CHRONICLES OF CANADA FOR BOYS & GIRLS

MONTCALM

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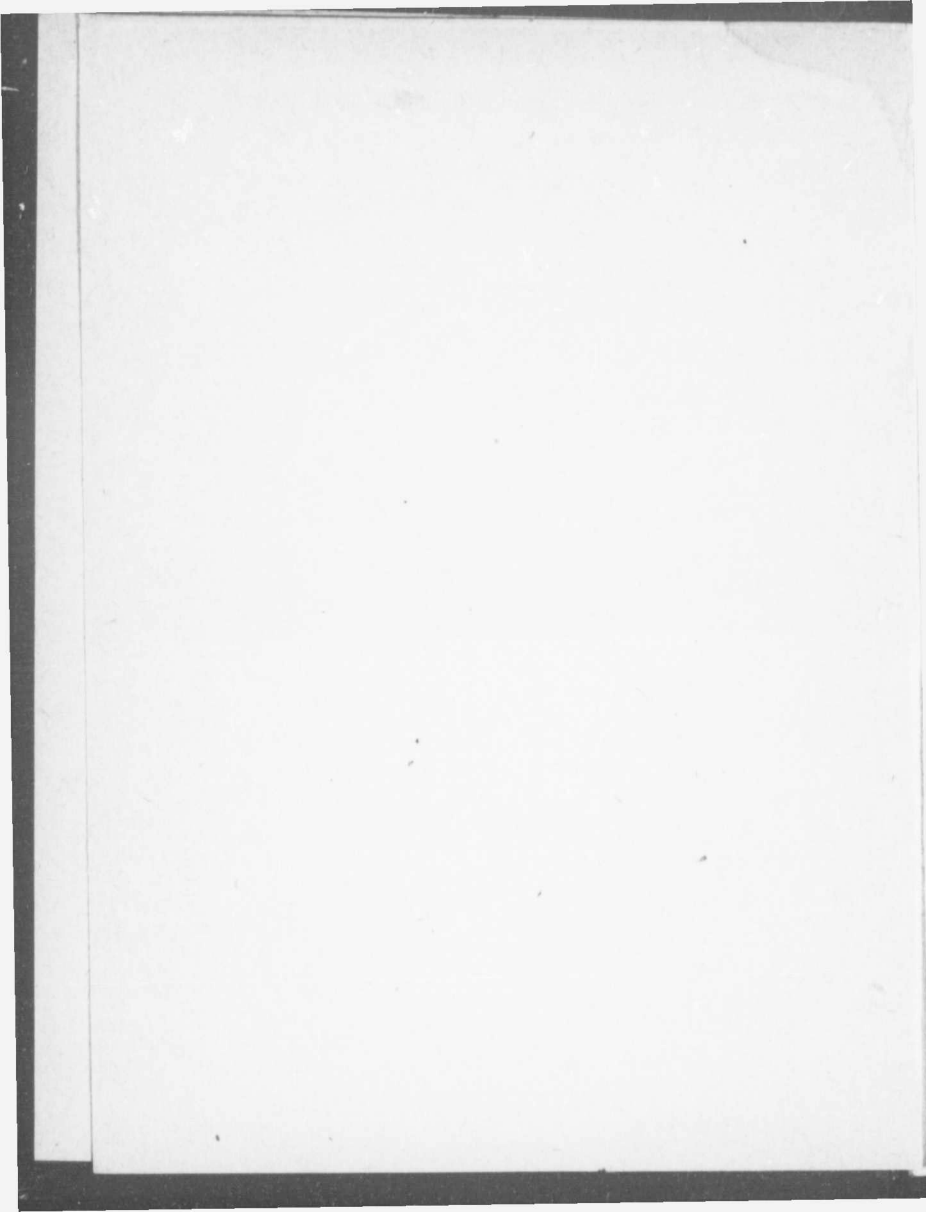


