mine for lead and copper. One Nicolas de la Salle, a purser in the naval service, was sent over to perform the duties of commissaire. The office of commissaire-ordonnateur was the equivalent of the intendant,—a counterpoise to the governor and a spy upon his actions. La Salle’s relation to this office was apparently the same as Bienville’s to the position of governor. A purser performed the duties of commissaire; a midshipman, those of commanding officer. Of course La Salle’s presence in the colony could only breed trouble; and we find him reporting that “Iberville, Bienville, and Chateauguay, the three brothers, are thieves and knaves capable of all sorts of misdeeds.” Bienville, on his part, complains that “M. de la Salle, purser, would not give Chateauguay pay for services performed by order of the minister.” This state of affairs needed amendment. Iberville had never reported in the colony after his appointment in 1703 as commander-in-chief. Bienville had continued at the actual head of affairs. In February, 1708, it was ascertained in the colony that M. de Muys had started from France to supersede Bienville, but had died on the way.

M. Diron d’Artaguette, who had been appointed commissaire-ordonnateur, with orders to examine into the conduct of the officers of the colony and to report upon the condition of its affairs, arrived in Mobile in February, 1708. An attempt had apparently been made to organize Louisiana on the same system as prevailed in the other colonies. Artaguette made his investigation, and returned to France in 1711. During his brief stay the monotony of the record had been varied by the raid of an English privateer upon Dauphin (formerly Massacre) Island, where a settlement had been made in 1707 and fortified in 1709. The peripatetic capital had been driven, by the manifest unfitness of the situation, from Biloxi to a point on the Mobile River, from which it was now compelled by floods to move to higher lands eight leagues from the mouth of the river. No variation was rung upon the chronic complaint of scarcity of provisions. The frequent changes in the position of headquarters, lack of faith in the permanence of the establishment, and the severe attacks of fever endured each year by many of the settlers, discouraged those who might otherwise have given their attention to agriculture. To meet this difficulty, Bienville proposed to send Indians to the islands, there to be exchanged for negroes. If his plan had met with approval, perhaps he might have made the colony self-supporting, and thus have avoided in 1710 the scandal of subsisting his men by scattering them among the very savages whom he wished to sell into slavery. It is not to be wondered at that the growth of the colony under these circumstances was very slow. In 1701 the number of inhabitants was stated at one hundred and fifty. In 1708 La Salle reported the population as composed of a garrison of one hundred and twenty-two persons, including priests, workmen, and boys;
On the 9th of February, 1718, three vessels despatched by the Company arrived at Dauphin Island, bearing troops and colonists, and also conveying to Bienville the welcome news that he was appointed commandant général. In September, 1717, Illinois had been detached from New France and incorporated with Louisiana. Boisbriant, who was appointed to the command of that province, did not assume the government until the fall of 1718. The Company set to work honestly to develop the resources of the country. Engineers were sent over to superintend the construction of public works. The pass at the mouth of the river was to be mapped, and two little towers were ordered to be erected "at the entrance to the river, sufficiently high to be seen from afar during the day, and upon which fire can be made at night." The coast was to be surveyed, and orders were given to effect a landing at St. Joseph's Bay,—a step which was taken only to be followed by its prompt abandonment. Concessions were made to many distinguished men in France, with conditions attached to each that a certain number of colonists should be imported. Unfortunately for the influence of these grants upon the future of the colony, it was not required that the grantees themselves should live upon their concessions. The

grant to Law, twelve miles square, was situated on the Arkansas River. By

1 Forbonnais, Recherches et considérations sur les finances de France, ii. 604, says shares rose as high as eighteen to twenty thousand francs.

