

what had deferred the project of closing the war by storming the intrenchments of the Natchez, as it now required levies of settlers and Indians to make up for it. And it was after giving orders for this, that Perrier proceeded to Maubile to confer with the Choctaws, not to ask those Indians to join him in his expedition, since he was, as we have seen, resolved to act without them, but to prevent their accepting the commercial offers made by the English, and to retain them in our alliance.

1730.

This accomplished, he returned to New Orleans,¹ where he found the army ready to march. His first step was to send the Sieur de Coulonge, a Canadian, to the Akansas, who were to assemble at the French fort at Natchez. The Sieur de Beaulieu embarked with him, with orders to reconnoitre the enemy's condition. On the 9th of December, Mr. de Salvart embarked with two hundred men; including three companies of marines, the rest volunteers or sailors from the Somme.² On Monday, the 11th, Mr. Perrier set out with a company of grenadiers, two of fusiliers, and some volunteers. This detachment was also two hundred strong; Captain de Benac commanding the militia, followed on the 13th with eighty men; he was to have a hundred and fifty, but the rest joined him on the way.

The army
marches—
its order.

On the 20th, the whole force having united at the Bayagoulas, a Colapissa chief arrived there with forty warriors of his tribe. The militia companies were organized at this place, and a company of cadets selected from them, but soon suppressed. Mr. le Sueur had orders the next day to load the demi-galley which he commanded, and to push on to Red River, which he was to ascend; for although it was not precisely known where the Natchez were, they were supposed, beyond doubt, to be on the Black, or River of the Ouatchitas, which empties into the Red ten leagues above its entrance into the Micissipi.

On the 22nd, they set out from the Bayagoulas in this

¹ Perrier to the Minister, March 25, 1731. Gayarré, p. 273.

² Perrier as above, says 150 marines, 40 sailors.