

1713-25. as his sole answer, had he not been restrained by Mr. Davion, who was a missionary in his village.

Mr. de Bienville sent to demand satisfaction.

The Messrs. de la Loire continued their journey, and reached Maubile, where all were surprised to see them back, and still more to learn the reason of their return. Mr. de la Motte Cadillac thought that this treachery of the Natchez should not be allowed to go unpunished, and raised a party of a hundred men, soldiers and settlers, under the command of Mr. de Bienville, King's-lieutenant, with whom he associated Mr. de Pailloux, major in the army, Captain de Richebourg, Lieutenant du Tisé and the two brothers who had just escaped from the Natchez.¹ As they passed before the Bay of the Tonicas, they noticed a bag hanging from the branch of a tree on the river side, and in this bag they found a letter from Mr. Davion, who, ascertaining that they would pass by there without stopping, informed them that a Frenchman named Richard, on his way from the Illinois, had been taken by the Natchez; that these savages, after plundering him of all his goods, had taken him to their village, cut off his feet and hands, and cast him, still living, into a mudhole.²

They encamp at the Tonicas.

Up to this time, Mr. de Bienville had imagined that the Messrs. de la Loire had been seized with a mere panic; the perusal of this letter disabused him. He did not even deem himself strong enough to march direct upon the Natchez; he entered the Bay of the Tonicas, built a fort, and sent du Tisé with twenty men to the Great Chief of the Natchez, to tell him that he had some matters to impart to him, and that he begged the chief to meet him at the Tonicas. Du Tisé returned the next day and informed de Bienville that the Great Chief would soon follow him. He did not, however, leave his village, but sent to the French commandant some subaltern chiefs, with about twenty-five men.

¹ The King had ordered Bienville, with 80 men, to begin a fort at Natchez. La Motte Cadillac would give him only Richebourg's compa-

ny of 34 men. Richebourg, p. 242.

² They reached the Tonicas, April 23. Richebourg, p. 242. See Charlevoix, Journal, pp. 431-4.