

Breton, all told, numbered scarcely eighty thousand souls.

"Notwithstanding this excessive numerical disproportion, victory showed a stubborn disposition to want to follow the standards of France in the contests between the two colonies.

"The frontiers of America, which sought to extend themselves as the populations increased, had been devastated, their strongholds taken, and dismantled or razed by the bands of Canadians which had at their heads such noted leaders as *de Lery*, *La Corne* of *St. Luc*, and *Rigaud de Vaudreuil*, and these feats of arms, almost incredible for daring, had so far scattered terror and dismay among the English colonies that the simple announcement would cause settlers to abandon all their possessions and take refuge in the distant settled portion of the country with their families, and all that they would try to save of more precious things in their headlong flight.

"In the meantime the second peace of *Aix-la-Chapelle* had been signed in 1748, by which France gave up all her acquisitions. This was one of the most deplorable treaties that French diplomacy ever accepted, for by it they suspended the victorious courses with which they had traversed the enemy's country.

"But this peace did not long endure.

"Lord *Albarnale*, the English ambassador to Paris, did not delay long in entering bitter complaint against the encroachments of France in *Acadia* and elsewhere. This was undoubtedly a mere pretext whereby to break the treaty of peace. Nevertheless, a commission was named to fix the mission. It sat and discussed. A royal decree, emanating from the English court, granted to a company of English merchants a very large portion of the *Ohio valley*, which was especially a point of controversy.

"The French interpreted this to mean that this concession thus made had, as its sole purpose, the thought to invade their rich commerce of the West, and to cut off their line of communication between *Canada* and *Louisiana*, so they hastened, by a wise foresight, to bind by means of certain forts, this