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The Secretary folded the despatch,
and sat down without altering a
line of his impassive face. Not so
the majority of the officers round the
table; they were excited, and ready
to spring up in their indignation.
The King's name restrained them all
but Rigaud de Vaudreuil, who im-
petuously burst out with an oath,
exclaiming: "They may as well sell
New France at once to the enemy, if
we are not to defend Quebec! The
treasury wants money for the war in
Europe, forsooth! No doubt it
wants money for the war when so
much is lavished upon the pimps,
panders, and harlots of the Court!"

The Governor rose suddenly, strik-
ing the table with his scabbard to
stop Rigaud in his rash and danger-
ous speech.

"Not a word more of comment,
Chevalier Rigaud!" said he, with a
sharp imperative tone that cut short
debate; "not another word! His
Majesty's name and those of his min-
isters must be spoken here respect-
fully, or not at all! Sit down,
Chevalier de Vaudreuil; you are in-
considerate."

"I obey your Excellency—I am, I
dare say, inconsiderate! but I am
right!" Rigaud's passion was sub-
siding, but not spent. He obeyed
the order, however. He had had his
say, and flung himself heavily upon
his chair.

"The King's despatch demands
respectful and loyal consideration,"
remarked De Lery, a solid, grave of-
ficer of engineers, "and I doubt not
that, upon a proper remonstrance
from this council, His Majesty will
graciously reconsider his order. The
fall of Louisbourg is ominous of the
fall of Quebec. It is imperative to
fortify the city in time to meet the
threatened invasion. The loss of
Quebec would be the loss of the Col-
ony; and the loss of the Colony the
disgrace of France and the ruin of
our country."

"I cordially agree with the Che-
valier de Lery," said La Corne St.
Luc; "he has spoken more sense
than would be found in a shipload of
such despatches as that just read! Nay, your Excellency," continued the
old officer, smiling, "I shall not af-
front my sovereign by believing that
so ill-timed a missive came from him.
Depend upon it, His Majesty has
neither seen nor sanctioned it. It
is the work of the minister and his
mistresses, not the King's."

"La Corne! La Corne!" The
Governor raised his finger with a
warning look. "We will not dis-
cuss the point further until we are
favored with the presence and opin-
ion of the Intendant; he will surely
be here shortly!" at this moment a
distant noise of shouting was heard
in some part of the city.

An officer of the day entered the
hall in great haste, and whispered
something in the Governor's ear.
"A riot in the streets!" exclaimed
the Governor. "The mob attack-
ing the Intendant! You do not
say so! Captain Duval, turn out
the whole guard at once, and let
Colonel St. Remy take the command
and clear the way for the Intendant,
and also clear the streets of all dis-
turbances."

A number of officers sprang to their
feet. "Keep seated, gentlemen! We
must not break up the Council,"
said the Governor. "We are sure
to have the Intendant here in a few
minutes and to learn the cause of
this uproar. It is some trifling af-
fair of noisy habitants, I have no
doubt."

Another loud shout, or rather yell,
made itself distinctly heard in the
council-chamber. "It is the people
cheering the Intendant on his way
through the city!" remarked La
Corne St. Luc, ironically. "Zounds!
what a vacarme they make! See
what it is to be popular with the
citizens of Quebec!"

There was a smile all round the
table at La Corne's sarcasm. It
offended a few friends of the Inten-
dant, however.

"The Chevalier La Corne speaks
boldly in the absence of the Inten-
dant," said Colonel Leboeuf. "A
gentleman would give a loud d'or



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