whom



it was entrusted, were M. Joliet, then residing at Quebec, and Father Marquette, who was at Michillimackinac, or in the vicinity of that place. Marquette wrote an account of his tour and voyage down the Mississippi, which was sent to France, and published eight years afterwards in Paris. From this account the following particulars are chiefly taken. In some parts the translation is nearly literal, and all the prominent facts are retained.

On the 13th of May, 1673, Father Marquette and M. Joliet, with five other Frenchmen, embarked in two canoes, with a small provision of Indian corn and smoked meat, having previously acquired from the Indians all the intelligence they could afford respecting their proposed route.

The first nation through which they passed, was the *Folles Avoines*, (Wild Rice,) so called from the grain of that name, which abounds in the rivers and marshy lands. This plant is described as growing about two feet above the water, resembling European oats, and gathered by the savages during the month of September. The ears are dried, separated from the chaff, and prepared for food either by pounding into meal, or simply boiling the grain in water.\*

The natives, having been made acquainted by Father Marquette with his design of visiting the most remote nations, and preaching to them the Gos-

\* Charlevoix mentions the *Folles Avoines* as residing on a small river, which flows into the Bay of Puans from the west. *Malhomines* was the name by which they were known among the Indians, and they were supposed to be a branch of the Pottawatomies.—“*Histoire de la Nouvelle France*,” Tom. III. p. 291.

pel, did their utmost to dissuade him from it, representing the cruelty of some of the tribes, and their warlike state, the dangerous navigation of the river, the dreadful monsters that were found in it, and, finally, the excessive heat of the climate.

He thanked them for their good advice, but declined following it; assuring them, that, to secure the success of his undertaking, he would gladly give his life; that he felt no fear of the monsters they described; and that their information would only oblige him to keep more on his guard against surprise. After having prayed, and given them some instructions, he parted from them, and arrived at the *Bay of Puans*, now called Green Bay, where considerable progress had been made by the French priests in the conversion of the Indians.

The name of this bay has a less unpleasant meaning in the Indian, than in the French language, signifying also *salt bay*, which induced Father Marquette to make strict search for salt springs in this vicinity, but without success. He concluded, therefore, that the name was given to it in consequence of the ooze and mud, deposited there, from whence, as he thought, arise vapors, that produce frequent and violent thunder storms. He speaks of this bay as about thirty leagues long, and eight leagues wide at its entrance, gradually contracting towards its head, where the flux and reflux of the tides, much like those of the sea, may be easily observed.\*

\* The appearance of these tides has attracted the notice of travellers from the earliest times, and has recently engaged the attention of scientific observers. Mr. Schoolcraft has collected many facts on the subject.—“Journal of the Expedition under Governor Cass,” p. 373.

Leaving this bay, they ascended the river, since known as Fox River, which empties into it. At its mouth, he says, the river is broad and deep, and flows gently; but, as you advance, its course is interrupted by rapids and rocks; which he passed, however, in safety. It abounds with bustard, duck, and teal, attracted by the wild rice, which grows there. Approaching the village of *Maskoutins*, or *nation of fire*, he had the curiosity to taste the mineral water of a stream in its vicinity. The village consisted of three several nations, namely, *Miamis*, *Maskoutins*, and *Kikabeaux*. The first were the most friendly and liberal, and the finest looking men. Their hair was long over their ears. They were good warriors, successful in their expeditions, docile, and fond of instruction. They were so eager to listen to Father Allouez, when he was among them, that they allowed him no repose, even in the night.\* The *Maskoutins* and *Kikabeaux* were coarser, and less civilized; their wigwams were constructed of rushes, (birch-bark being scarce in this country,) and might be rolled up in bundles and carried where they pleased.

In visiting these people, Father Marquette was much gratified at seeing a large cross erected in the centre of the village, decorated with thank-offerings to the Great Spirit for their success during the last

\* Father Allouez was an enterprising and successful missionary. He arrived at the Sault Ste. Marie in 1668, and traversed the country between Lake Superior and Lake Michigan. Charlevoix speaks of his having visited the *Miamis* and *Maskoutins* the year before Marquette's expedition.—“Histoire,” &c. Tom. I. p. 448.



winter. The situation of the village was striking and beautiful, it being built on an eminence, whence the eye overlooked on all sides a boundless extent of prairie, interspersed with groves and forests. The soil was good, producing abundantly Indian corn, grapes, and plums.

Immediately on their arrival, Father Marquette and M. Joliet assembled the chiefs, and explained to them the objects of their expedition, expressing their determination to proceed at all risks, and making them some presents. They requested the assistance of two guides, to help them in their way; which request the natives readily granted, returning for their presents a mat, which served them as a bed during the voyage. The next day, being the 10th of June, the two Miamis, their guides, embarked with them in sight of all the inhabitants of the village, who looked with astonishment on the hardihood of seven Frenchmen in undertaking such an expedition.

They knew that within three leagues of the Maskoutins was a river which discharged itself into the Mississippi; and further, that their course must be west-southwest; but so many marshes and small lakes intervened, that the route was intricate; the more so, as the river was overgrown with wild rice, which obstructed the channel to such a degree that it was difficult to follow it. On this account their guides were necessary, who conducted them safely to a portage, which was about two thousand seven hundred paces across. The guides aided them in transporting their canoes over the portage to the



river, which ran towards the west, and then they left them and returned.\*

The travellers quitted the waters, which flow towards Quebec, five or six hundred leagues from that place, and embarked on an unknown stream. This river was called *Mescousin* (Wisconsin). It was very broad, but its bottom was sandy, and the navigation was rendered difficult by the shoals. It was full of islands, overgrown with vines; and the fertile banks through which it flowed were interspersed with woods, prairies, and groves of nut, oak, and other trees. Numbers of buck and buffalo were seen, but no other animals. Within thirty leagues of their place of embarkation, they found iron mines, which appeared abundant and of a good quality. After continuing their route for forty leagues, they arrived at the mouth of the river, in forty-two degrees and a half of latitude;† and on the 17th of June, they entered with great joy the waters of the Mississippi.

This river derives its source from several lakes in the north. At the mouth of the *Mescousin* its channel was narrow, and it flowed onwards with a gentle

\* This description of the wild rice in the river, and of the portage, agrees very exactly with that of Mr. Schoolcraft. He says the portage is a mile and a half, being equal to two thousand six hundred and forty paces. And of the river he tells us, "It is filled with wild rice, which so chokes up the channel, that it is difficult to find a passage through it."—*Journal, &c.* pp. 363, 364.

† Father Marquette's estimate of the latitude approaches very near the truth. By a series of observations, Fort Crawford, at Prairie du Chien, four or five miles above the mouth of the Wisconsin, has been ascertained to be  $43^{\circ} 3' 31''$ .—LONG'S "Expedition," p. 245.

current. On the right was seen a chain of high mountains and on the left fertile fields interrupted by islands in many places. They slowly followed the course of the stream to the south and southwest, until, in forty-two degrees of latitude, they perceived a sensible change in the surrounding country. There were but few hills and forests. The islands were covered with beautiful trees.

From the time of leaving their guides, they descended the two rivers more than one hundred leagues, without discovering any other inhabitants of the forests than birds and beasts. They were always on their guard, kindling a fire on the shore towards evening to cook their food, and afterwards anchoring their canoes in the middle of the stream during the night. They proceeded thus for more than sixty leagues from the place where they entered the Mississippi, when, on the 25th of June, they perceived on the bank of the river the footsteps of men, and a well-beaten path leading into a beautiful prairie. They landed, and, leaving the canoes under the guard of their boatmen, Father Marquette and M. Joliet set forth to make discoveries. After silently following the path for about two leagues, they perceived a village, situate on the margin of a river, and two others on a hill, within half a league of the first. As they approached nearer, they gave notice of their arrival by a loud call. Hearing the noise, the Indians came out of their cabins, and, having looked at the strangers for a while, they deputed four of their elders to talk with them, who slowly advanced. Two of them brought pipes ornamented

with feathers, which, without speaking, they elevated towards the sun, as a token of friendship. Gaining assurance from this ceremony, Father Marquette addressed them inquiring of what nation they were. They answered, that they were Illinois, and, offering their pipes, invited the strangers to enter the village; where they were received with every mark of attention, conducted to the cabin of the chief, and complimented on their arrival by the natives, who gathered round them, gazing in silence.

After they were seated, the *calumet* was presented to them, and, while the old men were smoking for their entertainment, the chief of all the Illinois tribes sent them an invitation to attend a council at his village. They were treated by him with great kindness, and Father Marquette, having explained to him the motives of this voyage, enforcing each part of his speech with a present, the chief in reply expressed his approbation; but urged him, in the name of the whole nation, not to incur the risks of a further voyage, and rewarded his presents by the gift of a *calumet*.

The council was followed by a feast consisting of four courses, from each of which they were fed with much ceremony; and afterwards they were conducted in state through the village, receiving many presents of girdles and garters from the natives. The following day, they took leave of the chief, promising to return in four moons, and were accompanied to their canoes, with every demonstration of joy, by more than six hundred savages.

Before leaving this nation, Father Marquette re-



marked some of their peculiarities. The name *Illinois*, in the native language, signifies *men*, as if implying thereby, that other tribes are brutes in comparison, which in some sense Father Marquette thought to be true, as they were more civilized than most of the tribes. Their language, on the borders of the river, was a dialect of the *Algonquin*, and was understood by Father Marquette. In the form of their bodies the Illinois were light and active. They were skilful in the use of arms, brave, but mild and tractable in disposition. They were entirely ignorant of the use of leather, and iron tools, their weapons being made of stone, and their clothing of the skins of wild beasts. The soil was rich and productive, and game abundant.

After this peaceful interview with the natives, the voyagers embarked again, and passed down the stream, looking out for the river *Pekitanoni* (Missouri), which empties into the Mississippi from the northwest. They observed high and steep rocks, on the face of which were the figures of two monsters, which appeared as if painted in green, red, and blue colors; frightful in appearance, but so well executed, as to leave Father Marquette in doubt, whether they could be the work of savages, they being also at so great a height on the rocks as to be inaccessible to a painter.

As they floated quietly down a clear and placid stream, conversing about the figures they had just passed, they were interrupted by the sound of rapids before them; and a mass of floating timber, trunks and branches of trees, was swept from the mouth of



the Pekitanoni with such a degree of violence as to render the passage dangerous. So great was the agitation that the water was thereby made very muddy, and it did not again become clear. The Pekitanoni is described as a large river flowing into the Mississippi from the northwest, with several villages on its banks.\*

At this place Father Marquette decided, that, unless the Mississippi altered its previous course, it must empty its waters into the Gulf of Mexico; and he conjectured from the accounts of the natives, that, by following the stream of the Pekitanoni, a river would be discovered, which flowed into the Gulf of California.

About twenty leagues south of the Pekitanoni, and a little more to the southeast, they discovered the mouth of another river, called *Ouabouskigou* (Ohio), in the latitude of thirty-six degrees; a short distance above which, they came to a place formidable to the savages, who, believing it the residence of a demon, had warned Father Marquette of its dangers. It proved nothing more than a ledge of rocks, thirty feet high, against which the waves, being contracted by an island, ran with violence, and, being thrown back with a loud noise, flowed rapidly on through a narrow and unsafe channel.

\* This relation agrees with facts, although the muddiness of the waters of the Missouri has been found to be produced by a different cause. "The painted monsters," says Stoddard, "on the side of a high perpendicular rock, apparently inaccessible to man, between the Missouri and Illinois, and known to the moderns by the name of *Piesà*, still remain in a good degree of preservation."—"History of Louisiana," p. 17.

The Ouabouskigou came from the eastward, where the country was thickly inhabited by the tribe of *Chuouanons*, a harmless and peaceful people, much annoyed by the Iroquois, who were said to capture them as slaves, and kill and torture them cruelly.

A little above the entrance of this river were steep banks, in which the boatmen discovered iron ore, several veins of which were visible, about a foot in thickness, portions of it adhering to the flint-stones; and also a species of rich earth, of three different colors, namely, purple, violet, and red, and a very heavy red sand, some of which, being laid on an oar, left a stain during fifteen days. They here first saw tall reeds, or canes, growing on the shores, and began to find the *maringouins* (mosquitoes) very troublesome; the attacks of which, with the heat of the weather, obliged the voyagers to construct an awning of the sails of their canoes.

Shortly afterwards they saw savages armed with muskets, waiting their approach on the bank of the river. While the boatmen prepared for a defence, Father Marquette presented his *calumet*, and addressed them in Huron, to which they gave no answer, but made signals to them to land, and accept some food. They consequently disembarked, and, entering their cabins, were presented with buffalo meat, bear's oil, and fine plums. These savages had guns, hatchets, knives, hoes, and glass bottles for their gunpowder. They informed Father Marquette, that he was within ten day's journey of the sea; that they purchased their goods of Europeans,

who came from the east; that these Europeans had images and beads, played on many instruments, and were dressed like himself; and that they had treated them with much kindness.\* As they had no knowledge of Christianity, the worthy Father gave them what instruction he could, and made them a present of some medals. Encouraged by the information received from these savages the party proceeded with renewed ardor on their voyage between banks covered with thick forests, that intercepted their view of the prairies; in which, however, they heard at no great distance the bellowing of buffaloes. They also saw quail upon the shores, and shot a small parrot.

They had nearly reached the thirty-third degree of latitude, steering towards the south, when they discovered a village on the river's side, called *Metchigamea*. The natives, armed with bows and arrows, clubs, and tomahawks, prepared to attack them; some in canoes, trying to intercept their course, others remaining on shore. Father Marquette in vain presented his *calumet* of peace. They were ready to attack, when the elders, perceiving at last the *calumet*, commanded the young warriors to stop, and, throwing their arms at the feet of the strangers, as a sign of peace, entered their canoes, and constrained them to land, though not without some uneasiness.

As the savages were not acquainted with any of

\* Channels of trade had been opened with the Spaniards in Florida, and other Europeans in Carolina and Virginia. Colonel Wood is said to have crossed the Alleghanies from Virginia, in 1670; doubtless for this object.



the six languages spoken by Father Marquette, he addressed them by signs, until an old man was found, who understood a little Illinois. Through this interpreter, he explained their intention of going to the borders of the sea, and gave the natives some religious instruction. In reply they answered, that whatever information he desired might be obtained at *Akamsca* (Arkansas), a village ten leagues lower down the river; and presented them with food. After passing a night of some anxiety, they embarked the following morning with their interpreter; a canoe with ten savages preceding them. About half a league from *Akamsca*, they were met by two canoes full of Indians, the chief of whom presented his *calumet*, and conducted them to the shore, where they were hospitably received and supplied with provisions. Here they found a young man well acquainted with the Illinois language, and through him Father Marquette addressed the natives, making them the usual presents, and requesting information from them respecting the sea. They answered, that it was within five days' journey of *Akamsca*, that they knew nothing of the inhabitants on its borders, being prevented by their enemies from holding intercourse with these Europeans; that their knives and other weapons were purchased partly from the eastern nations, and partly from a tribe of Illinois, four days' journey to the westward; that the armed savages, whom the travellers had met, were their enemies; that they were continually on the river between that place and the sea; and that, if the voyagers proceeded further, great danger might be ap-



prehended from them. After this communication, food was offered, and the remainder of the day was spent in feasting.

These people were friendly and hospitable, but poor, although their Indian corn produced three abundant crops in a year, which Father Marquette saw in its different stages of growth. It was prepared for food in pots, which, with plates and other utensils, were neatly made of baked earth by the Indians. Their language was so very difficult that Father Marquette despaired of being able to pronounce a word of it. Their climate in winter was rainy, but they had no snow, and the soil was extremely fertile.

During the evening the old men held a secret council. Some of them proposed to murder the strangers and seize their effects. The chief, however, overruled this advice, and, sending for Father Marquette and M. Joliet, invited them to attend a dance of the *calumet*, which he afterwards presented to them as a sign of peace.

The good Father and his companion began now to consider what further course they should pursue. As it was supposed that the Gulf of Mexico extended as far north as thirty-one degrees and forty minutes,\* they believed themselves not to be more than two or three days' journey from it; and it appeared to them certain that the Mississippi must empty itself

\* It is hardly necessary to say, that, although this is nearly accurate, in regard to the most northerly part of the Gulf of Mexico, it is an error as to the mouth of the Mississippi, which is below twenty-nine degrees.

into that gulf, and not into the sea through Virginia, at the eastward, because the coast of Virginia was in the latitude of thirty-four degrees, at which they had already arrived; nor yet into the Gulf of California, at the southwest, because they had found the course of the river to be invariably south. Being thus persuaded that the main object of their expedition was attained, and considering, moreover, that they were unable to resist the armed savages, who infested the lower parts of the river, and that, should they fall into the hands of the Spaniards, the fruits of their voyage and discoveries would be lost, they resolved to proceed no further, and, having informed the natives of their determination and rested another day, they prepared for their return.

After a month's navigation on the Mississippi, having followed its course from the forty-second to the thirty-fourth degree of latitude, they left the village of Akamsca, on the 17th of July, to return up the river. They retraced their way, slowly ascending the stream, until, in about the thirty-eighth degree of latitude, they turned into another river (the Illinois), which abridged their route and brought them directly to Lake *Illinois* (Michigan). They were struck with the fertility of the country through which that river flowed, the beauty of the forests and prairies, the variety of the game, and the numerous small lakes and streams which they saw. The river was broad and deep, and navigable for sixty-five leagues, there being, in the season of spring and part of the summer, only half a league of portage between its waters and those flowing into Lake Il-

linois. On its banks they found a village, the inhabitants of which received them kindly, and, on their departure, extorted a promise from Father Marquette to return and instruct them. One of the chiefs, accompanied by the young men, conducted them as far as the Lake; whence they proceeded to the *Bay of Puans*, where they arrived near the end of September, having been absent about four months.\*

Such is the substance of Father Marquette's narrative; and the whole of it accords so remarkably

\* The following distances have been communicated by General Wool, Inspector General of the Army of the United States, who is personally acquainted with the route, and has had the best means of forming an accurate estimate.

	Miles.
From Green Bay up Fox River to the portage.....	175
From the portage down the Wisconsin to the Mississippi.	175
From the mouth of the Wisconsin to the mouth of the Arkansas .....	1087
From the Arkansas to the Illinois River.....	547
From the mouth of the Illinois to Chicago.....	305
From Chicago to Green Bay by the Lake shore.....	260
Total.....	2549

General Wool observes, that some persons estimate the route about fifty miles more, but he thinks it will rather fall short than exceed the above result. It would appear, therefore, that the whole distance, passed over by Marquette and Joliet in this tour, was at least two thousand five hundred miles.

Considering the manner in which Father Marquette travelled, being conveyed in boats up and down rivers, through an unknown country, it cannot be supposed that his estimate of distances would be exact, particularly as he had no means of deciding the velocity with which he was carried along by the currents of the streams. Deceived by the rapid motion of the water, he reckoned the distance from the portage to the mouth of the Wisconsin to be forty leagues, or one hundred and twenty miles, whereas General Wool states it to be one hundred and seventy-five; and Mr. Schoolcraft, who ascended the river, estimates the distance at one hundred and eighty-two miles from *Prairie du Chien* to the portage.



with the descriptions of subsequent travellers, and with the actual features of the country through which he passed, as to remove every doubt of its genuineness. The melancholy fate of the author, which followed soon afterwards, was probably the reason why his expedition was not in a more conspicuous manner brought before the public.

In addition to this narrative, nothing is known of Marquette, except what is said of him by Charlevoix.\* After returning from this last expedition, he took up his residence, and pursued the vocation of a missionary, among the Miamis, in the neighborhood of Chicago. While passing by water along the eastern shore of Lake Michigan towards Michilimackinac, he entered a small river, on the 18th of May, 1675. Having landed, he constructed an altar, performed mass, and then retired a short distance into the wood, requesting the two men, who had charge of his canoe, to leave him alone for half an hour. When the time had elapsed, the men went to seek for him and found him dead. They were greatly surprised, as they had not discovered any symptoms of illness; but they remembered, that, when he was entering the river, he expressed a presentiment that his voyage would end there. To this day the river retains the name of *Marquette*. The place of his grave, near its bank, is still pointed out to the traveller; but his remains were removed the year after his death to Michillimackinac.

The manuscript of Father Marquette, containing

\* "Histoire de Nouvelle France," Tom. III. p. 314.



the particulars of his voyage, was sent to France, where it fell into the hands of Thevenot, who had recently published a large collection of miscellaneous pieces, entitled, "Relations de divers Voyages Curieux," &c. in two large folio volumes. Having subsequently collected a few other curious tracts, he gave these to the public under the title of "Recueil de Voyages," a small duodecimo volume, printed at Paris in 1681. In this work the Narrative of Marquette first appeared under the title of "Découverte de quelques Pays et Nations de l'Amérique Septentrionale," accompanied with a map. It occupies forty-three pages.

A very defective and erroneous translation was published at London, in 1698, as a supplement to an edition of Hennepin; but it was here thrown into the shade by the pretended discoveries of that mendacious traveller, who, several years after the death of La Salle, falsely assumed to himself the merit of having descended the Mississippi to its mouth. Hennepin was never below the confluence of the Illinois with the Mississippi. By the order of La Salle, and in company with M. Dacan, he went down the former river, and up the latter as high at least as the *Falls of St. Anthony*. This was in 1680, seven years after Marquette's expedition. All the discoveries made by Hennepin were above the mouth of the Wisconsin. He claimed nothing more in the first edition of his work; but, after La Salle's death, he fabricated the tale of his voyage down the Mississippi, and mingled so much falsehood with truth, that it is now difficult to separate the one from the

other. To him belongs the honor, however, of naming the Falls of St. Anthony and the country of Louisiana. It is said by Charlevoix,\* that the name of *Louisiana* was given by La Salle, who descended the Mississippi in the year 1682; but it is doubtful whether it can be found in any printed work before Hennepin's "Description de la Louisiane, Paris, 1683." This contains a dedication to Louis the Fourteenth, adulatory in the extreme, and it is believed the name was given for the same end. In his second edition, which was prepared in Holland, he complains of being neglected by the King of France, and changes the title of his book to "Nouvelle Découverte d'un très Grand Pays situé dans l'Amérique, &c. Utrecht, 1697." To this edition is prefixed a dedication to William the Third, King of Great Britain, more laudatory if possible than the one to Louis. In the Preface he utters bitter invectives against his enemies, who, from his own account, were very numerous; and he endeavors to explain, by a series of puerile and improbable statements, the reasons why he did not claim the discovery of the Mississippi, from the mouth of the Illinois to the Gulf of Mexico, before the death of La Salle.

The publications of Hennepin, the descriptions of the enterprising adventures and discoveries of La Salle, and the premature death of Marquette, were among the principal causes why the services and the *Narrative* of the last were overlooked, and in a measure forgotten. Indeed, they would hardly have escaped from oblivion, had not Charlevoix brought

\* "Histoire," &c. Tom. I. p. 571.

them to light, in his great work on Canada, nearly seventy years after the events.\*

\* There is a curious passage relating to this subject in a volume, entitled "A Description of the English Province of Carolana, by the Spaniards called Florida, and by the French La Louisiane; by Daniel Coxe." This volume was printed at London in 1722, and contains a full description of the country bordering on the Mississippi. The author's father claimed a large territory in Louisiana by virtue of a charter, which had been granted to Sir Robert Heath by King Charles the First. He endeavors to prove, that the English discovered the country before the French, and among other proofs he adduces the following:

"In the year 1678, a considerable number of persons went from New England upon discovery, and proceeded as far as New Mexico, one hundred and fifty leagues beyond the river Mississippi; and on their return rendered an account to the government of Boston, as will be attested, among others, by Colonel Dudley, then one of the magistrates, afterwards Governor of New England, and at present Deputy-Governor of the Isle of Wight, under the Honorable the Lord Cutts. The war soon after breaking out between the English and the Indians, many of the Indians, who were in that expedition, retreated to Canada, from whom Monsieur La Salle received most of his information concerning that country, by him afterwards more fully discovered. And they served him for guides and interpreters, as is attested by Monsieur Le Tonty, who accompanied Monsieur La Salle; as also by Monsieur Le Clerc, in a book published by order of the French King."—p. 117.

This extract is from a memorial presented to King William, in favor of Coxe's claim, in the year 1699. The Attorney-General reported that Coxe's title was good in law.

The substance of the above paragraph is repeated in a pamphlet, published in the year 1762, after the preliminaries of peace between England and France had been made known, and entitled "An Impartial Inquiry into the Right of the French King to the Territory west of the Great River Mississippi, in North America, not ceded by the Preliminaries; including a Summary Account of the River and the Country adjacent." It is stated in this pamphlet, that, "in the year 1678, some New England men went on discovery, and proceeded the whole length of the southern coast of the continent as far as Mexico; at their return rendering an account of their proceedings to the government of Boston.—p. 53. How far these statements are borne out by other testimony, I have not had the means of ascertaining; but, if they are correct, the



The narrative itself is written in a terse, simple, and unpretending style. The author relates what occurs, and describes what he sees, without embellishment or display. He writes as a scholar, and as a man of careful observation and practical sense. There is no tendency to exaggeration, nor any attempt to magnify the difficulties he had to encounter, or the importance of his discoveries. In every point of view this tract is one of the most interesting among those which illustrate the early history of America.

Marquette's map, attached to the *Narrative* in Thevenot's "Recueil," is unquestionably the first that was ever published of the Mississippi River. In this light it is extremely curious; but it is also valuable as confirming the genuineness of the Narrative. It was impossible to construct it without having seen the principal objects delineated. The five great rivers, Arkansas, Ohio, Missouri, Illinois, and Wisconsin, in regard to their relative positions and general courses, are placed with a considerable degree of accuracy. Several names are entered on the map which are still retained, and near the same places, with slight differences in the orthography. The Wisconsin (or, as the French write it, *Ouisconsin*) is written "*Missiousing*" in the map. It is "*Mescousin*" in the Narrative, perhaps by a typographical mistake for "*Mesconsin*." The Missouri, it is true, is named in the Narrative "*Pekitanoni*,"

lower waters of the Mississippi were discovered and crossed by these adventurers from Massachusetts, four years before the river was descended by La Salle, and five years after the upper waters had been discovered by Marquette.



which it may at that time have been called by the natives; but in the map a village is placed on the bank of that river called "*Oumissouri*."

The Ohio River is named "*Ouabouquigou*," in which we may see the elements of *Ouabache*, which name it retains in all the early French maps, the river itself being denominated by what is now regarded as one of its principal branches.

