

1685.

Conspiracy  
against  
Joutel.

Their design was to stab both, then take from the store-house whatever suited their fancy, and desert. A day was fixed for the accomplishment of this nefarious design; but one of the conspirators having revealed it to Davault, a hunter, the latter at once warned Joutel, who seized the mutineers and put them in irons.<sup>1</sup>

On the 14th of July he received a second order, directing him to join de la Sale with all his force. He obeyed, and on reaching that commander's camp, delivered up to him his two prisoners, with proofs of their plot.

Sad posi-  
tion of the  
colony.

This information, clearly exposing the injudicious character of his selection of settlers, greatly depressed la Sale. For his part, Joutel was greatly surprised to see so little done on the fort. Nothing was yet covered but a little, square, stone building, containing the powder and some barrels of brandy. They had planted and sowed, but all had failed for want of rain, or had been rooted up by wild beasts.<sup>2</sup> Several good men, among them the Sieur de Villeperdry were dead; the sick increased in number daily: in a word, nothing was more deplorable than de la Sale's position. He was worn down with disappointment; but he dissembled well. With that firmness of mind which was his leading characteristic, but often degenerated into a stubborn harshness, he had in the highest degree the talent of resource, and his ingenuity made him find in himself what lacked in others. As soon as he saw his whole force assembled, he began in earnest to build and fortify. He became the architect of his own fort,<sup>3</sup> and as he was always the first to put his hand to work, each one, in emulation, did his best.

<sup>1</sup> Joutel, Journal, pp. 104-5.

<sup>2</sup> This was about the middle of July. He put all on board the Belle, and tried to make a raft of the timber he had dressed, but finally buried it, and marched along the sea-shore to an Indian village, where they passed the night, then to Hurier's camp, where he put all his

stores and slept; the next day he reached La Salle in canoes. Joutel, Journal Historique, pp. 105-8.

<sup>3</sup> Procès Verbal, Ms. His camp was a league from the wood, and his carpenters incompetent. Having no horses, they had to drag the timber by hand. Joutel, p. 109.