

until we made them give way ; then drove them, by strength of arm, four hundred paces before us ; and, to say the truth, we were all glad to see them retreat.' He and his followers continued their march unmolested, carrying their wounded men, and leaving about forty dead behind them, along with one of their flags, and all their knapsacks, which they had thrown off when the fray began. They reached the banks of the Richelieu, found their canoes safe, and after waiting several hours for stragglers, embarked for Albany.

"Nothing saved them from destruction but the failure of the French at La Prairie to follow their retreat, and thus enclose them between two fires."

Frontenac determined by one last great effort to crush the Iroquois. To accomplish that object, he rebuilt Fort Frontenac, against the express orders of the king. Then assembling the whole available force of the colony, amounting to 2200 men, he penetrated into the country south of Lake Ontario, only to find it deserted and the enemy hidden in the impenetrable forests beyond. The task had been one of incredible difficulty, the route toilsome and dangerous, amid the heats of July and August. The indomitable leader, the aged Frontenac, was carried in a chair ; while Callières, the second in command, disabled by gout, rode on a horse, brought for the purpose in a bateau. After destroying the hidden provisions and standing crops, the force returned to Montreal. Frontenac sent an account of his "victory" to the king who rewarded him with the cross of the Military Order of St. Louis.¹ Next the news of the treaty of Ryswick reached America, but before peace could be patched up between the rival factions in Canada Frontenac had breathed his last.

"His own acts and words best paint his character, and it is needless to enlarge upon it. What, perhaps, may be least forgiven him is the barbarity of the warfare that he waged, and the cruelties that he permitted. Yet he was no whit more ruthless than his times and surroundings, and some of his contemporaries find fault with him for not allowing more Indian captives to be tortured. Many surpassed him in cruelty, none equalled him in capacity and vigor. When civilized enemies were once within his power he treated them according to their degree, with a chivalrous courtesy or a generous kindness. If he was a hot and pertinacious foe, he was also a fast friend, and he excited love and hatred in about equal measure. His attitude towards public enemies was always proud and peremptory, yet his courage was guided by so clear a sagacity that he never was forced to recede from the position he had taken. Towards Indians, he was an admirable compound of sternness and conciliation. Of the immensity of his services to the colony there can be no doubt. He found it under Denonville, in humiliation and terror; he left it in honor and almost in triumph."²

¹ Parkman.

² Parkman : *Death of Frontenac*.