

Oregon, as this was the farthest north any European vessel had yet penetrated in the Pacific. "A short distance further north," says the Spanish historian, Torquemada, was "discovered a rapid and abundant river, with ash trees, willows, brambles and other trees of Castile on its banks, which they endeavored to enter, but could not from the force of the current." From this point the *fragata* was headed back for Acapulco, but before reaching that port, the commander, pilot, and the greater portion of the crew, had fallen victims to the scurvy, and been consigned to the bosom of that great unknown ocean, whose mysteries they were endeavoring to explore.

The next intimation of there being a large river in this region came a century later, through the French explorers, who penetrated the region about the headwaters of the Mississippi, during the closing years of the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth. One feature is very prominent in the reports of nearly all these early French explorers—the fact that beyond the Shining mountains, as they called the Rockies, was a large river flowing westward to the "Great Water," as the Indians called the Pacific, of whose existence they were aware. Coming, as it did, from different tribes, and through distinct sources, it was accepted as a geographical fact, and was deemed to be the same stream as that whose mouth Aguilar had endeavored to enter a century before. Such a stream was invariably entered on the maps of North America, and bore the various titles of River of the West, River Thegayo, and Rio de Aguilar.

About this time, also, another name was applied to this undiscovered stream, a name founded on a romance, which, however, was not proved to be such for nearly a century after its publication. In 1708, there was published in London

a magazine entitled "Monthly Miscellany, or Memoirs of the Curious." In this appeared a long account of an alleged voyage, said to have been made in 1604, from the Pacific to the Atlantic and return, through a system of rivers and lakes, crossing North America at about the fifty-third parallel. This voyage was credited to Admiral Pedro Bartolomé de Fonté, of the Spanish marine, who was engaged in explorations under the direction of the Viceroy of Peru. Fonté was said to have entered a large river, called by him Rio de los Reyes, or River of Kings, and, after a long voyage inland, to have entered an immense lake, called Lake Belle. He continued east from Lake Belle, through Parmentier river, Lake Fonté and the Straits of Ronquillo, into the Atlantic, returning by the same route. Little did the author of this romance dream that the continent, in the latitude assigned to this wonderful series of rivers and lakes, was nearly five thousand miles in width. Yet, absurd as this story is, in the light of our present knowledge of the geography of North America, it was by no means so at the time it was published, and though the archives of neither Mexico, Peru nor Spain contained a record of any such voyage, or any admiral by the name of Fonté, maps thereafter had the River of Kings added to the other names used to designate a great stream flowing into the Pacific from the Rocky mountains.

The next name added to the many used to designate this stream, was Oregon, bestowed by Captain Jonathan Carver, a native of Connecticut, who, after the French were compelled to withdraw from the Mississippi region, at the close of the French and Indian war, began an exploration of the West, till that time untraversed by an Anglo-Saxon foot. He left Boston in 1766, and is supposed to have gone as far west as the Red riv-