

conjuncture, having only two days' provision for the garrison, which had subsisted until the arrival of the English troops by means of fishing-nets, that river abounding with the most delicious fish, with seven or eight oxen, which had been kept as a reserve and killed by the enemy's cannon. M. de Vaudreuil's letter contained a permission to M. de Bougainville to capitulate or retire from the island if it was possible. M. de Levis' letter was a positive order to defend that post to the last extremity. De Bougainville, notwithstanding his genius, good sense and learning, with personal courage, and who lacked only taste for the study of the art of war to distinguish himself, was nevertheless put to a nonplus how to act from the contradictory orders he received. In this dilemma he shewed me the letters, asking at the same time my advice; and my answer was:—"That in two days famine must oblige us to surrender to the enemy at discretion. That the reinforcements of a thousand men at Montreal might be of the greatest importance, and help to make a good countenance when the English army had advanced in the neighborhood of it. That it was M. de Vaudreuil who commanded-in-chief in Canada, and not M. de Levis; and that there was yet a possibility of retiring with the garrison towards the north side of the island, where the swampy ground upon the border of the river had hindered the English from establishing a post." De Bougainville immediately decided for a retreat, which was executed and combined with equal justness; and the success answered exactly to the prudence, wisdom and good conduct that De Bougainville exhibited in preparing for it. It was then about ten in the morning when Nogaie arrived with the Indians, who—not accustomed to such a terrible fire as was at that moment poured forth by the English batteries, very different from their way of fighting behind trees—were not at all at ease, and furiously impatient to get out of the island. The hour of retreat was settled for ten that night.