

Some one was pointing back over the trec-tops toward Rattlesnake Mountain ; and on the slopes there, as the smoke cleared, sure enough, figures were moving. Guns ? A couple of guns planted there could have knocked this cursed rampart to flinders in twenty minutes, or plumped round shot at leisure among the French huddled within. Where was the General ?

The General was down at the saw-mill in the valley, seated at his table, penning a despatch. The men on Rattlesnake Mountain were Johnson's Indians—Mohawks, Oneidas, and others of the Six Nations—who, arriving late, had swarmed up by instinct to the key of the position and seated themselves there with impassive faces, asking each other when the guns would arrive and this stupid folly cease. They had seen artillery, perhaps, once in their lives ; and had learnt the use of it.

Oh, it was cruel ! By this time there was not a man in the army but could have taught the General the madness of it. But the General was down at the saw-mill, two miles away ; and the broken regiments re-formed and faced the rampart again. The sun beat down on the clearing, heating men to madness. The wounded went down through the gloom of the woods, and were carried past the saw-mill by scores at first, then by hundreds. Within the saw-mill, in his cool chamber, the General sat and wrote. Some one (Gage it is likely) sent down, beseeching him to bring the guns into play. He answered that the guns were at the landing-stage, and could not be planted within six hours. A second messenger suggested that the assault on the ridge had already caused inordinate loss, and that by the simple process of sitting still Montcalm could be starved out in a week. The General showed him the door. Upon the ridge the fight went on.

John à Cleeve had by this time lost count of the charges. Some had been feeble ; one or two superb ; and once the Highlanders, with a gallantry only possible to men who are past caring for life, had actually heaved themselves over the parapets on the French right. They had gone into action a