The Arkansas is not named on the map, but in the Narrative we are told of the village of "*Akamsca*," near the banks of that river, which is evidently the same name.

To the northward of the Arkansas is a place on the map called "*Metchigamea*." The same name is found to this day on French maps, applied to a lake very near the same place, and a little to the northward of the River St. Francis.

It should be kept in mind, that this map was published at Paris in the year 1681, and consequently the year before the discoveries of La Salle on the Mississippi, and that no intelligence respecting the country it represents could then have been obtained from any source subsequently to the voyage of Marquette. There is a slight error in the map in regard to the dotted line marked "*Chemin du retour*," because the Narrative is very explicit in stating that the voyagers returned up a river, which, from the description given of it, could be no other than the Illinois. This dotted line, therefore, must have been a conjectural addition.

M. Joliet separated from Marquette at Green Bay and returned to Montreal. In passing the rapids,

just before he reached that city, his canoe was upset, and his journal and all his other papers were lost. He dictated a few particulars relative to his voyage down the Mississippi amounting to no more than three or four pages, which were published, and which agree, as far as they extend, with Father Marquette's Narrative.

In Francis de Creux's "Historia Canadensis" is a map of Canada, which purports to have been drawn in 1660. It includes the Island of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and New England, extending to the westward so far as to take in a small part of Lakes Superior and Michigan. The latter is called *Lacus Magnus Algonquiorum*. The river St. Lawrence and its branches, and the Lakes Ontario, Erie, and Huron, are well delineated on this map; but it does not cover any part of the territory embraced in the one which accompanies the Narrative of Marquette. As before said, this map is manifestly original, and the first that was sketched of the Mississippi and its great tributary streams.

**LIFE OF**  
**ROBERT CAVELIER DE LA SALLE**

**BY**

**JARED SPARKS**

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## P R E F A C E

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AMONG the discoverers of the interior of North America, none has been more distinguished, either for the boldness of his designs or for resolution and enterprise, than the Sieur de la Salle. Although the period of a century and a-half has elapsed since his discoveries, yet no connected account of them has been written, except the brief sketches which have appeared in the general histories of the country. The untimely and disastrous termination of his career, before he had completely attained the great objects to which he had devoted twenty years of his life, connected with the political events immediately following, may account for the neglect of his countrymen to render the tribute of justice to his name and services which they would seem to have deserved. However this may be, these causes are no longer worthy of consideration; the events of his life form a part of our history; and his memory and deeds claim a conspicuous place among those of the early pioneers of civilization in North America.

The writers, from whom the particulars of the following narration have been drawn, are Marquette, Hennepin, Le Clercq, Tonty, Joutel, and Charlevoix. These authorities are entitled to various degrees of

credit, and it has been a task of some difficulty to reconcile their conflicting statements, and to arrange the events in their appropriate order. Marquette preceded La Salle in the discovery of the Mississippi, and his narrative has been consulted only for a few preliminary facts. Hennepin, Tonty, and Joutel were companions of La Salle, and profess to describe what they saw; Le Clercq and Charlevoix rely on the descriptions of others.

Hennepin's publications are so fully considered in the body of the following memoir that it is unnecessary to speak of them in this place. The story of his descending from the Illinois to the mouth of the Mississippi is unquestionably a fabrication.

The two volumes by Le Clercq are mainly devoted to a history of the labors of the missionaries in Canada, particularly those of the Recollets; but in the second volume he introduces an account of the discoveries of La Salle. His materials were the manuscript letters of Father Zenobe, who accompanied La Salle to the mouth of the Mississippi, and of Father Anastase, who was with him during his last voyage, and stood by his side at the time of his death. Le Clercq often transcribes the language of these manuscript letters, and thus invests his narrative with the highest authority. Viewed in this light, and as containing many incidents not mentioned by any other writer, this book may be regarded as one of the best that treats upon the subject.

The work ascribed to Tonty cannot be trusted as a record of historical facts. It was published in Paris, without his approbation or knowledge, while

he was in America. There can be no reasonable doubt that Tonty furnished notes, which became the basis of the work bearing his name; and, if we may judge of his character from the representations of his contemporaries, it would be unjust to lay to his charge the innumerable errors with which it abounds. But these notes fell into the hands of a writer in Paris who held a ready pen, and was endowed with a most fertile imagination; and he infused his own inventions so copiously into the text of Tonty, that the task would now be utterly hopeless of selecting the true from the false, the real from the fictitious, except so far as any particular passages may be confirmed by other authorities. There are perpetual conflicts and transpositions of dates, and blunders in geography, which could not have escaped from a writer on the spot engaged in the scenes he describes. For instance, Tonty is made to say, that, with twenty men in canoes, he passed in three days from Niagara through the Lakes Erie, Huron, and Michigan, to the River St. Joseph. Mistakes of this sort often occur. It may be added, moreover, that Tonty himself, who lived several years after the publication of this work, declared to Iberville and Father Marest, that it was not written by him, but by a "Parisian adventurer," whose stimulating motive was money.

An account of La Salle's last voyage and its disastrous results was published twenty-six years after his death, as drawn up by Joutel, one of his companions. Although he wrote chiefly from recollection, yet he is allowed the merit of fidelity in relating what he saw, and internal evidence sanctions this

award. The narrative of Father Anastase, contained in the second volume of *Le Clercq*, supplies many interesting particulars, which did not come under the observation of Joutel.

The principal events in the life of La Salle are related by Charlevoix in different parts of his "History of New France." This historian had access to authentic materials, and, in the main, he was doubtless an honest chronicler; yet he possessed one foible from which greater minds have not always been free. His opinions on some subjects were tinged with the jaundiced hues of prejudice. He belonged to the Order of Jesuits, and through his optics the labors and writings of such ecclesiastics as did not come within the pale of this renowned fraternity appeared diminutive and worthy of little notice. Now, all the missionaries, who accompanied La Salle, from the beginning to the end of his discoveries, and who wrote concerning them, were of the Franciscan Order. If Charlevoix ever read their books, it was in so superficial a manner that he derived little profit from them in the composition of his History. By thus avoiding to consult the only authors, except Joutel, who wrote from personal knowledge, he has fallen into anachronisms and errors in his sketches of the life of La Salle which an unbiassed judgment, and a research conducted upon a more liberal spirit, would have enabled him to escape.

Some important facts, it may be added, have been derived from original papers procured in the archives of the Marine Department at Paris.



# ROBERT DE LA SALLE

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## CHAPTER I

**First Discovery of the Mississippi.—Robert Cavelier de la Salle.—Passes eight Years in Canada.—Obtains Letters-Patent from the King.—Builds Fort Frontenac.—Obtains additional Letters-Patent for making new Discoveries.**

MORE than half-a-century had elapsed, from the time of the first settlements in Canada, before French enterprise extended itself to the westward of the Great Lakes. At an early day the pious zeal of the missionaries had planted the cross among the Hurons, on the southern shores of the lake of that name, but it was long before the tide of civilization advanced beyond the Island of Montreal. Unceasing wars with the powerful nations of the Iroquois employed the attention and exhausted the resources of the colonial government. Led by a spirit of adventure, as well as of gain, a few traders penetrated the interior, crossed the lakes, and brought back intelligence of the Indians, who wandered over the boundless regions of the west.

At length, in the year 1665, the resolute ardor of Father Allouez, a Jesuit missionary, prompted him to undertake the hazardous undertaking of executing his mission in these remote and unknown countries.

Arrived at the Falls of St. Mary, he threw himself boldly among the savages, relying on his powers of persuasion to win their confidence, and on the purity of his motives to secure success. His hopes were not disappointed. He visited the tribes on the southern borders of Lake Superior, and was everywhere received with kindness. Three years afterwards, he was joined by Marquette and Dablon; and, during the five succeeding years, these courageous missionaries explored the territory between Lake Superior and the southern extremity of Lake Michigan, fulfilling their vocation as messengers of Christianity with a devotedness and self-sacrifice rarely surpassed, preaching to numerous native tribes, and subduing their wild hearts by gentleness of manners, and by inculcating the mild precepts of the Gospel. They likewise established the posts of Mackinac, St. Mary's, and Green Bay, which soon became the first rallying-points of civilization on the Upper Lakes.

From the Indians, who came from the west, these missionaries heard of the River *Mississippi*, meaning, in the language of the aborigines, the *Great River*, a word variously written by the early French authors, according as the sound was caught by different ears from the pronunciation of the Indians. Curiosity was excited by the reports of the natives concerning the magnitude and course of this river. So large a stream must find its way to the ocean. Conjecture was awake as to the direction it pursued and the place of its outlet. Some supposed that it disembogued itself into the Vermilion Sea, since known as the Gulf of California; others, that it

poured its waters into the Gulf of Mexico; and others again, that it flowed into the Atlantic Ocean somewhere along the coast of Virginia or Florida. Such was at that time the entire ignorance of the geography of the vast regions beyond the Alleghany Mountains.

The vague information collected by the missionaries was communicated to the authorities at Quebec. M. Talon, the Intendant-General of Canada, a man of intelligence, enterprise, and large designs, resolved to send a party to explore the Great River, for the double purpose of solving an important geographical problem, and of extending the power of France in the New World by the right of prior discovery. As leaders of the expedition he selected Father Marquette, the missionary, and M. Joliet, a citizen of Quebec. Attended by five other Frenchmen, they left the Island of Mackinac, in two bark canoes, in the month of May, 1673, ascended the Fox River from Green Bay, passed thence across the portage to the Wisconsin, proceeded down that river, and in a few days found themselves floating on the broad waters of the Mississippi. Yielding to the current of this majestic stream, and stopping occasionally to hold peaceful intercourse with the natives on its banks, they continued their adventurous voyage to Arkansas, a distance of about eleven hundred miles from the mouth of the Wisconsin.

At this point, being convinced by the general course of the river that it flowed into the Gulf of Mexico, and having accomplished the main objects of their expedition, they resolved to return. Ascend-

ing the Mississippi to the mouth of the Illinois, they passed up that river, thence to Green Bay, where they arrived at the end of four months from the date of their departure, having gone over a distance, in their whole route, of at least two thousand, five hundred miles. Marquette's narrative of this expedition, written without pretension or parade, and with a fidelity in the description of natural objects, which, although published after his death, confirms its genuineness and accuracy, is among the most valuable and interesting contributions to the early historical literature of America.

Owing to the premature and lamented death of Marquette, however, and to the departure of M. Talon from Canada, no results of moment seem to have issued from these discoveries. But while Marquette was wafting in his bark canoe upon the waters of the Mississippi, discovering countries and gazing at wonders hitherto unknown to the civilized world, there was a man on the banks of the St. Lawrence, whose deep thoughts were brooding over projects of peril and adventure, which he was destined at a future day to put in execution. ROBERT CAVELIER DE LA SALLE came to Canada about the year 1667. He was a native of Rouen, in Normandy. Of the day of his birth no record has been preserved. It is only related that he was of a good family, and that he spent ten or twelve of his earlier years in a seminary of the Jesuits, where he acquired an accomplished education, particularly in mathematics and physical sciences, as they were taught at that day. A career seems to have been marked out for him in



the church, since he received no share in the distribution of his father's property. If such plans were formed, it would be in vain to inquire what motives induced him to change them. When he left the seminary, however, his superiors gave him testimonials of an unblemished character, and of their approbation of his conduct during the time he had been under their charge.

The object which first led La Salle into Canada can only be inferred from his subsequent pursuits. For several years no other aim is apparent than that of accumulating a fortune by the Indian trade, consisting chiefly in the barter of European merchandise for beaver skins and other peltries. Considering the means he possessed, however, his operations were on a large scale, and conducted with the same bold spirit of enterprise which afterwards bore him through so many scenes of trial and danger. He pushed forward at once to the frontiers, where he erected trading-houses, and superintended in person the details of his business, freighting his bark canoes and ascending the rapids of the St. Lawrence and other rivers, thereby acquiring a practical skill in the only kind of navigation which then existed on the interior waters of America. In this art the first settlers were everywhere the pupils of the savages. In pursuing his schemes of traffic, La Salle made excursions among the Indian tribes bordering on the shores of Lake Ontario, and among the Hurons farther to the north, gaining a knowledge of their modes of life, manners, resources, and language.

While thus employed, his thoughts were roaming

far beyond the sphere of his immediate occupations. Speculative minds in Europe had long been dreaming of a shorter way to China and Japan across the North American continent. The fervid imagination of La Salle was easily kindled by these dreams. The vast extent of the Great Lakes, which was then beginning to be made known, appeared to him a confirmation of this idea, as he did not doubt, that at their western extremities would be found the heads of rivers flowing into the China Seas, or perhaps a chain of other lakes, that would render the communication easy and direct. To commemorate these anticipations he gave the name of La Chine (Lachine) to his trading establishment on the Island of Montreal, a name it has borne to the present day.

Although he saw glowing visions of fame and fortune in so brilliant a discovery, yet he was not so sanguine as to believe it could be effected without more means than he could then command, either by his personal influence or from his own resources. He set himself to learn a lesson of patience, and resolved to wait the favoring tide of opportunity. Meantime, Courcelles, the Governor of Canada, was busy in resisting the hostile inroads of the Iroquois. He built a fort at Sorel, and another at Chambly, and proposed to erect a third at the eastern extremity of Lake Ontario, where the St. Lawrence issues from that lake. This plan was carried out by the Count de Frontenac, his successor in the government, who called a council of Iroquois chiefs at that place, and so far prevailed over their simplicity as to gain their consent, on the grounds that this fort was to be only

a depository of goods, which would facilitate the Indian trade. The fort was constructed of earth and palisades of wood in the year 1672, and called at first Fort Cataraqui, but afterwards honored with the name of its founder. The discerning eye of La Salle perceived that this post offered great advantages for the execution of his projects of traffic and discovery. He aspired to its command. He had the good fortune to win the favor of Frontenac, a man, says Charlevoix, of quick perceptions, talents, and cultivation, but of determined will, absolute temper, and deep-rooted prejudices. Fortified by the countenance of Frontenac, the aspiring adventurer repaired to France, in the year 1675, and laid his proposals before the minister. The capacious genius of Colbert then presided over the finances and marine of France. The colonial affairs were under the control of the marine department.

Colbert had a soul to comprehend the large schemes of La Salle, and their ultimate bearing on the power of France in the New World. We are authorized to believe, also, that La Salle, during his residence of eight years in Canada, had acquired a character which commanded respect and confidence. Louis the Fourteenth acceded to the views of Colbert, and letters-patent were issued, and signed by the king's hand, which granted the government and property of Fort Frontenac to the Sieur de la Salle, with the seigniory of a tract of land around it, on condition that he should rebuild the fort with stone, maintain a garrison there at his own expense, and clear up certain portions of the land. According to



Hennepin, he likewise agreed to reimburse the amount which the Count de Frontenac had paid for constructing the original fort and supporting the garrison. Charlevoix informs us, that La Salle received from the king a patent of nobility, but in what rank or degree he was placed by this patent in the scale of titles does not appear. He was empowered, however, to hold free commerce with the natives, and to pursue his discoveries.

After a few months' detention in France, the new lord of Cataragui returned to Quebec, and repaired immediately to his seigniory. Applying himself diligently to his work, he faithfully performed his part of the contract. In two years' time, the palisades and embankments of the old fort were demolished, and a new one, of much larger dimensions, arose in its place, constructed of stone, with massive walls and four bastions. Trees were felled, fields planted, and the scene was enlivened by vegetable gardens, poultry-yards, and herds of cattle. A few French families had been drawn thither by such temptations as the proprietor could hold out to them; and the Recollet missionaries prevailed on some of the wandering natives to set up their cabins in the neighborhood of the fort, and to allow their children to be taught. A convenient and secure harbor lay within a small distance from the fort, opening into the lake towards the south. Not neglecting his commercial interest, on which, indeed, he depended for the resources to meet his heavy expenditures, La Salle built three small barques with decks, the first of that description which had been seen above the rapids of



the St. Lawrence. With these vessels he could navigate Lake Ontario and traffic with the savages on all its borders.

Having accomplished these undertakings with a despatch and success which afforded a signal proof of his ability and energy, he was now in a condition to turn his thoughts again to his great project of western discovery. After the expedition of Marquette and Joliet, he could not doubt that the Mississippi discharged itself into the Gulf of Mexico. This fact only inflamed him with the more vehement desire to complete the discovery of that river, to be the founder of colonies on its banks, and thus to open a new avenue of trade upon navigable waters between France and the vast countries of the west. Fortune and fame seemed to lie in his path and beckon him onward. Nor were his visions of China and Japan grown less dim or attractive. He still hoped to find a passage to those distant countries from the head-waters of the Mississippi. His achievements at Fort Frontenac were only preparatory to the grand enterprise upon which he had so long set his heart. He had continued to preserve the friendship of the Count de Frontenac, who approved his designs, and proffered his influence to promote them with the court of France. Thus encouraged, the Sieur de la Salle made another voyage to his native country towards the end of the year 1677.

The great Colbert received him as before, and his son, the Marquis de Seignelay, who was now at the head of the marine department, was equally forward in advancing an enterprise which promised so much

for the glory and power of France. With its successful execution these ministers saw almost the whole continent of North America within their grasp. As La Salle asked for no aid in money or supplies from the government, his requests were the more readily complied with. New letters-patent were granted, and signed by the king, May 12th, 1678, confirming his rights to the fort and seigniory of Cataraqui, and bestowing additional privileges and powers. He was authorized to push his discoveries as far as he chose to the westward, and to build forts wherever he should think proper, on the same conditions as he had built Fort Frontenac. To meet the large expense, which he must necessarily incur, the exclusive traffic in buffalo skins was accorded to him while the patent continued, but he was prohibited from trading with the Hurons and other Indians, who usually brought their furs to Montreal. The object of this prohibition was, doubtless, to prevent an interference with the established traders. It does not appear to have extended to the Upper Lakes, or to the westward of those lakes, where La Salle enjoyed the same privilege as others. Buffalo skins had but recently been brought to the Canadian market. He must have heard of the immense numbers of these animals that wandered over the western prairies, and have formed high expectations of the profits of the trade, and of its advantage to French commerce, for this was one of the arguments which he used to the ministers in soliciting his grant. He took some of the skins with him to France as a sample. The cost of transporting so bulky an article to Canada in canoes rendered it

the more important to seek a communication with the sea through the waters of the Mississippi. This consideration was of little moment compared with others, which chiefly weighed upon his mind. He sought wealth apparently as the means of attaining his favorite ends. The love of adventure, the passion for exploring unknown lands, and the ambition of planting colonies and of building up a name which should rival those of the early discoverers and conquerors of the New World, these were the motives which kindled the aspirations and wrought upon the strong heart of La Salle.

Among the men of rank who promoted his application to the French court was the Prince de Conti. By the recommendation of this nobleman, La Salle took into his employ the Chevalier de Tonty, an Italian by birth, who had been for several years in the French army, and had lost a hand in the service. This selection proved fortunate. Tonty was a man of capacity, courage, and resolution, and he continued true to the interests of his employer to the last, both as an officer and a friend.\* Two months after receiving his patent, the Sieur de la Salle sailed from Rochelle, accompanied by Tonty, the Sieur de la Motte, a pilot, mariners, ship-carpenters, and other workmen, in all about thirty persons. He also freighted the ship with anchors, cordage, and other materials necessary for rigging small vessels, which he designed to construct for the navigation of the

\* In some authors the name retains its Italian dress, *Tonti*; but I have seen an autograph written *Henry de Tonty*. He was a son of the Italian financier, who invented the *Tontine*, a method of life insurance adopted in France.

lakes. To these was added a quantity of arms and merchandise. With this equipage he arrived at Quebec near the end of September. Remaining there no longer than was necessary to arrange his affairs, he hastened forward, with the whole of his company, to Fort Frontenac, having succeeded, with great labor and difficulty, in conducting his heavy-laden canoes up the dangerous rapids of the St. Lawrence.



## CHAPTER II

Recollet Missionaries in Canada.—La Salle prepares for his Voyage of Discovery.—Builds a Vessel of sixty tons above the Falls of Niagara.—Sails through the Lakes to Mackinac.

FROM the date of the original settlement of Canada, the missionaries performed a distinguished part in paving the way to an intercourse with the Indians, and on many occasions in tempering the ferocity of those wild men of the forest. This work of self-sacrifice and pious zeal was at first shared between the Jesuits and Recollets, a branch of the Franciscan stock; but at an early day the Jesuits had the address to exclude their brethren of a different order, and for nearly forty years the Canadian mission was wholly under their control. This unbrotherly act was deeply bewailed by the Recollets, as appears in the narrative of Father Le Cercq, one of their number, who unveils the secret machinations, political and theological, by which the event was brought about. During this period were published the numerous volumes of "Relations," which consist of the annual reports of the Jesuit missionaries in Canada, containing curious incidents of their adventures among the savages, and often matter of historical value.

But the Recollets were not doomed to perpetual lamentations. These disciples of St. Francis were

restored to their privileges in 1670, and Father Gabriel de la Rabourde, with others of his fraternity, came over to Quebec, and established their mission on its former basis. They were favored by the goodwill, if not by the direct encouragement, of the Count de Frontenac. Before the fort of palisades at Catarqui was completed, Father Gabriel was allowed to commence his vocation at that place, and the mission continued under his direction or that of his associates. Although La Salle had received his education at the hands of the Jesuits, and had lived with them for many years, yet his predilections seem to have leaned towards the Recollets. From them he chose the spiritual guides who were to accompany him in his discoveries. When he arrived at Fort Frontenac, he found Fathers Gabriel, Louis Hennepin, and Zenobe Membré, awaiting his orders; and also Luke Buisset and Melithon Watteau, the former destined for the missionary station at the fort, and the latter for that at Niagara. They were all natives of the Spanish Netherlands. The most renowned of these Fathers was Hennepin, who has figured in the literary world, and who will often appear in the course of this narrative. He came to Canada in the same vessel with the Sieur de la Salle, when returning after his first voyage to France; and from that time he had been employed as a missionary at Fort Frontenac, or in rambling among the Iroquois. In some of these excursions he visited Albany, then called New Orange, and other frontier settlements of New York. Being of a restless temper, it was not his humor to remain long in the same place.

The season being now far advanced in this northern climate, La Salle made all haste to begin the preparations for his great enterprise, which he resolved to set on foot as early as possible in the following Spring or summer. A vessel was to be built and equipped above the Falls of Niagara, in which he could navigate the Upper Lakes; and this arduous task was to be accomplished in the heart of winter, by a few men, at a distance of several hundred miles from any civilized settlement, who were to construct and guard their own habitations, surrounded by savages, who looked with no approving eye upon these strange inroads into their ancient domains.

It will be remembered that three small vessels with decks had been built at Fort Frontenac the year before. On the 18th of November, one of these vessels, a brigantine of ten tons, was despatched to Niagara, with workmen on board, and laden with provisions, and the implements and materials necessary for ship-building. Tonty was at the head of this party, accompanied by La Motte and Hennepin. To screen their slender craft from the northwest winds by the protection of a lee shore, they laid their course along the northern coast of the lake, making slow progress, and running aground two or three times in attempting to sail up a river. They stopped at an Indian village near the present town of Toronto, where they procured from the natives a supply of corn. Steering thence across the upper end of the lake, they encountered headwinds and bad weather, and anchored on one occasion five leagues from the land; but they had the good fortune, on the 6th of December, to

furl their sails in the mouth of the Niagara River. Here they found a cluster of Indian cabins, the tenants of which were not destitute of the virtue of hospitality, for they regaled their unexpected visitors with a repast of excellent white-fish, which were caught in great abundance at that place.

The next day, a party went up the river, in a canoe, as far as the hills near the present site of Queenstown; but, the current being too rapid to permit them to ascend higher, they left their canoe, and proceeded by land around the Falls to the Chipeway River, where they encamped for the night. The snow was now a foot deep. They were searching for a place above the Falls in which a vessel might be built and launched, and taken thence into Lake Erie. Returning to the mouth of the river, they found their brigantine in danger from the floating ice, and with infinite labor they brought it up to the foot of the cliffs, and dragged it ashore. This position was selected as suitable for a fort, and they began to set up palisades and erect cabins necessary for their immediate protection against the Indians, as well as against the severity of the weather. The frozen ground, covered with snow, rendered this task tedious and difficult.

To prosecute with any hope of success the design of building a fort and a ship on the waters of the Niagara, it was essential to have the approbation and good-will of the surrounding Indians. The powerful nation of the Senecas resided in the vicinity. La Motte had orders from the Sieur de la Salle to go on an embassy to this nation, hold a council with the



chiefs, explain his objects, and gain their consent. Accompanied by Father Hennepin and seven men well-armed, he travelled about thirty leagues through the woods, and came to the great village of the Senecas. A council-fire was kindled, around which the Indians assembled with their accustomed gravity, speeches were delivered on both sides, and the French, by a profusion of presents and a promise to establish a blacksmith at Niagara, who should repair the Indians' guns, at last gained their point. La Motte and his companions went back well satisfied to Niagara; and here he disappears from the scene. The hardships which thronged around him in the path of new discoveries were more than he had resolution to encounter, and he returned to a life of repose in Quebec.

Tonty remained firm at his post, and on the 20th of January, the whole party, who still lingered within their encampment of palisades, were cheered by the voice of La Salle himself, who had come from Fort Frontenac in one of his small vessels, laden with provisions, merchandise, and materials for rigging the new ship, which was destined to be the first to plough the waves of the great western lakes. The clouds of misfortune, however, began already to hang over his prospects, and to cast a gloom upon the future that might have disheartened any man of a less ardent temperament and resolute spirit. By the dissension of two pilots the brigantine was cast away on the southern shore of Lake Ontario, and it was with difficulty that the anchors and rigging were saved. Several bark canoes, with the goods and provisions on board, were wrecked and lost.

On his passage, La Salle had made a visit in person to the Seneca Indians, and he flattered himself that he had so far won their favor that they would not embarrass his operations. It is to be considered that it was not the suspicious temper alone of the Indians with which he had to contend. The monopoly which he had gained from the government, the many advantages which this monopoly gave him, and the large scale upon which he conducted his affairs, raised against him a host of enemies among the traders and merchants of Canada. These men endeavored to thwart his designs, and the easiest way of effecting this end was to stir up the jealousy of the savages, by representing that his plan of building forts and ships on their borders was intended only to command their trade, by dictating the terms and curbing their power. Agents were sent among the Indians to scatter reports of this nature, and to sow the seeds of hostility.