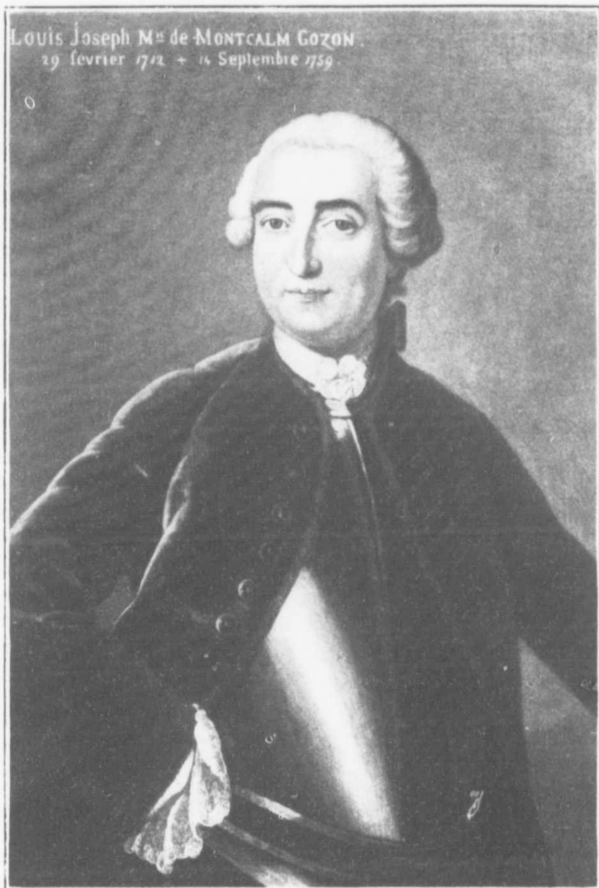
CHRONICLES OF CANADA FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

EDITED BY JOHN C. SAUL

MONTCALM

TO FOUR GOOD FRIENDS

J., G., E. AND H. LAIRD



MONTCALM

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CHRONICLES OF CANADA FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

MONTCALM

THE HERO OF A LOST CAUSE

BY

WILLIAM WOOD

TORONTO

MORANG & CO., LIMITED

1912

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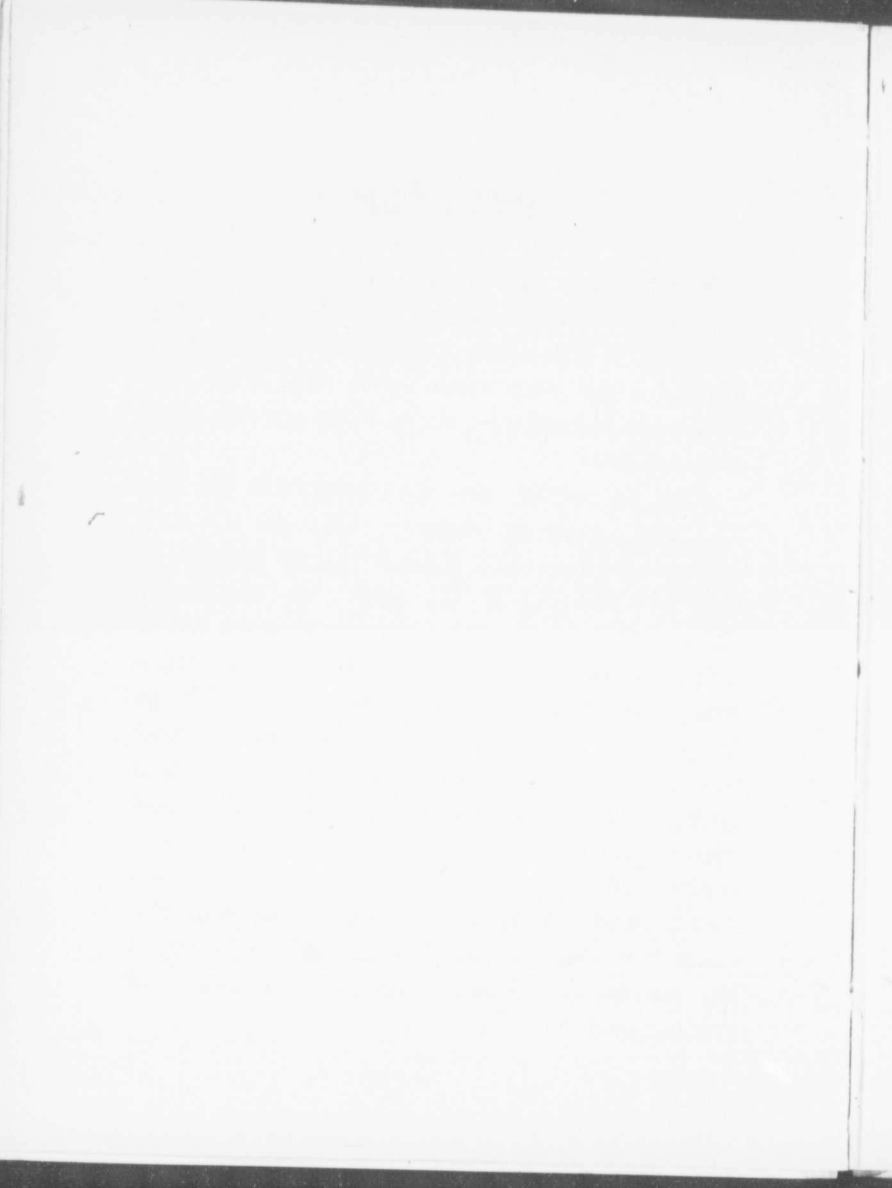
PREFACE

