

necessary to inspire alarm, if we could not do harm. Chance has permitted us to do both, and come honorably out of an affair, the success of which has given us time to understand our position. We have recovered more than two hundred women and children,¹ all our negroes, and brought our enemies to the necessity of abandoning their forts and their lands. If we could have kept our Indians two or three days longer, not a single Natchez would have escaped; their destruction is merely deferred by the measures that I have taken. I do not regard them as our most cruel enemies; the Chickasaws really are; they are entirely devoted to the English, and have managed all the intrigue of the general conspiracy, although they are at peace with us. I have avoided urging the Choctaws to make war on them till I received reinforcements and orders from France, although they asked nothing better; but they are so self-seeking, that it would cost us much to get them to make a move, which I feel convinced they will make of their own accord, from grounds of dissatisfaction of their own."²

1730.

As on the plan adopted by the General, the most urgent point was to make sure of the Choctaws and other nations nearest to the Fort of Maubile, he made known the first tidings of the Natchez disaster as soon as he received them, to Mr. Diron,³ who commanded at that post, and by a second letter, which was handed to that officer on the 16th of December, he directed him to sound the Choctaws, to see whether he could depend upon them. The difficulty was to find a man willing to run the risk of putting himself at the mercy of these savages, whose disposition was then doubtful enough, and to whom we could as yet only make promises. Mr. le Sueur,⁴ who had

They arm
against the
Natchez.

¹ Perrier says 54 women and children, and 100 negroes. Gayarré, i., p. 249.

² This is not an extract, but a summary. See dispatch in Gayarré, i., pp. 243-253. As to the missions among the Choctaws and their in-

fluence, see Carayon, Documents Inédits, xiv., pp. 17-8.

³ Diron d'Artaguette died at Cap François in St. Domingo, where he was King's Lieutenant. Charlevoix, Journal, p. 436.

⁴ See ante, iv., p. 273a; vi., p. 13a.