

zen over nearly to its mouth, or junction with the Richelieu, from which the Mill was about three quarters of a mile distant. The Mill had been placed in a state of defence, by filling up the windows with logs, leaving horizontal interstices to fire through. On the north bank of the river, a little to the right of the Mill, and with which it is communicated by a wooden bridge, was a small house, converted into a block house, by being surrounded with a breast-work of logs. In the rear of this temporary block house was a large barn, to which nothing had been done, and which was not even musket proof. The breadth of the cleared ground, to the southward of the Mill, was about two hundred, and that to the northward, about one hundred yards, but in the flanks the woods were much nearer. The reader has now before him the position and strength of the Mill, the number of troops available for its defence, and the number of the assailants. These points then having been settled, we will accompany General Wilkinson on that march which was to result in victory or death.

The Americans commenced the expedition by setting out in a wrong direction, and instead of La Colle found themselves at Burtonville, where they attacked and drove in a small piquet. This mistake discovered, the march was resumed but again in a wrong direction. At last, however, they got on the main road near Odelltown, about three miles from La Colle. This road was found almost impassable for the troops, in consequence of the trees on either side having been felled, and before the march could be pursued, the axe-men were compelled to cut up and remove the obstruction. While this operation was going on, a piquet sent forward by Major Hancock, opened a severe fire and killed and wounded several men. At last, however, the Mill was reached and by half-past one in the afternoon the American commander had invested the fortress with his nearly four thousand men. As the General very naturally expected that the one hundred and eighty men who composed the garrison, would attempt to escape, six hundred, under Colonel Mills, were sent across in rear of the Mill, to cut off all chance of a retreat. A heavy fire was then opened from an 18-12 and 6 pounder battery, also from a 5½ inch howit-

zer. By this time the two flank companies of the 13th had arrived at the scene of action, and a gallant charge was made by them on the battery, but the overpowering fire kept up compelled them to retreat and recross the river. A second charge was now made by the Fencibles and the Voltigeurs, with the remnant of the two companies of the 13th. This charge was so vigorous that the artillerymen were driven from their guns which were only saved from capture by the heavy fire of the infantry. The evidence as to the gallantry of the British and Canadians is fortunately to be found in the proceedings at General Wilkinson's court martial. Lieutenant-Colonel McPherson who commanded the artillery, deposed on that occasion that, "the ground was disputed inch by inch, in our advance to the mill; and the conduct of the enemy, that day, was distinguished by desperate bravery. As an instance one company made a charge on our artillery, and at the same instant, received its fire, and that of two brigades of infantry." Lieutenant-Col. Totten, of the Engineers, and Brigadier General Bissell might both be also cited as bearing the same testimony. Despite, however, this gallantry, it became apparent to Major Hancock that farther attempts on the guns, in the teeth of such overwhelming superiority in numbers, would be but to sacrifice valuable lives, the men were accordingly withdrawn to act on the defensive. Here we must correct a statement made by General Wilkinson, in his trial, viz., that he had to contend against not only Captain Pring's two sloops, but also two gun-boats at the back of the mill. We assert on the authority of James, and Wilkinson's own memoirs, (vol. 3, p 235,) that not one American officer stated anything of the kind, and that Colonel Totten swore positively "that the fire from the gun-boats was perfectly useless, fifty or a hundred feet above their heads."

It was by this time about dusk, but although the fire of the besieged had slackened for want of powder, the enemy made no attempt to carry the Mill by storm, but retired from the field. Thus ended the fourth great invasion of Canada.

It would almost seem impossible for any historian, however unprincipled to represent this affair in any other light than as a check