

harsh, and probably selfish to the full extent to be looked for in a man of worldly ambition. However, in one of the causes of quarrel which arose during the passage, he acted, if not with policy, certainly with boldness and humanity. It was when they came to the Tropic of Cancer, where, in those times, it was customary to dip all green hands, as is still sometimes done under the Equator. On this occasion the sailors of La Salle's little squadron promised themselves rare sport and much plunder, grog, and other good things, the forfeit paid by those who do not wish a seasoning; but all these expectations were stopped, and hope turned into hate, by the express and emphatic statement on the part of La Salle, that no man under his command should be ducked, whereupon the commander of the fleet was forced to forbid the ceremony.

With such beginnings of bickering and dissatisfaction, the Atlantic was slowly crossed, and, upon the 20th of September, the island of St. Domingo was reached. Here certain arrangements were to be made with the colonial authorities; but, as they were away, it became necessary to stop there for a time. And a sad time it was. The fever seized the newcomers; the ships were crowded with sick; La Salle himself was brought to the verge of the grave; and when he recovered, the first news that greeted him, was that of his four vessels, the one wherein he had embarked his stores and implements, had been taken by the Spaniards. The sick man, had to bestir himself thereupon to procure new supplies; and while he was doing so, his enemies were also bestirring themselves to seduce his men from him, so that with death and desertion, he was likely to have a small crew at the last. But energy did much; and, on the 25th of November, the first of the remaining vessels, she that was "to carry the light," sailed for the coast of America. In her went La Salle and the historian of the voyage, Joutel.*

For a whole month were the disconsolate sailors sailing, and sounding, and stopping to take in water and shoot alligators, and drifting in utter uncertainty, until, on the 28th of December, the main land was fairly discovered. But "there being," as Joutel says, "no man among them who had any knowledge of that Bay," and there being also an impression

* Joutel accompanied La Salle, and subsequently wrote his "*Journal Historique*," which was published in Paris, 1713. In the main it appears to be a truthful narrative.—Ed.