Wolfe and Montcalm met for the first time only at the very end of their lives. But when they did meet at Quebec, they had so much to do with each other that the story of the great campaign there becomes the story of them both.

Now, in war the one who attacks is the one who makes things happen. And the one who wins is the one who makes things happen in the way they will be told. So the main story of the siege and battle must follow Wolfe rather than Montcalm. And as this main story has been told already in the life of Wolfe, in "The Chronicles of Canada," it need not be told again here. But it was not and could not be complete by itself. The two Chronicles of "Wolfe" and "Montcalm" are really two halves of one whole. You cannot understand "Montcalm" unless you have first read "Wolfe." And you cannot understand the whole of "Wolfe" unless you also read "Montcalm."



CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	France	1
II.	Canada	16
III.	Oswego	31
IV.	Fort William Henry	47
V.	Ticonderoga	71
VI.	Quebec	104
VII.	The Plains of Abraham	128

MONTCALM

CHAPTER I

FRANCE

1712–1756

"War is the grave of the Montcalms." No one can tell how old this famous saying is. Perhaps it is as old as France herself. Certainly there never was a time when the men of the great family of Montcalm-Gozon were not fighting for their king and country; and so Montcalm, like Wolfe, was a soldier born.

Even in the Crusades his ancestors were famous all over Europe. When the Christians of those brave days were trying to drive the unbelievers out of Palestine, they gladly followed leaders whom they thought saintly and heroic enough to be their champions against the dragons of sultan, satan, and hell; for people then thought that there were dragons on the devil's side, and that only Chris-

tian knights, like St. George, could kill them. These leaders, in their turn, formed the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, taking an oath to be faithful unto death, and choosing the best man among them to be their Grand Master. So it could have been only after much devoted service that Deodat de Gozon became Grand Master, more than five hundred years ago, and was granted the right of bearing the conquered Dragon of Rhodes on the family coat of arms, where it still appears to-day. How often this glorious badge of victory reminded our Montcalm of noble deeds and noble men! And how it nerved him to uphold the family honour, which no Montcalm from first to last had ever dimmed!

