

crown in America subdued by their Christian foes, or laid waste by the inroads of their relentless allies.

When, therefore, intelligence was received at the fort which covered the southern termination of the portage between the Hudson and the lakes, that Montcalm had been seen moving up the Champlain with an army "numerous as the leaves of the trees," its truth was admitted with more of the craven reluctance of those who court the arts of peace, than with the stern joy that a warrior should feel in finding an enemy within reach of his blow. The news had been brought towards the decline of a day in mid-summer, by an Indian runner, that also bore an urgent request from Munro, who commanded the work on the shore of the "holy lake," for a speedy and powerful reinforcement. It has already been mentioned that the distance between these two posts was less than five leagues. The rude path, which originally formed their line of communication, had been widened for the passage of waggons; so that the distance which had been travelled by the son of the forest in two hours might easily be effected by a detachment of troops, with their necessary baggage, between the rising and setting of a summer sun. The loyal servants of the British crown had given to one of those forest fastnesses the name of William Henry, and to the other that of Fort Edward; calling each after a favourite prince of the reigning family. The veteran Scotchman just named held the first, with a regiment of regulars and a few provincials, a force really by far too small to make head against the formidable power that Montcalm was leading to the foot of his earthen mounds. At the latter, however, lay General Webb, who commanded the armies of the King in the northern provinces, with a body of more than five thousand men. By uniting the several detachments of his command, this officer might have arrayed nearly double that number of combatants against the enterprising Frenchman, who had ventured so far from his reinforcements, with an army but little superior in numbers.

But, under the influence of their degraded fortunes, both officers and men appeared better disposed to wait the approach of their formidable antagonist within their works, than to resist the progress of their march, by emulating the successful example of the French at Fort du Quesne, and striking a blow on their advance.