This nation follows this execrable ritual even to this day, in spite of all that has been done to dissuade them. Our missionaries have never been able to succeed in dissuading them: they have been able to do no more than get permission sometimes to baptize those poor little children before their fathers strangled them. Moreover, this nation is too stubborn in its religion, which humors the wicked inclinations of their depraved natures so that there has been no progress in converting them and in establishing Christianity among them.

We had tarried long enough in this village, and we were seized, as it were, with sadness and horror at having seen such a frightful spectacle; so we decided to leave two days later and return to Fort Mobile. After we had thanked them for the good treatment with which they had regaled us during our stay, they escorted us back to our boats. They vied with one another in providing us with food and invited us to come back as soon as we could. At the edge of the water we embraced them once more and departed. We came down to Bâton Rouge and spent the night. We were making a good deal of headway each day, because the currents in the Mississippi are very rapid when one is coming downstream.

In fourteen days we reached Fort Mobile, where we found a ship that had arrived from France, bringing us food supplies. This ship, named Le Pélican, was under the command of M. du Coudray.¹⁵ He had brought

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twenty-six girls from France. These were the first ones that came to Louisiana. They were quite well behaved, and so they had no trouble in finding husbands. They were in the care of a priest named M. Huet, who remained in Louisiana as much to instruct the French as to convert the savages.

A little later, two companies of the garrison were relieved, and in their place other soldiers were left us who were not the equals of those that were going away, who were already well informed about the region.

The Reverend Fathers Dongé and de Limoges returned to France on Le Pélican. M. de Bienville entrusted several bundles of letters for the Court to M. du Coudray, the captain of the ship.

16 This priest is Father Alexandre Huvé, who came to Mobile in 1704 as curate when De la Vente was curé. He baptized the first Creole child born in Louisiana: Jean François, son of Jean le Can and Magdelaine Robert. (Mobile Baptismal Records, October 4, 1704.)

17 On the Pélican, which had brought yellow fever to Fort Louis de la Mobile, sailed away the last Jesuits in Louisiana. (Delanglez, French Jesuits, pp. 34–37.) Having lost their jurisdictional dispute, the Jesuits were not to have further assignments in the Gulf area of Louisiana until Father Beaubois received a mission assignment in 1725, with the right to reside in New Orleans. Father Dongé, who had been living at Fort Mobile with Father Davion, died at sea, November, 1704. (Ibid., p. 48.) Father Joseph de Limoges died January 30, 1704. Delanglez thought Father Limoges possibly sailed on La Loire, October 16, 1703.