

1700.

eaten wood, laid end to end, burning and emitting much smoke. At the end of the room was a kind of stage, on which lay several packages of deer, bear and buffalo skins, which had been offered to the chouchouacha, that animal being the god of the Bayagoulas, and being painted in several parts of the temple in red and black.¹

There was still another temple in the village, which Mr. d'Iberville did not apparently enter, as he says nothing of it in his letter. The village consisted of seven hundred cabins, each holding only one family, and lighted only by the door and an aperture two feet in diameter in the centre of the dome.²

D'Iberville
finds a
letter from
the
Chevalier
de Tonti to
Mr. de la
Sale.

Thence d'Iberville ascended to the Oumas, where he was received with great cordiality. Yet he still had some doubt whether the river he was on was the Micissipi,³ because, although he noticed some marks, among the Bayagoulas, which gave him ground to infer that the Chevalier de Tonti had passed there, yet he did not find certain things mentioned in the Relation attributed to that officer.⁴ But a letter handed to Mr. de Bienville by an Indian chief, relieved him from this uneasiness. The letter was from the Chevalier de Tonti, and addressed to "Mr. de la Sale, Governor of Louisiana."⁵ It began thus :

¹ The Journal du Voyage describes the temple briefly, March 15, 1699. Iberville makes the Bayagoula village 64 leagues from the mouth; the Journal, 60.

² The Journal makes the population four or five hundred. They were subsequently ravaged by small pox, and by 1722 had disappeared. Charlevoix, Journal, p. 436.

³ The Journal du Voyage shows that d'Iberville was by no means certain at that time that he was on the Mississippi. Yet he undoubtedly must have had any reports and maps of Beaujeu's possessed by the Department de la Marine. That naval officer, by la Sale's request, (Letter, March, 1685, in Thomassy and in Early Voyages, p. 198,) examined

as he sailed back the outlet passed in January, (ante iv., p. 68,) as a chart by Engineer Minet dated May, 1685, still exists in the Archives de la Marine, showing the river as high as New Orleans. (Parkman, Discovery of the Great West, p. 330.) If Iberville was not certain, we cannot assume that Beaujeu was certain that this was really the true mouth of the Mississippi, and therefore acted with premeditated bad faith.

⁴ Iberville to Pontchartrain, July 3, 1699. The chief wore some articles given him by Tonti. Journal du Voyage.

⁵ This letter was given by the Mongoulaches to Iberville's brother, (Iberville to Pontchartrain,) or to Sauvole, (Journal du Voyage, March