

1719. disease spread, and no relief appeared, many advised that the country should be abandoned before the mortality increased, because, if the French came with a new force, it would avail little to be well fortified, when want of provisions would force them to surrender. Men even began to think, ere long, that the expected succors were lost, it not being probable that the Viceroy of Mexico and the Governor of Havana would have neglected to send them at the time they had set, and some said openly that their departure should no longer be delayed, as they had only just provisions enough to carry them to Havana.

The general was so fortunate as to succeed in quelling this incipient mutiny, but he was soon after notified that five sail had been seen near Dauphin Island; that the captain of a bilander had sent his longboat to reconnoitre them, and that this boat, having gone too near, had been detained.¹ There was then no doubt that they were French ships, and this opinion was confirmed by the fact that for three days past not a band of Indians had been seen near Pensacola. This led to the conclusion that these savages had joined the French troops to invest the fort by land, while the ships attacked by sea. The Governor of San Carlos, the first to receive this tidings, thought it the best expedient to burn the fort to prevent the French from establishing themselves there, and to carry to the fort on Siguença Point all his artillery and munitions. But as he was almost alone in this opinion, he bade the general do what he deemed best for the King's service.²

Arrival of
Mr. de
Champmélin
with
squadron.

The next morning the captain of another bilander assured the general that the ships which he had seen were merchantmen of from twenty to twenty-six guns at the most, but it was soon after reported to him, that six men-of-war were in sight to the southeast. He at first took it for Cornejo's squadron, but was soon undeceived, and it was evident that they were French vessels.³ Carrascosa re-

¹ Barcia, *Ensayo Cronologico*, pp. 357-9. Dumont, ii., p. 19.

³ Champmélin had arrived at Dauphin Island, Sept. 1, with the *Hercules*, 60, Capt. de Gouyon;

² Barcia, *Ensayo Cron.*, p. 359.