

highway. The space between the wood and the British was not wide enough to allow De Lévis to form his men and lead them on without disadvantage. His situation thus became difficult, for the hill of Sainte Geneviève and the river St. Charles, alike barred his way, if he elected to march on Quebec either by the road of St. Ambroise or that of Charlesbourg; and the enemy might reach the above eminence before the French, having only the cord of the arc to pass along: he therefore resolved to attain the Sainte-Foye road by a flanking march.—Nightfall come, he ordered his troops to defile, on the right, along the skirts of the wood, till they would have got beyond the British front, and then turn round their left flank. This manœuvre, if successful, gave him both a good position, and a chance for cutting off the corps of observation posted at the Red River outlet to the St. Lawrence; but the stormy weather, and the difficulty of countermarching at that season, with wearied men, prevented the operation being essayed with due celerity. Next day Murray, who hastened to the imperilled spot, had leisure to extricate his troops with the loss only of their baggage, &c. Becoming pressed in his own retreat, he took shelter in the church of Sainte-Foye, which he fired as he left it; and he was finally able to resume his march to Quebec, leaving De Lévis master of a field of battle which he would have had much difficulty to conquer.

"The French horsemen dogged Murray's retrograde steps, and skirmished with his rear-guard as far as Dumont Mill, within a mile and a half of the city ramparts. Murray posted a strong guard within the mill, with orders to hold it (if attacked) till night. The French troops took lodging in the houses between the church and the mill. The rain fell, meanwhile, in torrents, and the weather was frightful.

"During the night the British left the mill, fell back on the Buttes-à-Neveu, and began to entrench themselves there. When day broke, De Lévis took possession of the mill, and the whole plain of Abraham as far as the flood, in order to cover the Anse-du-Foulon (Wolfe's Cove), whither the French vessels (laden with provisions, artillery, and baggage) which had not effected their discharge at St. Augustin, had received orders to repair. While this was effecting on the 28th, our army was to take repose, so as to be ready next day to assail the British at the Buttes, and drive them into the city.

"No sooner, however, was Murray within the walls, than he determined to make a sortie with all his troops; intending, either to give battle if an occasion presented, or else to fortify himself at the Buttes-à-Neveu, should De Lévis' force appear to be too considerable to resist in open field; for the report of a French cannoner (who fell in while disembarking, was floated down the flood, and rescued by some British soldiers on guard) left no further doubt in his mind that the force so long spoken of had now arrived. He left the city in the morning of April 28, at the head of his whole garrison, the regulars in which, not including officers, alone numbered 7714 combatants. Excepting some hundred sick in hospital, Murray left in the place only soldiers enough to mount guard and, with a force from 6,000 to 7,000 strong, advanced, in two columns, with 22 cannon.

"De Lévis, who rode out, with his staff officers, far in advance of his men to reconnoitre the position of the British on the Buttes-à-Neveu, no sooner perceived this forward movement than he sent orders to his main army to quicken its march towards the plains of Abraham. Murray, seeing only the French van as yet, resolved to attack it before the soldiers could take breath after their march; but he had to deal with an adversary of mark, and cool temperament withal. The former ranged his troops in advance of the Buttes, his right resting on the hill (*coteau*) of Sainte-Geneviève, and his left touching the cliff (*falaise*) bordering the St. Lawrence; his entire line extended about 6 furlongs. Four regiments, under Colonel Burton, formed his right, placed astraddle (*à cheval*) on the road of Sainte-Foy. Four regiments, and the Scots Highlanders, under Colonel Fraser, forming the left, were similarly ranged on the road of St. Louis. Two battalions were kept as a reserve: and besides these last, the right flank of the British army was covered by a corps of light infantry under Major Dalling; the left flank by Captain Huzzen's company of Rangers and 100 volunteers, led by Capt. Macdonald. All being arranged in the form described, General Murray gave orders to advance.

"The French van, composed of six companies of grenadiers, set in battle order, part on the right, in a redoubt erected by the British, the year preceding, to the eastward of the Anse-du-Foulon; part on the left, in Dumont mill, the miller's house, the tannery, and other buildings close by, on the road to Sainte-Foye. The rest of the army, on learning what was toward, hastened its march, the men closing ranks as they came near; but the three

brigades were hardly formed, when the British began the attack vigorously.

