

the death-cry; that afterwards seven hundred warriors had set out to attack the Natchez, and that a party of a hundred and fifty was to pass to the Yazooos, to intercept all the negroes and French prisoners, whom they wished to conduct to the Chickasaws. The next day he received letters from de Saint Denys, the commandant at the Natchitoches, about whom he was much concerned, as some Natchitoches were seen among the Natchez at the time of the massacre of the French; but he learned by these letters that the wisdom and vigilance of that officer had saved him from the disaster threatening his post.

He had, however, great difficulty in reassuring the settlers, whom the sad tidings brought in from all parts, almost all with no foundation, but an alarmed imagination, had hurled at once from excessive confidence to as excessive discouragement. He himself felt less sanguine, as he was fully informed that the smaller tribes had been gained by the Chickasaws, and that if the Natchez had not anticipated the day fixed for the execution of the plot, they would have acted simultaneously with them. He also discovered that what had induced the Natchez to precipitate their meditated blow, was their learning that at the very time that the first Choctaw chiefs who had come to New Orleans on his invitation, were on their way thither, a hundred and twenty horses loaded with English goods had entered their country. The Natchez were convinced that these two circumstances were the most favorable to ensure the success of the project; that the two Choctaw chiefs were going to delude the Commandant-General by feigned protestations of fidelity, and that their nation, seeing that an alliance with the English would bring plenty into their country, would not hesitate to keep the promise they had given to fill all on the Maubile River with fire and blood.

But they were deceived: the Choctaws, from the moment they received the general's invitation through the Sieur Regis, began by declaring that they would not receive the goods from the English till they had learned

1730.

Discouragement of the whole colony.

Conduct of the Choctaws.