

most populous of all, only about twenty escaped, and five or six negroes,<sup>1</sup> most of them wounded. One hundred and fifty children, eighty women, and almost as many negroes, were taken.<sup>2</sup> The Jesuit Father du Poisson and Mr. du Codere, commandant at the Yazooos, who happened to be at the Natchez, also perished.

1729.

The former had started from his Arkansas mission for some business that required his presence at New Orleans. He arrived at the Natchez quite late on the 26th, intending to set out again the next day, after saying mass. Unfortunately for him, the Capuchin father, who exercised parochial functions at that place, was absent, and Father du Poisson was requested to sing high mass and preach, it being the first Sunday of Advent, and he consented. In the afternoon, as he was on the point of embarking, he was informed that there were some sick persons at the point of death; he attended them, administered the last sacraments to some, and deferred one till next day, as his case was not so urgent, and it was already quite late. The next day he said mass, and then carried the Viaticum to the sick man, to whom he had promised it, and it was after performing this duty of charity that he was encountered by a chief, who seized him around the body, threw him to the ground, and chopped off his head with an axe. Mr. du Codere, who happened to be near, had already drawn his sword to defend him, when another Indian, whom he had not seen, shot him down.<sup>3</sup>

During this massacre, the Sun, or Great Chief of the Natchez, was calmly seated under the tobacco shed of the India Company. The head of the commandant was first brought to him, then those of the leading Frenchmen,

<sup>1</sup> Dumont, Mem., ii., pp. 148-152. Pratz, iii., p. 257. Father Paul du

<sup>2</sup> They killed Madame Papin, Mme Macé, and some others. Dumont, ii., p. 153. Dumont's wife was taken, and his account is based in part on her statements.

<sup>3</sup> Lettres Edifiantes—Kip's Jesuit Missions, pp. 286-7. Le Page du

Poisson belonged to the Province of Champagne, and had entered the order in 1712. He came to Louisiana in 1726, and was killed at Natchez, Nov. 28, 1729. F. Martin's

List in Carayon's Chaumonot, pp. 207, 214.