

in order, and two hundred canoes, filled with braves, each nation with its own pennon, in imposing regularity, swept over the smooth waters of Champlain, to the landing place of the fortress. Ticonderoga rung with the voices of thousands; and the martial airs of France, and shouts in the many tongues of the red men, resounded among the rocks and forests and mountains. The Christian mass, too, was chaunted solemnly; and to the Abenaki converts, seated reverently, in decorous silence, on the ground, the priest urged the duty of honoring Christianity by their example, in the presence of so many infidel braves.

"It was a season of scarcity in Canada. None had been left unmolested to plough and plant. The miserable inhabitants had no bread. But small stores were collected for the army. They must conquer speedily, or disband. "On such an expedition," said Montcalm to his officers, "a blanket and a bearskin are the warrior's couch. Do like me, with cheerful good-will. The soldier's allowance is enough for us." (1)

"During the short period of preparation, the partisans were active. Marin brought back his two hundred men from the skirts of Fort Edward, with the pomp of a triumphant warrior. "He did not amuse himself with making prisoners," said Montcalm, on seeing but one captive (2); and the red men yelled with joy as they counted in the canoes two-and-forty scalps of Englishmen.

"The Ottawas resolved to humble the arrogance of the American boatmen; and they lay hid in ambuscades all the twenty-third of July, and all the following night. At day-break of the twenty-fourth, Palmer was seen on the lake, in command of two-and-twenty barges. The Indians rushed on his party suddenly, terrified them by their yells, and after killing many, took one hundred and sixty prisoners. "To-morrow, or next day," said the captives, "General Webb will be at the fort with fresh troops." "No matter," said Montcalm; "in less than twelve days, I will have a good story to tell about them." (3) From the timid Webb there was nothing to fear. He went, it is true, to Fort William Henry, but took care to leave again with a large escort, just in season to avoid its siege.

It is the custom of the red men, after success, to avoid the further chances of war, and hurry home.

"To remain now," said the Ottawas, "would be to tempt the Master of life." But Montcalm, after the boats and canoes had, without oxen and horses, by main strength, been borne up to Lake George, held on the plain above the portage, one general council of union. All the tribes, from the banks of Michigan and Superior to the borders of Acadia, were present, seated on the ground according to their rank; and, in the name of Louis the Fifteenth, Montcalm produced the mighty belt of six thousand shells, which, being solemnly accepted, bound all, by the holiest ties, to remain together till the end of the expedition. The belt was given to the Iroquois, as the most numerous; but they courteously transferred it to the upper nations, who came, though strangers, to their aid. In the scarcity of boats, the Iroquois agreed to guide De Levi, with twenty-five hundred men, by land, through the rugged country which they called their own.

"The Christian savages employed their short leisure at the confessional; the tribes from above, restlessly weary, dreamed dreams, consulted the great medicine men, and, hanging up the complete equipment of a war-chief as an offering to their Manitou, embarked on the last day of July.

"The next day, two hours after noon, Montcalm followed with the main body of the army, in two hundred and fifty boats. The Indians whom he overtook, preceded him in their decorated canoes. Rain fell in torrents; yet they rowed nearly all night, till they came in sight of the three triangular fires that, from a mountain ridge, pointed to the encampment of De Levi. There, in Gouvisky, or, as some call it, Northwest Bay, they held a council of war, and then, with the artillery, they moved slowly to a bay, of which the point could not be turned without exposure to the enemy. An hour before midnight, two English boats were descried on the lake, when some of the upper Indians paddled two canoes to attack them, and with such celerity that one of the boats was seized and overpowered, two prisoners being reserved; the rest were massacred. The Indians lost but one warrior, a great chieftain of the nation of the Nepissings.

