

ous flotilla, and sailed away from Boston to have a shot at the bastions of Quebec. The celebrated fortress, the "Gib." of the New World was a thorn in the side of the straight-laced, psalm-singing colonists of the "Modern Athens," and to see it polluted by a swarm of cowed and shaven monks, holy fathers and pious virgins, who offered up their orisons for its safety to St. Joseph, St. Anne and all the angels, was more than the stomachs of Bostonian Presbyterianism could possibly digest. Hence the expedition of Mr. Phips, which, fortunately for the fame of Wolfe, ended in a fiasco. However, although his cannon rattled against its walls in vain, in spite of his failure the ex-captain seems to have made a good thing in the way of looting, and we find that he and Mrs. Phips divided between them the belongings of one Monsieur Meneval, which, as they had newly set up house-keeping, proved tolerably useful, and included six silver spoons, six silver forks, one silver cup, the shape of a gondola, a pair of pistols, three new rags, a grey vest, four pairs of silk garters, two dozen shirts (the Governor must have been poorly off in this way, or perhaps Mrs. P. was an indifferent hand at the needle, otherwise they would hardly have left the French gentleman with lace edgings, all the table service of fine tin, the kitchen linen, and many other items, all of which came in more especially the night caps for Mrs. Phips, so that although his pop guns left no impression on the grim old walls, Sir William's raids bore fruit in another direction.

The fortress of Quebec against which Phips wasted his powder and sacrificed his men, enjoys the proud pre-eminence of being the grandest sea-born spot upon the continent of America. When the walls of Quebec opened before Frontenac, as he sailed up the St. Lawrence, his imagination kindled by the beauty of the scene. "I never," he says, "saw anything more superb than the situation of this town. It cannot be better situated as the future capital of a great empire."

One of the grandest scenes of the continent here opens upon the sight; the wide expanse of waters; the lofty promontories; the opposing heights of Lewis; the cataract of Montmorency; the distant ranges of the Laurentian Mountains, the "Gibraltar of the West" itself with its diadem of walls and towers, the roofs of the lower town clustering on the strand beneath, and the beacon of St. Louis perched on the brink of the cliff, and over it the white banner spangled with fleur-de-lis flaunting defiance in the clear autumnal air, the dense wilderness in the background must have inspired the beholder even as they now do with the sentiments of admiration.

It was a charming autumn day when the dreamy loveliness of the Indian summer hung over the land, making all the objects of nature beautiful to behold, that an emissary of Phips presented himself before the Governor of Canada and his suite, armed with a modest request for the surrender of the

fortress, the evacuation of the country, and the surrender of their persons and estates to his "dispose"—(Sir William was evidently hungering for more shirts for himself and bonnets de nuit for his fair spouse). The ambassador was ushered blindfolded into the presence of the Governor, whom he found surrounded by French and Canadian officers, Maricourt, Bienville and others, bedecked with gold and silver lace, perukes and powder, plumes and ribbons and all the frippery of the day. This gentleman was no doubt astonished at the elegance that was displayed in the Canadian court, so different from the Puritanical stiffness of his own peculiar sect; and was more than astonished when his request for the surrender of the fortress was politely refused, his eyes bandaged and himself bowed over the bastions again.

Louis de Buade, Comte de Palluan et Frontenac, Seigneur de L'Isle Savary, Mestre de Camp de regiment de Normandie, Marechal de Camp dans les armees du Roy, et Gouverneur et Lieutenant General en Canada, Acadie Isle de Terre-Neuve et autres, pays de la France Septentrionale, was the gentleman of many titles who reigned over the vice-court of Quebec. There was no Countess, however, to share in doing the honours of the capital. Madame de Frontenac, whose picture, painted as Minerva, hangs in Versailles, was of a somewhat wilful and imperious nature, and led her husband such a sorry life, that he was well pleased to put the ocean between them, as she declined to follow his fortunes to Canada, preferring the splendour of St. Germain and the dawning glories of Versailles to life among savage hordes and half reclaimed forests, on a stern grey rock, haunted by sombre priests, rugged merchants and traders, blanket-clad Indians and wild bushrangers. She was beautiful and gay, and with her friend Mademoiselle d'Outrelaise, gave tone to the society of Paris where she died at an advanced age.

Hardly had the Viceroy dismissed the envoy of Sir William with a wave of his jewelled hand, than a runner arrived in hot haste to announce that the dreaded Iroquois were on a scalping expedition, and threatened to attack the little fort of Vercheres, which was many miles away and but feebly defended. This celebrated little post might be called a "Castle Dangerous" from its position on the frontiers, and the harassing life to which its inmates were exposed from the constant incursions of the restless Indians, who filled the surrounding woods with their ferocious war-whoops, and the scout having laid its critical condition before the Governor, His Excellency ordered a party of forty men under Lieutenant de la Monnerie to set out for its rescue. Leaving them to plod their way through miles of pathless forest, let us turn for a little to the fort and its heroic defender.

The inmates of the little fort of Vercheres, the ruins and broken palisades of which may yet be seen by the observant traveller, were prosecuting their usual avocations on a morning late in October, when they were suddenly alarmed by the war cries of the Iroquois which

rang through the surrounding woods. The inhabitants were mostly away in the fields, engaged in whatever agricultural labours were suitable for the advanced season, every man working like the builders on the walls of Jerusalem, with his weapons by his side, and the fort was almost entirely defenceless. Fortunately for its eventual safety, and the lives of its garrison, there was one heroic spirit there, encased in the delicate form of a girl of fourteen, a worthy countrywoman of Joan of Arc, and with the intrepidity of the Maid of Saragossa, whose courage and daring upon this memorable occasion were perhaps never surpassed by the heroines of any age. Madeleine de Vercheres, daughter of the Seigneur, was not the only heroine of her family. Her mother, with three or four armed men, had thrown herself into a blockhouse beset by the Iroquois, and held them at bay for two days, until relieved by the Marquis de Crisail. At this momentous period of her life, her father was on duty at Quebec, her mother was at Montreal, and the young Castellan was left to defend this dangerous post: her garrison, at the critical moment, consisting of two soldiers, two boys and an old man of eighty, and a number of women and children. The fort was tolerably strong, and was connected with a blockhouse by a covered way, but was many miles from any hoped-for assistance.

On this memorable morning of the 2nd of October, the young heroine was at the landing place, not far from the gate of the fort, with a hired man named Lavolette, when he suddenly exclaimed, "Run Mademoiselle, run; here come the Iroquois." The warning did not come too late, for on lifting her eyes she saw the dusky forms of the savages emerging from the woods that surrounded the clearing.

Mademoiselle, though young in years, and fragile in body, was animated with the soul of a hero. Accustomed, as she was to the constant harassing alarms and dangers to which her isolated position gave rise, her presence of mind enabled her to grasp the intricacy of the situation at a glance; and realizing that the chief safety and strength of her little garrison lay in her promptness to command and execute, she turned towards the fort, commending herself to the protection of the Virgin, with her faithful attendant, a couple of dozen whooping Indians bringing up the rear in dangerous proximity, who fired after the courageous maiden, the bullets whizzing about her ears. But fortune favours the brave! She ran the gauntlet of their fire unhurt, and on approaching the gate of the fortress, called upon the scanty garrison to look to their arms, as the dreaded foe was approaching. But her appeal for aid was unheeded. The terror of the Iroquois was such that the two musketeers on whom she chiefly relied for help, instead of rushing out in defence of their young mistress, valiantly hid away in the blockhouse, and left her to the tender mercies of the pursuing Indians. At the gate she found two women crying for the loss of their husbands who