2 The commanders of the post in the early days of the colony have been generally spoken of as governors. Gayarré (i. 162) says, "The government of Louisiana was for the second time definitely awarded to Bienville." He was, as we have seen, lieutenant du roy. As such he was at the head of the colony for many years, and he still held this title when he was by letter ordered to assume command after La Mothe left and until L'Epinay should arrive (Margry, v. 591). In 1716 he was "commandant of the Mississippi River and its tributaries" (Journal historique, etc., pp. 123, 141). His power as commandant général was apparently for a time shared with his brother Sérigny. In a despatch dated Oct. 20, 1719, quoted by Gayarré, he says, "Mon frère Sérigny, chargé comme moi du commandement de cette colonie." M. de Vallette Landum, in the Journal d'un voyage (Paris, 1768), on the 1st of July, 1720, says, M. de Bienville "commands in chief all the country since the departure of his brother, Monsieur de Sérigny." In 1722 Bienville applied for the "general government" (Margry, v. 634).

8 Margry, v. 589; Shea's Chartlaix, vi. 37.
agreement, he undertook to introduce fifteen hundred settlers. Vessels began now to arrive with frequency, bringing involuntary as well as voluntary emigrants. The power of the courts in France was invoked, apparently with success, to secure numbers for Louisiana, without regard to character. Vagrants and convicts, considered dangerous for French society, were thought suitable for colonists. These steps were soon followed by complaints from the colony of the worthlessness of such settlers and of the little reliance that could be placed upon them in military service.\(^1\) Raynal, in his vigorous way, characterizes them as "the scum of Europe, which France had, as it were, vomited forth into the New World at the time of Law's system."

The new commanding general sent a force of mechanics and convicts in February, 1718, to clear the territory now occupied by the city of New Orleans, and to lay the foundations of a new settlement.\(^2\) The channel at Dauphin Island having been blocked by a storm, the headquarters of the colony were removed, first to Old Biloxi, and afterward by order of the Company in 1719, to New Biloxi. During the fall of 1718 MM. Benard de
Company in 1719, to New Biloxi. During the fall of 1718 MM. Benard de la Harpe and Le Page du Pratz, whose names are associated with the annals of Louisiana, both arrived in the colony. The pages of the chroniclers of colonial events are now sprinkled with the names of ships which arrived with troops and emigrants, including young women from the hospitals and prisons of Paris. On the 6th of June, 1719, two vessels arrived direct from the coast of Guinea with "five hundred head of negroes." The Company had entered with fervor upon the performance of the stipulation imposed by the charter.

The news of the war between France and Spain reached the colony in the spring of 1719. The inconvenience of the roadsteads occupied by the French had made them anxious to possess Pensacola. Iberville had urged upon the Government the necessity of procuring its cession from Spain if possible. So forcible were his arguments that negotiations to that end had been opened by Pontchartrain. Although the settlement had been neglected by the Spanish Government, yet the proposition to cede it to France was rejected with pompous arguments, in which the title of Spain was asserted as dating back to the famous Bull of Alexander VI., dividing the newly discovered portions of the world between Spain and Portugal.¹ Upon receipt of the news of hostility between the two nations, Bienville promptly availed himself of the opportunity to capture the place. The episodes of the capture of Pensacola by the French, its recapture by the Spaniards, the

¹ Vergennes, p. 161. "The inhabitants trembled at the sight of this licentious soldiery."

² The Penicaud narrative apparently assigns the year 1717 as the date of the original foundation of New Orleans. Margry (v. 549) calls attention in a note to the fact that the Journal historique, which he attributes to Beaurain, gives 1718 as the date. Gravier, in his Introduction to the Relation du voyage des dames religieuses Ursulines, says that New Orleans was founded in 1717. He cites in a note certain letters of Bienville which are in the Archives at Paris; but as he does not quote from them, we cannot tell to what point of the narrative they are cited as authority.

³ [ Cf. Vol. II. index.— Ed.]

desertion of a large part of the French garrison, the successful resistance of Sérigny to the siege of Dauphin Island by a Spanish fleet, the opportune arrival of a French fleet, and the capture again of Pensacola, furnished occupation and excitement to the colonists for a few months, but had no
other result. The port was returned to Spain when peace was restored. For several years the French at Natchitoches, and the Spaniards a few miles off at the Mission of the Adaes, had lived peacefully side by side. The French lieutenant in command of the post took advantage of the outbreak of hostilities to destroy the Spanish Mission. It was, however, immediately re-occupied by the Spaniards in force, and was permanently retained by them. In Illinois, through the arrival of a band of Missouris who had come to chant the calumet bedecked in chasubles and stoles, and tricked out in the paraphernalia of the altar, Boisbriant learned that a Spanish expedition from Santa Fé, in 1720, had been completely annihilated by these savages.