These artifices were well known to La Salle. He was on his guard, but was not deterred for a moment in pursuing his objects. He did not, however, press the point of constructing a permanent fort at Niagara. This was not necessary to his immediate purpose. His present aim was to push forward with all speed to the west, and he lost no time in making preparation for his voyage. The place for a dock-yard was selected about two leagues above the Falls, at the outlet of a creek on the western side of Niagara River. Here the keel of a vessel was laid, six days after his arrival, and he drove the first bolt with his own hand.

Having made the arrangements for prosecuting the work, he hastened back to Fort Frontenac, leaving Tonty in command. His affairs required his presence at the fort, for it must be kept in mind that the expedition was to be carried on wholly at his own expense; and the funds were to be raised by his credit, and by such thrift in traffic as his skill and means would allow. Setting off with two men, he performed the journey by land, a distance of nearly three hundred miles, through the country of the Five Nations. A sack of parched corn constituted his stock of provisions. The two men and a dog dragged his baggage over the frozen snow and ice.

It should be mentioned that, some weeks previously, he had despatched fifteen men in canoes, with orders to proceed through the lakes to Mackinac and other islands in that vicinity, and thence to the Illinois country at the south end of Lake Michigan. These men were supplied with merchandise, to trade with the natives for furs and skins. It was also expected that they would collect provisions at different posts; and they were to await the arrival of the Sieur de la Salle with his exploring company.

Meantime the shipbuilders applied themselves with diligence to their task, under the direction of Tonty. The savages excited alarm now and then by hovering around and sometimes entering the encampment with less ceremony than beseemed well-disposed visitors. An Indian woman brought them intelligence that a plot was laid to burn the vessel while it was on the stocks. Again, the provisions on board the brigantine having been lost, a scarcity was feared, espe-



cially as the Indians would not sell their corn. Two eastern Indians, however, employed as hunters, were so successful in their calling as to furnish seasonable supplies of fresh deer and game. Notwithstanding this resource, the sufferings of the men from cold and privation, and their apprehension of savage tomahawks, betrayed them into occasional symptoms of discontent. Father Hennepin takes credit to himself for allaying their fears, and soothing their anxieties, by the exhortations which he proffered to them as supplements to his sermons.

However this may be, the work went rapidly forward, and in good time the ship was launched, to the great joy of all. The event was commemorated by the firing of three guns. The vessel was named the *Griffin*, in compliment to the Count de Frontenac, whose armorial bearings were adorned by two griffins as supporters.

The men swung their hammocks under the deck, secure in their floating fortification from the intrusion of the savages. No wonder that from this time they were cheered with more buoyant spirits and flushed with brighter hopes. The ship was completely finished, rigged, and equipped within six months from the day on which the keel was laid. The ornamental parts were not forgotten. A griffin, with expanded wings, surmounted by an eagle, sat on the prow. Five small guns, two of brass, and three arquebuses, were the arms of defence. The burden was sixty tons. The success with which this undertaking had been carried through, in the face of so many obstacles and embarrassments, was credit-



able to the ability of the Chevalier de Tonty, and to his skill in command. Hitherto the current of the river above the Falls had been untried, and the navigators of the *Griffin* did not venture to trust their sails in making this new experiment. The vessel was cautiously towed along the shore, and moored in safety within three miles of Lake Erie.

During this period, the Sieur de la Salle remained at Fort Frontenac, attending to his commercial and other affairs. It required no small degree of vigilance to counteract the manœuvres of his enemies, who were bent on defeating all his plans. They spread reports that he was about to engage in a most hazardous adventure, the expenses of which were enormous, and from which there could be little hope of his ever returning, and that his visionary schemes and unyielding temper would ruin himself and all concerned with him. These rumors alarmed his creditors in Montreal and Quebec, who seized upon his effects there, and sold them at a great loss to their owner. There was no remedy for these vexations; the delay in rectifying them would effect the very object at which the instigators aimed; and he submitted to them with patience; although his property of Fort Frontenac and the lands around it, which he must necessarily leave behind him, was in value more than double the amount of all his debts.

Before leaving Fort Frontenac, he performed an act of generosity to the Recollets, who were about to depart with him, by making a perpetual grant to their Order. He had already built houses and a chapel for their accommodation, and he now, by a

legal instrument, drawn up and attested by his notary, La Metairie, gave to the Order of Recollets eighteen acres of land on the margin of the lake near the fort, and a hundred acres more of forest land.

Hearing that his ship was ready, he hastened to Niagara, skirting along the southern shore of Lake Ontario in a canoe, and stopping by the way to cement his friendship with the Iroquois by new presents and promises. Arriving at the ship, he was rejoiced to find all preparations in forwardness, and the men in good spirits. The wind not being strong enough for a few days to encourage the attempt to surmount the rapids at the head of the Niagara River, the time was employed in grubbing up the soil and planting seeds. At length, advantage being taken of a favorable wind, with the aid of twelve men pulling by a rope on the shore, the ship escaped all danger, and floated triumphantly on the waters of Lake Erie. The brass cannon, the arquebuses, and a volley of firearms, attested the joy which this occasion inspired; the forests resounded with the acclamations of the men; and the Indians gazed with mute astonishment at so novel a scene.

The company now assembled on the deck of the *Griffin* amounted in all to thirty-four. The three missionaries, the venerable Father Ribourde, the erratic Hennepin, and the amiable Zenobe, were at their posts. A small party was left at Niagara under the spiritual charge of Father Melithon Watteau. The Chevalier de Tonty had been sent forward some time before, with five men in canoes, instructed to proceed to Mackinac, and look after the fifteen men,

whom La Salle had despatched thither in the autumn preceding for purposes of trade.

On the 7th of August, 1679, the sails of the *Griffin* were spread to the winds of Lake Erie, and our adventurers committed their destiny to the great waters. Confiding in the strength of their vessel, and the skill of the mariners, they sailed fearlessly into the lake, and shaped their course by the compass. The voyage was prosperous. On the third day were descried the islands at the mouth of the strait leading to Lake Huron. In sailing up this strait, hitherto not explored except with canoes, more caution was necessary, but they ran safely through it in thirteen days. The small lake, which they crossed in their way, they called St. Claire, in honor of the saint whose name appears in the calendar for the day on which they entered it. By frequent soundings and other precautions, they passed without accident over the shallow waters of the strait near its northern extremity, till their sails at last caught the breezes of Lake Huron.

Standing thus on an open sea, they felt more secure, and with good heart turned the prow towards the port of their destination. With the usual vicissitudes of headwinds and calms, they advanced slowly, but without danger, till a terrible tempest arose which filled the boldest mariners with dismay. Hennepin tells us that even the resolute soul of La Salle quailed before the horrors that surrounded him. Joining with the others in fervent prayers to St. Anthony of Padua, he made a vow, that, if he should be delivered out of these perils, the first chapel

erected in his newly-discovered countries should be dedicated to that great saint.\* The pilot was the only man among them whose devotions were not quickened by these appalling scenes. He poured out his complaints upon La Salle, as the author of these calamities, and bewailed the sad fate, by which, after the glory he had gained in braving the storms and rage of the ocean in every clime, he was now doomed to perish in a fresh-water lake. Happily the winds abated, the billows ceased to roll, and, on the 27th of August, a favoring breeze wafted the *Griffin* into a placid bay in the Island of Mackinac.

\* Hennepin's "Description de la Louisiane," p. 58. Le Clercq's "Etablissement de la Foy" (Establishment of the Faith), p. 148.



## CHAPTER III

Sails to an Island at the Entrance of Green Bay.—Proceeds on his Voyage in Canoes along the Western Shore of Lake Michigan.—Disasters of the Voyage.—Meets a Party of Indians, who threaten Hostilities.—Arrives at the Miamis River.

It was the first purpose of our voyagers to make a favorable impression upon the Indians, whose friendship was essential to their success. These sons of the forest looked with wonder at the ship, the first they had ever seen, which they called the *great wooden canoe*; and their astonishment was increased when they went on board and heard the roar of the cannon. The Sieur de la Salle, clothed in a scarlet cloak edged with gold, and attended by some of his men well dressed and armed, made a visit of ceremony to the head-men of the village, where he was received and entertained with much civility, and where the missionaries celebrated mass.

On the opposite shore of the strait, which separates Mackinac from Michigan, was a settlement of Hurons, which Father Marquette had gathered at that place several years before. Their habitations stood on an eminence, and were surrounded by palisades. They had already made such progress in civilization that they understood the use of firearms, which they had procured from the French traders, and they saluted the commander of the great canoe

with three rounds from all their guns. This show of civility, however, was more politic than sincere, for their friendly dispositions were no further manifested.

In fact, La Salle soon discovered that the zeal of his enemies in Canada had been exceedingly active against him during the summer, and that they had taken pains, by their emissaries, to poison the minds of the Indians and traders in all that region. They had represented him as having a design, not only to monopolize the trade in furs and skins, but to invade and subdue the natives. Reports of this nature occasioned suspicion, and put them on their guard. These machinations operated to his disadvantage in another quarter. The fifteen men, whom he had sent forward to barter and collect provisions had been tampered with and seduced from their duty. Instead of going to the Illinois, as they were ordered, they had wasted the time at Mackinac, and on the islands and coasts in the neighborhood. Some had deserted, and others had squandered a part of the merchandise with which they were furnished for traffic. Tonty, who reached Mackinac in a canoe some time before the vessel arrived, had been unable to find them all, or to satisfy the disaffected at that place.

These disappointments were discouraging, but they could not be remedied, and the season was too far advanced to admit of delay. It was known that some of the deserters had gone to the Falls of St. Mary, and others to the Indian villages in that direction on the western shores of Lake Huron. These men were important to the success of the expedition,

and Tonty was sent with a small party in canoes to search for them, and prevail on them to return to the service. Moreover, a few of them, it was believed, were true to their engagements, and were detained in carrying on their trade with the natives.

Meantime the sails of the *Griffin* were again spread to the wind. Passing through the strait between Mackinac and the mainland on the opposite side, the explorers entered the broad expanse of Lake Michigan, and, coasting along its northern borders, after a prosperous voyage of somewhat more than a hundred miles, they cast anchor in a small island at the mouth of Green Bay. This island was inhabited by Pottawatimies, being a portion of a tribe of Indians of that name residing in the Wisconsin territory. And here the Sieur de la Salle had the good luck to meet with several of his men, who had been diligent in collecting furs, and had laid up a large quantity in store.

With these furs, and others that might be procured at Mackinac, and at the different posts on the passage, he resolved to freight his ship, and send her back to Niagara, for the purpose of making a remittance to his creditors. This was apparently a sudden resolution, and not satisfactory to his people, who must thenceforth pursue their route in canoes, exposed to numerous hardships and dangers; and in the end it proved extremely unfortunate. But he seldom asked counsel of any person, and was not easily diverted from an object upon which he had set his mind. Besides, he doubtless thought that his men could not reasonably complain of hardships,

which he was to share in the same measure as all the others. Within two weeks after their arrival at the island, the vessel sailed, having on board the pilot and five mariners bound for Niagara. The pilot was ordered to come back as soon as possible, and pursue his voyage to the mouth of the Miamis River, at the southeastern extremity of Lake Michigan.

The company now remaining consisted of fourteen persons. These were to be transported along the west side of Lake Michigan in four bark canoes, which were likewise laden with a blacksmith's forge, carpenters' tools, utensils of various kinds, merchandise, and arms. A small stock of provisions only was laid in, because it was expected that supplies would be obtained on the way from the Indians, and by the hunters whenever they landed. In all his travels, La Salle seems to have been accompanied by a faithful Indian from some of the eastern tribes, who served him in the double capacity of footman and hunter, being exceedingly expert in the use of his gun and in searching for game, and on whose skill and activity he and his companions often depended for subsistence.

All the preparations being made, they took their departure from the island on the 19th of September. Nightfall came on before they reached the nearest point of the continent, which was twelve miles distant. Darkness thickened, the waves rose, and the water dashed into the canoes; but they contrived to keep together, and to find a landing-place in the morning. Here they were detained four days in a barren spot, till the lake became calm. A single



porcupine was the only trophy that rewarded the hunter's fatiguing rambles, which Father Hennepin says afforded a savory relish to their pumpkins and corn. Trusting their fragile canoes again to the waves, they were soon overtaken by new disasters. Clouds gathered over them, the winds blew angrily, and, deluged with rain and sleet, they were glad to seek safety on a naked rock for two days, with no other shelter than their blankets. At the end of another day, they were in so great danger in attempting to land that the Sieur de la Salle leaped into the water with his men, and assisted them to drag his canoe ashore. His example was followed by those in the other canoes. They landed somewhere in the neighborhood of the River Milwaukie.

By this time the provisions were exhausted, but they had seen Indians, and presumed their habitations were near. Three men were sent, with the calumet of peace, to search for corn. They came to a deserted village, where they found abundance of corn, of which they took as much as they wanted, and left such articles as the natives valued in exchange. Before night the Indians hovered suspiciously around the party at the canoes; but, when the calumet of peace was presented, they showed themselves friends, and entertained their visitors with dances and songs. They were so well satisfied with the goods left in the village that the next day they brought more corn and a supply of deer, for which they were amply rewarded.

This proof of human sympathy, even from men called savages, was a sunbeam in the path of the

weary voyagers. Their troubles, however, were not at an end. Launching their canoes again upon the water, they were doomed to wage the same hard conflict with the angry elements; at times dragging their canoes upon the rocks to escape the fury of the waves, and at other times pulling them ashore through the foaming surf, with the spray beating over their heads. Such were the perils to which they were exposed, and the sufferings they endured, almost without cessation, till they reached the end of the lake, and turned their course eastward. Here the waters were more tranquil, and on the land they could regale themselves with the flesh of deer and wild turkeys, which fell an easy prey to the hunters. Grape vines hung in graceful festoons from the tall forest trees, loaded with clusters of ripe fruit, which was gathered by cutting down the trees. At length, to enjoy a little repose, they went ashore on a small peninsula, and drew their canoes upon the beach.

The footprints of men had been seen near this place, which indicated that Indians were not far off. At present La Salle had no desire to make their acquaintance. He gave express orders that every one should keep quiet, and be on his guard. But one of the men, seeing a bear in a tree, could not resist so tempting an opportunity to try his gun, and he shot the bear dead, and dragged him in triumph to the camp. These animals climbed the trees to feast on the grapes. La Salle was vexed at this piece of indiscretion in the man, and, to avoid surprise, placed a sentinel near the canoes, which had been turned bottom upwards to screen the goods under them from the rain.

The noise of the gun was heard by the savages, who proved to be a roving party of Outtagamies, or Fox Indians, from Green Bay, apparently on a hunting excursion. In the night several of them crept silently by the camp, and came to the canoes, where they succeeded in stealing a coat and some other articles before they were discovered. The alarm was given, and the Frenchmen flew to their arms. The Indians then cried out that they were friends, and that, hearing the gun, they suspected a party of Iroquois to be in the neighborhood, who, being enemies, could only design to kill them. To ascertain whether their suspicions were correct, they said, was the occasion of their coming so near the camp; and since they found themselves among Frenchmen from Canada, whom they regarded as brethren, they had no disposition to be obtrusive, but, on the contrary, should be well pleased to smoke the calumet of peace. Not caring to embroil himself unnecessarily, the Sieur de la Salle allowed them to depart, telling them that he would receive a visit from four of their number, but no more. Accordingly four old men came to him, smoked their pipes, and proffered friendship.

Not long after they were gone, the theft was detected, which placed matters upon another footing. If such an affront were suffered to pass unnoticed, a repetition of it might be expected, with other insults. La Salle was determined to have satisfaction. He went out with some of his men, and seized two of the Indians, who were strolling in the woods, and brought them back prisoners. One of these he sent



to the chiefs with a message, that, unless the stolen goods were restored, the life of the prisoner remaining in his hands should be the forfeit. This message threw the Indian encampment into a state of great perplexity, for the coat and other articles had been cut into many pieces, and distributed to different individuals, so that the demand could not be complied with. It was finally decided, as the only resort, that they would rescue the prisoner by force. They marched to the attack, but the movement was discovered in time to enable the Frenchmen to advance to an eminence near the sandy plain, which separated the peninsula from the mainland, and to take such a position as the savages were not eager to assail. For a brief space these demonstrations seemed ominous of a conflict; but, the Indians being evidently reluctant to make the assault, and their opponents having nothing to gain by it, there was not much difficulty in coming to a parley, which led to a settlement of the dispute without bloodshed or blows. Father Hennepin, as usual, plumes himself upon this happy issue of events, ascribing it to his valor and presence of mind in going boldly among the Indians, in the face of their war-clubs and tomahawks, and presenting himself as a mediator and peace-maker. He had seen battles and sieges in Flanders, and was not now to be intimidated by the parade of Indian warfare.

The *Sieur de la Salle* agreed to admit a deputation of two persons, and promised their safety. Two old men made their appearance, and said that the robbery was disapproved, and that the goods would



have been restored if it had been possible; but, since it was not so, the only thing that could now be done was to return such as were not injured, and pay for the rest. So reasonable a proposition could not be refused. The treaty was, moreover, confirmed by a rich present of beaver skin robes. The cessation of hostilities on these terms was mutually gratifying to the parties. The event was celebrated by feasts, dancing, and speeches, and the Indian orators called up all their rhetoric to adorn and enforce their expressions of attachment to their new friends.

Harmony being thus restored, the canoes were again put afloat, and, without further adventures, the whole party entered, on the 1st of November, the mouth of the Miamis River, since called the St. Joseph.

## CHAPTER IV

Builds a Fort.—Joined by the Chevalier de Tonty.—Loss of the *Griffin*.—The Sieur de la Salle and the whole Party go down the Kankakee River to the Illinois.—Arrive at a deserted Indian Village.—Descend the River to Lake Peoria.—Land at a large Settlement of Illinois Indians at the South End of the Lake.

THE Miamis River had been appointed as the rendezvous of the ship, and of the Chevalier de Tonty, who was expected to bring with him about twenty men. La Salle was disappointed not to find this party already arrived, since their route from Mackinac was along the east side of the lake, which was much shorter than that on the west, over which he had passed. His anxieties were also increased by the murmurs of his men. The provisions were all consumed, except such as could be obtained by the chase; and they urged him not to stop here, but to make haste to the Illinois country, where corn might be procured from the natives. They said the winter was fast approaching, and the rivers would soon be closed with ice, and, if they were detained in this desolate spot, there would be the greatest danger of perishing by famine, or of being cut off by hostile Indians.

This counsel did not accord with the views of the commander. He told them that it would be haz-

ardous to go with so small a number among the Illinois, who were a great nation, and on whose dispositions they could not rely, and that it would be more safe to wait for the expected reinforcement, by which they would be enabled to make a better appearance, and stand a better chance of gaining the respect and friendship of the natives. In the meantime, he hoped to fall in with some straggling party of that nation, and to conciliate their favor by presents and kind treatment, and, perhaps, to learn something of their language. He added, moreover, that, if he were deserted and abandoned by them all, he should remain at that place with his Indian hunter and the missionaries.

The men seemed very much dissatisfied with this determination; but they yielded, and agreed to obey his directions. To divert their thoughts, and employ them in a manner that might prove useful to his designs, he resolved to build a fort. At the junction of the river with the lake, there was a hill of considerable elevation, and of a triangular form, bounded on two sides by the water, and on the other by a deep ravine. The top was level and covered with trees. This position was chosen for the fort. The trees were cut down, and the bushes cleared away, so as to leave the ground open to the distance of two musket shots on the side toward the ravine. Logs were then cut and hewn, so that they could be laid compactly one upon another, and with these timbers a breastwork was raised on four sides, enclosing a space eighty feet long and forty broad, which, for greater security, was to be surrounded

by palisades. The structure was called Fort Miamis.

While this work was going on, the precaution was taken to sound the river at its entrance, for the purpose of ascertaining whether the water was deep enough to admit the *Griffin*. The main channel was thus discovered, and long stakes were driven down on each side of it, with bear skins attached to them, as signals for the pilot. Two men were likewise sent back by the shortest route to Mackinac, with instructions to the captain, urging him to sail up the lake as soon as possible, and informing him of the signals by which he would be enabled to bring the vessel immediately into the river.

These occupations kept all hands busy during the month of November. The discontent of the men, however, did not cease, although they were submissive to the orders of the commander. To sustain them under their fatigues and hard labor, they had no other food than the flesh of bears, which the Indian hunter killed in the woods. They became satiated and disgusted with this coarse fare, and desired to go out and hunt for deer and game. This permission was not granted, because it was evident that they were more bent on desertion than on improving their diet.

At last the Chevalier de Tonty appeared, with two canoes well stocked with deer, which had been recently killed. This seasonable supply and accession of numbers cheered the spirits of the whole company. Tonty had left some of his men two or three days' journey behind, who were expected to



follow, but whom he could not divert from their amusement of shooting stags and gathering acorns, in both of which the forests abounded. Perceiving that his commander was uneasy at this apparent negligence, and was apprehensive that the men would desert, he hastened to repair the fault by going back after them. On the passage, a violent wind upset his canoe, and drove it ashore; but he proceeded by land, found the men, and brought them all to the fort, except two, who had verified the suspicions of the commander by running away.

Tonty was the bearer of the unwelcome intelligence that the *Griffin* had not been at Mackinac, and that nothing had been heard of her since she sailed from the island of the Pottawotimies, although inquiries had been made of the natives inhabiting the coasts in those parts. This intelligence weighed heavily upon the mind of the Sieur de la Salle, who had already begun to have anxious forebodings of the fate of his vessel. Judging from her first voyage, she might reasonably be expected to arrive at the Miamis River in forty-five days from the time she left the island, and seventy days had now elapsed. In the sequel, it turned out that she was lost; no news of her ever came to light; and she was probably swallowed up by the waves of Lake Michigan while on her passage from the island to Mackinac. There was a report that she was plundered and burned by the Indians, but of the accuracy of this report no credible proof was ever produced.

Having waited as long as prudence would admit,

La Salle resolved to go forward. Ice had formed in the river, but it was dissolved by a favorable change of the weather. On the 3d of December, the whole party, consisting of thirty-three persons, took their departure from the fort in eight canoes, and ascended to the portage.\* The distance was about seventy miles. Although a canoe had before gone up the river to search for the portage, yet its exact position had not been ascertained. The Sieur de la Salle landed to explore the country alone, and was gone so long that his companions began to be alarmed for his safety. While he was wandering at some distance from the river, hoping to discover the sources of the eastern branch of the Illinois, he fell upon marshy grounds covered with thick bushes, which compelled him to take a large circuit, and darkness overtook him on his way. He fired his gun, but the signal was not answered. By good luck, however, he espied a light not far off, which he approached, and found near the fire a bed of leaves, upon which a man had just been reposing, probably an Indian, who, startled at the sound of the gun, had made a precipitate escape. Weary

\* This is according to the statement of Hennepin, but Le Clercq says that four men were left at the fort. No other account mentions this fact, and it is not probable that so small a number would have been left there, exposed to the attacks of roving savages. There seems no good reason for questioning the accuracy of this part of Hennepin's narrative. Forty-two years afterwards, Charlevoix travelled over the same route, and his description of natural objects, the courses of rivers, and distances, agrees very closely with Hennepin's. At the time of Charlevoix's visit, there was a French fort and garrison a few miles below the portage. The river was then called the St. Joseph.

with the fatigues of the day, and chilled by the falling snow, La Salle at once came to the resolution of appropriating these comfortable quarters to himself for the night. Cutting down the bushes, and so arranging them around his little encampment that no one could approach without making a noise that would arouse him from his slumbers in time for defence, he threw himself upon the couch of leaves, and slept undisturbed till morning. In the afternoon he rejoined his companions, who were overjoyed at his safe return. Two opossums were hanging from his belt, which he had killed with a club while suspended by their tails from the branches of trees.

Two days had passed in an unsuccessful search for the portage. At last the faithful Indian hunter, who had been out to look for deer, came in and told them where it was, and that they had gone too far up the river. By his aid the place was found, and the canoes and all their contents were carried over a distance of five or six miles to the head-waters of the Kankakee.\* The precaution had been taken to leave letters hanging from branches of trees in conspicuous places, both at the fort and the portage, containing instructions for the captain of the *Griffin*, in case he should arrive. For nearly a hundred miles from its source, the Kankakee winds through marshes, which afford growth to little else than tall rushes and alders. A more desolate scene

\* The present name of the eastern branch of the Illinois River. This word is a corruption of the Indian name *Theakiki*, which the French called *Kiakiki*.



in the midst of winter could hardly be imagined. As one comfort of our travellers, however, the frozen ground enabled them to go on shore at night, build fires, and take their repose. Emerging from the marshes, they entered a vast prairie, where the stream became broader, and nature put on a more cheering aspect. They now began to be straitened for provisions, and were disappointed in the supplies they had expected from the chase. At this season, the buffaloes had migrated to a more genial clime, and for several days the hunters succeeded in killing only two deer, as many wild turkeys, and a few swans. In this extremity, Father Hennepin says, Providence came to their relief. A stray buffalo was found sticking fast in a marsh. Thus disabled, he fell an easy victim to the prowess of the hunters, and this fortunate supply revived the flagging spirits and failing strength of the whole party.

At length, the canoes floated on the waters of the Illinois, after a voyage of three hundred miles, by the windings of the Kankakee, from the portage. This river is considerably larger than the one in which it loses its name at the place of their junction. Charlevoix says he has seen a buffalo wade across the western branch at the fork, whereas the Kankakee is deep and broad, and, as he calls it, a beautiful river.

The current of the Illinois soon conducted the voyagers to a large Indian village, situate on the right bank of the river, not far below the present town of Ottawa. Not a human being was seen in the whole village, though it contained between four



and five hundred cabins, many of them well built, and covered with mats of rushes. The inhabitants, according to their custom, had separated, and gone away to the hunting-grounds, where they were to pass the winter, this being the proper season for the chase and for taking furs. Great quantities of corn were found carefully buried in dry places, a temptation too seductive for men who had subsisted for months on the flesh of wild animals alone. The Sieur de la Salle knew the hazard he should run by appropriating to his use a portion of this corn, and the vengeance which such an act might bring upon him from its owners; but the call of necessity was more imperious than that of danger, and he caused about fifty bushels of it to be carried to the canoes, trusting in his good fortune to appease and satisfy the savages, when he should meet them, by presents and a fair recompense.

Embarking again on the river, they descended four days without any incidents worthy of note, till the 1st of January, 1680, the morning of which day was commemorated by mutual salutations, by religious services from the missionaries, and by such other ceremonies as were suited to bid a welcome to the opening of a new year.