"Murray felt the importance of getting hold of Dumont mill, which covered the passage (*issue*) by which the French were debouching, and he assailed it with superior numbers. He hoped that, by overpowering the grenadiers who defended it, he should be able to fall afterwards upon the centre of the force still on its way, push them far off the line of operation, and cut off the French right wing, hemmed in, as it were, on the road of St. Louis.

"Lévis, to prevent this design, withdrew his right to the entry of the wood which was in its rear, and caused the grenadiers to evacuate the mill, and fall back, in order to lessen the distance for the arriving brigades. At this turn, Bourlamaque was severely wounded by a cannon-shot, which also killed his horse. His soldiers, left without orders, seeing the grenadiers hotly engaged and overmatched, simultaneously flew to their support, and formed in line just as the enemies bore down on this point in mass with all their artillery; their field-pieces and howitzers, loaded with ball and grape, plying upon the space occupied by this wing, which staggered under so deadly a fire. The French grenadiers advanced quick step, re-took the mill after an obstinate struggle, and kept it. These brave soldiers, commanded by Captain Alguebelles, almost all perished this day. While those events were passing on the left, De Lévis caused the soldiers to re-capture the redoubt they had evacuated in order to fall back. The Canadians of the Queen's brigade, who occupied that petty redoubt and the pine wood on the margin of the cape, regained their ground and soon charged in turn, supported by M. de St. Luc and some savages. The combat was not less hot on this line than at the left. All the troops were now in action, and the fire was heavy on both parts. Milltimen were seen to crouch on the ground to load their pieces, rise up after the cannon-shot passed over them, and dash forward to shoot the British gunners. Those of Montreal fought with great courage, especially the battalion led by the brave Colonel Rheaume, who was killed. This brigade posted in the centre, and commanded by M. de Repentigny, itself arrested on open ground (*rase campagne*) the British centre, when advancing at quick step, and with the advantage of high ground. It also repulsed several charges, and slackened, by its firmness and rapid firing, the enemy when pressing the grenadiers of the left; thereby facilitating their after march onward: in fine, this was the only brigade that maintained its ground during the whole time the obstinate struggle lasted.

"By this time, the attack, which gave the British the mastery, for a moment, over the positions occupied by the French van when the fight began, was everywhere repulsed, and our people in re-possession of all the ground they temporarily lost; thus Murray's offensive movement by the road of Sainte-Foye had failed, and that check enabled the French to attack him in their turn.

"De Lévis, observing that the British general had over-weakened his left to strengthen his right, resolved to profit by it. He ordered his troops to charge the enemy's left wing with the bayonet, and to thrust the British off the St. Louis road on to that of Sainte-Foye. By this manœuvre, he took in flank the whole of Murray's army, drove the corps headlong off the height of Sainte-Geneviève, and cut off the enemy from the line of retreat to the city. Colonel Poulardier dashed forward at the head of the Royal Roussillon brigade, attacked the British impetuously, transpierced their whole mass, and put them to flight. At the same time their light troops gave way, and the fugitives, throwing themselves in front and in rear of the enemy's centre, caused his fire to be suspended. De Lévis profited by this disorder to cause his own left to charge the British right wing, which the former completely routed.

"Then the whole French army advanced in pursuit of the beaten foe; but as his flight was rapid, the short distance they had to run did not allow of throwing them towards the river St. Charles. De Lévis, nevertheless, might have been able to effect this object but for an order ill delivered by an officer, whom he charged to call upon the Queen's brigade to sustain the charge of the Royal Roussillon brigade at the right; and who, instead of causing it to execute the prescribed movement, thus made it take place behind the left wing.

"The enemy left in the victors' hands their whole artillery, ammunition, and the intrenching tools they brought with them, besides a portion of the wounded. Their loss was considerable; nearly a fourth of their soldiers being killed or wounded. Had the French been less fatigued than they were, and assailed the city without allowing the enemy time to recover themselves, it would probably have fallen again under the domination of its former masters, says Knox; for such was the confusion, that the British neglected to