

had sworn by the sky, which is the customary oath of the Acanibas, that they would return in thirty-six moons, and bring him a supply of beads and other trinkets from Canada. As gold was to be had for the asking, each of the eleven Frenchmen took away with him sixty small bars, weighing about four pounds each. The King ordered two hundred horsemen to escort them, and carry the gold to their canoes; which they did, and then bade them farewell with terrific howlings, meant, doubtless, to do them honor.

After many adventures, wherein nearly all his companions came to a bloody end, Sâgean, and the few others who survived, had the ill luck to be captured by English pirates, at the mouth of the St. Lawrence. He spent many years among them in the East and West Indies, but would not reveal the secret of his Eldorado to these heretical foreigners.

Such was the story, which so far imposed on the credulity of the minister Ponchartrain as to persuade him that the matter was worth serious examination. Accordingly, Sâgean was sent to Louisiana, then in its earliest infancy as a French colony. Here he met various persons who had known him in Canada, who denied that he had ever been on the Mississippi, and contradicted his account of his parentage. Nevertheless, he held fast to his story, and declared that the gold mines of the Acanibas could be reached without difficulty by the river Missouri. But Sauvolle and Bienville, chiefs of the colony, were obstinate in their unbelief; and Sâgean and his King Hagaren lapsed alike into oblivion.