

1710-25. Indeed, there could scarcely be said to be a colony in Louisiana, or at least it did not begin to take shape till the arrival of Diron d'Artaguette as Commissaire Ordonnateur in 1708. This magistrate's first care was to enable the settlers to cultivate the soil, which seemed quite fertile along Maubile River, so that they might not be obliged to wander about, living by hunting or with the Indians whenever the ships from France were late in bringing provisions, as it happened on several occasions.¹

Arrival of a
Commissaire
Ordonnateur.

But success did not crown his hopes. Around Maubile there is only a mere surface of good soil, and moreover, wheat can never ripen there well on account of the fogs, which produce rust. They made up for this for some time by raising tobacco, which succeeded better.² D'Artaguette, in a letter dated January 10th, 1711, says that Maubile tobacco was esteemed above the Virginian.

He added that in the month of September of the preceding year, an English corsair had ravaged Dauphin Island, plundered and burned the houses and stores, wreaked unparalleled cruelties on the people to force them to tell where they had hidden their money, and that the damage done to the King and to individuals amounted to eighty thousand francs,³ whence he concluded that it was absolutely necessary to fortify the island. The Commissaire reasoned well according to the prevailing idea, which was to plant the

¹ The *Aigle*, Capt. de Noyant, arrived Feb., 1707, to find them hunting or living on the Indians; yet brought over many families to settle, and implements, as well as two priests, de la Vente and la Maire. D'Artaguette arrived 10th Feb., 1708. Pénicaut, ch. 10. Bénard de la Harpe, p. 106.

In 1704, Louisiana, including the garrison, contained 180 men, comprising 27 families, occupying 80 houses and 190 acres of cleared land. Document, Archives de la Marine, Portef. 1, No. 40. Twenty girls of good character, selected by the Bishop of Quebec, were sent out

in 1704. Gayarré, *Hist. de la Louisiane*, i., p. 76.

² The first fort at Mobile was on a site so badly selected that it was overflowed in 1709, and a new fort was erected and occupied the next year. Pénicaut, ch. 11, 12.

³ Bénard de la Harpe, p. 107, says this Jamaica corsair landed 60 men, and did damage to the extent of 50,000 livres, but says nothing of the cruelties. Lediard details the operations of Commodore Littleton's squadron at Jamaica in 1709 and 1710, but is silent as to this attack, probably the act of a privateer.