

obliged to emigrate at the time of the revocation of the edict of Nantes by Louis XIV., and settled in Switzerland, where many other French exiles found a refuge and security from religious persecution. When quite a young man, however, J. P. B. Gratiot found his way to St. Louis, then a small French settlement, entered the service of the Northwestern Fur Company, married Miss Chouteau, and made St. Louis his permanent home, becoming wealthy.¹

Gratiot had a considerable interest in the lead mines. He possessed mines as well as smelting furnaces, and intended to move his family to Galena so soon as spring had fairly opened, and he persuaded us to go up with him and his family to the lead mines, saying that the climate of St. Louis was exceedingly unhealthy in summer and that the Northwest Territory, in addition to health, would give us an opportunity to select a home more congenial to our ideas and habits than a residence in a slaveholding state. My father was opposed to going into the wilderness; but to us boys, visions of a life a la "Robinson Crusoe" danced before our imagination and we were delighted with the idea. My father had some business matters to settle in New Orleans, after which he promised to join us in our new home. He descended to New Orleans, but never came back. That summer he fell a victim to yellow fever, and was buried there.

My father's brother and only living near relative on his side, then quite a young man, having graduated at the University of Heidelberg, had concluded to join us in our emigration, and he and I were selected to make the voyage of exploration.

The boat on which we embarked was a clean and comfortable craft, a high-pressure steamer, whose puffing could be heard miles ahead. The cabin was plainly but substantially furnished, and kept very clean. There were no state rooms; but two tiers of bunks, containing the beds,

¹ See E. B. Washburne's biographical sketch of Henry Gratiot, and incidentally of Charles, the founder of the house, and the other members of the family, in *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, x, pp. 235-260.—Ed.