And here we should remark, that La Salle had all along been told by the savages he had seen on his way from Mackinac, that the Illinois Indians were unfriendly to the French, and that he was running a fearful risk to venture himself among them. The thievish Outtagamies, who crossed his path near the Miamis River, had repeated the same tale.

Those rumors lingered in the busy thoughts of the men, and the commander himself was not entirely free from apprehension. At any rate, as he must soon expect to meet with the natives, he deemed it prudent to be on his guard, and prepared for any tide of events that might rise.

On the first day of the year, after the ceremonies of the morning, they passed through a lake, about twenty miles long and three broad, then called Pimiteouy, but since known as Lake Peoria; and, just as they had entered the river at the lower end of the lake, an Indian encampment suddenly broke upon their view, planted on both sides of the stream. The men were immediately summoned to arms; the canoes were ranged in a line, with La Salle on the right and Tonty on the left; and in this attitude the little flotilla boldly advanced to the shore. The Indians were amazed at this apparition; some of the more resolute seized their arms; others took to flight; and in a moment the whole camp was a scene of confusion. The *Sieur de la Salle* landed first, and he was followed by his men. It was not his interest or his purpose to seek hostilities, but he well knew that to betray symptoms of timidity was not the way to secure the respect or conciliate the favor of the savages. He stood on his defence, allowing the Indians time to recover from their consternation, and awaiting the issue. He did not present his calumet, because this might be construed as an evidence of weakness, rather than of a voluntary offer of peace on equal terms. The Indians gazed for a while, and seemed to expect a conflict; but,

perceiving no movement on the part of their visitors, they finally held up three calumets of peace, and the signal was immediately answered by the French. From that moment all suspicions and fears ceased; they invited the Frenchmen to their cabins, and received them as friends; the women and others who had fled were called back; and the day was passed amid festivity and joy.

La Salle took the first opportunity to explain to them the objects that had brought him to their country, which he could do with the more facility as he was accompanied by two interpreters. He told them that he had come from Canada to impart to them a knowledge of the true God, to assist them against their enemies, and to supply them with arms and with the conveniences of life. At this interview he said nothing about his proposed voyage to the Mississippi. In fact, his aim seems only to have been to quell their apprehensions and rivet their friendship. The idea of teaching them the Christian religion, and at the same time putting firearms in their hands to excite their passion for war is so incongruous that this report might be doubted, if it were not confirmed by two of the missionaries who were present, and who relate the circumstance without comment. He explained to them what he had done in regard to the corn, which, he said, was an act of necessity; and he offered to pay its full value in such commodities as they might choose from his stores. This proposal was readily accepted, and he then distributed presents among them, with which they expressed entire satisfaction, and all the links



in the chain of friendship were understood by both parties to be closed.

This good understanding, however, was soon interrupted. During the night of the same day, a chief of the Mascoutens, a tribe inhabiting the region near the Fox River, came secretly into the camp of the Illinois. His name was Monso, and he was accompanied by several Miamies, who brought with them presents of knives, hatchets, kettles, and other valuable articles. Monso assembled the head-men of the village in the night, and told them he had come to warn them against the insidious designs of La Salle, representing him to be in a league with the Iroquois, and as coming only in advance of an army from that formidable nation, with which he would unite his forces in an attack on the Illinois; and added that this intelligence was communicated to him by some of La Salle's own countrymen, at whose suggestion he had undertaken this mission, out of the love he bore to his friends. Having thus poisoned the minds of these people, and distributed the presents, he went off the same night, to avoid being seen by the French, although he was, doubtless, himself the dupe of his employers, believing the tale they instructed him to tell.

In the morning, when the *Sieur de la Salle* went into the camp, he was surprised at seeing the apparent distrust and coldness of those who the day before had treated him with so much frankness and cordiality. He was puzzled to conjecture the cause. Applying to one of the chiefs, from whom he had received marked tokens of friendship, and pressing



him to explain the reason of these strange appearances, he finally drew from him the whole story of Monso's intrigues. Knowing now on what ground he stood, it was his next endeavor to counteract these mischievous counsels, by proving the falsehood of the report, and showing the evil designs of its authors. He managed the affair with so much dexterity that he succeeded in recovering their friendship, though, perhaps, not in eradicating every germ of suspicion.

In the meantime, he made inquiries about the Mississippi, and talked of his plan of building a boat to sail down that river. That all jealousies were not put at rest is evident from a circumstance which occurred soon afterwards. Nikanape, a man of rank in the camp, and brother to the great chief of the nation, who was absent on a hunting excursion, invited the Frenchmen to an entertainment, and, before sitting down to the repast, he made a long speech, the drift of which was to advise his guests against their perilous scheme of going down the Mississippi. He said that others had perished in the attempt; that the banks were inhabited by a strong and terrible race of men, who killed everybody that came among them; that the waters swarmed with crocodiles, serpents, and frightful monsters; and that, even if the boat was large and strong enough to escape these dangers, it would be dashed in pieces by the falls and rapids, or meet with inevitable destruction in a hideous whirlpool at the river's mouth, where the river itself was swallowed up and lost. This harangue, which the ora-

tor enforced by expressions of anxious concern for the welfare of his friends, produced an obvious effect on the minds of La Salle's men, even when repeated in the less ornate and forcible language of the interpreter. He perceived it in their countenances, and therefore framed his answer in a manner both to allay their fears, and show the savage that he saw more deeply into his motives than he imagined.

He said the dangers which had been painted in such glowing colors bore on their face so clear a stamp of exaggeration and improbability that he was convinced Nikanape himself would excuse him for regarding them with utter incredulity; and even if they were as formidable as had been represented, the courage of Frenchmen would only be the more eager to encounter them, as crowning their enterprise with the greater glory. As to the concern, which his host had expressed for their welfare, he would not doubt its sincerity, but he believed there was something at the bottom of his heart, which his sense of propriety on this occasion did not permit to escape through his words. He felt constrained to say that he saw the seeds of jealousy lurking under the cover of this fair speech, which touched him the more sensibly, as his own conduct had been frank and confiding. If there were causes of uneasiness, let them not be concealed under the garb of suspicion, but let them be brought out to open day, where they might be explained and removed. He was surprised that they should listen to such idle and malicious reports as Monso had imparted in their ears, creeping into the camp

as he did at midnight, and skulking away in darkness before he could be confronted by those whom he had accused.

This tone of firmness and reproof was taken in good part by Nikanape, and he was too skilful a host to allow the harmony of his feast to be interrupted by dissensions of his own making. These events, however, were not such as to give peace or repose to the mind of La Salle. The imaginations of his men were inflamed by Nikanape's terrific account of the Mississippi. Six of them deserted, including the two sawyers, whose services were exceedingly important, preferring a long journey in search of some friendly tribes near the Michigan, to the labors and dangers before them. Some accounts say that these men had laid a plot to poison their commander and his principal adherents. The defection of so large a number was not only discouraging in itself, but a sad breach in the company. La Salle told those who remained, that, in the Spring, if any of them should be afraid to venture upon the Mississippi, he would give them a canoe to return to Canada, but that it was the extreme of folly and imprudence to go off in the depth of winter, exposed to perish by cold and hunger, or perhaps by the hands of the savages. He was aware that the readiest method of soothing their discontent was to find them employment, and he formed a scheme for building a fort. He consulted his men on the subject, represented their exposed situation among the natives, and their greater security in some fortified place. They acquiesced in his views, and promised cheerfully to undertake the work.

## CHAPTER V

Fort Crèvecœur built near Lake Peoria.—Intercourse with the Indians.—Hennepin ascends the Mississippi.—La Salle returns by Land to Fort Frontenac.—Some of the Men desert.—Iroquois War.—Tonty and Father Zenobe endeavor to mediate between the Iroquois and Illinois.

THE place selected for the fort was about half a league below the Indian camp, and not far from the present town of Peoria. The position was strong by nature, situate on a high bank rising from the margin of the river, and bounded on two sides by ravines running nearly at right angles to the stream. The task of preparing it for defence was not a hard one, since it consisted mainly in connecting the two ravines by a breastwork of timbers and palisades, and in digging away some parts of the other three sides, to render the ascent more steep and difficult. About the middle of January, the whole company removed to this spot, and established their quarters within the lines of the fort. In sympathy with his feelings, La Salle named it Fort Crèvecœur, *Broken Heart*, as a memorial of the sadness he felt at the loss of his vessel, which he now deemed almost certain, and at the numerous discouragements and disasters which had hitherto attended his enterprise.

With his suspicious neighbors at the camp he lived on good terms. They gave him no annoyance, and visits were sometimes interchanged. Father



Zenobe took up his residence there, was adopted into the family of a noted chief, made some progress in learning the language of the natives, and exercised among them, as well as he could, his missionary calling; but he confessed that their rude manners and mode of living were as much as his philosophy and Christian patience could bear. The good Father Gabriel remained at the fort, where he erected a chapel; and Hennepin rambled as his fancies moved him.

While one party was busily employed upon the fort, another was engaged in preparing timbers and planks for building a barque, or brigantine, forty-two feet long and twelve broad, with which it was intended to prosecute the discoveries on the Mississippi. The two sawyers had run away; but, after a little practice, two other men succeeded very well in supplying their place. Trees were burnt into charcoal, the smith went to work with his forge and hammers, and all hands moved with such alacrity and diligence, that in six weeks' time the fort was completed, and the vessel's hull stood on the stocks nearly ready for her masts and rigging. Planks were provided for a parapet around the deck, to ward off the arrows and other missiles with which the natives might assail them from the banks of the river. The men were encouraged, also, by certain savages coming from the south, who confuted Nikanape's stories about the terrible monsters in the river, and who said it was easily navigated, and nowhere obstructed either by falls or by rapids.

It was obvious, however, that with the present

means it was impossible to finish the bigantine. Cordage, more iron, and other materials for the rigging, were wanted. All these articles had been put on board the *Griffin*; but La Salle despaired of ever again seeing this ship, after the report brought to him by Tonty, and since he had not heard from the two men whom he sent to Mackinac. With these disheartening prospects staring him in the face, he came to the hardy resolution of going back himself to Fort Frontenac, procuring the necessary supplies, and returning with them as soon as possible to Fort Crèvecœur.

That the intermediate time might not be lost to his grand objects, he planned an expedition of discovery to the sources of the Mississippi. Above the mouth of the Wisconsin, where Father Marquette's voyage began, that river had not been explored by any European. It is probable that the dreams of China and Japan, which he had cherished so fondly, still lingered in his imagination, and that he hoped to solve a problem of so much interest to the commercial world. This fatiguing and hazardous enterprise was intrusted to Father Hennepin, whose restless spirit, courage, and experience of Indian life and manners, well fitted him, in many respects, for so bold an adventure. On the 29th of February, 1680, he departed from Fort Crèvecœur in a canoe, accompanied by two Frenchmen, named Picard du Gay and Michel Ako, and pursued his course down the Illinois River. He was liberally supplied, as he says, with goods to exchange with the savages for provisions, and to conciliate them by presents, and with

such other conveniences for his voyage as could be spared.

La Salle was prepared for his departure, and two days afterwards began his journey, with three Frenchmen and his Indian hunter. The Chevalier de Tonty was left in command of the fort, having now under him about sixteen men, besides the two missionaries. We may easily imagine the nature of La Salle's undertaking, when we reflect that he was to travel over land, and on foot, through vast forests to Fort Frontenac, a distance of at least twelve hundred miles by the route he was to take along the southern shores of Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, and that innumerable rivers were to be forded, and others crossed on rafts; and all this at a season of the year when the melting snows and floating ice rendered travelling to the last degree fatiguing, and the rivers dangerous; depending wholly on the chase to supply provisions for five men, and on their courage and address to protect themselves from wandering savages. Nothing seemed formidable, however, to his strong heart and unbending resolution. Shouldering his knapsack and musket, he bade adieu to his companions, and set his face towards Canada.

Following an Indian path near the bank of the river, he arrived on the 11th of March at the great village where he had found the corn. Some of the natives had already returned from their camp and hunting-grounds to their summer residence in this place, and among them the pious and persevering Father Zenobe, who hoped to tame their wild spirits and win them to a better life by his well-timed in-



struction and the persuasive eloquence of his example. Not far from this village La Salle discovered a spot, with which he was charmed, as affording an admirable position for a fort. It was a high, rocky eminence, rising abruptly from the river, and so steep as to be ascended with great difficulty, except on one side, and level at the top. He sent a message to Tonty, requesting him to come up with some of his men, and erect a fortification on this rock during his absence. The work was afterwards executed, and occupied as a stronghold by the French for several years. It was called Fort St. Louis.

La Salle stayed but twenty-four hours at the village, and the next day, at some distance up the river, he met the two men who had gone by his orders from the Miamis River to Mackinac. They could give no account of the *Griffin*. He told them to join their comrades at Fort Crèvecoeur, and then hastened forward on his journey.

As soon as the Chevalier de Tonty received the orders of his commander, he repaired immediately, with some of his men, to the place designed for the new fort, and began to mark out the lines and prepare for the work. In a short time, however, news came that the men at Fort Crèvecoeur were in a state of insubordination, and that his presence was required there as soon as possible. When he arrived, it was ascertained that the two men lately returned from Mackinac, who had doubtless been tampered with by La Salle's enemies during their absence, had stirred up some of the others to revolt. More than half of the whole party had deserted, carrying with



them such arms, goods, and provisions, as they could take away. Two of them, while ascending the river in a canoe with Father Gabriel to join the Chevalier de Tonty, contrived to injure the muskets of the Sieur de Boisrondet and another person, not in the conspiracy, so that they would not take fire, and then made their escape. The deserters appointed their place of rendezvous at Fort Miamis, where they demolished the fort, and plundered whatsoever they could find, and then went to Mackinac, and seized the furs and peltries, which had been left in deposit by La Salle as a part of the *Griffin's* cargo.

Tonty, being destitute of succor and of the means of providing them even for the small remnant of his party now remaining, retired to the great village of the Illinois, and took up his quarters among the natives, intending to wait there for the return of La Salle with a reinforcement and supplies. He had the good fortune to gain the favor and confidence of the Indians, and spent the summer in attempting to teach them the use of firearms and military manoeuvres, which at least served to amuse and keep them in good-humor. When an alarm was raised by a rumor that a combined attack was about to be made by the Miamies and Iroquois, he prevailed on them to build a little fort, and surround it with intrenchments; for it seems, that, although numerous, they were not a warlike people, it being their custom, whenever an enemy approached with a large force, to desert their habitations, wander to the westward, and join their allies, sometimes across the Mississippi.

In the meantime, the missionaries applied themselves with zeal to the labors of their calling. Father Gabriel was adopted into the family of a chief, where he was treated in all respects as one of their own number. Zenobe made such progress in acquiring the language, as enabled him to converse in it with tolerable ease. He visited other Illinois villages, and even the Miamies, among whom Marquette had resided for some time five or six years before. But in his narrative Father Zenobe speaks despondingly of the prospect of communicating to these savages the doctrines and precepts of Christianity, or of producing any change in their manners. He represents them as addicted to gross vices, passionate, thievish, indolent, superstitious, and as yielding but a very slight obedience to their chiefs. Some of them were docile, and listened attentively to the instructions of the missionaries; but the good Fathers could not satisfy themselves that they had made the least impression. One of the principal converts, a man of note among them, being attacked by some disease, put himself under the discipline of the conjurers, in whose hands he died, thus showing the little confidence he possessed in his new faith.

At all events, neither Tonty nor any of his party had reason to complain of a want of hospitality or kind treatment in these untutored Illinois, during their residence of six months in the great village. At length, in the early part of September, an Indian belonging to a friendly tribe came to the village, and reported that he had discovered an army of Iroquois and Miamies, to the number of four or five hundred

men, who had already advanced into the territory of the Illinois. This intelligence, so unexpected, produced the greatest consternation. A few persons were deputed to reconnoitre, who soon came back and confirmed the report, adding that La Salle himself was in the enemy's camp, whom they recognized by his hat and European dress. A loud clamor was immediately raised against the French, who were accused of being deceivers and traitors, and the rabble cried out that those in the village ought to be put to death without a moment's delay.

It required all the presence of mind and firmness which the Chevalier de Tonty could command to appease this tempest of rage and avert the blow. He used such arguments as he could in his defence, and, to prove his sincerity, offered to join the Illinois with his companions in an attack on the enemy. It turned out that the man taken for La Salle was an Iroquois chief, who had adorned his person with a hat and Canadian jacket.

It was unfortunate that at this time a large number of the young Illinois warriors was absent, but, as no time was to be lost, those in the village, accompanied by the Frenchmen, marched out to meet the enemy. They put on an air of courage at first, and skirmished with an advanced party; but Tonty soon discovered that his allies would not be able to stand their ground against so large a force. As a last hope, therefore, he proposed to go to the Iroquois as a mediator, and endeavor to bring about a reconciliation and peace, to which they assented, and gave him the powers of a negotiator. Attended by Father



Zenobe, and laying aside his arms, he approached the camp of the Iroquois with a calumet in his hand, and called out for a parley. The Iroquois themselves had begun to waver a little, as to the probable issue of a battle, for they had expected to come upon the Illinois by surprise in their village, whereas these had been enabled to rally their warriors and prepare for defence. Nor could the Iroquois judge of the numbers of the opposing army.

In this state of uncertainty, some of the leaders were willing to hear what could be said in favor of peace. Tonty and Zenobe were admitted into the camp; but the young men, not approving any terms of peace, surrounded the mediators, and, with violent gestures and language, seemed on the point of putting them to instant death. A young warrior thrust a knife at Tonty, which would have pierced him to the heart, if it had not been turned aside by one of his ribs. The wound bled profusely. At this moment, a chief rushed forward, who, perceiving that his ears were not bored, cried out that he was a Frenchman, and must not be killed, and endeavored to stop the blood by applying a belt of wampum as a bandage to the wound.

At the same time, another warrior seized Tonty's hat, and, placing it upon the end of his musket, ran towards the Illinois, who inferred from this signal that their messengers of peace had been murdered, and, enraged at such perfidy, they were about to renew the conflict with all their might, and wreak their vengeance on so faithless a foe. They were undeceived, however, in time to prevent this rash step.



The Iroquois accepted the calumet, promised peace, and made a show of retiring; but, having discovered that the Illinois were not so strong as they had supposed, they soon appeared again near the village.

Father Zenobe now consented to go alone among them, and inquire the reason of their return. They received him with civility and kindness, and told him that they did not intend to violate the treaty or do any harm, but they were hungry, and must have food. The Illinois, taking this in good part, supplied them with such provisions as they wanted, and proposed to open a trade with them for furs and skins. For two or three days, there was a sort of intercourse between the two parties on the footing of friendship, and Father Zenobe and one of his Illinois friends slept very quietly one night in the Iroquois camp. It was soon apparent, nevertheless, that all these pretensions were hollow and treacherous. The Iroquois prowled about the village, committed depredations, and took such liberties as proved that they were only seeking a quarrel under the garb of peace.

The Illinois themselves had not been free from suspicion, and they prepared for the worst. The old men, women, and children, had retired to the interior of the country, and the inhabitants of the other villages were advised to retreat, and leave nothing behind for the enemy to plunder. The warriors began to disperse one after another, and Tonty was left with Fathers Gabriel and Zenobe, Boisrondet, and two other Frenchmen, without hope of support or aid from any quarter. Considering the part he had acted, he must necessarily be looked upon as an

enemy by the Iroquois, and in this delicate situation he had but one course to pursue. He and his five companions betook themselves to an old and leaky canoe, and, on the 18th of September, departed from the great village of the Illinois, without provisions or supplies of any kind, and made the best speed they could up the river.

## CHAPTER VI

Tonty escapes with his Party to Green Bay.—Father Gabriel murdered by the Savages.—La Salle arrives at Fort Frontenac.—State of his Affairs.—Prepares for another Expedition.—Returns to the Illinois Country, and spends the Winter there.—Meets Tonty and his Party at Mackinac.

THE next day, when they were about twenty-four miles from the village, the canoe ran upon a rock, and it was dragged ashore for repairs. While this was being done, the pleasant scenery and open woodlands tempted Father Gabriel de la Ribourde to walk on the bank of the river. He stayed away so long that his companions became uneasy, and as soon as the canoe was finished, they all went to search for him, calling, firing their guns, and looking in every direction till dark. They had seen paths recently trodden by human footsteps, and it was deemed prudent for safety to cross the river, and pass the night on the other side, since there were reasons for apprehending that the Iroquois might pursue them, with a design to waylay and cut them off.

At the dawn of day the next morning, they crossed the river again to the same place, and renewed their search, which was continued till three o'clock in the afternoon, when, nothing having been seen or heard of the venerable missionary, they

entered the canoe with heavy hearts, and moved slowly along near the shore, looking anxiously at every opening in the wood and jutting point of land, with the hope that he might have strolled up the river farther than he was aware at the time, and had waited their arrival. They never saw him more. Delay would have subjected the whole party to the greatest danger, as it was evident that Indians had recently been at the place, and it could not be doubted that they would all be killed if they were overtaken by the Iroquois.

As events proved, it would have been useless to remain longer. The tragical end of Father Gabriel was not known till some time afterwards, when the particulars were related by the Indians. It happened that, just before this time, the Kickapoos, a tribe inhabiting the central parts of the Wisconsin territory, had sent out a party of warriors to fight the Iroquois, of whose advance westward they had heard. This party was encamped not far from the place where Tonty landed, and on that day three young warriors from the camp were scouting near the river. They accidentally met Father Gabriel in his walk, and killed him, in cold blood, with a war-club, although they knew he was not an Iroquois. It was an act of savage barbarity and deliberate murder. They took off his scalp, and carried it away as a trophy, seizing likewise his Breviary and Prayer Book, which afterwards fell into the hands of a Jesuit missionary.

Thus perished a man whose character is extolled by all the writers that mention his death. In Eu-



rope, he had held responsible offices in the church, and he was for some time at the head of the Recollet mission in Canada; eminent for his virtues, piety, and those rare qualities which bear up the spirit with equanimity and cheerfulness under the heaviest trials. Charlevoix says he died at the advanced age of seventy-one. He had been ten years in America, ardently devoted to the cause to which he had consecrated his life, spending his days and nights in the cabins of savages, domesticating himself in their families, submitting without a murmur to the hardships he endured, and waiting patiently for the blessing of Heaven to convert the fruit of his toils to the spiritual well-being of these benighted children of nature.

Indeed, there are few examples in the history of mankind more worthy of admiration and profound respect than those of the Catholic missionaries in Canada. With a singleness of heart, a self-sacrifice, and constancy of purpose, to which a parallel can scarcely be found, casting behind them the comforts of civilized life, deprived of the solaces of society and the sympathy of friends, and surrounded by dangers and discouragements on every side, they exhausted their energies in a work for which they could not hope for any other reward than the consciousness of having done a great duty, approved in the sight of God, as designed to enlighten the moral and mental darkness of a degraded race of human beings. Some of them were murdered, some were cruelly tortured, but these appalling barbarities did not shake the constancy of others, nor deter them

from closing up the ranks thus fearfully broken. We need not look to the end, nor inquire for the results; motives are the test of merit; and humanity can claim no higher honor than that such examples have existed.\*

Having despaired of meeting their venerable friend, the voyagers pursued their course up the river with dejected spirits, and much distressed by the want of food. The water broke into their shattered canoe so fast that they were obliged to leave it behind and perform the journey by land, a distance of more than two hundred miles, to the nearest village of the Pottawatimies, subsisting on ground nuts, wild garlic, and such roots as chance threw in their way. The snow began to fall, and the ice to form. Their lacerated feet were poorly protected by moccasins made of Father Ga'riel's mantle of skins. Without a compass or path to guide them through the woods, they wandered up and down at random, and advanced slowly towards their journey's end; nor was it till after fifteen days' march that their hunger was appeased by the flesh of a deer, which they had the good fortune to kill.

\* A spirited sketch of the labors and sufferings of the early missionaries in Canada may be seen in the third volume of Bancroft's "History of the United States."

Hennepin, in the closing chapters of his "Nouvelle Découverte," has narrated the incidents of Father Gabriel's death, and the preceding events of the Iroquois war. His facts are drawn from the letters of Father Zenobe, or from the abstract published by Le Clercq, with such embellishments as are always ready at the call of his prolific imagination. He censures Tonty, apparently without justice, for having deserted Father Gabriel; but Zenobe, who was present, passes no such censure, though he endeavored to prevail on Tonty to remain some time longer.

The Sieur de Boisrondet lost himself in the forests, and for ten days his companions supposed him to be dead. He had a musket, but neither balls nor flint. Necessity spurred his invention, and he contrived to melt a pewter dish into balls, and to fire his gun by the touch of a live coal. In this way he shot wild turkeys, upon which he subsisted.

They finally all reached the village of the Pottawatimies, borne down with fatigue and exhaustion. They were kindly received, and entertained with a generous hospitality. These Indians had traded with the French, and regarded them as friends. The principal chief addressed them in a flattering speech. He was accustomed to say that he knew of but three great captains in the world, Frontenac, La Salle, and himself. Tonty had dragged his emaciated frame with difficulty to the village, where he was taken dangerously ill, and was obliged to remain till his recovery. Father Zenobe went forward to the missionary station at Green Bay. At this place they all assembled in the Spring, and proceeded to Mackinac, where they intended to wait till they should hear from their commander.

Let us now return to the Sieur de la Salle. No record has been preserved of the incidents of his long and perilous journey through the wilderness from the Illinois to the St. Lawrence. He arrived safely at Fort Frontenac, where he found his affairs in a state of deplorable confusion. The *Griffin*, with her cargo, valued at twelve thousand dollars, had been lost; his agents had despoiled him of the profits of the trade, in which he had several



boats and canoes embarked in Lake Ontario; a vessel charged with merchandise for him to a large amount had been cast away in the Bay of St Lawrence; his canoes, heavily laden, had been dashed in pieces while ascending the rapids above Montreal; some of his men, seduced by the wicked machinations of his enemies, had stolen his goods, and run away with them to the Dutch in New York; and, to crown all, his creditors, taking advantage of a rumor, maliciously circulated, that he and his whole party were drowned on their voyage up the lakes, had seized upon his remaining effects, and wasted them by forced sales. In short, being deserted by fortune, all Canada seemed to conspire against his enterprise.

