

had found him and held him in talk, walking him to and fro, with pauses now and again beside a gun for a few minutes' rest.

"But touching this polygon of M. de Montcalm's, he would doubtless follow Courmontaigne rather than Vauban. The angles, you say, were boldly advanced?"

"So they appeared to me, monsieur; but you understand that I took no part——"

"By advancing the angles boldly"—here the Commandant pressed his finger-tips together by way of illustration—"we allow so much more play to enfilading fire. I speak only of defence against direct assault; for of opposing such a structure to artillery the General could have had no thought."

"Half-a-dozen six-pounders, well directed, could have knocked it about their ears in as many minutes."

"That does not detract from his credit. Every general fights with two heads—his own and his adversary's; and, for the rest, we have to do what we can do with our material." The Commandant halted and gazed down whimsically upon the courtyard, in the middle of which his twenty-five militiamen were being drilled by M. Etienne and Sergeant Bédard. "My whole garrison, sir! Eh? you seem incredulous. My whole garrison, I give you my word! Five-and-twenty militiamen to defend a post of this importance; and up at Fort Frontenac, the very key of the West, my old friend Payan de Noyan has but a hundred in command! I do not understand it, sir. Stores we have in abundance, and ammunition and valuable presents to propitiate the Indians who no longer exist in this neighbourhood. Yes, and—would you believe it?—no longer than three months ago the Governor sent up a boat-load of women. It appeared that his Majesty had forwarded them all the way from France, for wives for his faithful soldiers. I packed them off, sir, and returned them to M. de Vaudreuil. 'With all submission to his Majesty's fatherly wisdom,' I wrote, 'the requirements of New France at this moment are best determined by local considerations';