

region of forest and streams no human being ever had abode from the beginning of time till it was occupied by the people of Connecticut. But for nearly a century and a half a shadow of unutterable horror held back the multitude of brave and enterprising colonists who gathered at the very border of the fated domain. Year after year the forest fruits fell unheeded and the foliage decked the earth in colors of gold and red that matched the imperial splendor of cathedral transepts. Through successive seasons the streams bounded in the sun and froze into the silence of death, and the fertile lands that might have blossomed with harvests lay dull and hopeless under the stars and the sun; for over them brooded the terror that was the ally of the old lion, Frontenac, and of his successors who held sway at Quebec. In all the wars of France and England the American colonies had a frightful participation. The Indian allies of the Canadian French were hurled not only upon the Iroquois tribes that lay within the gateway of the continent formed by the Mohawk valley, but upon the settlements of New England. The atrocities of Deerfield and Haverhill overawed the disposition to settle in undefended places; and to invade the region where these murderous bands were prowling was to enter into the shadow of inevitable destruction. The customary route of Indian foray through the wilderness was to follow the frozen water-courses, with such portages as were necessary to pass from one to another. The Canadian savages came by Lake Champlain to streams entering it from the East, and thence crossed over to the Connecticut; or from Lake George by the portage to the Hudson, and thence up the Hoosac to its head-waters, and over the mountains to the Deerfield River. The old Indian trail runs there almost exactly over the great railway tunnel. By whichever route, the war parties came at last upon the settlements through the narrow gateways of Southern Vermont, and at any hour their plumed and painted shapes might emerge from the forest. Such a terror brooded over this region till the final conquest of Canada in 1760; but in the meanwhile the Taghconic valley of Western Vermont and of Western Massachusetts was