

1776. quired tempting, and the desire of the attainment seemed to lessen or remove obstacles, which to a bold or lukewarm speculation would have appeared insuperable. If the Lakes could be recovered, and Albany possessed, before the severity of the winter set in, the northern army would hold a principal share in the honour of bringing the war to a speedy conclusion. It was conceived that they could then pour destruction at will, into the heart either of the middle or the northern colonies, each of which would be exposed to them in its most tender and defenceless part. Whilst the possession of Hudson's river would establish and secure their communication with General Howe, it would equally sever and disconnect the southern and northern provinces, leaving thereby the latter to sink under the joint weight of both armies, or to accept of such terms as they could obtain, without the participation of the others. Nor could General Washington attempt to hold any post in New York or the Jerseys, with such a superiority of force as already oppressed him in front, and General Carleton's army at his back. The successes of their fellows on the side of New York, increased the impatience, and excited the jealousy of his army, every one apprehending that the war would be brought to an end, before he could have an opportunity of sharing in the honour of that happy event.

While all this ardour, and the most unremitting industry, it was not until the month of October, that the fleet was in a condition to seek the enemy on Lake Champlain. The force was very considerable with respect to the place and service, extraordinary in regard to the little time spent in its formation, and such as, a very few ages ago, would have been deemed formidable even upon the European seas. The ship *Indeflexible*, which may be considered as Admiral, had been re-constructed at St. John's, from whence she sailed in 28 days after laying her keel, and

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