A less resolute heart would have shrunk from such obstacles and abandoned an object apparently so hopeless and unattainable; but despair was never known to settle upon the mind of La Salle. He had one friend left, the Count de Frontenac, whose influence and authority were exerted in his favor. The plan of navigating the Mississippi in a boat with rigging and sails was given up, and he resolved to prosecute his discoveries with canoes.

Having engaged more men, and among them La Forest as an officer, and such an arrangement of his affairs being made as circumstances would permit, he departed from Fort Frontenac on the 23d of July, 1680. Head winds detained him more than a month in Lake Ontario, and he did not reach Mackinac till the middle of September. Three weeks were here consumed in a vain attempt to



traffic for Indian corn, which neither money nor goods would purchase. It was known that he had brandy; and when this was offered, the trade became so brisk, that sixty sacks of corn were brought to him in a single day. With this supply he embarked for Lake Michigan, and near the end of November the canoes were moored in the mouth of the Miamis River.

We have already seen that the fort erected at this place the year before had been plundered and thrown down by the deserters from Fort Crèvecoeur. A few men were left here, but La Salle pursued his journey without delay to the Illinois, where he was surprised to find the great village burnt and desolate; for he had heard nothing of the Iroquois war, or of the disasters that had befallen Tonty and his party. The hill upon which he had ordered a fort to be built stood bare and lonely, without any vestige of human labor at its top; a proof that the Frenchmen had either been killed or dispersed. This aspect of things seems to have discouraged him from going down the river till he could gain further intelligence. He returned to the Miamis River, and spent the winter in visiting the Indian tribes near Lake Michigan.

At a village of the Outtagamies he met with some of the vagrant Illinois, who told him the story of the war, and of the calamities their nation had suffered; but they could give no account of the Frenchmen. He was informed that nearly all the inhabitants of seventeen Illinois villages had crossed the Mississippi, and sought safety among the Osages.

In the late incursion, the Miamis had sided with the Iroquois, and it was the effort of La Salle to break the bond of this connection, and to unite in an alliance all the neighboring tribes in that region against so formidable an enemy, who had no goodwill for any of them, whose policy was to divide and conquer, and who, by sowing dissensions among them, designed only to subdue them all in detail, and then to plunder and destroy their towns. He sent a message likewise to the Illinois, advising them to commit no hostilities against the Miamis, but to join in this league of peace and self-defence. All parties listened with apparent acquiescence to his counsels; and, whatever may have been the result, it was evidently the most politic scheme he could adopt, for his future operations would be obstructed, perhaps defeated, by hostilities between the tribes through which he must pass.

It being impossible to execute his plan with the small force now under his command, it was necessary again to seek new recruits and resources in Canada. Towards the end of May, 1681, he left the Miami River, and, after a prosperous voyage, entered the harbor of Mackinac about the middle of June. We need not describe the joy that was mutually felt, when Tonty and his companions here met their commander. They recounted to each other the strange events, disasters, and dangers, that had thronged around them since their separation, and La Salle, in particular, set before them, in melancholy array, the dark catalogue of misfortunes and disappointments which had assailed him at every

step; yet, says Father Zenobe, with all the calmness and indifference of a man who relates only ordinary occurrences, and with the same tone of firmness and self-reliance, of hope and confidence in the future, that he had expressed at the beginning of his enterprise. The experience, which he had so dearly bought, seemed only to impart a new impulse to his resolution and ardor.

As there was no occasion for delay at this place, they all embarked in a few days for Fort Frontenac.

## CHAPTER VII

**Hennepin's Voyage up the Mississippi.—His pretended Discovery of the Mouth of that River.—Grounds for disbelieving his Account.—Sources whence he drew his Materials.**

WE will now interrupt the thread of our narrative to say a word of Father Hennepin, whom we left with his two Frenchmen, Picard du Gay and Michel Ako, in a canoe at Fort Crèvecœur, departing on a voyage of discovery. His instructions from the Sieur de la Salle were that he should ascend the Mississippi and explore the sources of that river.

On the seventh day, he found himself at the mouth of the Illinois, and, after waiting a short time for the Mississippi to become clear of floating ice, he turned his course northward. No incident worthy of remark is related till the 11th of April, when he was somewhere in the vicinity of the Wisconsin, probably above the mouth of that river. Here he was surprised by the sudden appearance of a large body of natives, in thirty-three canoes, who came fiercely down upon him, and took him and his two men prisoners. They were treated rudely at first, and some of their goods were seized; but the calumet was smoked the next day, and from that time they appear to have met with as good usage as the savages were accustomed to bestow upon uninvited guests. They all returned up the river, and in nineteen days the



grand cataract opened upon their sight, now seen for the first time by European eyes, and named by Hennepin, in honor of his patron saint, the *Falls of St. Anthony*. Proceeding thence by land about one hundred and eighty miles up the River St. Francis, which was likewise named by him in honor of the patron saint of his Order, they came to the villages inhabited by these Indians, whom he calls the Issati and Nadouessioux, since known as the Sioux.

Many adventures are related as having happened during his residence with these wild tribes, showing their manners and habits of life. He speaks of himself and his comrades as being in captivity, but he does not inform us wherein their liberty was restrained. He was permitted to be absent for several weeks with one of his men, on a voyage down the river to the Wisconsin, and Picard was allowed to retain his sword, pistols, and powder. There is no evidence that they could not have gone away when they pleased, at least after the first few days of their captivity; nor complaint that they were deprived of food or raiment, or compelled to endure greater hardships than the Indians themselves. They remained in the villages, and in wandering with the savages, about three months, when they were agreeably surprised by meeting a party of five Frenchmen, under the command of the Sieur du Luth, who had come into the country by way of Lake Superior. Du Luth was a man of courage and enterprise, who had penetrated these remote regions for the purpose rather of trade than of discovery. He prevailed on Hennepin, Picard, and Ako, to go with him to the

villages, where they all stayed till near the end of September, 1680; and then they set off together on their return to Canada, being nine persons in company.

Descending the Mississippi to the Wisconsin, they took the route, that was then well-known, up the Wisconsin and down the Fox River to Green Bay, and arrived at Mackinac in the early part of November, about eight months from the date of Hennepin's departure from Fort Crèvecoeur. If they had arrived a few weeks earlier, they would have met the Sieur de la Salle at Mackinac, on his way to the Illinois country. Hennepin went to Quebec and sailed for France, where he published, three or four years afterwards, an account of his travels and discoveries, under the title of a "Description of Louisiana." \*

Such is the substance of his narrative, as contained in this first work. It is singularly deficient in geographical facts, though it abounds with curious incidents and descriptions, somewhat confusedly put together. His discoveries were limited to the space on the Mississippi and St. Francis between the Wisconsin and the Issati villages, for Marquette had passed over his track below the Wisconsin. This was all he pretended to have done in his first narrative, and his map of the Mississippi extends no farther down than the mouth of the Illinois.

Although it was evident, from the book itself, that

\* This work was written and printed some time before its publication. The license is dated September 10th, 1682; the printing was completed January 5th, 1683; and, in his preface to the "Nouvelle Découverte," he says it was published in 1684, though some copies bear the date of the year preceding.

the author was endowed with a lively imagination, and entertained exalted ideas of the great things he had accomplished, yet, as he had really shown himself a man of courage and persevering resolution, the world seemed disposed to allow him credit for sincerity and general accuracy, except in his estimate of the Falls of Niagara, which he represents to be six hundred feet high. And, after all, this might be an error of judgment, for he does not pretend to have measured the height, although he passed a winter within the sound of the cataract.

Thirteen years after the first appearance of this work, and ten years after the death of La Salle, he published another at Utrecht and Amsterdam, with the pompous title of a "New Discovery of a Vast Country situated in America, between New Mexico and the Frozen Ocean." In this publication is embodied the whole of the former, written anew and much enlarged. This might well be done from the author's notes and recollections. But the most remarkable addition is that in which he pretends to have descended to the mouth of the Mississippi, and to have been the first discoverer of that river, giving the particulars of the voyage, as to dates, distances, the names of Indian tribes, and natural scenery, which, it was supposed, could not be known except from actual experience and observation. Men were astonished at this new revelation, after the secret had been locked up for seventeen years in the bosom of a man who had never before been suspected of hiding his light under a bushel or of veiling his achievements from the public eye.



In his first narrative, he says, "We had some design of descending to the mouth of the River Colbert, which probably discharges itself rather into the Gulf of Mexico than into the Vermilion Sea; but the nations who took us prisoners would not allow us time to navigate this river both up and down." \* After this gratuitous declaration, it is no wonder that his readers should have been surprised at his detailed account of a voyage which he had said he could not perform. Nor was this surprise lessened by further examination. The voyage is interpolated into the original narrative, and the time assigned for it is so short as to astound the faith of the most credulous. He takes but forty-one days to descend from the Illinois to the Gulf of Mexico and to return, a distance, up and down, of two thousand, seven hundred miles, and this in a canoe paddled by two men; whereas the trading boats on the Mississippi, with oars and sails, were considered long afterwards as having made an expeditious voyage in ascending from New Orleans to St. Louis in seventy days. † According to his own statement, the average distance passed over by his canoe, from the time he left the Illinois River till he returned to it, must have been at least sixty-five miles a day. ‡

\* "Description de la Louisiane," p. 218. At the time of La Salle's discovery, the Mississippi was called *Colbert* by the French, after the great minister; and the name of *Seignelay*, his son, was given to the Illinois.

† Stoddard's "Louisiana," p. 18.

‡ Moreover there is a conflict of dates, which defies every attempt at reconciliation. He sets out from the Gulf of Mexico on the 1st of April, is at the Arkansas River on the 9th, and at the Illinois on the 24th; but in his first account he repre-



The suspicions of the author's veracity, which could not but spring from these circumstances, were strengthened by others. In the preface to his "New Discovery," he affirmed that he lived in America eleven years, whereas the whole time of his residence there was less than five years. He also declares that Joliet assured him that he had never been further west than the Hurons and Ottaways, who dwelt in the neighborhood of Green Bay; \* but he had before written that Joliet descended the Mississippi as far as the Illinois. † In the preface to his third work, he says, in round terms, that he was "the first European who discovered the course of the Mississippi;" and again he repeats, "I was the first European who navigated that river," ‡ although he had learned from Joliet himself the particulars of his voyage to the Arkansas, performed seven years before the river was seen by Hennepin, while the interesting narrative of that voyage by Marquette had been a long time published. Nor was it possible that these assertions should be mere slips of the pen or of memory. The motive for making them was obvious, and could by no means redound to the author's credit or honor.

He assigns reasons, however, for withholding his secret so long, and for not divulging it during the

sents himself as having been captured by the Issati Indians near the Wisconsin on the 11th of the same month, and, in his second account, on the 12th. To have altered this last date essentially would have marred all that followed, but, as it stands, it equally unsettles all that preceded.

\* "Nouvelle Découverte," Chap. XL.

† "Description de la Louisiane," p. 13.

‡ "Nouveau Voyage," Chap. III.

lifetime of the Sieur de la Salle, whom he represents as so eager for the glory of discovering the mouth of the Mississippi, that his anger would never cease to burn, if it were known to him that he had been anticipated by one of his own party, in violation of his orders. He tells us, also, that La Salle was his enemy. In adducing proofs, he goes far back, and relates a circumstance which happened while they were crossing the Atlantic together from France to Canada. A joyous company of girls on board sought to wear away the tediousness of the voyage, and enliven the spirits of the passengers, by the amusement of dancing. This was more than the grave and scrupulous Recollet could endure, and he took occasion to reprimand the young damsels and check their hilarity. La Salle interposed, and said there was no harm in dancing, and that the missionary had overstepped the bounds of his authority. Warm words ensued, and we are called upon to believe that, by this frivolous incident, a root of bitterness was planted in his bosom, which was never eradicated.\*

Again he recurs to a conversation between him and La Salle at Fort Frontenac concerning the Mines of St. Barbe in Mexico, of which the latter expressed a hope of some day gaining possession. The

\* This story is told in the preface to the "New Discovery." A small part only of this curious preface is printed in the English translation. Indeed, the English version of the whole book is wretched, both in the matter and style. The "Nouvelle Découverte," and "Nouveau Voyage," are both contained in the "Recueil de Voyages au Nord," (Vols. V. IX.,) but the prefaces and dedications are omitted, and also more than three chapters at the end of the "Nouveau Voyage."

patriotic Recollet talked coldly of such a scheme, because he was a good subject of the King of Spain. By this indication of loyalty, according to his representation, the heart of his commander was turned against him.

In addition to tales like these, we have an insinuation that he had been exposed to unnecessary dangers. What can be more absurd than these trivial pretences? Deception is stamped on the face of them. By his own choice, La Salle had retained him at Fort Frontenac, invited him to take part in the expedition, and confided to him the enterprise to the Upper Mississippi. These acts are not proofs of enmity, but of friendship and confidence. Yet such are the reasons given, if reasons they can be called, for so long keeping out of sight this boasted discovery.

The blame for a disobedience of orders he threw upon his two men, Picard du Gay and Ako. He describes as follows the state of his mind and his resolutions when he was deliberating what course to take at the mouth of the Illinois River.

“I am now determined to make known to the whole world the mystery of this discovery, which I have hitherto concealed, that I might not give vexation to the Sieur de la Salle, who was ambitious to secure to himself alone the glory and the knowledge of it. For this reason, he sacrificed many persons, whom he exposed to dangers to prevent them from publishing what they had seen, and thereby crossing his secret designs. I was fully persuaded that, if I went down the Mississippi, he would traduce me to



my superiors, because I did not pursue the route to the north, which I ought to have done in obedience to his directions, and according to the plan we had agreed upon together. But, on the other hand, I saw myself about to perish with hunger, and knew not what to do, as the two men who accompanied me threatened openly to go off in the night, and take with them the canoe and all its contents, if I refused to descend the river to the nations inhabiting its banks below. Surrounded by these embarrassments, I could hesitate no longer, and I thought it my duty to prefer my own safety to the violent passion which the *Sieur de la Salle* had conceived of enjoying alone the glory of this discovery. The two men, seeing me resolved to follow them, promised entire fidelity. After we had shaken hands as a mutual pledge, we embarked on our voyage." \*

By this statement he would have it believed that the voyage was accidental on his part, and that he was compelled to undertake it against his will by the obstinacy of his two men; and no other motive is assigned than that of procuring food to keep them from starving. Was not this end to be answered just as well by going up the river as down? When they afterwards ascended the river above the Illinois, we hear no complaint of a want of provisions. In fact, the whole paragraph is anything but a fair and ingenuous explanation of his conduct. He might well have had some qualms of conscience in the matter, for, besides a violation of trust and disobedience of orders, the canoe was laden with merchandise

\* "Nouvelle Découverte," Chap. XXXVII.



which belonged to La Salle, designed for conciliating the Indians by presents, and for procuring necessary supplies.\*

It has been asked where Hennepin found materials for his account of a voyage which never existed except in his imagination. Some have supposed that he drew them from the book ascribed to Tonty, which appeared at the beginning of the year in which the "New Discovery" was published, and might therefore have been in the hands of the author early enough for such a use. For the descriptions of natural scenery, as far as the Arkansas River, he might have helped himself from Marquette. It is true enough that the agreement with Tonty, in many parts, is too close to have been the result of accident, and it is remarkable that the Recollet and his two men should encounter so many events, which happened precisely in the same manner, and at the same places, two years afterwards, to the Sieur de la Salle and his party; and these events of a kind which would never be likely to happen but once anywhere. But there is no occasion to pursue this inquiry, for the problem can be solved by a more direct and certain process.

Le Clercq's account of the missionary proceedings in Canada was published in 1691, six years before Hennepin's revelation of his new discovery. The

\* It is singular that Charlevoix should represent Hennepin's voyage down the Mississippi to have taken place *after* he had been at the Falls of St. Anthony. ("Hist. de la Nouv. France," Chap. X.) It shows with how little attention the historian perused the volumes of the ambitious Recollet. The Jesuits, to whose body Charlevoix belonged, were more fortunate in his hands.

work contains a pretty full narrative of La Salle's voyage down the Mississippi, which the author professes to compile from the letters of Father Zenobe, and for the most part in his own words. Zenobe was of the expedition, and described it in letters to the Bishop of Quebec, of which Le Clercq procured copies. Now, whoever will make the comparison will find that Hennepin has not only taken the framework of his narrative from Le Clercq, but has appropriated whole paragraphs, with very slight verbal alterations, contenting himself with changing the dates to suit the occasion. It is possible that he may have had access to a copy of Zenobe's letters on this subject, as he speaks, in another part of his work, of having seen his previous letters describing the Iroquois war and Tonty's adventures; but, if we admit this possibility, it does not alter the nature of the case, nor weaken the charge of piracy and fabrication. These facts, added to others, are perfectly conclusive, and must convict Father Hennepin of having palmed upon the world a pretended discovery and a fictitious narrative. It is no other than a description of the voyage of La Salle, vamped up in a new and deceptive dress, and adorned by such intervening incidents as a fertile invention could easily supply.\*

\* Parallel passages from Le Clercq and Hennepin bear out the above statement. Le Clercq's two volumes are very rare. The circulation of the work is said to have been suppressed by the French government, for some political reason, soon after it was published. Coxe's "Carolana," p. 118.

The first eight chapters of Hennepin's third work, the "Nouveau Voyage," contain an account of La Salle's last voyage, travels in Texas, and death. This account is likewise closely

Notwithstanding this gross imposition, we must allow him justice on other points. There seems no good reason to doubt the general accuracy of his first book, nor of his second, previous to his departure from Fort Crèvecoeur. Where his personal ambition and glory are not concerned, he may probably be relied on; but, unfortunately, these too often obtrude themselves upon the reader's notice. He was one of that restless and aspiring class of men who are unhappy at the thought of another's fame or success, looking upon themselves as entitled to a monopoly of these distinctions. Jealous of rivals, and distrustful of friends, he was always prying into hidden motives, and his wayward temper drove him into troubles, which would have been shunned by a mind of more repose. His descriptions of Indian manners and life are skilfully drawn, and are valuable as being the results of much experience and observation; and in the marvellous he deals less than many of the writers of his time, who are allowed the credit of fidelity and truth.

copied from Le Clercq, who acknowledges himself indebted for his materials to the letters of Father Anastase, a missionary in that expedition. Hennepin acknowledges the same, but in many parts he copies the reflections and remarks of Le Clercq, which shows that he used Le Clercq's printed book, instead of Anastase's letters; and yet he gives no credit.

## CHAPTER VIII

La Salle begins his Voyage down the Mississippi.—Intercourse with various Indian Nations on the Banks of the River.—Arrives at its Mouth, and takes Possession of the Country.—Returns to the Illinois, and thence to France.

WHEN the Sieur de la Salle arrived at Fort Frontenac with the remnants of his company, as heretofore related, he immediately began to prepare for another expedition, determined to proceed with as little delay as possible to the Mississippi. It was his first object to recruit his forces, and he took into his service a company of Frenchmen, and also a number of eastern Indians, Abenakis, and Loups or Mahingans, as they are called by the French writers. He also adjusted the difficulties with his creditors, either by payment or satisfactory security; and he was enabled to provide for his future expenses by pledging Fort Frontenac and the lands around it, as also his privilege of commerce with the natives. He met the secretary of the Count de Frontenac at Montreal, who was instructed to hold an interview with him on certain affairs appertaining to the government. The Sieur Dautray, son of the Procurer-General of Quebec, joined him as a volunteer.

Sending forward Father Zenobe with a large part of his men, and putting Fort Frontenac under the



command of the Sieur de la Forest, he followed with the remainder to Niagara. A fort had here been built, called Fort de Conty, which was occupied by a small garrison. Everything being now in readiness, he embarked with his whole company in canoes from the head of the Niagara River, on the 28th of August, 1681, and, without any remarkable incident during the voyage, arrived at the Miamis River on the 3d of November.

Six weeks were here spent in the necessary arrangements. The company selected for the voyage down the Mississippi consisted of fifty-four persons, namely, twenty-three Frenchmen, eighteen savages, Abenakis and Loups, from New England, ten Indian women, and three children. The Indians insisted on taking these women with them to prepare their food, according to their custom, while they were fishing and hunting.\*

It was decided to diverge from the old route, and Tonty and Zenobe were despatched in canoes, with the equipage and nearly all the men, along the southern border of Lake Michigan to the mouth of the Chicago River. The waters were closed with ice, as had been anticipated, and Tonty caused sledges to be constructed for dragging the canoes over the frozen surface. La Salle travelled on foot from the Miamis River, and joined him on the 4th

\* That women and children should be taken on such an enterprise would seem incredible, if it were not so stated by Father Zenobe, who is particular in his enumeration of the persons engaged. See Le Clercq's "Etablissement de la Foy," Tom. II. p. 214. La Salle also mentions the women in his "Procès Verbal," but not the children.

of January, 1682. The whole party then began their journey up the Chicago, the canoes, baggage, provisions, and a wounded Frenchman unable to walk, being thus conveyed to its sources, and thence across the portage, and down the Illinois to Lake Peoria, where the river was open, and the canoes were launched again upon their proper element. No Indians were seen at the great village, they having gone to their winter habitations below. Fort Crèvecœur was found in good condition. There seems to have been a garrison in the fort, probably sent thither a few weeks before by La Salle, on his last arrival at the Miamis River, for there is no evidence of its having been occupied till now from the time it was abandoned by Tonty, soon after its construction. There was no delay at this place; and, on the 6th of February, the voyagers found themselves floating safely on the waters of the Mississippi, no accident having occurred to retard their progress or cloud their hopes.

They were detained here seven days, waiting for the Indians, who had loitered behind in consequence of the floating ice; and, on the day of their departure, they passed the mouth of the Missouri, the general appearance of which and its muddy waters are accurately described by Father Zenobe. Six leagues below, on the east side of the river, they landed near a village of the Tamaroa Indians, who were then all absent at their hunting-grounds; and from this place, having no provisions in store but Indian corn, and being obliged to stop on the way to hunt and fish, they advanced slowly to the Ohio

River, where they remained a short time. For a hundred and twenty miles below the mouth of the Ohio, the banks of the Mississippi were marshy and covered with reeds, which afforded no opportunity for hunting; and the next resting-place was at the Chickasaw Bluffs, where they arrived on the 26th of February.

The hunters went into the woods in search of game, and all returned except Pierre Prudhomme. As Indians had been seen, who probably fled at the sound of the guns, it was feared that Prudhomme might have been captured or killed. To be on his guard, the *Sieur de la Salle* threw up an intrenchment, called *Fort Prudhomme*, a name which it retained long afterwards; and at the same time ordered a party of Frenchmen and Abenakis to follow the Indian tracks, and, if possible, to take some of the natives prisoners, without doing them any harm, by which means he hoped to gain intelligence of the lost man. *Gabriel Barbiè* and two Abenakis succeeded in discovering five natives, and in capturing two of them, whom they conducted to the camp. They were given to understand that no injury was intended, that they would be kindly treated, and that peace with their nation was desired. They reported themselves as belonging to the nation of Chickasaws, and acceded to the proposition for peace, but they could give no account of Prudhomme. They said that one of their villages was distant only half-a-day's journey. *La Salle*, *Zenobe*, and others, set off for the village; but, after travelling till night, the savages confessed that the



distance was four days' journey farther. In this state of uncertainty, owing probably to the difficulty of communicating with these Indians, and being without provisions, they all went back to the camp. One of the Chickasaws agreed to return with them, and the other promised to go to the village, and prevail on some of the principal men to meet La Salle on the bank of the river, at the distance of four days' journey below.

At length Prudhomme was found, after having been lost in the woods nine days. Pursuing their voyage for a hundred miles or more unmolested, and without being able to find the Chickasaw rendezvous by reason of a fog, they were all at once arrested by the sound of a drum on the western side of the river, and the calls of distant voices, as if giving an alarm. With his usual caution, the *Sieur de la Salle* pushed for the opposite shore, where trees were felled, and a place of defence was hastily constructed. This caution, however, proved to be unnecessary.

No demonstrations of hostility were shown by the natives, who cordially accepted the calumet of peace, visited the Frenchmen in their camp, and invited them to their village. The shore was lined by a concourse of people to receive them, cabins were assigned for their accommodation, fuel was supplied for their fires, abundance of provisions was brought to them, and for three days they were regaled with a continual feast. These Indians, it was remarked, were of a much gayer humor than those of the north, more frank and open-hearted, more gentle in



their manners and decorous in their deportment. The Sieur de la Salle was treated with marked deference and respect. He took possession of the country in the name of his king, erected a cross, and adorned it with the arms of France. This was done with much pomp and ceremony, at which the savages testified great joy, and doubtless supposed it to be intended for their amusement. Father Zenobe also performed his part, by endeavoring to impress upon the multitude some of the mysteries of his faith, as far as he could do it without understanding a word of their language; and he did not despair of having produced good effects, especially as he observed, on his return, that the cross stood untouched, and had been surrounded by the Indians with a line of palisades. This village was called Kappa, one amongst many others occupied by the Akansa Indians in the vicinity of the Arkansas River. Two weeks were passed in these villages, and in all of them the reception was equally cordial.

The next nation below was that of the Taensas. They arrived here on the 20th of March. The villages were at the opposite side of a lake formed by the waters of the Mississippi. Zenobe and Tonty were deputed to go with presents on an embassy to the king, whom they found in much regal state, and an absolute sovereign over his people, surrounded by numerous attendants, who approached him with ceremonious respect. He was not content with showing all due hospitality and civilities to the ambassadors, but signified his intention to return the compliment by a visit to their commander. Two

hours before the time appointed for the visit, a master of ceremonies appeared with six men, who cleared the way over which the great chief was to pass, and erected an awning of mats to shield him from the sun. He came clothed in a white robe beautifully woven from the bark of trees, preceded by two men bearing fans of white plumes. A third carried before him two plates of copper brightly polished. His demeanor was stately and grave, but complaisant and engaging; and throughout the interview he manifested tokens of satisfaction, confidence, and friendship.

Father Zenobe represents these savages as docile, tractable, and capable of intellectual culture, and as indicating by their manners and modes of life a farther advance in civilization than he had ever seen among the rude tribes of the north. Their cabins were built with walls of mud mixed with straw, and covered with mats of cane firmly wrought together and ornamented with painted figures. Many convenient articles of furniture were in use, which gave an air of comfort to the dwellings. Their temples, which served as the burial-places of the chiefs, were adorned with embellishments. They were believed to be worshippers of the sun. Two Akansa guides, who could converse in the language of these people, doubtless prepared them to receive our voyagers without suspicion or distrust. From this place the guides returned to their nation.

