

which is sufficiently proved, by the fact that he pretends to have ascended it from the Gulf of Mexico to the Illinois river, in a canoe, with only two men, in twenty-two days. So notorious, indeed, was his bad faith in these transactions, that his common epithet in Canada, we are told, was "*Le Grand Menteur*" (the Great Liar). "By this impudent fabrication, he secured to himself a reputation somewhat like that of Vesputius, whose fraudulent attempt (or that of his admirers) to wrest the glory from a true discoverer, obscures the renown of his real and meritorious achievements."

La Salle, having collected twenty men at his posts, resumed his enterprise, and on the 2d of February, 1682, embarked on the Mississippi. He passed the Missouri and the Ohio, as well as the Arkansas, the termination of the voyage of Marquette. The river seemed interminable in its windings, yet he kept on, and was kindly received by the powerful tribe of the Natchez. On the 27th of March he passed the mouth of Red River, and on the 7th of April arrived at that strange region, neither land nor water, where, through many channels, the turbid torrent of the Mississippi mingles with the gulf. "The country immediately around the outlet of this vast stream was desolate and uninteresting. Far as the eye could reach, swampy flats and inundated morasses filled the dreary prospect. Under the ardent rays of the tropical sun, noisome vapours exhaled from the rank soil and sluggish waters, poisoning the breezes from the southern seas, and corrupting them with the breath of pestilence. Masses of floating trees, whose large branches were scathed by months of alternate immersion and exposure, during hundreds of leagues of travel, choked up many of the numerous outlets of the river, and, cemented together by the alluvial deposits of the muddy stream, gradually became fixed and solid, throwing up a rank vegetation."*

The discoverer, exulting in the completion of his achievement, proceeded to take formal possession of the vast regions watered by the river he had explored—bestowing on them, in honour of his sovereign, the name of Louisiana. From the top of a high tree a cross was suspended; a shield, bearing the arms of France, was set up; and a solemn *Te Deum* was chanted, in gratitude to Heaven for the success of this memorable enterprise. The more important operation of attempting to ascertain the latitude, produced a result entirely fallacious.

* Warburton—"Conquest of Canada."

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