

there was always a burning sun above our heads, and we were not able to arrange over our pirogues a little screen which might give us a slight shade. Besides, the height of the trees and the denseness of the woods—which extend along the entire route, on both sides of the river—did not permit us to enjoy the least breath of air, although the river is half a mile wide; we felt the air only in the middle of the river, when we were obliged to cross it so as to take the shortest way. We were constantly drawing the water of the *Mississippi* with reeds, in order to quench our thirst; although the water is very muddy, it did us no harm. Another refreshment that we had was the grapes which hang from the trees almost everywhere, and which we snatched in passing, or went to gather when we landed. In this country, or at least among the Akensas, there are two sorts of grapes, one of which ripens in summer and the other in the autumn; they are of the same kind; the berries are very small, and yield a very thick juice. There is also another kind: the cluster has only three berries, which are as large as damson plums: our Savages call them *asi*, *contai*: *grape*, *plum*.

Our provisions consisted of biscuit, salt, and very rancid bacon, rice, corn, and peas; the biscuit failed us a little above the Natchez country. At ten or twelve leagues from New Orleans, we no longer had any bacon; we lived on peas, then on rice, which failed us only on our arrival here; the seasoning consisted of salt, bear's oil, and a keen appetite. The most ordinary food of this country—almost the only one for many people, and especially for travelers—is *gru*. Corn is pounded, in order to remove the outer skin, and then is boiled a long time in