Far more important in their effect upon the prosperity of the colony than any question of capture or occupation which arose during these hostilities were the ordinances passed by the Company of the West, on the 25th of April, 1719, in which were announced the fixed prices at which supplies would be furnished to inhabitants at different points, and the arbitrary amounts that would be paid at the same places for peltries, tobacco, flour, and such other articles as the Company would receive. Gayarré summarizes the condition of the colonists under these rules as follows: “Thus the unfortunates who were sent to Louisiana had to brave not only the insalubrity of the climate and the cruelty of the savages, but in addition they were held in a condition of oppressive slavery. They could only buy of the Company at the Company’s price. They could only sell to the Company for such sum as it chose to pay; and they could only leave the colony by permission of the Company.” Whites brought from Europe and blacks brought from Africa “worked equally for one master,—the all-powerful Company.”

Through a title based upon La Salle’s occupation in 1685, strengthened by the explorations of Bienville and Saint-Denys in 1700, the subsequent journeys of Saint-Denys in 1701, 1714, and 1716, and the occupation of Natchitoches, the French laid claim to a large part of what now constitutes Texas. Benard de la Harpe left Dauphin Island toward the end of August, 1718, with fifty men, to establish a post on his concession at Cado-
daquails. He settled on land of the Nasonites, eighty leagues in a straight line from Natchitoches. He was instructed to open up trade with the neighboring Spaniards, and through him Bienville forwarded a letter to the Spanish Governor. A correspondence ensued between La Harpe and the Governor at Trinity River, in which each expressed doubts as to the right of the other to be where he was. La Harpe closed it with an assurance that he could be found in command of his fort, and could convince the Governor that he knew how to defend it. No overt act followed this fiery correspondence, and La Harpe shortly after went on an extended tour of exploration to the northward and westward of his concession. We hear no more of this post from French sources; but Spanish authorities assert that after the Mission at Adaes was broken up, the Spaniards returned with an armed force and the French retired to Natchitoches. That post was then put under charge of Saint-Denys. Great stress was laid at Paris upon the necessity for occupying the coast to the west of the mouth of the Mississippi, and positive orders had been issued to that effect by the King Mississippi, and positive orders had been issued to that effect by the King on the 16th of November, 1718. Nothing was done, however, until 1720, when six men were landed one hundred and thirty leagues west of the Mississippi and left to perish. In 1721 these orders were reiterated, and La Harpe was appointed "commandant and inspector of commerce of the Bay of St. Bernard." On August 16 he sailed to take possession of that bay. His equipment and his force were totally inadequate for the purpose. He made a landing at some point on the coast; but finding the Indians hostile, he was obliged to abandon the expedition. With this futile attempt all efforts on the part of the French to occupy any point on the coast of Texas ceased. On the other hand, they remained in uninterrupted possession of Natchitoches; ¹

¹ For the points involved in the discussion of the Louisiana boundary question, see Waite's *American State Papers* (Boston, 1819), vol. xii.
MOUTHS OF THE MISSISSIPPI.¹

(said to have been L'Abbé Le Maserier), was in the military service in the colony. In the *Journal historique*, etc., mention is made of a sub-lieutenant Dumont de Montiguay.⁵

¹ [Part of a map in Le Page du Pratz' *Histoire de la Louisiane* (1758), pl. 139. Cf. also the *Carte des embouchures du Mississippi*, by N. Bellin, given (1744) in Charlevoix' *Nouvelle France*, ii. 445. In the same volume (p. 469) is the "Partie de la côte de la Louisiane et de la Floride," giving the coast from the mouths of the Mississippi to Apalache Bay. In 1759 Jeferys gave in the margin of his reproduction of La Tour's map of New Orleans a map of the Mississippi from Bayagoula to the sea, and of the east mouth of the river, with the fort La Balise.—Ed.)

⁵ *Journal historique*, etc., p. 310.