Parting on amicable terms with the Taensas, the voyagers proceeded thirty or forty miles, when they discovered a pirogue, or canoe of wood, to which

the Chevalier de Tonty gave chase; but he desisted when a large number of savages were seen on the shore; and again, with his customary precaution, La Salle drew his canoes to the opposite bank of the river. The calumet of peace, however, soon settled all doubts, and the Indians, who proved to be fishermen of the Natches tribe, came over and invited him to accompany them to their village, which was twelve miles from the river. Taking with him Zenobe and some others, he went to the village, and passed the night there, and was treated with the same kindness as heretofore, although the Natches were at enmity with the Taensas. Another cross was planted, with the arms of France attached to it, by which ceremony the country was declared to be held by the king. The next day they returned to the camp, attended by the principal persons of the place, and also by a chief of Koroa, a village situate on the bank of the river about six miles below, to which they were invited by the chief.

At Koroa they were detained but a short time. A Chickasaw Indian, who had come with them from Fort Prudhomme, remained at this village. On the 3d of April, having advanced more than a hundred miles from Koroa, they saw several Indians employed in fishing, who fled as soon as they were discovered. Two Frenchmen and two Abenakis were sent on shore to reconnoitre. They were saluted by a shower of arrows, and soon returned, having been ordered not to discharge their guns, unless driven to an extremity. A drum was beaten, and the cry of war was raised. These belligerents



were the Quinipissas. Not caring to engage in a quarrel without an object, the Sieur de la Salle passed along without returning the fire, and came to a village of the Tangibaos, which had been recently sacked and pillaged, and many dead bodies were seen lying in the deserted cabins.

At length, on the 6th of April, the river was observed to divide itself into three channels. The Sieur de la Salle separated his company into three divisions, and, putting himself at the head of one of them, he took the western channel, the Chevalier de Tonty the middle, and the Sieur Dautray the eastern. The water soon became brackish, and then perfectly salt, till, at last, the broad ocean opened fully before them. La Salle encamped for the night about twelve miles above the mouth of the western branch, and the next day he and Tonty examined the shores bordering on the sea, and ascertained the depth of the waters in the two principal channels. The day following was employed in searching for a dry place, removed from the tide and the inundations of the river, on which to erect a column and a cross. This ceremony was performed the next day.

The arms of France were attached to the column, with this inscription: *Louis the Great, King of France and Navarre, reigns; the 9th of April, 1682.* All the men were under arms, and, after chanting the "Te Deum," they honored the occasion by a discharge of their muskets, with shouts of *Long live the King!* The column was then erected by the Sieur de la Salle, who made a formal speech, taking possession



of the whole country of Louisiana for the French King, the nations and people contained therein, the seas and harbors adjacent, and all the streams flowing into the Mississippi, which he calls the great River St. Louis. A leaden plate was buried at the foot of a tree, with a Latin inscription, containing the arms of France and the date, and purporting that La Salle, Tonty, Zenobe, and twenty Frenchmen, were the first to navigate the river from the Illinois to its mouth. The cross was then erected with similar ceremonies. At the same time an account of these proceedings was drawn up, in the form of a *Procès Verbal*, certified by a notary, and signed by thirteen of the principal persons of the expedition.\*

A scarcity of food obliged them to depart on their return up the river without delay. When they approached the inhospitable Quinipissas, they landed, and encamped not far from one of their villages. Four women were discovered, and brought to the

\* Creditable writers have erred in assigning the date of this discovery to the year 1683; misled, perhaps, by the garbled narrative of Tonty, in which there would seem to be a misprint of the last figure, which has been retained in subsequent editions and translations. It is remarkable that, in the Letters-Patent to Crosat, signed by the king's hand, and granted only thirty years after the discovery, the year is twice mentioned to have been 1683. The "*Procès Verbal*" sets this point at rest.

It has been said that the name *Louisiana* was first given to the country by La Salle on the present occasion. This is possible; yet, as Hennepin's "*Description de la Louisiane*" was printed the same year, it is more probable that the name had before been used, or at least spoken of as appropriate. La Salle does not profess, in the "*Procès Verbal*," to give a new name, but seems rather to employ it as one already existing.

camp; and soon afterwards a party of savages in pirogues came towards them, with an apparent intention of making an attack. They refused to accept the calumet, and, when a gun was fired, they all hurried away in a fright, having never before seen firearms. It being absolutely necessary to procure provisions, either by favor or force, one of the women was dismissed with presents, and given to understand that the others would be permitted to follow her, if the Indians would bring corn to the camp.

On the following day, one of the chiefs appeared, and the *Sieur de la Salle* went out to meet him. A peace was concluded, and hostages were given by the savages. This proved to be a finesse, however, and designed only to gain time for an accession to their numbers. While several Frenchmen were at the village, where a feast was prepared for them, armed men were seen coming from different quarters, and they all retired hastily to the camp. Before light the next morning, a sentinel heard a noise among the canes and gave the alarm. All hands were called to arms, and at that moment the savages raised the war-cry, and discharged their arrows. This salutation was returned by a volley from the muskets, and a skirmish was kept up for nearly two hours. Ten of the savages were killed, and many others wounded, but no harm was done to their opponents. The Indians at last ran off, leaving their dead behind, and the *Loups*, true to the power of habit, bore away two *Quinipissa* scalps. So successful had *La Salle* been in his intercourse with the

numerous tribes of Indians whom he had met that this was the first instance in which he was compelled to wage war upon them. Some of his people were eager to go and burn down the village of so perfidious a race, but he refused his consent.

On the 1st of May, they came to the Koroas, who had received them as friends on their way down, but were now seen in arms along the bank of the river. They were allies of the Quinipissas, who had sent messengers in advance. No hostilities were offered, and, putting on a bold countenance, the voyagers passed above the villages to the place where they had concealed a quantity of corn, which was found in good condition. This was an opportune supply, for they had suffered extremely from hunger since they left the mouth of the river. At Taensa and Akansa they met with the same friendly reception as before.

From this latter place the Sieur de la Salle proceeded, in advance of the others, with two canoes, as far as Fort Prudhomme, where he was overtaken by the whole party on the 2d of June. Here he was seized with a dangerous illness, which arrested his progress; but he despatched the Chevalier de Tonty to Mackinac, with orders to inform the Count de Frontenac, by the first conveyance, of the particulars of the voyage, and then to return to the Illinois. The good Father Zenobe remained with his commander, whose malady was so severe that he was detained forty days, and then by slow movements he reached the Miamis River towards the end of September.



Tonty had been faithful and active in executing his orders. He had returned from Mackinac, and while on his way thither he placed Dautray in command at the Miamis River, and Cauchois at Fort St. Louis, near which many Indians assembled and built two hundred new cabins. According to Father Zenobe's account, it was at this time the intention of the Sieur de la Salle to go down the Mississippi in the Spring following, with a large number of people and families, to found a colony.

Wishing to communicate full and accurate information of his discoveries to the court of France, he prevailed on Father Zenobe to be the bearer of his despatches. The resolution was suddenly taken, and Zenobe left the Miamis River on the 8th of October for Quebec, whence he sailed in the same vessel with the Count de Frontenac, and arrived in France before the end of the year.

Little is known of the plans or the operations of the Sieur de la Salle during the next ten or twelve months. The letters of Father Zenobe, who had been his devoted attendant for the last four years, fail us here, and no other records have come to light to supply their place. It can only be ascertained that he passed the time in the Illinois country and in the region of the Upper Lakes, probably prosecuting his traffic, the exclusive privilege of which was soon to terminate, and cementing his alliance with the Indian tribes.

Fort St. Louis was completed, and the best understanding was kept up with the Illinois Indians, in the midst of whose territory it was situate. His



scheme of conducting a colony down the Mississippi was abandoned, and he formed the more extensive one of soliciting the government to aid him in this enterprise on a larger scale. Leaving the Chevalier de Tonty in command at Fort St. Louis, and in the general charge of his interests, he departed for Quebec in the autumn of 1683, sailed for France, and landed at Rochelle on the 13th of December.

## CHAPTER IX

La Salle obtains a Commission to settle a Colony in Louisiana.—Sails with four Vessels to St. Domingo, and thence to the Gulf of Mexico.—Discord between him and the Commander of the Squadron.

THE grand project, which now absorbed his thoughts, was an expedition by sea to the mouth of the Mississippi, with such an equipment of ships, colonists, and supplies, as would enable him to explore his newly-discovered country, and establish permanent settlements. His hopes rested on the success he should have in persuading the ministers to adopt his plans, and furnish the aid necessary for carrying them into effect.

It was soon apparent, however, that much was to be done before the way could be prepared for a reception of this proposal. His enemies in Canada had spared no pains to excite prejudice at Court against him, and to represent his conduct and designs in the most unfavorable light. La Fevre de la Barre, successor to the Count de Frontenac in the government of Canada, took the lead in making these representations. Jealous of the friends of his predecessor, and willing to thwart the measures he had set on foot, La Barre listened complacently to all the tales that were told, either to his disadvantage or to that of his supporters. While the Sieur de

la Salle was yet in the Illinois country, after his return from the Mississippi, the governor wrote to the minister, that the imprudence of La Salle had kindled a war between the French and the Iroquois, that his pretended discovery was of little account, that his designs were suspicious, and that the reports of Father Zenobe should be received with distrust. This insidious letter was despatched by the fleet in which Zenobe sailed for France, and of course before the new governor could have had any opportunity to gain a correct knowledge of the designs, transactions, or discoveries, of La Salle.

Five months afterwards, in April, 1683, he wrote again, affirming his conviction of the falsehood of what had been said of the new discoveries, of which La Salle had sent an account to the minister by the Recollet Father, and adding that this voyager was then at Green Bay, with some twenty vagabond Frenchmen and savages, that he assumed the air of a sovereign, pillaged his countrymen, exposed the people to the incursions of the Iroquois, and covered all these violences under the pretext of a permission from the king to hold an exclusive commerce with the countries he should discover. The governor seemed to console himself, however, with the remark, that his privilege would cease in a month, when he would be obliged to come to Quebec, where his creditors, to whom he owed more than thirty thousand crowns, impatiently waited his return.

“Such is the lot of those men,” says Charlevoix, “whom a mixture of great faults and great virtues lifts above the common sphere. Their passions be-

tray them into errors, and, if they do what others cannot do, their enterprises are not approved by all men; their success excites the jealousy of those who remain in obscurity; their acts prove beneficial to some and injurious to others; the latter take revenge by decrying them without moderation; the former exaggerate their merit. Hence the different portraits which are drawn, and of which none is an exact resemblance; and as hatred and the habit of evil-speaking are more prevalent than gratitude and friendship, and as calumny finds an easier access to the public ear than commendation and praise, the portrait of the *Sieur de la Salle* was more disfigured by his enemies than embellished by his friends." \*

The representations of *M. de la Barre*, upon whatever foundation in truth they may have rested, and there appears to have been little, did not answer the end he expected. *La Salle* was now present, aided by his steady friends *Frontenac* and *Zenobe*, to make his own statements and support his own cause. His early and constant patron, *Colbert*, had died a few months before, but his son, *Seignelay*, was still a Secretary of State and Minister of the Marine. He saw at once the glory that must redound to France by settling with Frenchmen a country half as large as Europe. Whatever he might think of the faults of *La Salle's* temper and disposition, he confided in his talents, integrity, expanded views, determined resolution, and prodigious enterprise; he acceded to his proposals, and gained for them the approbation of the Court and the King.

\* "Histoire de la Nouvelle France," Chap. X.



It was decided that an expedition should be fitted out, for which the government would provide vessels, troops, munitions, and such other supplies as were wanted; the whole to be under the command of the Sieur de la Salle. A new commission was granted to him, with all the powers necessary for the object. He was authorized to establish colonies in Louisiana; and the immense country and all its inhabitants from Lake Michigan to the borders of Mexico were made subject to his orders. These large powers imply an extraordinary degree of confidence in the ability and character of the man to whom they were intrusted. The commander of the squadron was to be under his direction, except in the business of navigating the ships at sea till they arrived in America, and to assist him in making preparations for the voyage.

Four vessels of different dimensions were selected and put in readiness at Rochelle and Rochefort. The largest of these was the *Joly*, a frigate of thirty-six guns, commanded by Beaujeu, who was likewise the commander of the squadron. The second was called the *Belle*, which carried six guns, and had been given to the Sieur de la Salle by the king. The third was a ship of about three hundred tons' burden, called the *Aimable*, which belonged to a merchant of Rochelle, and on board of which were the implements, goods, and other effects deemed necessary for a new settlement. The fourth was the *St. Francis*, a small vessel, in which were contained thirty tons of munitions and merchandise for St. Domingo.

The whole number of persons who embarked in these vessels, including the seamen and one hundred soldiers, was about two hundred and eighty. The high expectation entertained of the success of this enterprise prompted several respectable individuals to join it as volunteers, among whom were Moranget and Cavelier, nephews of La Salle, the latter only fourteen years old, Planterose, Thibault, Ory, and also Joutel, who had served sixteen years in the army, and who has since been known as the historian of the expedition. These persons and a few others were from Rouen, the native town of La Salle. A Canadian gentleman, by the name of Talon, and his family, and also some other families, consisting of men and young women, increased the number of volunteers to about thirty.

The missionary force was strong, being four Recollet Fathers, Zenobe Membré, Anastase Douay, Maxime Le Clercq, and Denis Marquet; and also three priests, Cavelier, the brother of La Salle, Chefdeville, his relation, and Majulle. At the head of the mission was Father Zenobe, whose experience and character eminently qualified him for this station. After their arrival in America, some of them were to remain in the new colony, and others to pursue their vocation among the Indians. On the first day of the voyage, however, Marquet was so ill that he was set on shore and left behind.\*

The selection of the soldiers, artisans, and

\* Maxime Le Clercq had resided five years as a missionary in Canada. He is not the same as the author heretofore quoted, whose name was Chrétien Le Clercq.

laborers, was intrusted to agents at Rochelle and Rochefort, who seem to have discharged their trust in a most faithless and reprehensible manner. It was extremely important that every man should be of good character and competent to fulfil his duties. But the soldiers were an assemblage of vagabonds and beggars from the streets, some of whom had never handled a musket. Special orders had been given that workmen should be engaged who were skilled in the several mechanic arts, three or four for each; but many of them proved, upon trial afterwards, to be totally ignorant of the trades in which they were to be employed. This deception in the choice of the soldiers and workmen, though remedied in part by La Salle before his departure, was most unfortunate in the result, and was one of the principal causes of the disastrous failure of the enterprise.

But the most serious misfortune of all was the disagreement between the two commanders. Beaujeu was a sensitive, querulous, troublesome man, of small mind and narrow conceptions, and possessing a most exalted opinion of his consequence as an officer of the king's navy. La Salle was reserved, keeping secret the tenor of his commission and instructions, making no explanations to Beaujeu, and seeming indifferent whether this captain indulged himself in a good or ill-humor. Two such men were the last in the world to be united in promoting a common object.

The *Sieur de la Salle* arrived at Rochelle on the 28th of May, 1684, for the purpose of superintend-

ing the preparations. He found Beaujeu there, who began to unfold his griefs in a letter to the minister two days afterwards.

“You have ordered me, Sir,” he writes, “to afford to this enterprise every facility in my power. This order I shall execute as far as possible; but permit me to take great credit to myself for consenting to obey the orders of the Sieur de la Salle, whom I believe to be a worthy man, but who has never served in war except against savages, and who has no military rank; whereas I have been thirteen years captain of a vessel, and served thirty years by sea and land. Moreover, he tells me, that, in case of his death, the command is to devolve on the Chevalier de Tonty. This is certainly very hard for me to bear, for although I am not now acquainted with the country, yet I must be a dull man indeed not to obtain an adequate knowledge of it in a month after my arrival. I beseech you, therefore, so far to give me a share in the command, that they shall undertake no operation of war without consulting me. Of their commercial affairs I do not pretend to have any knowledge. I believe such an arrangement important to the king’s service. If we should be attacked by the Spaniards, I am persuaded that men, who have never commanded in war, could not resist them, nor secure the advantages which another could do, who had been instructed by occasions and experience.” \*

\* Beaujeu’s letters have never been printed. The extracts here given are translated from the originals, contained in the archives of the Marine Department at Paris.



We here discover a source of dissatisfaction, which could hardly fail to generate continual discords and complaints. Three weeks later the captain wrote from Rochefort as follows:

“The *Joly* is now prepared for sea, and I hope to sail down the river to-morrow. It remains for the Sieur de la Salle to depart whenever he is ready. We have six months’ provisions for one hundred soldiers, and eight months’ for sixty sailors. We could put no more on board. The Sieur de la Salle has said nothing to me of his designs, and, as he is constantly changing his plans, I know not whether these provisions will be enough for the enterprise. He is so jealous, and so fearful that some one may penetrate his secrets, that I have refrained from asking him questions. He was offended because I inquired where we should find a pilot, who has been on the coast to which we are bound, and he has not yet given me any light on this subject. His suspicions are such that he told me it would be necessary to prevent any one from taking the latitude of the coasts, and he was displeased when I replied that I would keep my instruments under my own control, but that it would be impossible to prevent others from ascertaining the sun’s altitude, since it could be done with a cross-staff made of two sticks.

“I have already informed you how disagreeable it is for me to be under the orders of the Sieur de la Salle, who has no military rank. I shall obey him, however, without repugnance, if you send me positive orders to that effect; but I desire that they may be of such a kind that he cannot impute to me

any fault, in case he should fail to execute what he has undertaken. I am induced to say this, because he has intimated that some persons have been suborned by his enemies to use their endeavors to defeat his enterprise. I wish also that you would inform me what is to be done in regard to the soldiers, for he pretends that on our arrival they are to be put under his charge; but my instructions do not authorize this pretence, since I am to afford all the succor in my power, without endangering the safety and navigation of the vessel. Now, it is evident that with seventy men I can neither defend nor navigate safely the *Joly*, a ship of thirty-six guns. By the second article of my instructions, I am intrusted only with the manœuvres of the vessel at sea, which is likely to breed a schism between him and me, for, in case of an attack, he may pretend to command the sailors as well as the soldiers."

This letter was written more than a month before the departure of the squadron, and yet there was no change in the instructions. The minister probably thought that these points should be settled between the commanders themselves; and so they might have been, if their interests had been the same, and if they had cherished a mutual spirit of accommodation. Unhappily this spirit did not exist, and the natural consequences followed.

The four vessels sailed from Rochelle on the 24th of July. They had not gone more than fifty leagues to sea, when the bowsprit of the *Joly* was broken, and they all returned to the River of Rochefort for repairs. The bowsprit being replaced by a new one,

they put to sea again on the 1st of August, bound for St. Domingo. At the end of twenty days they descried the Island of Madeira, where Beaujeu proposed to anchor and take in water and refreshments. La Salle refused his consent, on the ground that they had plentiful supplies on board, and that to stop here would cause an unnecessary delay, and expose the designs of the voyage to the risk of being discovered by the Spaniards.

This refusal occasioned not only the displeasure of the captain, but the dissatisfaction and murmurs of the other officers and of the men. On the 6th of September, another incident occurred, which tended to widen the breach between the two commanders. They had reached the Tropics, and the sailors were preparing for the usual ceremony of plunging in a tub of water all those who had not before crossed the line. The Sieur de la Salle gave a positive order that none of his men should be required to submit to this absurd folly, and thereby drew upon himself the ill-will of the subordinate officers and sailors, who expected good cheer and bountiful gifts from so large a number of persons, as a compromise on their part for having the ceremony performed in as gentle a manner as the rules would allow. The captain was obliged to sustain this order, but the odium of it fell upon the Sieur de la Salle.

The voyage was prosperous till they approached the Island of St. Domingo, when there was a storm and foul weather, and the vessels were separated from each other. It had been agreed that the *Joly*



should put into Port de Paix, in the north part of the island; but Beaujeu seems to have changed this plan of his own accord, for he sailed round the western end of the island, and landed far south, at Petit Gouave, on the 28th of September. Four days afterwards, the *Belle* and *Aimable* came in; but the little bark *St. Francis* was taken by the Spaniards. This loss was severely felt, as the cargo consisted of articles important to the expedition.

The Sieur de la Salle went immediately on shore to provide refreshments and accommodations for the sick, who were landed and put under the care of Joutel and the surgeons. It was necessary, also, for him to see M. de Cussy, the Governor of St. Domingo, and M. Begon, the Intendant, who were required by instructions from the minister to render him such assistance as was requisite for advancing the objects of his voyage. Unfortunately these officers were at Port de Paix. He wrote to them, and requested that, if possible, they would meet him at Petit Gouave, since it was not in his power to leave the squadron. Meantime he was taken ill of a fever, which increased to such a degree of violence that his life was despaired of. The state of his affairs at this time may be understood by the contents of another letter from Beaujeu to the minister, dated the 20th of October.

“Were it not for the malady of the Sieur de la Salle,” he says, “I should have no occasion to render to you an account of our voyage, since I am charged only with the navigation, and he with the secret; but his illness obliges me to inform you of the situation in which we are now placed.”



He proceeds to give an account of the voyage, in which he complains that his wishes were always thwarted, that two of the vessels were wretched sailers, and that the *Joly* was so much filled with merchandise and baggage between the decks, that the men had fallen sick for the want of air and accommodations; and he then adds,

“ At last we arrived here, almost all sick; and the Sieur de la Salle himself has been attacked by a violent fever, which the surgeons think will be long and dangerous, affecting not more his body than his mind. A few days after he was taken ill, M. Cavellier, his brother, came to me, and requested that I would take charge of his affairs; but I excused myself, because I knew that, when restored to health, he would not approve what I had done, for I have often heard him say that he was not obliged to any one for meddling in his concerns, or speaking of them. He told me, however, that it was absolutely necessary to procure subsistence for the men with the goods on board the *Aimable* and *Belle*, and I gave orders for that purpose, established the rations, and appointed a commissary for their distribution.

“ It is said that the Spaniards have in these seas six men-of-war, each carrying sixty guns. However this may be, or whatever may happen, I will carry home to you intelligence of the Mississippi, or perish in the attempt. It is true, if the Sieur de la Salle should not recover, I shall pursue different measures from those he has adopted, which I do not approve. Nor can I comprehend how a man should dream of settling a country, surrounded by Span-

iards and Indians, with a company of workmen and women, instead of soldiers. But I shall undertake nothing without the consent of the governor and intendant, whose counsels I shall follow.

“If you will permit me to express my opinion, the *Sieur de la Salle* ought to have contented himself with the discovery of his river, without attempting to conduct three vessels and troops across the ocean, in so many different climates, and through seas utterly unknown to him. I agree that he is a man of learning, who has read much, and has some knowledge of navigation; but there is so great a difference between theory and practice that the man who possesses only the former will always deceive himself. The ability to transport canoes through lakes and rivers is also very different from that which is required to conduct vessels and troops over remote seas. Pardon this little digression, which I have thought it necessary to make in my own justification, because I am aware that I have been represented to you as a man full of difficulties; but I would only provide for whatever may happen, whereas they who make everything easy never know what to expect.”

By this extract, and those preceding, we perceive all the troubles of this captain to centre in one point, the mortification of being under the orders of a man who had no military rank. Why did he accept the command, the terms of which he perfectly understood, and then give himself up to perpetual heart-burnings, and seize every possible occasion to vent his complaints, and to embarrass the measures which

it was his duty as an officer to support? La Salle's great fault consisted in not comprehending or regarding the delicacy of his situation, and endeavoring to soothe his sensitive temper by more condescension and frankness of manners; as well as in not reposing confidence in a man whose cordial coöperation was absolutely essential to the success of his enterprise.

The governor and intendant came to Petit Gouave, and in three weeks' time the Sieur de la Salle had gained sufficient strength to make the arrangements with them for pursuing his voyage. The proper stores of provisions were procured and laid in; and domestic animals, suited for settling a colony, were put on board. Consultations were held with competent pilots concerning the navigation of the West India seas and the Gulf of Mexico. It was resolved to steer to the south of the Island of Cuba, and touch at Cape St. Anthony, its western extremity. He was the more anxious to depart, as his motley company of soldiers were licentious and disorderly; some died of diseases contracted in the island, and others deserted.

In the voyage from France, the *Joly* had taken the lead of the squadron, but the *Aimable*, being the heaviest sailer of the three, was now placed in front, and the others were to be guided by her motions. Some of the passengers were transferred from the *Joly* to the *Aimable*, among whom were La Salle himself, Fathers Zenobe and Anastase, Cavelier, Chefdeville, and Joutel. The two commanders were thus separated, which, under the circumstances, was

undoubtedly an important change, since it seems to have become a settled point that they could not respect each other, nor act together in harmony. They all sailed from Petit Gouave on the 25th of November.



## CHAPTER X

The Vessels make the Land at the Westward of the Mississippi.  
—The Colonists go ashore at the Bay of St. Bernard, and build a Fort.—La Salle explores the Bay with the hope of finding one of the Mouths of the Mississippi.

PARTING from St. Domingo, they coasted along the southern shore of Cuba, at one time standing to the south till they saw the Cayman Islands, and then turning northward to seek for the Isle of Pines. Here they cast anchor, and remained three days. They embarked again, and, after beating for some time against a headwind, they weathered Cape Corrientes, and on the 12th of December came to anchor at Cape St. Anthony.

The Gulf of Mexico now lay before them, and, staying there one night only, they set sail, and turned their prows in a northwesterly direction. Contrary winds drove them back, and detained them four days longer at Cape St. Anthony, which time they employed in filling the water-casks. The wind and weather becoming favorable, the sails were spread, and a northwest course was taken, as before. The sky was for the most part cloudless, and there were opportunities for frequent observations; but unfortunately the latitude of the coasts was so imperfectly known that these observations, however accurate,

could be turned to little account. By some rude instrument, La Salle had observed the elevation of the pole at the mouth of the Mississippi, and had made the latitude full two degrees too far south.

After eight days' sailing, however, it was certain that they could not be far from land. At length soundings were found, and the *Belle*, being the smallest of the three vessels, was sent ahead, and on the tenth day a signal from her mast gave notice that land was in sight. At the same time, a sailor from the mast-head of the *Aimable* saw land bearing northeast, at the distance of six leagues.

