

"Done was the work of her hands, she had eaten her bitter bread;
"The world of the alien people lay behind her, dim and dead,
"But her soul went back to its child time; she saw the sun o'erflow
"With gold the Basin of Mimas, and set over Gasperau;
"She saw the face of her mother, she heard the song she sang,
"And far off, faintly, slowly, the bell for vespers rang."

But pathetic incident must give place before the march of historical event. It was not until wearied out by incessant attack, deserted by the parent land, and overborne by superior numbers, that the French Canadian laid down his arms and exchanged his allegiance. In the spring of 1758, 30,000 British combatants were ready to march on Canada, not merely raw militiamen, but regular troops as we', led by officers trained on European battle-fields, armed with artillery and siege requisites, and supported by an active and daring fleet. The Canadians knew their danger and prepared to meet it. An inquest of the inhabitants was held, and the male population of the colony between the ages of sixteen and sixty was found to be but 15,000. Aid was implored from France, but instead of munitions of war and recruits, the devoted colonists were vouchsafed official despatches recommending them to dispute every inch of territory, foot to foot, with the British, and to sustain the honour of the French arms to the utmost. "Not only would additional troops be a means of aggravating the evils of the dearth which has too long afflicted the colony"—wrote the French Minister—"but the chances are great that if sent thither, they would be captured on their way to you, by the British." Though thus basely deserted; though exhausted by continual marching and incessant fighting; though their dwellings were falling to ruin and their fields lay waste; though their wives and children were crying for bread; the despised and forsaken French Canadians neither flung aside their allegiance nor forgot their honour, but plunged into the fina