

CLXXV. In September, 1700, Jacques Gravier left Chicago for a voyage down the Mississippi, to Iberville's new fort thereon. This journey is described by him in a letter (dated February 16, 1701) to Jacques de Lamberville. Upon reaching Peoria, he finds that the Kaskaskias settled there have resolved to migrate to the shores of the Mississippi—a step which he heartily disapproves, but cannot prevent. The Peoria tribe, also settled there, promise Gravier to remain until his return, and not to change their abode until he and Iberville shall direct them to do so; but he adds, "I am very doubtful whether they will keep their word."

Gravier proceeds with the Kaskaskias—who are accompanied by their faithful pastor, Father Marest—as far as Cahokia, where there is a French trading post. There he embarks with a band of Frenchmen, who are bound for Iberville's fort near the mouth of the Mississippi. Several of the party being attacked by malarial fever, Gravier is able to cure them by a relic and novenas: "a small piece of Father François Regis's hat, which one of our servants gave me, is the most infallible remedy that I know of for curing all kinds of fever." He describes the course of the river; the bluffs, mines, and other features of the region; and the wild animals with which the country abounds. Not far south of the Ohio are seen high banks of sand, in which report has located an iron mine; but Gravier satisfies himself that the sand, although colored like iron, does not contain that metal.

Below the St. Francis River, the Frenchmen meet a band of Arkansas savages, who hospitably entertain them. At the village of that tribe, they hear