There are seas of change between Crusaders and Canadians. Yet the Montcalms can bridge them with their honour. And among the Montcalms who, in all those changing centuries, made their name mean soldier's honour in every Eastern or European war, there are none who have given it so high a place in the whole world's history as the hero whose life and death in our own land

made it one of our first immortal three — Canada, Wolfe, and Montcalm.

This was the supreme glory of the name Montcalm; and a glory so bright that it shone even through the dust of death which shrouded the France of the Revolution. In 1790, when the National Assembly was suppressing the pensions granted by the crown, a special exception was made in favour of Montcalm's children. As kings, marquises, heirs, and pensions were the four things the Revolution hated most, it is a wonderful tribute to our Marquis of Montcalm that the revolutionary Parliament should have paid to his heirs the pension granted by a king. Nor has another century of change in France blotted out his name and fame. The *Montcalm* was the French flagship at the royal coronation naval review held in honour of King Edward VII, who did so much to make friends between the French and British. The *Montcalm* took the President of France to greet his ally the Czar of Russia. And, but for its duty elsewhere at the time, the *Montcalm* would have flown the French admiral's

flag at the celebration of the tercentenary of the founding of Quebec, when King George V led the whole of the French-speaking and English-speaking peoples of the world in doing honour to the twin renown of Wolfe and Montcalm on the field where they won equal glory, though with unequal fortune.

Montcalm was a leap-year baby, being born on February 29th, 1712, in the family castle of Candiac, near Nîmes, a very old city of the south of France, with many forts built by the Romans there two thousand years ago. He came by almost as much good soldier blood on his mother's as on his father's side, for she was one of the Castellanes, with numbers of heroic ancestors, right back to the First Crusade.

The Montcalms had never been a rich family. They had had many heroes but no millionnaires. They were well known and well loved for their kindness to all the people on their estates. And they were so generous to every one in trouble, and so ready to spend their money as well as their lives for the sake of their king and country, that they

never would have made a great fortune, even if their estate had been ten times larger than it was. So, while they were famous and honoured all over France, they had to be very careful about what they spent on themselves, especially as they all — and our own Montcalm in particular — spent much more in serving their country than their country ever spent in paying them to serve it.

Montcalm was a delicate little boy of six when he first went to school. He had many schoolboy faults. He found it very hard to keep quiet or to pay attention to his teacher; he was very backward in French grammar, and he wrote a very bad hand. Many a letter of complaint was sent to his father. "It seems to me that his handwriting is getting worse than ever. I show him, again and again, how to hold his pen; but he will not do it properly. I think he ought to try to make up for his want of cleverness by being more docile, taking more pains, and listening to my advice." And then poor old Dumas would end with an exclamation of despair — "What will become of him?"

Dumas had another pupil who was much more to his taste. This was Montcalm's younger brother, Jean, who knew his letters before he was three, read Latin when he was five, and Greek and Hebrew when he was six. Dumas was so proud of this infant prodigy that he took him to Paris, where he showed him off to the learned men of the day, who were dumbfounded at so much knowledge in so young a boy. All this, however, was too much for a youthful brain; and poor Jean died at the age of seven.

Dumas then turned back sadly to the elder boy, who was in no danger of being killed by too much study, and renewed his complaints. At last Montcalm, now sixteen and already an officer, could stand it no longer, and wrote to his father telling him what he was really aiming at, for all his supposed stupidity. "I want to be, first, a man of honour, brave, and a good Christian. Secondly, I want to read moderately, know as much Greek and Latin as other men; also arithmetic, history, geography, literature, and some art and science. Thirdly, I want to be obedient

to you and my dear mother, and listen to Mr. Dumas's advice. Lastly, I want to handle a horse and a sword as well as ever I can." The result of it all was that Montcalm became a good Latin scholar, a very well read man all round, an excellent horseman and swordsman, and — to poor old Dumas's eternal confusion — such a master of French that he might have been as great an author as he was a soldier. His letters and despatches from the seat of war remind one of Cæsar's. He wrote like a man who sees into the heart of things and comes straight to the point with the fewest words which will tell you exactly what he wants you to know. In this he was like Wolfe, and like many another great soldier whose quick eye, cool head, and warm heart, all working together in the service of his country, gave him a command over words which was often equal to his command over men.

