

La Salle, Magnificent Adventurer



La Salle



Building of the Griffin



La Salle at the Mouth of the Mississippi



Count Frontenac

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON



HE time is February in the year 1682; the place is the Illinois river in what is now the state of that name; the actors in the epic drama which is now about to begin are some 18 Indians and 23 French soldiers and voyageurs. Not a very impressive company, it is true, but the leader of it is what makes it great. For this leader is Rene-Robert Caveller, Sieur de La Salle, "magnificent adventurer" and one of the world's greatest explorers.

"La Salle . . . announced that they would take to their canoes. They lifted the light white birch-barks from the sledges, and slipped them into the icy water. The baggage and rifles went aboard, piece by piece, then man after man, soldier, and voyageur, and red hunter stepped gingerly to his place, sank to a kneeling position, and took up his long-handled paddle. First one light canoe, then another, pushed off from shore and the black current bore them away.

"To right and left they saw drab banks frost-flecked and hard that rang under a blow, and leafless forests iron in their rigid desolation that rose despairingly toward an opaque gray sky. On the sixth of February, they emerged from the Illinois, and their fleet slipped out upon the swelling current of the Mississippi. La Salle's dreams came nearer. The mirage at last promised realization."

Thus began the historic voyage down the length of the "Father of Waters" which was to give to France control of the interior of North America, which was to open up the vista of the richness of a new empire before the greedy eyes of the white race, which was to enbroider England and France in an almost unending war for the next three-quarters of a century and which was to result finally in the founding of a new nation greater than either. It is this voyage which has been characterized as "one of the greatest epics of all history."

To most Americans the name of La Salle is just another in a dimly-remembered list from their school-book histories. But now, 250 years after the beginning and the end of his great achievement, his name is brought to their attention again through the publication of two biographies of him. One of them is "La Salle," written by I. V. Jacks and published by Charles Scribner's Sons (from which the foregoing quotation is taken) and the other is "The French Adventurer—The Life and Exploits of La Salle," written by M. Maurice Constantin-Weyer and published by the Macaulay company. Mr. Jacks is an American and M. Constantin-Weyer is a Frenchman. So it is interesting to read their two books together and get the two points of view on this great Frenchman whose name is written in the annals of America.

Of the voyage down the river, Mr. Constantin-Weyer writes a vivid account—how "spring was breaking on every side. A sky of clouds rent by the wind was reflected in blue and white. The forest was powdered with tender green. Flowers were unfolding timid petals. The cries of migratory birds filled the immense valley. Mosquitoes swarmed. At night coyotes barked on the hillsides. In the mornings bison descended in friendly pairs to the giant drinking trough."

"They passed the mouths of great rivers—the muddy Missouri, the quiet Ohio, ("La Belle Riviere") and the Arkansas. There were adventures with Indians, both pleasant and grim, for they met both friendly and hostile red men. There were innumerable new wonders of scenery which unfolded before their eyes and a variety of experiences such as few explorers had ever had. Just two months from the time they had floated out upon the broad bosom of the Mississippi, "all at once spray struck their faces. Tasting the water they found it already brackish. A great joy painfully welled up in their breasts; a thrill ran down their spines. And suddenly, sonorous under the shock of a thousand waves, immense and without a sail, there was the sea! April the seventh, 1682!"

Thus Mr. Constantin-Weyer. And now to turn to Mr. Jacks for the next scene:

"The Frenchmen must have been as glad to see the Gulf as Xenophon's hardy soldiers once were glad to see the blue of the Euxine. When at last, red as a great fire-fingering ruby, the sun had dropped to westward, and the night wind brought over the glitter of the phosphorescent sea the faint hushed voices of breathing waters, the voyagers lay down beside their canoes, aware that they had seen, in all probability, the greatest day of their tumultuous lives. It had been a long trail which he had fol-

lowed since that far-off day when as a school-boy in Rouen, France, he had read of other explorers and adventurers and had thrilled to the tales of their exploits in the places which had previously been marked on the rude maps of the time "terra incognita." In those 30 years his life had been one of many hardships, of many high hopes, of many disappointments. But in his make-up was the tough fiber of soul which had carried him through all of this, the fiber that justified the title given him by an early American biographer—"The Undespairing Norman."

Educated for priesthood in the Jesuit order, La Salle soon found that the restlessness in his blood would never allow him to be happy in that role. The result was a journey in his early twenties to Canada where his brother was a priest in the Seminary of St. Sulpice. Through the influence of this brother, he received a grant of land near Montreal, a seignery which he named La Chine. The name was significant—already he was dreaming of finding the undiscovered northwest passage to China, the goal of many an explorer before him.

