

ture, it is no slight token of a genuine religious feeling to find the young soldier, among strangers, and with an unfamiliar form of worship, perseveringly frequenting the house of God.

A period of imbecility, gloom, and disaster, marked England's share in the war which followed soon after the truce of Aix-la-Chapelle, till the Great Commoner was called to the councils of the Nation. Forthwith vigour took the place of despondency and defeat. Men were entrusted with the conduct of the war because of approved fitness, and not from family connections or parliamentary interest; and, among the rest, young Wolfe was selected by Pitt, and sent with General Amherst to this continent, where Lord Loudon had been conducting matters to most unsatisfactory results. Forthwith all was changed. At Louisbourg, Cape Breton, Brigadier Wolfe effected a landing under the eye of the General and Admiral Boscawen, in the face of powerful batteries, and with a sea so violent that many boats were foundered; and pushed on the siege till Louisbourg fell, and Cape Breton with it. The fleet to which the Court of Versailles had confided the defence of French America was destroyed; the captured standards were borne in triumph from Kensington Palace to the City, and there suspended in St. Paul's, amid the roar of cannon and the shouts of the people; and, as Walpole writes, "our bells are worn threadbare with ringing for victories!"

The energy of the great Minister seemed to extend its influence everywhere. The year 1759 opened with the conquest of Goree; next Guadaloupe fell; then Ticonderoga and Niagara, bringing that old war, in fancy, to our own doors. And as on land, so was it at sea. The Toulon squadron was completely defeated by Admiral Boscawen off Cape Lagos, while Wolfe—now General of the forces of the St. Lawrence,—was preparing for the achievement which was to crown the triumphs of the year with sadness

and with glory. The season was already far advanced. He had tried in vain to effect a landing below the Montmorency, and do battle with Montcalm where he lay entrenched at Beauport. All fears or hopes of aid from the French fleet were at an end. But Montcalm had other resources; had already—though in vain—tried, by fire-ships and rafts, to annihilate the English fleet. His best hope now lay in the equinox, and early winter beyond, with their gales, to drive General and Admiral both out of the St. Lawrence; and he already flattered himself that Quebec and French America were as good as safe for another year.

The English General's fears corresponded only too closely thereto. Fatigue and anxiety preyed on his delicate frame. A violent fever prostrated him for a time; but, undaunted, he returned to his work, and at length the night of September 12th, 1759, had come, and the dawn of his fortunate day.

His force, 5,000 men in all, had been already transported above Quebec. This he embarked in boats, dropt down the broad river in silence, under the stars; and as he glides swiftly towards victory and death, a little incident illuminates for us the stealthy machinations of that night with a tender spiritual ray. John Robison, a young midshipman—long after well known as Professor of Natural Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh,—was in the same boat with the general, and loved in after years to recall the incident. As they glided down the river with muffled oars, Wolfe repeated in a low voice some stanzas from Gray's *Elegy*—then in the first blush of its fame,—ending with the prophetic lines:—

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike th' inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

And as he closed, he added that he would rather be author of that poem than victor in the impending battle.

On the triumph which followed, we need