led to those measures which eventually deprived France of all her American colonies.

Early in 1753, the French, under the energetic government of the Marquis du Quesne, built on Presqu' Isle, on Lake Erie, where the city of Erie, in the State of Pennsylvania, now stands, a strong fort.—Thirteen miles south of this point, another fort, called De la Riviere aux Bœufs, or Fort Machault, at the present village of Waterford, in Erie county, Pennsylvania, (the name is given to a small stream which falls into French Creek, one of the tributaries of the Alleghany River, and preserves the memory of the time when Buffalo roamed through those wilds), furnished the next station in the line of those strongholds intended to keep the English colonists east of the Alleghany range in check. A waggon road twenty-one feet in width kept up the communication with the fort at Presqu'Isle. Fifty miles further down the stream of the French Creek, at the junction with the Alleghany River, where is now the village of Franklin, a fort called Venango formed the last post on the route to the Ohio; and at the further distance of fifty-six miles the Forks of the Ohio, at the junction of the Monongahela and Alleghany Rivers, was reached. This point, on which now stands the flourishing city of Pittsburg, was occupied by forty men of the Virginia Militia, under Ensign Ward, who had made a rude attempt at fortifying his post in the best manner possible, but who was at once obliged to abandon it when, on the 17th April, 1754, Monsieur de Contrecœur, at the head of 1000 men and 18 pieces of Artillery, appeared before it, and who immediately erected Fort du Quesne in this advantageous position.

The French had now reached navigable water on the Ohio, and were sure of their communication with the Mississippi as long as the position at Du Quesne could be maintained. It certainly argues a thorough knowledge of the country and of its best strategetical positions, to find them connect their forts on the Mississippi and the Great Lakes by water, with only thirteen miles of carriage road; and it displays culpable neglect on the part of the English colonists, to allow them to establish strong positions in the rear of their settlements, cutting them off from what was then the staple trade of America—peltry—and threatening their total political extinction.

A narration of the proceedings of the Governments of Virginia and Pennsylvania at this crisis establishes the fact of their total ignorance of the value of this movement, and the very imperfect knowledge of the locality itself, both fruitful, if not sole sources, of the disgrace and disaster which followed. The Governor of Virginia, apprehensive of the consequences, despatched the celebrated George Washington, then a Major in the Militia, in December, 1753, with a letter of remonstrance to the French commandant of Fort Venango, who received him kindly but, courteously and firmly refused to accede to the wishes of Governor Dinwiddie. Nothing, therefore, remained but to try the issues by arms, and the expedition fitted out under General Braddock next year kindled the flames of a contest which ended in the supremacy of British power in North America.

Throughout the whole contest, whatever credit may be due for statesmanship or superior military ability remains with the French, and the fall of their power on this continent redounds to their honour and glory in a marked degree. The mission of Major Washington established the fact of the intentions of the French, and the mode by which they proposed to carry out their designs was evident from the fact of fifty canoes of birch bark and one hundred and fifty of wood being prepared at the fort on the Aux Bœufs.

The Governor of Virginia at once took active measures to meet the threatened danger by calling out the colonial troops and despatching them to reinforce the party at the junction of the Monongahela and Alleghany River. Washington, now Lieutenant Colonel in command, met Ward's party on their return at Will's Creek (a tributary of the Potomac, in the State of Maryland,) and, acting on the principle that the next best thing to *prevention* in military tactics is to *check*, pushed forward to the Great Meadows, on the Monongahela, and erected Fort Necessity, at the junction of a small creek, about ten miles above Redstone Creek. His object in this was to provide a *point d'appui* from which operations for the investment of Fort du Quesne could be carried on when ever reinforcements arrived, as his own force only amounted to between three and four hundred men. On the 24th of May, Washington received intelligence that a secret expedition had started from Fort du Quesne two days before, with the intention of surprising any straggling English they might meet with, or procuring intelligence of their numbers or designs. This reconnoissance appears to have been brought about by a movement on Washington's part, who had despatched a Captain Stephens on a similar errand towards Fort du Quesne, but, being discovered, he was obliged to fall back, pursued by Monsieur Jumonville with forty-five men. On Stephens' report, Washington, with forty men, sallied forth from Fort Necessity on the night of the 27th of May, and surprised the French bivouac at dawn on the 28th. Owing to heavy rain and the fatigues of a night march, the firelocks of his party were useless, and seven men had lost their way, so that he charged the French, who fired upon his party, with the bayonet, his whole force being thirty-three men. Jumonville and nine of his men were killed, the rest, with the exception of one who escaped, were captured. On the 3rd of July, Monsieur Villiers, at the head of 600 men, appeared before the rude intrenchments of Fort Necessity, and, after a desperate fight of ten hours duration, the defenders, having expended all their ammunition, were allowed to march out with the honours of war; they were even permitted to destroy their own artillery. The capitulation signed on this occasion, being written in French, has given rise to many needless and unfounded misrepresentations. It makes Washington admit that the death of Jumonville was an act of assassination, as the French maintained he was merely an ambassador carrying a flag of truce, accompanied by an armed escort. All this may be quite possible, and still the act by which he lost his life justifiable. Situated as Washington was, in front of a superior force, the approach of an armed party to his lines could only be met in one way,—and that would be by attack. Ignorant of the French language, his interpreter either loosely translated the paragraph or left him in criminal ignorance of its exact meaning. At the same time, the French assertion that Jumonville was sent to request the withdrawal of the Provincial troops, and provided with the escort as protection against the Indians in alliance with the British, is probable enough, although, under the circumstances, it was by no means a judicious movement. Placed as Washington was, he could consider it in no other light than a hostile demonstration, especially as he had travelled five times the distance through unfriendly Indians, in the previous winter, with only one attendant and his guide, on his mission to the French commandant Legardiere de St. Pierre, at Fort Machault, on the River aux Bœufs. Hence the idea of armed embassy must be as novel as suspicious to him. He acted in the only way a soldier could act, and the blame must rest with those whose injudicious conduct provoked so dire an issue.

The French had succeeded in establishing their line of military posts from Niagara to the Mississippi; they had swept away all opposition, and that struggle so fraught with momentous issues to both nations had commenced.

[For the Review.]

AN INCIDENT OF THE PENINSULAR WAR.

In the winter of 1809, the —th Light Dragoons, forming part of the rearguard of the retreating British forces under Lieut.-General Sir John Moore, arrived at the town of Benevento, on the Isla, a tributary of the Douro. The only bridge being held by the British, who had already mined the piers preparatory to blowing it up, the fords being impassable owing to the heavy rains, the British troops, commanded by the gallant Captain C., were ordered to remain and cover the sappers whilst destroying the bridge, Captain C. and two orderlies remaining on the south bank, watching the French advance and urging forward the numerous stragglers. Whilst thus occupied, a French troop of cavalry, hidden by the broken nature of the ground, advanced so rapidly