So when the Indians told him of a great southwestern river which flowed into the "Vermilion sea" his quick mind grasped this as the route of the long-sought passage to the Orient, and he determined to follow the river. So he sold his seignery to obtain funds for an expedition and in July, 1680, the first of his long wanderings through the interior of the North American continent began. That trip carried him up the St. Lawrence, along the south shore of Lake Ontario, among the villages of the Iroquois, on to Niagara, along the south shore of Lake Erie and then south through what is now the state of Ohio until he, in all probability, reached the Ohio river. But desertions among his followers forced La Salle to go back to Canada so his first expedition was something of a failure.

His resources were now exhausted but he found an unexpected friend in Count Frontenac, "the Iron Governor" of Canada, who gave him the exclusive trading privileges at Fort Frontenac (the modern Kingston) on the condition that he would rebuild the defenses and garrison the post. In the meantime Father Marquette and Louis Joliet had reached the Mississippi, "the Great Southwest river" and gone down it for a considerable distance, although they did not follow it to its mouth. So that honor still awaited La Salle.

However, he needed more capital, so in 1677 he made a trip to France with letters from

Frontenac to the king and his ministers. In Paris La Salle found attentive listeners to his plans and when he returned to Canada in 1678 he brought with him a royal decree authorizing him to make discoveries and build forts in the interior of North America. He also brought back with him the man who was destined to be his chief lieutenant and greatest friend—Henri de Tonti, an Italian, "the Man with the Iron Hand."

That winter La Salle and Tonti were busy completing a fort at Niagara and building a ship. Before spring had come a vessel of about 45 tons, the largest yet built for service on the Great Lakes, was completed. On its prow was a carved griffin from the armorial bearings of La Salle's patron, Count Frontenac, and this ship won enduring fame under the name of the Griffin. (Incidentally, it was more "enduring" than La Salle could possibly have realized, for within the last year the timbers from a wrecked ship were found in Lake Huron and there is strong evidence to support the belief that these timbers were once a part of the Griffin—found after more than 250 years!)

La Salle sailed his vessel to Michillimackinac where he acquired a rich store of furs, then sailed on into Lake Michigan and finally dropped anchor in Green Bay where some more furs were obtained. Sending the Griffin back to Montreal, La Salle started south along the Wisconsin shore and reaching the mouth of the St. Joseph, he built Fort Miami. Then he struck across country to the upper Kankakee. From there he made his way down the Illinois to the present site of Peoria, Ill, where he built Fort Crevecoeur.

Leaving Tonti in charge, La Salle started back to Canada. When he reached Niagara at Easter time in 1680 it was to find news of disaster. The Griffin with all of her rich cargo of furs had been lost. La Salle hurried on to Montreal and once more sought the aid of Frontenac. Again he was provided with the necessary equipment for carrying out his projects and within a few months he was again at Fort Frontenac and ready to join Tonti at Crevecoeur. Just as he was ready to leave, however, there came the news that the garrison at the fort on the Illinois had mutinied and destroyed the post.

La Salle's one hope now was that the faithful Tonti had held on and had saved something from the wreckage of his plans. But when he reached Crevecoeur, he found Tonti gone to Green Bay and the place deserted. Undaunted by this climax to his misfortunes, the "Undespairing Norman" pushed on down the Illinois until he reached the Mississippi. But his party was too small to attempt an expedition down this great river. So La Salle once more retraced his weary steps northward. He spent the winter at Fort Miami, and in the spring he learned that Tonti was at Michillimackinac and there he hastened to hear from his trusted lieutenant the long tale of disaster. Of this interview an eye-witness writes: "Anyone else would have thrown up his hands and abandoned the enterprise; but far from this, with a firmness and constancy that never had its equal, I saw him more resolved than ever to continue his work and push forward his discovery."

La Salle was now determined to continue with his plan for exploring the Mississippi. Returning once more to Fort Frontenac he replenished his supplies and in the autumn of 1681 he set out once more, with Tonti, for the Illinois country. Then followed his journey down the Illinois river to the Mississippi and the beginning of the great journey which took place just 250 years ago.

(© by Western Newspaper Union.)

How Old?



He doesn't look a day over fifty. And feels like forty. At the age of 62.

That's the happy state of health and pep a man enjoys when he gives his vital organs a little stimulant!

When your system is stagnant and you feel sluggish, headachy, half-alive—don't waste money on "tonics" or "regulators" or similar patent medicines. Stimulate the liver and bowels. Use a famous physician's prescription every drug store keeps. Just ask them for Dr. Caldwell's syrup pepsin.

