

grow impatient at not being allowed to carry on the war alone. To satisfy them, we had to hasten to begin the siege and to mount our first battery. When it opened for the first time, the whole mountains resounded with their yells and joyous cries. We were dispensed during the operations from taking much trouble to ascertain the effect of our firing; the wild yells of the Indians soon carried this information in every direction. I seriously thought of changing my quarters; the distance which intervened between them and where my neophytes were, left me no duties to perform, but before this change took place an alarming incident occurred. The frequent trips which the enemy made during the day towards their boats made us suspect some grand move was in contemplation. A rumor got abroad that they intended to burn our war and commissariat supplies. M. de Launay, captain of a French regiment of grenadiers was instructed to watch over the boats which contained them. The skilful measures he had devised rendered it almost a subject of regret to us that the enemy did not show himself. I, subsequently to this, joined my Abnauquis and remained with them during the remainder of the campaign. Nothing of note took place for some days, except the promptitude with which the siege operations progressed. Our second battery was erected in two days. This was for the Indians the occasion for a new holiday, which they celebrated in a style befitting warriors. They were constantly hovering around our gunners, whose skill they admired. Nor was their admiration barren in results. They were resolved to make themselves useful in every way; undertaking to act as gunners, and one in particular got very expert. A savage having himself pointed a gun, struck exactly a retreating angle, on which he had been told to take aim. He however declined trying a second shot, alleging that as he had at the onset attained to perfection, he ought not to risk his reputation on a second attempt. But what seemed to astonish the savages most in our siege operations was the several zigzags of a trench which, like subterranean passages, are so useful in protecting the besiegers from the fire of the besieged. They witnessed with unbounded curiosity the finish and perfection which the French grenadiers bestowed on their works. The force of example soon induced them to set to, with pick and hoe, to open a trench towards the fortified rock, a task confided to them. They soon had extended the trench so far that they got within gun-shot. M. de Villiers, brother to M. de Jumonville, an officer whose name alone indicated merit, took advantage of this trench to march up with a detachment of Canadians in order to open fire on the outer defences of the enemy. The action was sharp, long and bloody for the enemy, who abandoned these outer works;—the chief entrenchments would also have been carried that day if their capture could have ensured the fall of the place. Each day was signalised by some brilliant feat of arms, either by the French, the Canadians or the savages. In the meantime the enemy held out resolutely, buoyed up with hopes of a prompt relief. A trivial occurrence which happened then ought to have greatly decreased these hopes. Our scouts met in the woods three messengers, who had left Fort Lydis (Edward): they killed the first, captured the second, and the third escaped by swiftness of foot. A letter was discovered in a hollow bullet concealed on the body of the dead messenger with so much art, that none save a soldier experienced in these matters could have detected it. This letter was signed by the commander of Fort Lydis, and addressed to the commander of Fort George. It contained the summary of the confession extorted from a Canadian, made prisoner on the first night of our arrival. He had stated that our army consisted of 11,000 men, and our Indian allies of 2,000, with most formidable artillery. This was erroneous, and our forces were considerably over-estimated. But the error did not proceed from fraud, which, however useful it can be to any country, cannot be pardoned by an honorable man, be he ever so patriotic. Until this campaign, the largest armies from Canada had rarely exceeded 800 men; surprise and wonder magnified ours to those unaccustomed to see considerable ones. I have often, during the campaign, witnessed greater illusions in this way. The commander of Fort Lydis concluded his letter by informing his colleague that the interest of the king, his master, did not permit him to send any soldiers from the fort: that it was his duty to capitulate and make the best of terms.

The best use Montcalm fancied this letter could be applied, was to have it delivered to its address by the surviving despatch-bearer, who had been captured. The English officer (Munro) thanked him, and hoped he would continue to act with the same courtesy. This act either indicated that he was joking, or else a prolonged resistance. The actual state of the place did not presage the latter: one-half of its batteries dismounted and rendered useless by our guns; terror amongst the besieged, whose courage was only kept up by rum; finally, frequent desertions—all combined to show

that surrender was close at hand. Such was the opinion of deserters, who would have come in crowds had not our Indian allies increased the perils attending such a feat.

