

back before he could entrench himself across the French line of communications. In a letter to Bougainville a week earlier he said: "Je crains toujours la communication coupée." If the enemy should steal a march on Bougainville, it would, he wrote, be for him to see that they did not entrench themselves. That is the secret. If further explanation be necessary it may be found in the simple desire of a gallant leader to dispose out of hand of a great menace. Whatever the cause, Montcalm did the one thing which Wolfe had invited him to do during eleven weary weeks. He came out into the open and fought. Indeed it is the opinion of the soldier as opposed to that of the layman that Montcalm had little choice. "Once Wolfe had gained the Heights in force, Montcalm was compelled to fight immediately for his very existence."¹ Mr. Corbett emphasises this point when he says: "Could every general who suffers an enemy to pierce his centre wait till he could combine a front and rear attack with his several wings, then interposition as a tactical stroke would lose the deadly character it has earned."²

Wolfe watched and awaited developments with a patience which was none the less perfect because he knew now that a few hours must determine the fate of both armies; a few hours and the news would be on its way to Amherst and Pitt that a bold stroke had either succeeded brilliantly or failed disastrously. Montcalm was not long in making his dispositions; he sent Indians and Canadians to worry Wolfe's flanks, and well they knew how to take advantage of every inch of cover afforded by a clump of trees, a

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advance.**

¹ Wood, pp. 247-8.

² *England in the Seven Years' War*, vol. i, p. 470.