This appetizing syrup is made from fresh laxative herbs, active senna, and pure pepsin. One dose will clear up almost any case of headache, biliousness, constipation. But if you want to keep in fine

shape, feel fit the year 'round, take a spoonful of Dr. Caldwell's syrup pepsin every few days. You'll eat better, sleep better and feel better in every way. You will never need to take another laxative.

Give the children a little of this delicious syrup two or three times a week. A gentle, natural stimulant that makes them eat and keeps the bowels from clogging. And saves them from so many sick spells and colds.

Have a sound stomach, active liver and strong bowel muscles that expel every bit of waste and poison every day! Just keep a bottle of Dr. Caldwell's syrup pepsin on hand; take a stimulating spoonful every now and then. See if you don't feel new vigor in every way. Syrup pepsin isn't expensive.

The Only Difference
There is this difference between great leaders and the average citizen: The average citizen doesn't know how to save the country, either, but he doesn't know it.—Los Angeles Times.

Drink Away that heavy, drowsy feeling!
When constipation signals, bring back the flush of health to your face by flushing the bowels thoroughly. A cup or two of Garfield Tea will cleanse away unhealthy, stagnant waste, renew the feeling of energy and pep off the nearest drugist.

GARFIELD TEA
A Natural Laxative Drink

Inhaling the Chowder
She (dining)—Seems to me we don't hear so much jazz in the restaurants.
He—No, and as a consequence we hear more soup.—Boston Transcript.

Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription makes weak women strong. No alcohol. Sold by druggists in tablets or liquid.—Adv.

If you have a chest expansion of four inches, you can make room for more medals and decorations.

PARKER'S HAIR BALM
Removes Dandruff Stops Hair Falling Imparts Color and Beauty to Gray and Faded Hair 6c and \$1.00 at Druggists. H. L. Parker, Chem. & Dr., Paterson, N. J.

FLORESTON SHAMPOO—Ideal for use in connection with Parker's Hair Balm. Makes the hair soft and fluffy. 50 cents by mail or at druggists. Hissox Chemical Works, Paterson, N. J.

The Ideal Vacation Land
Sunshine All Winter Long
Splendid roads—towering mountain ranges—Highest type hotels—dry invigorating air—clear starlit nights—California's Foremost Desert Playground

Write Cree & Chaffey
Palm Springs
CALIFORNIA

Cash for Old Envelopes With Stamps used during, before and just after Civil War. Stamp collections and accumulations also. Walter K. Emerson, 1313 Cornelia, Chicago.

CHEERY-GLYCERINE COMPOUND
For Coughs due to Colds, Minor Bronchial and Throat Irritations
JAS. BAILY & SON, Baltimore, Md.

Give some people half a chance and they'll take the other half.

A statesman can't afford to have new ideas until they are popular.

It's common sense

When doctors all agree that your body needs Vitamins, it's common sense to see that you get them. Scott's Emulsion of Cod Liver Oil contains both Vitamins A and D in guaranteed potency. Vitamin A builds resistance to winter colds. Vitamin D aids growing children in the development of bones and teeth. This emulsion has no fishy flavor. Men and women find it a pleasing, palatable way of taking cod liver oil. Scott & Bowne, Bloomfield, N. J. Sales Representative, Harold F. Ritchie & Co., Inc., New York.

Listen to the Scott & Bowne radio program "Adventuring with Count von Luckner," on Sunday night at 9:30 p.m. (E. S. T.) over the Columbia Coast-to-Coast Network.

Scott's Emulsion OF NORWEGIAN COD LIVER OIL

Holding Out on Us—The wealth of the average American has been placed at \$2,977, indicating that quite a few average Americans have been short-changed.—Miami News.
Delay always heeds danger.

RELIEVES HEAD, CHEST and BACK COLDS

McKesson's **ALBATUM** 35¢

Stainless "Rub In" and inhalant unsurpassed in preventing and relieving cold congestions

QUALITY SINCE 1833 McKesson & Robbins SOLD AT ALL DRUG STORES

When He's Flush—He—When is your birthday? She—When will it be most convenient for you?
Absent Treatment Indicated—"Is your love for me dead?"—"No, but it's very, very ill."—Passing Show.

CUTICURA SOAP AND OINTMENT

Quickly Heal Rashes, Eczema and All Forms of Itching, Burning Skin Irritations.

Bathe with the Soap, anoint with the Ointment. Relief comes at once and healing soon follows.

Soap 25c. Ointment 50c. and 50c. Proprietors: Potter Drug & Chemical Corp., Malden, Mass.