

these classes of conjurors are composed of old men, or those too indolent to work. When successful, their gain is considerable; but, if they fail, their heads are cut off. Ambassadors from other tribes are received by the Natches Indians with numerous and elaborate ceremonies, in which the calumet, or peace-pipe, is conspicuous.

Having furnished this preliminary information, Le Petit narrates the particulars of the terrible vengeance taken by these savages for the injustice shown them by a tyrannical French commandant. They form a conspiracy, even with other tribes, to exterminate the French settlers; "and in less than two hours they massacred more than two hundred of the French." Among these are the commandant at the Natches village, one of the earliest grantees on the Mississippi estates, and the Jesuit priest Du Poisson. The savages spare two Frenchmen, a tailor and a carpenter; they kill such women as have nursing children, or are not in good health, and enslave all the others. A few French fugitives escape, one of whom is aided to reach New Orleans by some Yazoo Indians whom he encounters. They assure him that they will remain faithful to the French; but no sooner do they return to their own village than they form a plot to murder the Frenchmen there. On December 11, they murder their missionary, Father Souel, and, on the next day, the garrison at the French post near their village. Soon afterward, they attack the Jesuit Doutreleau, on his way to New Orleans, who narrowly escapes them with his life.

As soon as Perrier, the governor at New Orleans, hears of the savages' treachery, he takes all possible measures to defend the colony. All other French