

He was a brave man ; but he held this resistance to be senseless and did not believe for an instant that Montreal would use the delay or, using it, would strike with any success.

At first the tremendous uproar of the enemy's artillery and its shattering effect on the masonry of their fortress had numbed the militiamen's nerves ; they felt the place tumbling about their ears. But as the hours passed they discovered that round-shot could be dodged and that even bursting shells, though effective against stones and mortar, did surprisingly small damage to life and limb ; and with this discovery they began almost to taste the humour of the situation. They fed and rested in bomb-proof chambers which the Commandant and M. Etienne had devised in the slope of earth under the *terre-plein* ; and from these they watched and discussed in comparative safety the wreckage done upon the empty buildings across the courtyard.

One of these caves had at the beginning of the siege been assigned to Diane ; and from the mouth of it, seated with Félicité beside her, she too watched the demolition ; but with far different thoughts. She knew better than these militiamen her father's obstinacy, and that his high resolve reached beyond the mere gaining of time. It seemed to her that God was drawing out the agony ; and with the end before her mind she prayed Him to shorten this cruel interval.

Early on the third morning the British guns had laid open a breach six feet wide at the north-western angle close by the foot of the flagstaff tower ; and Amherst, who had sent off a detachment of the Forty-sixth with a dozen Indian guides to fetch a circuit through the woods and open a feint attack in the rear of the fort, prepared for a general assault. But first he resolved to summon the garrison again.

He chose the same officer as before, a Captain Muspratt of the Forty-fourth Regiment, to carry his message.

Now as yet the cannonade had not slackened, and it chanced that as the General gave Muspratt his instructions, an artillery sergeant in command of a battery of mortars on the left, which