

had been successfully prosecuted against Quebec from the New England States, by a route which was little known and generally considered impracticable. This expedition was headed by Colonel Arnold, an officer in the service of the Congress ; who with two regiments, amounting to about eleven hundred men, left Boston about the middle of September, and undertook to penetrate through the wilderness to Pointe Lévi, by the means of the Rivers Kennebec and Chaudière.

The spirit of enterprise evinced in this bold design, and the patience, hardihood and perseverance of the new raised forces employed in the execution, will for ever distinguish this expedition in the history of offensive operations. A handful of men ascending the course of a rapid river, and conveying arms, ammunition, baggage, and provisions through an almost trackless wild—bent upon a most uncertain purpose—can scarcely be considered, however, a regular operation of war. It was rather a desperate attempt, suited to the temper of the fearless men engaged in it, the character of the times, and of the scenes which were about to be acted on the American continent. The project, however, of Arnold was by no means an original thought. It had been suggested by Governor Pownall, in his " Idea of the service of America," as early as the year 1758. He says,—“ The people of Massachusetts, in the counties of Hampshire, Worcester and York, are the best wood-hunters in America..... I should think if about a hundred thorough wood-hunters, properly officered, could be obtained in the County of York, a scout of such might make an attempt upon the settlements by way of Chaudière River.”

On the 22nd September, Arnold embarked on the Kennebec River in two hundred batteaux ; and notwithstanding all natural impediments—the ascent of a rapid stream—interrupted by frequent *portages* through thick woods and swamps—in spite of frequent accidents—the desertion of one-third of the number—they at length arrived at the head of the River Chaudière, having crossed the ridge of land which separates the waters falling into the St. Lawrence from those which run into the sea. They now reached Lake Megantic, and following the course of the Chaudière River, their difficulties and privations, which had been so great as on one occasion to compel them to kill their dogs for sustenance, were speedily at an end. After passing thirty-two days in the wilderness, they