

a youth of haughty temper, who incurred the enmity of the rest, and a mutinous spirit soon broke out. One of the party, named Lancelot, two days' journey from the fort, being taken ill, was permitted to return. His brother earnestly desired to bear him company, but La Salle refused to allow it, on account of the weakness of his force. The invalid, returning alone, was murdered by the Indians; and the surviving brother, from that moment, thought only of revenge. For two months, while the expedition slowly made its way toward Canada, he nourished schemes of vengeance, without the opportunity to put them in execution. With his accomplices, he then commenced with the murder of Moranger; and having concealed themselves in a cane-brake, shortly after, they fired from ambush at their unfortunate commander. He fell mortally wounded, and presently died, on the 19th of May, 1686, it is said, near the western branch of the Trinity. "Thus obscurely perished one of the bravest and most indefatigable of the many brave and unconquerable spirits who, at the cost of their lives, have won renown as pioneers in the New World. His memory will always be associated with the great river which he explored and laid open to mankind."

The assassins, to avoid the vengeance of the friends of their victim, hastily quitted the party, and struck a new track in the wilderness. They all perished, either at the hands of each other, or of the hostile savages. The little company of survivors, now reduced to seven, still kept on their toilsome journey to the north-east. The Indians through whose country they passed, treated them kindly; and four months after the death of their commander, they arrived at the confluence of the Arkansas and Mississippi. Here, to their surprise, they found a cross, which had been set up by certain companions of Tonti, whom, in ascending the Mississippi, he had left at this place. Encouraged by this solitary sign of Christianity and civilization, they pursued the journey to Canada, and, wonderful to state, finally succeeded in reaching it.

The miserable remnant of the colony, left by La Salle at Fort St. Louis, soon perished under the hostilities of the tribes surrounding that little station. Five children only were spared, who afterwards falling into the hands of the Spaniards, revealed the unhappy fate of the settlement. Of the two hundred souls of which it was composed, these, and the seven companions of La Salle who made their way to Canada, alone survived. Such was the miserable result of the first attempt to colonize the richest and most valuable region of all North