

was finished as rapidly as possible, laden with supplies and despatched to Louisbourg. But all this caused delay, and she did not reach the coast of Isle Royale till May 18th, a little over a fortnight after the arrival of the besieging force. The captain of the "Vigilante," the Marquis de Maison Forte, on approaching the coast, descried the "Mermaid," one of Warren's small ships of war, and immediately gave chase. The "Mermaid" hoisted all sail and ran for Louisbourg. All of a sudden the Marquis found himself in the middle of Warren's fleet. An action took place in sight of Louisbourg; and though Duchambon himself witnessed the battle, he had no idea how deeply he was interested in it. In a short time the "Vigilante" surrendered, the crew of 650 men becoming prisoners of war. The supplies she carried were of great use to the besiegers. The "Vigilante" herself was repaired, and manned by a British crew, thus adding a powerful ship to the strength of the British fleet.

The time had at last arrived for bringing the fleet on the scene. Preparatory to that Duchambon must learn the hopelessness of his condition. It was reported in the English camp that the French and their savage allies had treated the British prisoners with great cruelty. De Maison Forte was spoken to on the subject. He was asked to visit the different ships in which his captive officers and crew were distributed, and see how the prisoners were treated by the English. Finding everything to his satisfaction, he was asked to write to Duchambon, remonstrating against the cruelties alleged to be committed on the French side. He wrote accordingly, and his note was sent under flag of truce. This gave Duchambon the first intimation he had of the loss of the "Vigilante." Though he, himself, had witnessed the hard battle which had ended in the surrender of a ship, as yet it had never occurred to him that the ship was the one that contained his supplies. So the letter fell on Duchambon and his officers like a bomb-shell.

While the governor and his subordinates were labouring under the depression caused by this intelligence, the besiegers were making preparations for a general assault. This was to be made on June 11th, the anniversary of King George's accession. The grand battery and all the new batteries on the hill side near the west gate, were to open a general cannonade on the fort. The lighthouse battery was to play on the island below, and during the cannonade, the ships of war, at a given signal, were to enter the harbour and join in the grand assault.

Duchambon saw that the crisis was at hand. A day or two before, he had, according to his own account, received a petition, signed by 1,000 inhabitants, imploring him to spare further bloodshed, by offering a capitulation. He had then held a council of war, who recommended the same course. He then sent a flag of truce to the general and commodore. On their first arrival, they had summoned him to surrender. He had replied proudly, that he would send his answer by the mouth of his guns. But things had changed since then. It was now his place to drop lofty airs and to ask for terms. The conditions were sent. He was obliged to comply, and on June 16th, the fort surrendered.

Thus, in the course of less than seven weeks from the time when first the ships were seen from the battlements of Louisbourg, that stronghold was in the possession of the invaders.

In the preceding autumn, the Marquis de Beauharnois, the governor-general of Canada, having reason to believe that the provinces would take some steps to avenge the capture of Canso, and the raids on Annapolis, had sent a letter to Duchambon, offering