

at the bottom of this he found a river, which runs from the east to the west, which he followed, and having arrived at about the 280th (sic)¹ degree of longitude, and the 39th of latitude, he came to another river, which, uniting with the first, flowed from the northwest to the southeast. This he followed as far as the 36th degree of latitude, where he found it advisable to stop, contenting himself with the almost certain hope of some day passing by way of this river even to the Gulf of Mexico. Having but a handful of followers, he dared not risk a farther expedition in the course of which he was likely to meet with obstacles too great for his strength.²

I base my opinion, secondly, on a letter of La Salle's niece—the Mississippi and the river Colbert being both one. This letter, dated 1756, says the writer, contained maps, which in 1675, were possessed by La Salle, and which proved that he had already made two voyages of discovery. Among the places set down on these maps, the river Colbert, the place where La Salle had landed near the Mississippi, and the spot where he planted a cross, and took possession of the country in the name of the king, are mentioned.³

I base my opinion, thirdly, on a letter of Count Frontenac. In this letter, which was written in 1677 to the French premier, Colbert, Frontenac says that "the Jesuits having learned that M. De La Salle thought of asking (from the French crown) a grant of the Illinois Lake (Lake Michigan), had resolved to seek this grant themselves for Messieurs Jolliet and Lebert, men wholly in their interest, and the first of whom they have so highly extolled beforehand, although he did not voyage until after the Sieur De La Salle, who himself will testify to you that the relation of the Sieur Jolliet is in many things false."⁴

In fine, I found my opinion on the total antagonism between the Jesuits and the merchants, as well as those who represented interest, or only a legitimate ambition. In opposition to the

¹ La Salle's meaning is 280° east of the island of Ferro, which was reckoned 20° west of Paris. Reckoning according to this standard, the mouth of the Ohio would be 100° west of Paris. In fact it is about 92°.

² See the work above mentioned, vol. I, p. 378.

³ Vol. I, p. 379.

⁴ Vol. I, p. 324.