

Offogoulas and Tonicas; and soon, as I have said, of the Natchitoches, and they all gave striking proofs of it in the course of this war. On the other hand, the Natchez seemed to behold without alarm the storm gathering against them. They did not at first despair of winning over the Tonicas, and on the 9th of December sent to them the Tioux, a little tribe long domiciliated among them, to offer them some of the plunder taken from the French, in order to win them over to their side. They did not succeed in this, but killed two straggling Frenchmen whom they found.

1729-30.

On the 10th, the *Sieur le Merveilleux* entered that bay with his detachment and some Frenchmen who had joined him. He entrenched for fear of surprise. The following days all the troops arrived, and on the 18th the *Chevalier de Loubois* entered it with twenty-five additional soldiers.¹ He found the whole army encamped, well entrenched, and in good condition. He had two days previously detached the *Sieur Mexplex* with five men to obtain tidings of the enemy, and, the better to ascertain their strength, he had ordered him to throw out some proposals of peace; but as he was on the point of landing, he received a volley of musketry, which killed three of his men, leaving him and two others prisoners. The next day the Natchez sent one of these latter to *Mr. de Loubois* to make proposals also on their side, but they assumed a haughty tone, which revealed great confidence and great contempt for us.

The French army assembles at the Tonicas.

They asked in the first place that we should give as hostage the *Sieur Brouttin*, who had commanded among them, and the Great Chief of the Tonicas. They then specified, with great detail, all the goods they required for the ransom of the women, children and slaves, whom they had in their hands; and although their demands were exorbitant, they seemed to suppose that we would be only too happy to accept them. It was afterwards ascertained that, adding treachery to insolence, their design was to

Insolent proposals of the Natchez.

¹ *Le Page du Pratz*, iii., p. 265.