Amongst those who sought refuge in our ranks, there was an individual belonging to a neighboring republic, our faithful ally, who enabled me to claim him soon, as a returned son of the church. I visited him soon at the hospital, where he lay wounded. On my return, I noticed a general movement in all quarters of the camp—French, Canadians and Indians, all ran to arms. The rumor of the arrival of succor to the enemy had caused this commotion. Amidst alarm, M. de Montcalm, with that coolness which marks a master mind, made arrangements for the safety of our trenches, of our batteries and boats, and then left to head the army. I was quietly seated at the door of my tent, from which I could see our troops go by, when an Abnauquis put an end to my contemplative mood, by unceremoniously saying to me: "*Father, you pledged yourself that no danger would deter you from coming to administer to us the rites of your religion; do you think our wounded men could come to you from the battle-field, across these mountains? We now start to fight, and look to you to fulfil your promise.*" This strong appeal made me forget my fatigues. I took my position with alacrity in front of our regiments. After a forced march, I arrived at a spot where my people, in front of all the troops, were waiting for the battle to begin. I deputed, on the spot, messengers to bring them all together, and gave them a general absolution before meeting the enemy; but no enemy came. M. de Montcalm, in order not to lose the advantage of his preparations, sought to bring them out by the following stratagem. He proposed that the French and Canadians should simulate a fight, whilst the Indians, secreted in the woods, should lie in wait for the enemy, who would assuredly make a sortie. Our Iroquois approved of the plan, but alleged that the day was too far gone. The other savages were in favor of the *ruse de guerre*, but the excuse of the Iroquois prevailed; so that all had to withdraw without seeing anything more than the preparations for a fight. At last, the next day being the eve of the *fête* of Saint Lawrence and the seventh after our arrival, the trenches having been pushed as far as the gardens, we were just going to mount our third and last battery. The closeness of the fort led us to hope that in three or four days it might be assaulted by all our forces, and breached; but the enemy saved us the trouble and danger: they hung out the white flag, and asked to surrender.

We are now drawing near to the capitulation of the fort, and to the bloody catastrophe which ensued. No doubt that every corner of Europe has echoed with the news of this melancholy event, whose odious character (unexplained) is calculated to cast a stigma on France. Your equity will soon be in a position to decide whether this horrible charge rests, or not, on malignity or on ignorance of the facts. I shall merely adduce circumstances so public and so incontrovertible, that I can even, without fear of contradiction, appeal to the testimony of the English officers who saw them and suffered from them. The Marquis of Montcalm, before granting any capitulation, had thought proper, in order to have the capitulation respected, to consult all the Indian tribes present. He assembled all their chiefs, and laid before them the terms of the surrender; it granted to the garrison the right to march out of the fort with all the honors of war, imposing on them the obligation not to serve for eighteen months against the King of France, and to release all the Canadians made prisoners during this war. These terms received general assent and approbation, and were signed by the generals of both armies. Consequently, the French army, drawn up in line of battle, advanced towards the fort, to take possession of it in the name of His Most Christian Majesty, whilst the English troops, in good order, left it to go and post themselves, until the next day, in the retrenchments. Their march was not interrupted by a violation of the rights of nations. But soon the savages gave good cause of complaint. Whilst the French were entering the fort, the savages had crowded in numbers, in its interior, by the port-holes, in order to plunder, as plunder had been promised to them, but powder did not suffice. Several sick being too ill to follow their friends in their honorable capitulation, had remained in the casemates; these fell victims to the unmerciful cruelty of the savages: they were butchered in my presence. I saw one of those fluids issue from one of those pestiferous casemates, which thirst of blood alone could have induced him to enter, bearing triumphantly in his hand a human head all bloody; he would not have been more proud of the richest trophy imaginable.

This was but the prelude to the tragedy to be enacted on the morrow. At daybreak the Indians crowded round the defences. They began by asking the English for all the effects, provisions and valuables which their covetous eyes could detect; but their