"On the morning of the second day of August, the savages dashed openly upon the water, and forming across the lake a chain of their bark canoes, they made the bay resound with their war-

cry. The English were taken almost by surprise. Their tents covered the plains. Montcalm disembarked without interruption, about a mile and a half below the fort, and advanced in three columns. The Indians hurried to burn the barracks of the English, to chase their cattle and horses, and to scalp their stragglers. During the day, they occupied, with the Canadians under La Corne, the road leading to the Hudson, and cut off the communication. At the north was the encampment of De Levi, with regulars and Canadians, while Montcalm, with the main body of the army, occupied the skirt of the wood on the west side of the lake. His whole force consisted of six thousand French and Canadians, and about seventeen hundred Indians. Fort William Henry was defended by Lieutenant-Colonel Munro, (1) of the 35th regiment, a brave officer and a man of strict honor, with less than 500 men, while 1700 men lay entrenched near his side, on an eminence to the south-east, now marked by the ruins of Fort George.

"Meantime, the braves of the Nepissings, faithful to the rites of their fathers, celebrated the funeral honors of their departed brother. The lifeless frame, dressed as became a war-chief, glittered with belts and ear-rings, and the brilliant vermilion: a riband, fiery red, supported a gorget on his breast; the tomahawk was in his girdle, the pipe at his lips, the lance in his hand, at his side the well-filled bowl. And thus the departed warrior sat upright on the green turf, which was his death-couch. The speech for the dead was pronounced; the death-dances and chants began; the murmurs of human voices mingled with the sound of drums and the tinkling of little bells. And thus arrayed, in a sitting posture, he was consigned to the earth, well provided with food, and surrounded by the splendors which delighted him when alive.

"On the fourth of August, the French summoned Munro to surrender, but the gallant old soldier sent an answer of defiance. Montcalm hastened his works; the troops dragged the artillery over rocks and through forests, and with alacrity brought fascines and gabions. The red men, unused to a siege, were eager to hear the big guns. Soon the first battery of nine cannon and two mortars was finished; and amidst the loud scream of the savages, it began to play, while a thousand echoes were returned by the mountains. In two days more a second was established, and by means of the zig-zags, the Indians could stand within gun-shot of the fortress. Just then arrived letters from France, confirming on Montcalm the red riband, with rank as Knight Commander of the Order of St. Louis."

"We are glad," said the red men, "of the favor done you by the great Oronthio, but we neither love you, nor esteem you the more for it; we love the man, and not what hangs on his outside." Webb, at Fort Edward, had an army of four thousand, and might have summoned the militia from all the near villages to the rescue. He sent nothing but a letter, with an exaggerated account of the French force, and his advice to capitulate. Montcalm intercepted the letter, which he immediately forwarded to Munro. Yet, not till the eve of the festival of St. Lawrence, when half his guns were burst, and his ammunition was almost exhausted, did the dauntless veteran hang out a flag of truce.

"With a view to make the capitulation unviolably binding on the Indians, Montcalm summoned their war chiefs to council. The English were to depart with the honors of war, on a pledge not to serve against the French for eighteen months; they were to abandon all but their private effects; an escort was to attend them on their departure; every Canadian or French Indian made captive during the war was to be liberated. The Indians applauded; the capitulation was signed. Late on the ninth of August the French entered the fort, and the English retired to their entrenched camp.

"Montcalm had kept from the savages all intoxicating drinks, but they solicited and obtained them of the English, and all night long they were wild with dances and songs and revelry. The Abenakis of Acadia excited the angry passions of other tribes, by recalling the sorrows they had suffered from English perfidy and English power. At day-break they gathered round the entrenchment, and, as the English soldiers filed off, began to plunder them, and incited one another to swing the tomahawk recklessly. Twenty, perhaps even thirty, persons were massacred, while very many were made prisoners. Officers and soldiers, stripped of everything, fled to the woods, to the fort, and to the tents of the French. To arrest the disorder, De Levi plunged into the tumult, during death a thousand times. French officers received wounds in rescuing the captives, and stood at their tents as sentinels over those they recovered. "Kill me," cried Montcalm, using prayers, and menaces and promises; "but spare the English, who are

(1) Montcalm's Circular to his officers, 25th July, 1757.

(2) Montcalm to Vaudreuil, 27th July, 1757.

(3) DeBougainville to the Minister, 19th August, 1757.

(1) Captain Christie to Governor Powell, 10th August, 1757.