

three weeks upon it with miners and other workmen, to render all the footpaths impracticable; we finished only a few days before the arrival of the English fleet (in 1759). A town built upon a vast extent of ground, which would require an army to defend it, such as Ghent in Flanders, and which might be approached on all sides at the same time, in order to divide the troops of the garrison equally over all the town, may be surprised and taken by escalade, and in our desperate situation might have been attempted by risking all for all. A surprise in a dark night must naturally spread universal terror, disorder and panic amongst those who are taken unawares, and must soon be communicated through all the quarters of the town. The soldiers are so much the more terrified that they know not where they are most in danger; not like during a siege, where the place for the assault is marked by the breach. Their heads turn, and, deprived of judgment, coolness and reflection, they think rather of escaping the slaughter that ensues when a town is being captured in this manner, than of defending the ramparts. But Quebec being accessible only on that side of it which faces the heights of Abraham, and having nothing to fear elsewhere, the moment an alarm is sounded, all the force of the garrison must naturally be there. Thus the English having seven thousand men in the town—almost as many as our army proposed for the escalade to invest all that part of the town open to attack—it is likely that we should have lost the half of our army in the attempt, and at last, after a horrible slaughter of men, have been obliged to return ignominiously from whence we came. Besides, supposing that we had even taken the Lower Town by escalade, we would not have been further advanced. The English, in half an hour afterwards, by burning it, by throwing down from the Upper Town upon the roofs of the houses fire pots, shells and other combustible matter, could have soon chased us out of it, or buried