

1730.

by the arrival of troops from France; and they told him that most (of the chiefs) had hesitated whether they should attend the conference, for fear some trap should be sprung on them, fully conscious that the French had ground to be dissatisfied with them; but that some of the Western chiefs had answered for the good faith of our nation, adding: "It is the English who corrupt our mind."

Persuaded by this language, they had started for Mobile, which they entered on the 26th of October, to the number of eight hundred men. On the 28th, Perrier, who had arrived on the 27th, began to treat with them, and he had to submit to a hundred and fifty harangues, which took up a week. The substance of all was that the Indians begged him to assure the King of their inviolable fidelity; that they would never forget that he it was who had made men of them, and rendered them a terror to their neighbors; that some rumors unfavorable to the French had indeed circulated in their villages, but that such language came only from some madcaps, and that the chiefs and sachems had not been parties to it; that they begged him not to blame them for it, and to forget the past. This he promised, and spoke to them only concerning the negroes retaken from the Natchez, whom they still kept, although they had pledged their word to bring them into the colony. They replied that they had always intended to bring them back, but that their masters must send for them, because some whom they tried to bring back killed themselves on the way.

Although a good understanding seemed quite well restored between the Eastern and the Western Choctaws, the General nevertheless perceived that they were still somewhat jealous of each other, and as he was much surer of the latter than of the former, he represented to those that it was necessary for them to have a head chief like the others. He added that for this dignity he had cast his eyes on the Chief of the Castachas,¹ whom they

¹ A Choctaw tribe. *Charlevoix*.