

scarcely dried. The terms were favourable, for Townshend's position was none too secure, and without loss of time he marched his army into the ruined town, which had yet another siege to endure, though its details have been hopelessly obscured by the glamour of the first one. It will be our duty in the succeeding chapter to say something of an episode in British history that is not without honour, but, for the reason, no doubt, just mentioned, is utterly without fame.

In regard to this memorable 18th of September it only remains to tell how the re-invigorated French army learnt that night at St. Augustin that they were too late, and that the British flag was already floating over the ruins of the proud city which for a century and a half had been almost more French than France herself.

Of the still more famous 13th of the same month what more can be said? It is my business to follow out the campaign to its termination, and in so doing to seem, perhaps, a destroyer of landmarks, a disturber of time-honoured traditions. I should like, however, so far as my own study of these wars teaches me, to endorse rather than to disturb ancient landmarks. The fight upon the Plains of Abraham, beyond all doubt or question, settled the fate of Canada and eliminated the Frenchman as a governing factor in the life of the western continent. It did yet more, for if the republic of the United States was born at Yorktown, the seeds of the Dominion of Canada were surely sown on the plateau of Quebec. In all history there is no more dramatic episode; at the same time it would be hard to name one that had more influence on the future of the world.

The infinite significance of the achievement was, of course, in great part hidden from the eyes of those who shared in or applauded it. But the immediate value of the victory was patent enough to the meanest intelligence. When the news arrived in England, following so closely as it did on tidings of a disheartening kind,

there was an outburst of enthusiasm that, though tempered in one sense, was in another stimulated to an even greater excess of emotion by the victor's glorious death. All England blazed with bonfires and resounded with pealing bells, but the grief for Wolfe, mingled with the sounds of triumph, Burke tells us, was most noticeable. "The loss of a genius in war is a loss that we know not how to repair." "The people," says Walpole, "triumphed and wept, for Wolfe had fallen in the hour of victory! Joy, curiosity, astonishment were painted on every countenance. Not an incident but was heroic and affecting!" The recent doubters abased themselves, the tongues of envy which had freely wagged were silenced. Townshend, who failed significantly to do full honour in his despatches to his dead rival, was driven amid much obloquy to defend himself in print, which he did but tamely. The affection with which the army he commanded regarded their fallen chief could be instanced by a flood of written testimony: "Our joy is inexpressibly damped," wrote Knox on the evening of the 13th, "by the loss of one of the greatest heroes that this or any age can boast of."

But all further eulogy on Wolfe must be resisted. Though the crucial blow of the war had been struck and the striker was dead, there was yet much to be done and much even to be suffered before the end came. For the present, seeing we must return later to Quebec, it will be sufficient to state that Murray was left in command of the shattered city with almost all the troops that survived the campaign, and that on October 17th Admiral Saunders and his ships sailed for England, carrying with them the embalmed body of the dead soldier whose endeavours they had from first to last so loyally seconded.

The *Royal William*, bearing the remains, arrived at Portsmouth on November the 17th. Amid the firing of minute guns from the fleet, the tolling of muffled bells, and the hushed silence of a vast concourse of spectators, the