

losing sight of them. This retarded their march, and put off the evil hour as long as possible. He went with the rest of his army to Montreal. As there was no provision in that town to be able to keep his army assembled, he was obliged to disperse them, sending them back to their winter quarters, where each inhabitant was obliged to board a soldier at a very low rate, which was paid by the munitionary general.

M. de Bougainville was sent in the spring to command at Isle aux Noix, with eleven hundred men, of which number were the Regiment of Guicenne and Berry. This island is situated in the River Chambly (Richelieu), about eight leagues in a straight line from Montreal, and two miles distant from Lake Champlain.

M. Bourlamarque, an officer of great knowledge in all the branches of his profession, decided upon that position for his retreat the year before, when he evacuated Ticonderoga, having been forced to abandon to the English that lake. He fortified this island as well as was possible in a sandy ground, in order to serve as a frontier on that side of Canada, and hinder the English from coming down by the River Richelieu into the River St. Lawrence, by which means in a very short time they might have been in possession of Montreal and Three Rivers,—a much easier way than by Lake Ontario, which is much longer and full of chicanes (?) by the rapids in the St. Lawrence, and prolong their operations ;—a very great advantage in a country where there are violent frosts during seven months of the year. This island is about twelve hundred fathoms long, and from a hundred to two hundred broad. The entrenchments traced and conducted by M. Bourlamarque are regular, and a proof of his superior knowledge in fortifications. He barred the two branches of the river which formed the island with staccados, or chains of big trees, linked to one another at their ends by strong rings and circles of iron. This prevented the English boats from Lake Champlain to pass the island in the night, to reach Montreal. But for the staccados the island must have been taken by them before they could proceed any further.