In 1727, the year Wolfe was born, Montcalm joined his father's regiment as an ensign. Presently, in 1733, the French and Germans fell out over the question of who was the

rightful king of Poland. Montcalm went to the front and had what French soldiers call his "baptism of fire." This war gave him little chance of learning how great battles should be fought. But he saw two sieges; kept his eyes open to everything that happened; and, even in camp, did not forget his studies. "I am learning German," he wrote home, "and I am reading more Greek than I have read for three or four years."

At twenty-three his father's death made him the head of the Montcalms. The next year he married Angélique Talon du Boulay, a member of a military family, and granddaughter of Denis Talon, a kinsman of Jean Talon, who was the best intendant that ever served New France For the next twenty years, from 1736 to 1756, he spent as much of his time as he could spare from the army in his ancestral castle of Candiac. Here he was born, and here he always hoped he could live and die among his own people after his wars were over. How often he was to sigh for one look at his pleasant olive groves, when he was far away, upholding the honour of France

against great British odds and, far worse, against his secret enemies in the dying colony across the sea! But all this was a long time off for the present. And Candiac was a wonderfully happy home. It was so happy that Montcalm's wife and mother actually made it all the happier by living there together. In course of time ten children were born; and five of them lived to hail their beloved father as the defender of New France, and to mourn his death with the mother and grandmother to whom both he and they owed so much.

Wolfe's first and Montcalm's second war was the War of the Austrian Succession. But the two future opponents in Canada never met on the same battlefields in Europe. In 1741, the year Wolfe received his first commission, Montcalm fought so well in Bohemia that he was made a Knight of St. Louis. Two years later, at the age of thirty-one, he was promoted to the command of a regiment, which he led through three campaigns in Italy. During the third campaign, in 1746, there was a terrific fight against the Austrians under the walls of Placentia. The Austrian attack was so furious

that the French army was almost smashed to pieces. Montcalm's regiment was twice broken by the weight of numbers; but each time he rallied it and faced the enemy again. Their third attack was the worst of all and carried everything before it. Still Montcalm stood fighting, though he already had three bullet wounds. Then the Austrian cavalry charged and swept the French off the field altogether. Montcalm met them, sword in hand, as dauntless as ever. But he was caught in a whirlwind of sabre-cuts, and fell to the ground with two huge gashes in his head.

Unable to fight any longer he was taken prisoner. But he was soon allowed to go home, on giving his word of honour, or "parole," that he would not fight again until some Austrian prisoner of war, of the same rank as his own, was given back by the French in exchange for him. While still on parole he was promoted to be a brigadier. So he could now command more regiments than a single one. After the proper exchange of prisoners had been made, he went back to Italy, again fought splendidly, and again was badly wounded.

This time he had seen war on a grand scale, and had noted all its mistakes, no less than its triumphs. He rejoiced in having fought on such historic ground; for the walls of Placentia overlook the river Trebia, where Hannibal defeated the Romans after his memorable march across the Alps. But he could not have known at this time that Placentia was also an historic link between the Old World and the New, connecting the Romans, Gauls, and French of the Old World with that French dominion in the New which he was himself to die defending. The connection is only what we might call an historic connection-by-marriage. But it is a very singular thing that Montcalm, who had some of his martial blood from the Romans and Gauls, and who died fighting in America, should have been made a general for his action at Placentia, which is the native town of the families from which both Julius Cæsar and Christopher Columbus took their wives.

In 1748 the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle was signed; and Canada, Wolfe, and Montcalm had seven years' peace before the fate of all

three was decided by the Seven Years' War.

