

SIEGE OF FORT WILLIAM HENRY

the council. "A sortie seems to be the only thing left for us to try. I confess I am not at all sanguine myself of it doing us any good, but there's no telling. It may gain us some respite even though it does not effect our deliverance."

There was no dissenting voice, but on the contrary a hearty support of the veteran's project; and when volunteers for the forlorn hope were invited by him, not one of the officers held back.

Seth felt highly gratified when to the Rangers was assigned the perilous honor of taking the lead.

"There is only one chance in ten of our getting back alive, Reuben," he said to his friend, as, with countenance whose gravity showed how fully they realized what was before them, they talked together after the council of officers had dispersed, "but we can only do our best. If we have to surrender, I pray God we may not fall into the hands of those red devils the French have with them. I'd rather be shot at once than be taken prisoner by them and tortured to death."

"And so would I," answered Reuben. "They're perfect fiends, not human beings, and the French ought to be ashamed of themselves for having such allies."

It was at the dead of night when the majority of the effective men in the garrison silently