No one could tell, or conjecture with any degree of certainty, on what part of the coast they had arrived. It was finally agreed, that they must be in the Bay of Appalachie, which is nearly three hundred miles east of the Mississippi, and far to the eastward of the meridian of Cape St. Anthony. As they had all the while been steering to the west of north, it would seem strange that they should come to such a conclusion. But La Salle and Beaujeu had been told in St. Domingo, by pilots who professed to have a knowledge of the navigation of the Gulf, that a strong current set at all times towards the Bahama Channel, around the Cape of Florida, and they now supposed themselves to have been wafted much farther eastward by this current than was accounted for by the ships' reckoning. This decision was fatal, for they were actually at the westward of the main stream of the Mississippi, probably not less than a hundred miles, and near the Achafalaya Bay; but even at this place, if they had landed, they could not

have failed to find one of the western branches of the Mississippi.

In conformity with this decision, it was determined to coast along to the west, with the expectation of finding the mouths of the Mississippi. On the 1st of January, 1685, La Salle landed in a boat at the head of a few men, but without making any discovery, and, at the end of nine days, so much was he bewildered that he still thought himself in the Appalachie Bay, on the coast of Florida. He held intercourse with some of the savages who came on board, but no knowledge could be gained from them. At length, twenty days after the first discovery of land, it was ascertained, by the change of latitude, that the coast was tending towards the south. The delusion now vanished, and it was obvious that he was approaching the borders of Mexico, near the Magdalen River, and the Bay of Espiritu Santo. Yet he cherished the vain hope that some branch of the Mississippi might empty itself into the Gulf of Mexico not far from this place.

For the purpose of observing the country, and searching for fresh water, Joutel, with a party of men, was sent on shore. They found only salt water; the soil was barren and sandy; they saw a herd of deer, and killed many ducks and wild turkeys. La Salle himself was preparing to land and reconnoitre, when the *Joly* came in sight, which detained him on board. She had been separated from the other two vessels sixteen days, having kept at sea to avoid the shoals. The lieutenant came on board the *Aimable*, with a harsh message from the captain, in which he

complained that he had been left behind by design. This was not true, for the *Joly* was the best sailer, and was ahead when she was last seen. It is evident, from what had already passed, that Beaujeu cared little whether he kept company with the other vessels or not, and that he followed his own choice in standing farther out to sea. This new misunderstanding between the two commanders tended only to throw additional obstacles in the way of the enterprise. They met very rarely afterwards. The business relating to the *Joly* was transacted between La Salle and Beaujeu's lieutenant.

As all the officers were now satisfied that they had gone much too far westward, there was a discussion as to the expediency of retracing their course, and seeking again for the Mississippi. This was the desire of the Sieur de la Salle, and he proposed it to Beaujeu, who demanded a new supply of provisions before he would undertake the voyage. He was offered enough for fifteen days, within which time the Mississippi might be discovered; but this offer he would not accept. The discussion ran into a dispute, which continued for some time; but La Salle would not comply with Beaujeu's demands, because he suspected, and with apparent justice, that he would sail away for the West Indies, and leave him without fulfilling his promise. Whether he did not cross his own designs, and hasten his fate, by standing so rigidly upon these points, it would be fruitless now to inquire. He probably thought, from what he knew of Beaujeu's character and conduct, that the last hope of a compromise had fled.



In the meantime, the vessels returned twenty or thirty miles along the coast, till they came to the outlet of the Bay of St. Bernard, not then known to La Salle, and named by him St. Louis, but which is now called Matagorda Bay, in the southwestern corner of Texas. The soldiers and others, except the ships' crews, were landed near the entrance of the bay, on the west side, and were regaled to their hearts' content with the fresh provisions afforded by the deer, wild fowl, and fish, which were found in abundance. Near this place was established the first encampment. A temporary camp for a part of the company was likewise formed at a considerable distance farther up the bay, on a point of land called Point Hurier, from the name of the officer who commanded there. An exploring party was sent out, under the command of Joutel and Moragnet, with orders to proceed along the shore around the western end of the bay. After three days' march, they were stopped by a river, which they could not cross without a boat. The vessels on the other side of the bay were in full view, and the Sieur de la Salle crossed over in a boat, and met the explorers at this place.

He had already given orders for the outlet of the bay to be sounded, with the design of bringing in the *Aimable* and *Belle*, if the depth of water should prove sufficient. There were two channels, and an island between them. The pilots reported favorably, and set up signals on the shoals. The cannon, and some other heavy articles, were taken out of the *Aimable*, and the captain was directed to run her into the bay.

The pilot of the *Belle*, who knew the channel, was sent to his assistance, but he refused to admit him on board, and said he could manage his own ship. He hoisted the sails, and in a short time contrived to run her upon a shoal, where she bilged, and could not be removed. The boat, which hung at the stern, was also maliciously staved in pieces. Some part of the cargo was saved, but the larger and most valuable portion was lost. Beaujeu must have the credit of allowing his boats to be employed in this service. On one occasion, when a boat was dashed against the side of the wreck by the violence of the waves, Father Zenobe was plunged into the sea, and was rescued by a rope, which he caught from the hand of a sailor standing on the deck.

This loss was the more to be deplored, as the vessel contained nearly all the implements and tools intended for establishing the colony. Their circumstances were such, says Joutel, that no one could doubt the disaster to have been the effect of a premeditated design of the captain, which he calls, truly enough, one of the blackest and most detestable that could be conceived in the heart of man.

When this accident happened, the *Sieur de la Salle* was on the opposite side of the bay, where the savages had already made their appearance, and carried off three men, while they were employed in cutting down a large tree, to be shaped into a canoe. He went to the village and brought back the men without opposition. He also succeeded in bartering some hatchets with them for two canoes, which he very much wanted; and it may here be observed that

he seems to have possessed a deep knowledge of the character of savages, and an extraordinary power over their minds, for it rarely happened that difficulties began when he was personally present.

It would have been fortunate if all his companions had possessed the same knowledge and the same power. We have an instance in point at this time. A bale of blankets had floated away from the wreck of the *Aimable* to the margin of the lake on the opposite side. The Indians picked it up, and, naturally enough, appropriated the blankets to their own use. He thought it would be a good opportunity to prevail on them to let him have canoes in exchange. Du Hamel, the second lieutenant of the *Joly*, offered to go with a party in his boat and negotiate the affair. They landed, and marched up to the village in a resolute manner, with arms in their hands, so that the Indians knew not whether to regard them as friends or enemies. Unable to make themselves understood, they finally went back, seizing a parcel of skins and two canoes as booty. The Indians looked upon this act as a declaration of war, pursued the party, overtook them in the night on the shore where they had landed and gone to sleep, poured in upon them a discharge of arrows, killed two and wounded two others, and then fled, frightened at the sound of a musket, fired by one of the men while rousing from his slumbers.

The Sieur de la Salle bitterly lamented this catastrophe. Ory and Desloges, the men that had been slain, were volunteers, whom he esteemed and valued as friends. The event cast a gloom over the minds



of all; they were struck with terror at the thought of Indians, murmured at their condition, and began to talk of returning to France, and abandoning an enterprise so thickly beset with dangers. If they had been endowed with the gift of foresight, their hearts might well have sunk within them. But the firm spirit of La Salle, which never sank or even drooped under any burden, sustained him now as in former trials, and his example was a gleam of encouragement to the desponding, the irresolute, and the faint-hearted.

Meantime Beaujeu was preparing to depart. He nourished his ill-humor to the last. The cannon balls were all on board the *Joly*. He refused to take them out, because he could not do it without removing some of his cargo. Eight cannon were thus left for the defence of the colony, and not a single ball. Taking with him the perfidious captain and the crew of the *Aimable*, he set sail for France on the 12th of March.

The whole number of persons then remaining in the colony is not exactly known. Joutel mentions one hundred and eighty, besides the crew of the *Belle*, consisting of soldiers, volunteers, workmen, women, and children. The stock of provisions from the vessels was nearly exhausted, and their future supply depended mainly on the chase. Fortunately the surrounding prairies were covered with buffaloes, which were easily killed with their firearms, and which furnished excellent food; the rivers abounded with fish; the cattle, swine, and fowls, which they had brought from St. Domingo, thrived and multi-



plied; and, after the failure of one experiment in a barren soil, they succeeded in producing grain and vegetables from European seeds.

To provide a shelter for themselves and their goods, and a protection against the Indians, they built a temporary fort on a hillock of sand, with the timbers and planks of the *Aimable*, which floated ashore after the vessel went to pieces, and with drift-wood from the beach. While this work was in progress, the Sieur de la Salle, taking fifty men with him, set out on a tour of discovery. He was unwilling to relinquish the hope that this bay, stretching far to the eastward, was in fact one of the mouths of the Mississippi. The captain of the *Belle* was ordered to sound the shores of the bay, and to sail along so as to hold communication with him. The fort was left under the command of Joutel, who was directed not to have any intercourse with the Indians.

Accompanied by his brother Cavelier, and by Fathers Zenobe and Maxime, he began his march, and explored the country around the west end of the bay, till he came to a river of considerable size, which he called the Vaches, on account of the immense number of wild cows, or buffaloes, seen on its banks. The name is still retained in the maps. On the western side of this river, six miles from its entrance into the bay, a place was found which he thought a better situation for an encampment than the one first selected on the barren sand-hills near the sea. He therefore sent the Sieur de Villeperdry back across the bay in a canoe, with orders for all the company to march and join him, except thirty men, who were

to remain in the fort with Joutel. Not long afterwards, these men were ordered to follow. Stopping at Point Hurier, they took with them the party at that place, and about the middle of July the whole colony assembled at the new encampment on the River Vaches.

The Indians had hovered about the fort at different times in the night, howling like dogs and wolves, but had done no mischief. Two men had deserted; and the Sieur de Gros, while hunting snipes in a marsh, was bitten by a rattlesnake. At first the wound excited no alarm; but the leg gradually swelled till the surgeon advised an amputation. A fever ensued, and he lived but two days. A conspiracy was likewise engendered in the fort. It was the plan of the conspirators to murder Joutel and others, and then to run away with such effects as they could carry. The plot was detected in time to prevent its execution.

A beautiful spot had been chosen for the new encampment. It was on an elevation near the bank of the river. Vast plains stretched away towards the west, covered with green herbage and tufts of trees; at the south and east lay the smooth waters of the bay, fringed with verdant borders; and northward the view extended over a wide expanse of prairie grounds, terminated in the far distance by a range of sloping hills and lofty forests. Such is the description of Joutel; and if the charms of nature, fair skies, and a bountiful clime, had been all that was needed to insure the happiness and fulfil the expectations of the colonists, they might here have sat down

contented with the present, and cheered with encouraging hopes of the future. But with the burden that now weighed upon their spirits, the music of nature's harmony was discord in their souls.

Their first care was to erect a habitation, and to surround it with a new fort. This was a work of incredible labor and fatigue. It was three miles to the nearest copse of wood in which timber suited to the purpose could be obtained. The trees were cut and hewn, and then dragged by the men over grass and weeds through that long distance to the camp. The carriage-wheels of one of the guns were used to aid the operation; but with all the contrivances that could be devised the toil was extreme, and some of the men sank under it. When the company first assembled at the new encampment several of their number had died, among whom was the *Sieur de Villeperdry*, and within a few days thirty more followed them to the grave. These were mostly soldiers, some of whom had become diseased at *St. Domingo*. The loss most lamented was that of the master-carpenter, who wandered from the camp, and was never again heard of. These continual inroads of death cast a gloom over the survivors, which depressed their spirits and abated their energies.

The mind of the *Sieur de la Salle* sustained this weight of care with its accustomed firmness and constancy. He neither spared himself in the work nor allowed the healthy and strong to be idle. Taking the place of the chief carpenter, he marked out the tenons and mortises, and prepared the timbers for the workmen. He also sent twenty men to bring



away the remnants of the old fort, which was effected without difficulty by the *Belle*, and by a raft towed at its stern. The Vaches was navigable as high up as the new fort. The materials being thus brought together, the work went on with more speed, and it was soon in a condition for shelter and defence. It was named Fort St. Louis.

These preparations being made in such a manner as to afford security to the colonists, his next design was to explore the bay, and to ascertain whether, in any part, it received a branch of the Mississippi. The illness of his brother detained him for some time, during which he made short excursions for several leagues around, merely to observe the country. It was not till late in the month of October that he was ready for this tour. He then departed with twenty men, leaving the fort and the colonists under the command of Joutel. He had also resolved to make use of the *Belle* in this expedition, and he ordered the captain to sail up the bay, and to station the vessel near the western shore, and remain there till intelligence should be received from him. His clothes, papers, and other effects, were put on board, as he probably thought they would be more secure there than in the fort.

A discharge of five cannon was the signal of his departure. Crossing the River Vaches, he went down to the bay by land, and thence eastward along the shore, keeping in sight of two or three canoes, which contained a part of the company. In this way he proceeded to the place where the *Belle* was at anchor, and wishing to know how near she could be



brought to the land, he sent the pilot with five men in a canoe to take soundings. Night coming on, and their work not being yet done, these men went ashore, and kindled a fire to cook their supper, but were so careless in keeping guard that the savages fell upon them and murdered every man. Uneasy at their long absence, La Salle himself took a canoe and went in search of them. He found their mangled bodies stretched on the ground and half-devoured by wild beasts.

He returned to the *Belle*, ordered the officers to remain in that place till they should hear from him, and then went ashore with two canoes. He caused the canoes to be sunk in a small creek, and, each man taking what he could in his knapsack, marched towards the east. In a few days they came to a large river, since known as the Colorado, which flows into the bay, and which they crossed. The particulars of this journey have not been recorded, either by Anastase or Joutel, as neither of them was of the party. But since its whole object was to discover one of the mouths of the Mississippi, which the Sieur de la Salle conjectured might fall into the Bay of St. Louis, it cannot be doubted that he passed around the eastern end of the bay, and examined all the rivers, so far as to satisfy himself that his conjecture was erroneous.

One man, named Duhaut, deserted the company after they had been several days out, and returned alone to the fort. He had given offence to the commander, and quarrelled with Moragnet, his nephew. On other occasions he had shown himself factious and troublesome.

After an absence of more than four months, La Salle was again received with joy by the colonists at the fort. Seven or eight of his men only came with him. The others had turned off from the track to go and search for the *Belle*, in the place where she had been left. Joutel represents their first appearance as forlorn and sad; their clothes ragged, Cavalier's short cassock hanging in tatters, some without hats, others destitute of linen. The remainder of the party returned the next day; they could not find the *Belle*; they had searched in vain along the shore; at the fort she had not been heard from; and the melancholy conviction seemed to rest upon the minds of all that she was lost.

## CHAPTER XI

First Journey towards the Illinois.—Cenis Indians.—La Salle taken ill of a Fever near the Red River.—Returns to the Bay of St. Bernard.—Second Journey towards the Illinois.—Conspiracy against La Salle.—His Death.

SEVERAL days passed away, and, no news of the *Belle* having been obtained, the Sieur de la Salle was more deeply impressed than ever with the perplexities and perils of his situation. Hitherto his hopes had clung to this vessel, as affording the means of finding the mouth of the Mississippi by sea, or, in the last extremity, of procuring relief from St. Domingo, and of conveying a knowledge of his distresses to France. These hopes were now all cut off. Removed nearly two thousand miles from any civilized settlement to which he could look for succor, surrounded on every side by hostile savages, depending on chance for the daily subsistence of a colony which he was bound to sustain and protect, he had no other support left than the strong arm of a beneficent Providence, no other resource than the unsubdued energy of his own resolute spirit.

His usual calmness did not forsake him, nor was it a time to indulge unavailing regrets. One course only remained, which was to open a communication with the Illinois, and seek assistance from Tonty, his faithful friend, who was stationed there awaiting

his orders. Through this channel, also, intelligence might be sent to France. He resolved to undertake this journey, and made preparations without delay. The party consisted of twenty men, including his brother Cavelier, Father Anastase, Moragnet, Biho-rel, Le Clerc, Hurier, Hiens a surgeon, and Nika the Indian hunter, who had accompanied him from Canada to France, and thence on the voyage. Hiens was a German from Wittenberg, who had been a bucaneer, and had joined him at St. Domingo. On the morning of the 22d of April, 1686, they performed their devotions in the chapel and then took their departure from the fort, directing their course to the northeast.

The colony was left under the charge of Joutel. A few days afterwards, he was surprised to see a canoe coming up the river, containing Chefdeville, the Sieur de la Sablonnière, and others, who had escaped from the *Belle*. They told the sorrowful tale of the wreck of that vessel. It had been driven to the south shore of the bay and stranded on the beach three months before. Planterose and five others had been previously swallowed up by the waves, on a dark night, while returning in a canoe from the land, where they had been for water. Three or four died on board. The number of hands was thus so much diminished that, when the winds rose, the bark could not be managed, and she ran aground. Several of the men perished on a raft, which they had unskilfully constructed; and the remainder succeeded with difficulty in reaching the shore on another raft. They saved a small stock of



provisions and a few articles, among which were the *Sieur de la Salle's* clothes and papers. Here they continued, on a desolate strand, for three months, till a canoe accidentally floated to the beach, in which they returned to their companions at the fort.

Few incidents are related as having occurred during the absence of *La Salle* on this journey. The Indians sometimes assailed the hunting-parties, but they made no hostile attempts upon the fort. The perfidious *Duhaut* stirred up a mutiny in the camp, which gave trouble to *Joutel*, but which, by a timely discovery, he was enabled to suppress. Yet he could not entirely assuage discontent, the offspring of heavy disappointments and hardships. But it was not all a scene of grief and gloom. The *Sieur Barbier* gained the heart of one of the young maidens, which furnished an occasion for the festivities of a wedding. *Joutel* was assisted in the arduous duties of his command by the counsels of *Father Zenobe*, a man of wisdom, fortitude, and experience.

After three days' journey, the *Sieur de la Salle* met a party of Indians in the midst of a beautiful prairie, some on foot, and some riding on horses. These latter wore boots and spurs, and sat in saddles, which was a proof that they had a commerce, directly or indirectly, with the Spaniards on the borders of Mexico. They were peaceful and courteous, and invited the travellers to their village; but, as this lay to the northwest, out of the track, the invitation was declined. The party took the precaution to fortify themselves that night, as they did afterwards, with palisades and fallen trees. Travelling for two

days over prairie grounds, they came to a river, undoubtedly a branch of the Colorado, which they called the Robec.

Here they fell in with a prodigious number of buffaloes, and killed as many as they wanted with the greatest ease, stopping five or six days to dry the meat, and providing as large a quantity as they could conveniently carry, so that they might march for several days without being hindered on the way to hunt for game. Five or six miles beyond, they came to another river, which Father Anastase says was broader and deeper than the Seine at Paris, bordered on one side by the most beautiful trees, and on the other by extensive plains. They crossed it on a raft. This was the *Colorado*. It was afterwards called the *Maligne* by La Salle, in consequence of one of his party having been devoured in it by a crocodile.\*

The crossing of rivers was the most serious impediment in their way. Many of the smaller streams could be forded, but many others were too deep for such a passage. The larger rivers could only be passed with rafts, and these it took much time to construct. Sometimes they would fell trees across the stream, and thus form a bridge. At other times they would cut down trees on each side, in such a manner that the tops would meet in the middle. On marshy banks, where trees did not grow, the rafts were made of canes. Frequently there was danger

\* In some of the old maps, the name *Maligne* is applied to the Brazos, and the Colorado is called the *River of Canes*; but, from the narratives both of Joutel and Anastase, it is more probable that the Colorado was the *Maligne*.

from the rapidity of the current, and from the water being so deep that the bottom could not be reached with their poles. Some of the men were good swimmers, and could cross with an axe whenever the occasion required.

At no great distance from the Colorado, their course turned more to the east, and they soon found themselves in the midst of a numerous tribe of Indians, called the Biskatronge, who received them with all the kindness imaginable, invited them to their cabins, detained them as long as they could by persuasion, and then furnished them with guides, and conveyed them across a river in their canoes. The next tribe was that of the Kirononas, who were not less friendly and hospitable.

Parting from these nations, they were alarmed one day by Nika, who cried out that he was dead. He had been bitten by a snake. This accident caused great anxiety to them all, for Nika's fidelity and skill in hunting rendered his services extremely important. Remedies were applied, and, fortunately, in a few days the wound was healed.

The next adventure was at a large and rapid river, where the *Sieur de la Salle*, attempting to cross on a raft of canes with half of his party, was hurried violently down by the current, till he was out of sight of those left behind, who supposed they were all drowned; but at sunset they appeared on the opposite bank, the raft having been caught by the branches of a floating tree, which enabled them to reach land. The others crossed the next day. But it was a dismal, marshy place, where they were mid-leg in water



while framing the raft; and Father Anastase was obliged to put his Breviary in his cowl to prevent its being wet. This was probably the River Brazos.

They were entangled for two days among canes, through which it was necessary to cut a path. Soon afterwards, a beautiful country opened to their view, and the travelling was easy and agreeable. They had not gone far, when they entered the territory of a nation of Indians, whom they found less barbarous, better provided with the conveniences of life, and more comfortable in their dwellings, than any they had seen. They first met a single Indian, who, with his wife and family, was engaged in hunting. He gave one of his horses to the *Sieur de la Salle*, and such provisions as he could spare, and invited the whole party to the village. He went forward to give notice of their approach, and a large company of warriors and others came out, fancifully dressed in skins and adorned with feathers, carrying the calumet with much ceremony, and exhibiting in all their movements an unusual display. The *Sieur de la Salle* was received in a sort of triumph, and lodged in the cabin of the great chief. Smiling faces, friendly salutations, and good cheer, were proffered from every quarter.

This village was one of a large number, scattered up and down on both sides of a river for many miles in extent, each having a different name. They were inhabited by the *Cenis* Indians. Some of the habitations were forty feet in height, in the shape of a beehive, having a framework of trees, with their tops bent and intertwined. Such a dwelling would ac-



commodate two families. The fire was in the centre, and beds of mats were arranged around the walls, elevated three or four feet from the ground. Some articles were seen, which evidently came from the Spaniards in Mexico, such as silver spoons, pieces of money, and clothes. Horses likewise were common, which must originally have been obtained from the same quarter. Yet these people, as they said, had never seen any Spaniards in their villages, but procured the articles they possessed from the Choumans, their allies, who resided at the westward, between them and Mexico. They were ready to barter their horses. One was sold for a hatchet, and another was offered to Father Anastase in exchange for his cowl by a savage, who was struck with admiration of that part of his dress. The offer was not accepted.

The same remarkable power which La Salle could always exercise over the savage mind was shown on this occasion. He won the respect and confidence of all ranks. They entertained him bountifully for five days, when he departed, and, crossing a large river, which ran through the midst of the Cenis villages, undoubtedly the River Trinity, marched forward to the nation of the Nassonis. This nation was in alliance with the Cenis, and seemed to possess the same habits, manners, and character.

About twenty miles farther onward, it was discovered that four men had deserted and gone back to the Nassonis; and in a short time the Sieur de la Salle and his nephew Moragnet were attacked by a violent fever, which compelled them to stop. They were now reduced so low that it was more than two

months before they were able to resume their journey; and, in their present condition, it was hazardous, and indeed impracticable, to pursue their route towards the Illinois. They depended entirely on the chase for their food, and by this long detention the stock of powder was so much exhausted that it would not be possible for the remainder to carry them through a dreary march of more than a thousand miles, even if they should be so fortunate as to meet a friendly reception from all the savages on the way; and this was not to be expected. Compelled by this cruel necessity, La Salle took the only course that was left; he resolved to go back to the Bay of St. Bernard.

The reader need not be detained with the incidents of this journey. In fact, very few have been related. Their fatigues were much relieved by five horses, which they had purchased of the natives. One of the men, as mentioned above, was swallowed by a crocodile, while crossing the Colorado; and Bihorel wandered away and was lost. When they arrived at the fort on the 17th of October, after an absence of almost six months, Joutel says there were only eight men with La Salle. Three had left the company on their way out, being unable to endure the fatigue, and it is not known whether they ever returned. Speaking of this journey, Father Anastase says, "It would be difficult to find in history an instance of a more intrepid and invincible courage than that of the *Sieur de la Salle* in the midst of disheartening events; he was never cast down, and he constantly hoped, with the aid of Heaven, to accomplish his en-

terprise, in spite of the obstacles by which it was opposed."

The route he pursued cannot be traced on a map with any degree of exactness, because there are no well-defined landmarks by which to be guided; and even the names of the Indian tribes have long ago passed away. It may be assumed as certain, however, that he crossed the three large rivers, Colorado, Brazos, and Trinity; the first, not many miles above the present town of Montezuma; and the second, as far above the town of Washington. Father Anastase informs us that the course was for several days northeast, and then more easterly. The Nassonis Indians were at some distance east of the Trinity, and the journey terminated beyond the Nassonis, probably about midway between the Trinity and the Red River, near the head-waters of the Sabine, and fifty or sixty miles northwest of Nacogdoches.\*

After his arrival at the fort, he employed the people in constructing a new storehouse, and in providing other means for lessening the discomforts of their situation. He soon formed the design of another journey to the Illinois, and began to make preparations. He was again taken down by an illness, which caused delay, and ten weeks passed before he was ready.

For this tour, according to Anastase, he selected twenty men; Joutel says seventeen. Among them were Father Anastase, Cavalier the Priest, and

\* The particulars of this journey are taken from the narrative of Father Anastase, the only person of the party who wrote an account of it.



young Cavalier his nephew, Joutel, Moragnet, Duhaut, Larcheveque, Hiens, Liotot, Talon, De Marle, Teissier, Saget, and the Indian Nika.\* The fort was put under the command of the Sieur Barbier, with whom were Father Zenobe, and Maxime, Chefdeville, Sablonnière, and others, being twenty persons in all, of whom seven were women and girls.† The Sieur de la Salle, calling the people together, addressed them in an eloquent speech, says Anastase, "with that engaging air which was so natural to him," presenting such motives to sustain their constancy as the occasion would admit, and encouraging them to hope for his speedy return, and with such succor as to relieve their distress.

Having taken a melancholy leave of their companions, the travellers departed from the fort on the 12th of January, 1687. As they passed over the same route that had been pursued on the former journey, the incidents were of a like kind; hunting buffaloes and game for food, crossing rivers, marching through swamps, and encountering the numerous ills and privations to which they would naturally be exposed on such a march. They met companies of the natives more frequently than before, who uniformly received them rather with a

\* Talon was a son of the Canadian gentleman of that name who sailed from Rochefort, and who had died. His widow was left in the camp, with several young children.

