

a banker at Paris and an intimate friend of the regent. This company obtained a charter for twenty-five years, empowering it to exploit the Louisiana colony; it obtained enormous privileges from the regent; and in it were merged, in less than two years, the royal bank, the mint, and the farming of all the royal revenues. The company changed its title to *Compagnie des Indes* ("Company of the Indies"); it was also popularly known, from the first, as "the Mississippi Company." For a short time, France was carried away by the craze for speculation in Mississippi stocks; and the royal bank, under Law's management, issued enormous quantities of paper money,—to such an extent that, when the inevitable crash came (in May, 1720), the amount of paper issued by it was twice as much as that of all the specie in the kingdom. A panic ensued; the Company of the Indies seized Law's property, and he was compelled, now poor and friendless, to flee from France. He lived a few years longer, in obscurity, and died at Venice in 1729.

Warned by Crozat's failure, the Company of the Indies did not attempt to discover mines, but undertook to encourage agriculture. To this end, large tracts of land were granted to wealthy personages in France, on condition that they should send colonists to settle on their lands. Among these grants was one to Law, upon the Arkansas River; and, just before his flight from France, he sent 200 German emigrants to settle thereon. When these people heard of Law's failure, they abandoned their settlement on the Arkansas, and descended the Mississippi, intending to return to their native country. But they were persuaded to settle at a place about thirty miles above New Orleans, which was called from them *Côte des Allemands*, "the German shore." Du Poisson mentions this place, on p. 287 of this volume.

In 1722, the regent placed the affairs of the company in the hands of three commissioners. In the following year, the seat of the Louisiana government was transferred from Mobile to New Orleans, the site of which had been selected therefor by Bienville. The company finally surrendered its charter to the French government, in 1731, and Louisiana became a royal province. See La Harpe's *Journ. Hist.*; Condorcet's *Bibliothèque de l'homme public* (Paris, 1791), t. viii., pp. 63–87; Gayarré's *Louisiana: French Domination*, vol. i., pp. 191–455; Sulte's *Canad.-Fran.*, t. vi., pp. 105–118; Hamilton's *Colon. Mobile*, pp. 83–89; French's *La. Hist. Colls.*, part 3, pp. 49–59, 78, 87–89, 101–104.

38 (p. 261).—Paul du Poisson was born at Epinal, France, Jan. 27, 1692. At the age of twenty years he entered the Jesuit novitiate; coming to Louisiana in 1726, he was at once assigned to the Arkansas mission, where he labored during three years. On his