

the French Canadian population, that some decisive movement would be made, supported by France. In November the news reached Canada of 'Cornwallis' desperate situation, followed by the information that he had surrendered. Hitherto the events in the south had been favourable to the British arms and had exercised restraint upon the desire for French interference. The defeat of Cornwallis did not fail to work an undesirable influence. Such was the expressed sympathy with the French in several of the parishes, that Haldimand resolved not to send to many localities the arms necessary for defence. In the early part of the year, it had been only with reluctance that any number had been induced to serve as seamen on the lakes, while it was a prevalent opinion that too many were ready to act as guides to an invading army, and to furnish provisions. The best troops were in the west engaged in defending the posts, and in any emergency Haldimand could not bring 2,500 reliable men into the field. Letters which came into his possession revealed the state of feeling which he described, and if Canada was to be held, strong reinforcements were required, with a fleet, to command the Saint Lawrence.*

Haldimand could obtain no aid from admiral Arbuthnot. As this admiral had failed to second Clinton in his operations in New York,† so he declined to render any assistance to

* [Can. Arch., B. 55, p. 129.] "I have for many months observed in the Canadian Gentry Expectations of a Revolution which was to take Place in the Country, and am the more confirmed in this, from a Letter dated Paris the 6th of last March (which has fallen into my hands), from a Monsieur de Lothbinière, (Who after having received the King's Bounty in London went over to the Rebels in Philadelphia), Wherein He tells his Son that he expects to see him in fourteen or fifteen Months from the Date of the Letter, and in a situation to settle all his Affairs to their Mutual Satisfaction. In another part of his Letter, he desires his son to remain "à la campagne quelques mouvements qu'il y eût dans ce Pays, pourvu que vous restiez Spectateur absolu de tout, sans y prendre la moindre part. En ce cas, je vous crois plus en sûreté ou vous êtes qu'en aucune ville." Many Letters are in the same State, and one plain Indication of some dangers against this Province in the which France cannot (now that the rich provinces of Virginia and Carolina are recovered), refuse to give assistance to congress." [Haldimand to Germain.]

† Ante., Vol. VI., p. 369.

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