† This is the statement of Joutel, who speaks confidently as to the number remaining in the fort. When they assembled at the first encampment, after the departure of the *Joly*, he mentions the whole number of persons as being one hundred and eighty, besides the crew of the *Belle*. It follows that at least one hundred and forty-three had since died. "Journal Historique," pp. 95, 96, 157, 158.



kind welcome than with reserve or a show of hostility, entertaining them in the villages, supplying them with provisions, helping them across rivers with their canoes, and selling them horses for a small compensation. They were also aided in crossing some of the streams by a portable canoe, consisting of a light frame of wood covered with buffalo skins.

They thus proceeded without any remarkable adventure or accident for the space of two months. On the 15th of March, they came near to a place where the Sieur de la Salle had buried a quantity of Indian corn and beans on his last journey, and he ordered Duhaut, Hiens, Liotot, Larcheveque, Teissier, Nika, and his footman Saget, to go and bring it away. They found the place, but the corn and beans were spoiled. Nika, in the meantime, killed two buffaloes, and they despatched Saget to inform the commander, and request him to send horses for the meat. He accordingly directed Moragnet, De Marle, and Saget, to go thither with horses, and to send back one of them loaded with meat for immediate use, and wait till the rest was dried.

When Moragnet arrived, he found that the meat had been smoked, though it was not dry enough for that process; and Duhaut and the others had laid aside certain parts to be roasted for themselves, which it seems was the custom on similar occasions. Moragnet, in a passionate manner, reprimanded them for what they had done, and took away not only the smoked meat, but the pieces they had re-

served, saying, in a menacing tone, that he would do with it as he pleased.

They were irritated at this conduct, which was both rash and unreasonable. Duhaut had an old grudge against Moragnet, and was ready to take revenge. He brought over Liotot and Hiens to second his design. In short, they conspired to murder Moragnet, Nika, and Saget. In the night, after they had supped and were asleep, the horrible act was committed by Liotot, who butchered them all with an axe. Nika and Saget expired immediately, but Moragnet lingered for a short time, when the assassins compelled De Marle, who was not in the conspiracy, to put an end to his sufferings. That the rage of passion should drive these desperate men to so violent a deed as that of the murder of Moragnet, is conceivable, because similar atrocities have been committed on other occasions; but what could impel them to involve in the same doom the innocent Nika and Saget? For two years the faithful services of Nika had been unremittingly employed in providing the means of subsistence for them as well as for others. Why this black ingratitude and cold-blooded barbarity? They afford a proof that this crime was not the effect of a momentary impulse, but of a deliberate purpose. These men were the devoted though humble friends of the commander, whom they would defend in a time of peril, and who, if forced by necessity, might avenge his wrongs with a resolute arm.

As the conspirators had begun the work of blood, they laid a scheme on the spot for destroying the

Sieur de la Salle, in conformity, it may be, with a previous design, and under the dread of suffering the just punishment of their guilt at his hands. They deliberated on the method of doing it for two or three days. Meantime, La Salle expressed anxiety at the long absence of Moragnet, and seemed to have forebodings of some unhappy event, for he asked whether Duhaut and his associates had not shown symptoms of dissatisfaction. He feared, also, that the whole party might have been cut off by the savages.

Finally, he determined to go himself in search of them, leaving the camp, on the 19th of March, under the charge of Joutel. He was accompanied by Father Anastase, and two natives who had served him as guides. After travelling about six miles, they found the bloody cravat of Saget near the bank of a river, and, at the same time, two eagles were seen hovering over their heads, as if attracted by food, on the ground. La Salle fired his gun, which was heard by the conspirators on the other side of the river. Duhaut and Larcheveque immediately crossed over at some distance in advance. La Salle approached, and, meeting Larcheveque, asked for Moragnet, and was answered vaguely that he was along the river. At that moment, Duhaut, who was concealed in the high grass, discharged his musket, and shot him through the head. Father Anastase was standing by his side, and expected to share the same fate, till the conspirators told him that they had no design upon his life.

La Salle survived about an hour, unable to speak,



but pressing the hand of the good Father to signify that he understood what was said to him. The same kind friend dug his grave and buried him, and erected a cross over his remains. "Thus perished," says he, "our wise conductor, constant in adversities, intrepid, generous, engaging, adroit, skilful, and capable of anything. He who, during a period of twenty years, had softened the fierce temper of a vast number of savage nations, was massacred by his own people, whom he had loaded with benefits. He died in the vigor of life, in the midst of his career and his labors, without the consolation of having seen their results." \*

The conspirators all returned to the camp, and the grief with which the sad intelligence was heard by Joutel, Cavelier, and the others there, may be imagined. Attached and devoted as they had been

\* In this account of the death and burial of the Sieur de la Salle, I have followed the narrative of Father Anastase.—Le Clercq's "Etablissement, etc.," Tom. II. p. 340.—Joutel says that he expired instantly, and that "the body was stripped naked, dragged into the bushes, and left exposed to the ravenous wild beasts."—"Journal Historique," p. 203.—But he related what was told to him by others, and wrote from recollection; whereas Anastase was present, and has described what he saw and performed; and, as his authority is unquestioned, the account given by him would seem to deserve the most credit.

It is impossible to determine the precise spot at which this tragedy occurred. It was several days' journey west of the Ceniz Indians, whose dwellings were on the River Trinity. The place was probably on one of the streams flowing into the Brazos, from the east, and not far from that river; perhaps forty or fifty miles north of the present town of Washington. It could scarcely have been farther eastward, though the event has generally been supposed to have happened on a branch of the Trinity.



to their commander, they had reason to suppose themselves destined to be the next victims of the murderers. Larcheveque assured Joutel, however, that if he said and did nothing to give further offence, he would be safe; and the same declaration was made to Cavelier. But the anguish they felt was not assuaged by the reflection that they were now at the mercy of faithless and treacherous assassins, who, at any moment, in a fit of caprice, might perpetrate new crimes, as their passions or interests might dictate.

Duhaut assumed the command, and the confederates were for a time submissive to his orders. They seized upon all the effects of the *Sieur de la Salle*, and of those who had adhered to him, and then took up their line of march towards the villages of the *Cenis Indians*.

## CHAPTER XII

Contention between the Conspirators.—Five of La Salle's Party proceed to the Illinois, and thence to France.—The Chevalier de Tonty.—Error concerning a supposed Attempt of La Salle to find the Mines of St. Barbe.—Fate of the Colony at the Bay of St. Bernard.—Conclusion.

AFTER a few days' march, they encamped not far from Cenis village, and, as the provisions began to fail, Joutel, Liotot, Hiens, and Teissier, were sent forward with axes and knives to barter with the natives for corn and horses. They were successful in their trade, and went back with a good supply, except Joutel, who remained to collect a further stock. Among the Cenis he found three of the Frenchmen who had deserted from the Sieur de la Salle on the former journey. One of them was named Ruter, a sailor of Brittany, and another was called Grollet. They had adopted the Indian costume, shaved their heads, painted their faces and bodies, decorated themselves with feathers, and in their appearance and manners could scarcely be distinguished from the savages. While their powder lasted, they had made themselves of consequence in the wars, having killed many of the enemy; but when this was gone, they were obliged to resort to bows and arrows, which they had learned to manage with adroitness.

While Joutel was employed for a week or two in collecting provisions, the company still remaining at the camp, Duhaut formed the design of returning to the Bay of St. Bernard, where he intended to build a vessel and embark in it for the West Indies. This was a wild scheme, since there were neither carpenters nor materials for constructing such a vessel; yet he insisted on executing it. Anastase, Cavalier, and Joutel were bent on going forward to the Illinois; but they did not venture to reveal this project to Duhaut, not knowing what effect it might have upon his reckless and violent temper. Cavalier, in as gentle a manner as possible, told him that they were not willing to undertake the fatigues of this journey, but preferred to remain in the Cenis villages, and asked him to leave with them some of the powder, axes, and other articles, by which they could obtain provisions. After consulting with his associates, he consented to this proposal, and said that, in case he should not succeed in building a boat, he would return and bring with him Father Zenobe; and, if he should succeed, he would give them notice, and they might follow him to the Bay of St. Bernard.

This freak of good humor was more than they had reason to expect. Before long, Duhaut found out their project of going to the Illinois; and then he changed his mind, probably being convinced, upon reflection, of the folly of his own scheme. This change disconcerted the hopes of Joutel and his party, for they were anxious to be separated from the murderers. Their hopes were fulfilled in

a way they did not anticipate. Dissensions had already sprung up among the assassins about the division of the effects, which terminated in a quarrel. This was the state of things at the end of April.

Hiens had been absent from the camp for some time, and when he returned, and understood that Duhaut had altered his plan, he refused to consent, and said it would be dangerous for them to go to the Illinois, where they might be arrested and punished under the authority of the French government. He demanded a share of all the goods that had been seized, and, when this demand was refused, Hiens, who had probably formed his design beforehand, drew a pistol and shot Duhaut, who staggered a few steps and fell dead. At the same instant, Ruter fired his musket upon Liotot, who was mortally wounded, but who survived a few hours, when Ruter put an end to his tortures by the discharge of a pistol. They next sought Larcheveque, who was absent, and whom they likewise intended to kill; but they were diverted from their purpose by the intercessions of Anastase and Cavelier.

These new atrocities struck the adherents of La Salle with consternation and horror; but Hiens assured them that he had no intention to do them harm, and that they might be tranquil and easy on that score. They were now under his command, but he seems not to have exercised any severity, either to injure their persons or control their movements. He told them that he had engaged to join the natives in a war, and would fulfil his promise, and that they might remain in the villages till he



returned. This purpose was executed. Hiens and his men went away, leaving them behind.

They stayed till he returned from the war, in which bloody battles had been fought. He then consented, though with reluctance, to let them depart. He furnished them with a good supply of axes, knives, powder, and balls, and with three horses. If they were thankful for this show of generosity, it was not without sharp feeling that they saw this conspirator and assassin parading among the Indians dressed in a scarlet coat embroidered with gold, which had belonged to the Sieur de la Salle, and which he was accustomed to wear on occasions of ceremony. But it was not a time to yield to the claims of sensibility, or to indulge emotions, which nature might prompt, but which a stern policy bade them suppress.

The company now consisted of seven persons, Anastase, Cavelier the Priest, Cavelier the nephew, Joutel, De Marle, Teissier, and a young Parisian, named Barthelemy. They had six horses, and three Indian guides, who had been prevailed upon to go with them for a liberal reward.

To give the details of their journey would be little else than to repeat what has before been described. They left the Ceniz villages late in the month of May, travelled over the former route as far as the Nassonis, and then, pursuing the same northeasterly course, passed through several tribes of Indians, among others the great nation of the Cadodaquios, who dwelt on the banks of the Red River. A melancholy accident happened before they

reached this place. De Marle, while bathing in a river, was drowned. The natives were everywhere friendly, gave them provisions, and assisted them with guides. At length, on the 24th of July, as they approached a river, they beheld on the opposite side, to their inexpressible joy and surprise, a large cross, and a house of logs built after the French fashion. This house was near the junction of the Arkansas River with the Mississippi, where the provident Tonty, true to his duty and his attachment, had posted six men, with the hope that they might be able in some way to communicate with the *Sieur de la Salle*. Two of them only, *Couture* and *Delaunay*, now remained; the other four had gone back to the Illinois.

As soon as these two men saw their countrymen, they fired a salute, crossed the river with canoes, and took them to their habitation. After a six months' march through a wilderness, a march filled with perils and the most painful incidents, we may well imagine that the travellers were rejoiced to meet once more the tokens of human sympathy, as well as to see the waters of the Mississippi, so long the object of their ardent desire, now rolling placidly before their eyes. Although they were many hundred miles from the nearest footprints of civilization, they seemed to be on the threshold of home. They rested here six days, and were entertained by the *Akansas* with the ceremonies usual on receiving strangers bearing the calumet of peace. Moreover, these savages had seen *La Salle*; his renown as a great captain was high among them; and, not yet

informed of his death, they bestowed on his companions some portion of the respect entertained for their leader.

The Parisian youth Barthelemy, exhausted by the toils he had endured, was allowed to stay, at his own request, with Couture and Delaunay. The company was thus reduced to five persons. After making presents to the chiefs, procuring Indian guides, and bartering some of their horses for a canoe, they took leave of their hospitable friends, and began the wearisome labor of ascending the Mississippi. Their progress was slow, but at the end of two months they entered the Illinois River, and, on the 14th of September, landed at the foot of the high rock on which stood the Fort of St. Louis.\*

The Chevalier de Tonty, governor of the fort and of the Illinois country, was absent in a war against the Iroquois; but they were greeted with cordiality

\* In this part of the narrative, Father Anastase makes a passing remark upon the voyage of Marquette and Joliet. He endeavors to throw a shade of discredit upon Marquette's relation, and says it did not see the light till after La Salle's discovery. This is a mistake, for it was published in 1681, the year before La Salle descended the Mississippi. He affirms, moreover, that these voyagers did not go more than thirty or forty leagues below the mouth of the Illinois. He gives no reason for this assertion, and it may safely be said that there is no composition of the narrative kind which bears stronger internal marks of truth than that of Marquette. His map, also, which was published at the same time, is strikingly correct in the position of the great rivers, and in the latitudes as far south as the Arkansas, which was the limit of his voyage. Anastase was a Recollet, and Marquette a Jesuit; and as we have seen in the case of Charlevoix that the Jesuits sometimes looked through dark glasses upon the labors and writings of their Franciscan brethren, so, in this instance, perhaps, it is but fair to suppose that the compliment was returned.



and joy by the Sieur de la Bellefontaine who commanded in his absence. Boisrondet, whom the reader will recollect as having been several times mentioned before, was likewise in the fort, and devotedly attached to the interests of the Sieur de la Salle. It was the intention of Cavelier, Joutel, and Anastase, to proceed immediately to Quebec, and thence to France. They prepared for their journey in a few days. Boisrondet likewise proposed to go with them, and offered them passage in his canoe. They went to Chicago, and set off upon the lake, but were soon discouraged by the tempestuous weather and lateness of the season, and returned to Fort St. Louis, where they spent the winter.

They had not been long there, when the Chevalier de Tonty, having closed the Iroquois campaign, came to them at the fort. It may easily be imagined with what delight and eager anticipations he now met those who could give him intelligence of his long-lost friend. But, for some strange reason not well-explained, Cavelier and his companions had agreed to conceal his brother's death till they should arrive in France. They had told it to Couture, but charged him to keep it a profound secret. They were obliged to dissemble, therefore, with Tonty, and with everybody else, who besieged them with anxious inquiries upon this subject. They related the particulars of the voyage, and of the disasters and adventures at the Bay of St. Bernard, leaving the impression, at the same time, that La Salle was still there and alive. The only apology hinted at by Anastase and Joutel for this extraordinary conduct, is, that they re-



garded it a duty first to communicate the news to the Court of France. This is so clearly a subterfuge, that it is not worthy of a moment's consideration. Charlevoix probably suggests the true reason, which was, that they wished to make use of the credit of La Salle to procure the means for enabling them to pursue their journey. But this will not account for their silence at Quebec, when their journey was at an end. Cavelier presented a sealed letter to Tonty, purporting to be written by the Sieur de la Salle, and signed by him, in which he requested Tonty to furnish his brother with money or goods. Unsuspicious, and as ready to comply with the wishes as to obey the commands of his friend, he generously supplied the bearer, as Joutel relates, with the value of four thousand livres in furs, a canoe, and other effects, for which Cavelier went through the ceremony of giving him a receipt. The letter may have been written before La Salle's death; but was it just or honorable now to pass it off for such a purpose? These transactions, apparently so indefensible, cannot be explained, and must be left to the reader's reflection.

Cavelier and his companions left Fort St. Louis early in the Spring of 1688; but they lingered on the way, and did not reach Quebec till after the middle of August, when they sailed for France, and landed at Rochelle on the 9th of October, bearing with them the first intelligence to the French Court and nation of the death of the Sieur de la Salle, more than a year and a-half after the tragical event had occurred.

In conformity with his orders from La Salle and the Court of France, Tonty had descended the Mississippi, with forty men, to its mouth, where he expected to meet his commander. Disappointed in his expectation, he sent out canoes along the coast, both to the east and west of the Mississippi, in search of the vessels. These not being found, he returned up the river to the Illinois, stopping at the Arkansas, and establishing there the post before mentioned.\*

After this period, little is known of the Chevalier de Tonty. He was informed of La Salle's death by Couture, who came up to Fort St. Louis some time after the departure of Cavelier. His surprise and chagrin need not be described. The next year, 1689, he put himself at the head of an expedition

\* When Iberville sailed into the Mississippi, fourteen years afterwards, a letter was put into his hands, which had been written by the Chevalier de Tonty, and which was then procured from an Indian chief. It was directed to *M. de la Salle, Governor of Louisiana*, and its contents were as follows:

"At the village of the Quinipissas, 20th of April, 1685. Sir; Having found the column, on which you had placed the arms of France, overthrown by the driftwood floated thither by the tide, I caused a new one to be erected, about seven leagues from the sea, where I left a letter suspended from a tree.—All the nations have sung the calumet. These people fear us extremely, since your attack upon their village. I close by saying, that it gives me great uneasiness to be obliged to return under the misfortune of not having found you. Two canoes have examined the coast thirty leagues towards Mexico, and twenty-five towards Florida."

This letter is published by Charlevoix. He adds that the Indians, whom Tonty calls Quinipissas, were the same as the Bayagoulas and Mongoulachas.—"Histoire," Liv. XVIII.—The above date, as given by Charlevoix, is erroneous in regard to the year, for Tonty says in his "Petition," that he went down the Mississippi in 1686; and he must of course have been there about the time that La Salle was beginning his first journey to the Illinois.

to go and rescue the unfortunate people left at the Bay of St. Bernard. He advanced to the country of the Cenis Indians, and, as he says, approached within seven days' march of the Spaniards, when some of his men abandoned him, and he was obliged to return. He was absent ten months. If Cavelier and Joutel had been open and frank with him, and had told the whole truth when they first arrived, and thus enabled him to form his plan immediately, it is more than probable that his zeal and enterprise, prompted as they were by the noblest motives of humanity, would have been crowned with success. For several years, he held the chief command in the Illinois country, by a commission from the king, his headquarters being at Fort St. Louis. He joined Iberville at the mouth of the Mississippi about the year 1700, and two years afterwards was employed on a mission to the Chickasaws. His route from Mobile to the Chickasaw nation is delineated in some of the old maps. Neither his subsequent services nor the time of his death are known.

All the facts that can be ascertained, concerning the Chevalier de Tonty, are such as give a highly favorable impression of his character, both as an officer and a man. His constancy, and his steady devotion to La Salle, are marked not only by a strict obedience to orders, but by a faithful friendship and chivalrous generosity. His courage and address were strikingly exhibited in his intercourse with the Indians, as well in war as in peace; but his acts were performed where there were few to observe and fewer to record them. Hence it is that historians



have done him but partial justice. And it is most unfortunate that the narrative from his own pen, originally written, as his character justifies us in believing, with fidelity and truth, should have been so mutilated and deformed by some mischievous hand as to render it a reproach to his name, rather than what it might have been, a testimony to his merits, and an honorable monument to his memory.

One censure has been cast upon the *Sieur de la Salle*, of a very grave nature, which deserves a special notice. *Charlevoix* says, "It is certain that *M. de la Salle*, finding himself at the Bay of *St. Bernard*, and having soon discovered that he was at the westward of the river for which he was searching, might, if he had entertained no other design than that of finding the river, have procured guides among the *Cenis* Indians, during his first journey, as *Joutel* did afterwards; but he had a strong desire to go towards the Spaniards to obtain a knowledge of the Mines of *St. Barbe*." \* From this passage of *Charlevoix*, and one or two others, it is evident that he supposed *La Salle* to have left his forlorn colony in a state of desolation and distress, and to have strolled away to the borders of *New Mexico*, in search of these chimerical mines. Other writers have been betrayed by him into the same belief. But this idea is entirely erroneous, as the reader cannot but be convinced from the details of his journeys, which have been above related.

*Joutel* likewise observes, speaking of *La Salle's* first journey from the Bay of *St. Bernard*, that "he

\* "Histoire de Nouvelle France," Liv. XIII.



penetrated far into the country, inclining towards the northern parts of Mexico." \* But, we must remember, that Joutel was not with him during this journey, and does not pretend to describe it. The only person who wrote an account of it was Father Anastase, and he was one of the party. He says expressly, and more than once, that, when they left the fort, their route was northeast, and afterwards more easterly; and they passed in this direction a long way beyond the Cenis villages towards the Red River. And Joutel himself informs us that the second journey was over the same track as the first, and that La Salle was killed at a place where he had been while on the first journey.

Hennepin tells us, that, before the Sieur de la Salle began his discoveries, he used to talk to him in Canada of these imaginary Mines of St. Barbe, and hoped that he should find them at some future day. This may be true, for the same chimera at that time and afterwards troubled the dreams of many persons in France. Near the close of the volume, containing the English translation of Hennepin, is an absurd story by an unknown hand, purporting to be a description of La Salle's last voyage and death. The writer says that he proposed to his men to go with him from the coast to the Mines of St. Barbe, where they would find "a rich and easy booty;" that some approved and others rejected this proposition till they fell into a quarrel and came to blows, and that the Sieur de la Salle was killed in the fray.

\* "Journal Historique," p. 150.

From these suggestions and rumors, and others of a similar kind, it seems to have at length been regarded as an historical fact that he really engaged in this adventure. No authentic account of his death was published till that of Le Clercq, four years after the event. Meantime La Salle had enemies enough in Canada, and in France after the return of Beaujeu with his vessel, to circulate any tales that might be told to his disadvantage. Scarcely a fact connected with his discoveries, however, is more demonstrable than that he never went a day's journey from the Bay of St. Bernard towards Mexico, and that all his travels were eastward, in the direction of the Mississippi or of the Illinois. Hence it is impossible that he should have gone in search of the Mines of St. Barbe, which were supposed to exist somewhere in the northern parts of Mexico; nor is there any creditable authority of early date for believing that he entertained for a moment such a design after he landed.

The reader may be curious to know the fate of the unhappy colonists left at the fort. The story, as related by Charlevoix, is brief and sad. When the neighboring Indians, whom he calls Clamoets, heard of the *Sieur de la Salle's* death and of the dispersion of his men, they made an attack on the fort and massacred all that were in it, except three sons and a daughter of M. Talon, and a young Frenchman named Eustache de Breman. These were spared and led into captivity. Their tender age seems to have been their shield of protection. Meantime the Spaniards of New Mexico, alarmed at the movements of La Salle,

and hearing that Frenchmen had penetrated to the Ceniz Indians, despatched a strong military force to that nation, where they took Larcheveque and Grollet prisoners. Another party found Talon and Munnier, who, having acquired the language of the natives, were prevailed upon to remain there and assist the Spanish missionaries as interpreters. Young Talon informed the Spaniards of the captivity of his brothers and sister among the Clamoets. Two of the brothers, the sister, and Breman, were rescued some time after and conducted to the city of Mexico, where they were taken into the service of the viceroy.

Larcheveque and Grollet were first sent to Spain and confined in prison. They were next transported to New Mexico, and, it is supposed, were condemned to work in the mines. The two brothers, Talon, entered the Spanish navy, and, the vessel in which they served having been captured by the French, they were thus restored to their country. The youngest brother, and the sister, who were retained in the service of the viceroy, went with him to Spain. Nothing further is known of Breman, or of those who remained with the Ceniz Indians. It does not appear that the French government took any measures to reclaim the prisoners, although they had gone upon the enterprise under the authority of the Court. Political reasons may have prevented such a step. No plan was put in execution for saving the unfortunate people at the fort; and the news of their disastrous situation, after the death of their commander, came so late to France that an attempt for this object would have been unavailing if it had been made.



In estimating the character, the acts, and personal qualities of La Salle, we should not forget that our judgment is to be formed wholly from the relations of others, who knew little of his plans or his thoughts, and who were not all of them his friends. Not a single paper from his own hand, not so much as a private letter or a fragment of his official correspondence, has ever been published, or even consulted by the writers on whose authority alone we must rely for the history of the transactions in which he was concerned. All the original sources of information which now exist are mere narratives, the compositions of men who related passing events, and saw the outside only, but who had neither the means of knowing nor the intelligence to comprehend the nature and extent of his designs, or the complicated difficulties amid which they were executed. The journal of Joutel, which has been regarded as the best of these, was written, as the author himself confesses, mostly from recollection, and was published twenty-six years after the death of La Salle. It would be in vain to search, in materials of this kind, for the secret springs of his bold conceptions, his motives and ultimate aims, which, if they had been unfolded and explained by himself, would undoubtedly place him in a very different light before the world. Under such circumstances, it would be wrong to judge harshly.

From the preceding narrative it is obvious that he possessed remarkable qualities which fitted him for great undertakings; although it must be conceded that he was deficient in others scarcely less essential



to success. He was ignorant of the art of governing men, or rather of bending them to his purpose. He could neither humor their foibles nor lead them by a silken cord, nor attach them heartily to his interests; and he seems never to have been aware that enterprises like those in which he was engaged could not be accomplished without the willing support and co-operating agency of others, who, although they acted in a subordinate capacity, would claim some degree of respect and deference for their opinions. Saturnine in his temperament, reserved in his communications, he asked counsel of no one; and there was a certain hardness in his manners, a tone of lofty self-reliance, which, although it might command the obedience of his followers, was not likely to gain their hearty good-will. These faults were probably inherent in the constitution of his mind; but, whatever may have been their origin, they were fatal in their consequences.

On the other hand, his capacity for large designs, and for devising the methods and procuring the resources to carry them forward, has few parallels among the most eminent discoverers. He has been called the Columbus of his age; and if his success had been equal to his ability and the compass of his plans, this distinction might justly be awarded to him. As in great battles, so in enterprises of this kind, success crowns the commander with laurels, defeat covers him with disgrace, and perhaps draws upon him the obloquy of the world, although he may have fought as bravely and manœuvred as adroitly in one case as the other. Fortune turns the scale and

baffles the efforts of human skill and prowess. In some of the higher attributes of character, such as personal courage and endurance, undaunted resolution, patience under trials, and perseverance in contending with obstacles and struggling through embarrassments that might appal the stoutest heart, no man surpassed the *Sieur de la Salle*. Not a hint appears in any writer that has come under notice which casts a shade upon his integrity or honor. Cool and intrepid at all times, never yielding for a moment to despair, or even to despondency, he bore the heavy burden of his calamities manfully to the end, and his hopes expired only with his last breath. To him must be mainly ascribed the discovery of the vast regions of the *Mississippi Valley*, and the subsequent occupation and settlement of them by the French; and his name justly holds a prominent place among those that adorn the history of civilization in the *New World*.