Life went very well at Candiac. Montcalm was there whenever he could be; and spent his time between his castle and his olive groves, his study and his family circle. His eldest son was a young man of much promise, growing immensely tall, devoted to the army, and engaged to be married. His wife and her mother-in-law were as happy with him and each other as ever. Nothing seemed more peaceful than that quiet corner in the pleasant land of southern France.

But the age-long rivalry of French and British could not be stilled. Even in 1754 there were rumours of war from the farthest east and farthest west. Next year, though peace was outwardly kept in Europe, both the great rivals sent fleets and armies to America, where the clash of arms had already been heard. There were losses on both sides. And, when the French general, Baron Dieskau, was made prisoner, the minister of war, knowing the worth of Montcalm, asked him to think over taking the command in New France himself.

On January 26th, 1756, the formal offer came in a letter approved by the king. "The king has chosen you to command his troops in North America, and will honour you on your departure with the rank of major-general. But what will please you still more is that His Majesty will put your son in your place at the head of your present regiment. The applause of the public will add to your satisfaction."

The very day he received this letter Montcalm made up his mind, accepted the command, bade good-bye to Candiac, and set out for Paris. From Lyons he wrote back to his mother: "I am reading with much pleasure the 'History of New France' by Father Charlevoix. He gives a nice description of Quebec." From Paris he wrote back to his wife: "Do not expect any long letter before March 1st. All my pressing work will be done by then, and I shall be able to breathe once more. Last night I came from Versailles and am going back to-morrow. My outfit will cost me a thousand crowns more than what I am paid to cover it. But I cannot stop for that." On

March 15th he wrote home: "Yesterday I presented my son, with whom I am very well pleased, to all the royal family." Three days later he wrote to his wife: "I shall be at Brest on the twenty-first. My son has been here since yesterday, for me to coach him and get his uniform properly made. He will thank the king for his promotion at the same time that I make my adieux in my embroidered coat. Perhaps I shall leave some debts behind me. I wait impatiently for the accounts. You have my will. I wish you would have it copied, and send me the duplicate before I sail."

On April 3rd Montcalm left Brest in the *Licorne*, which formed part of the little fleet which the French were hurrying out to Canada before war was declared in Europe. The passage was long and stormy. But Montcalm was lucky in being a much better sailor than the sea-sick Wolfe. Impatient to reach the capital at the earliest possible moment, he rowed ashore from below the Island of Orleans when the *Licorne* met a contrary wind there, and drove up to Quebec, a distance of twenty-

five miles. It was May 13th when he first passed along the Beauport shore between Montmorency and Quebec. Three years and nine days later he was to come back there to make his last stand.

On the evening of his arrival, Bigot the intendant gave him a magnificent dinner party. Forty guests sat down to the banquet. Montcalm never expected that the poor struggling colony could boast a scene like this. In a letter home he said: "Even a Parisian would have been astonished at the profusion of good things on the table. Such splendour and good cheer show how much the intendant's place is worth." We shall soon hear more of Bigot the intendant.

On the twenty-sixth Montcalm arrived at Montreal to see Vaudreuil the governor. The meeting went off very well. The governor was as full of airs and graces as the intendant, and said that nothing in the world could have given him so much pleasure as to greet the general sent out to take command of the troops from France. We shall soon hear more of Vaudreuil the governor.

CHAPTER II

CANADA

1756

The French colonies in North America were nothing but two very long and very thin lines of scattered posts and settlements, running up the St. Lawrence and Mississippi and meeting at the lakes. Along the whole of these four thousand miles there were not one hundred thousand people. There were only two parts of the country that were really settled at all, one in Acadia and the other along the St. Lawrence between Bic and Montreal; and both of these together covered only about four hundred out of the whole four thousand miles. There were only three towns, — Louisbourg, Quebec, and Montreal, — and Quebec, which was much the largest, had only twelve thousand inhabitants.

The line of the Mississippi was called

Louisiana. The line of the St. Lawrence was called New France along the river and Acadia down by the Gulf. But Canada is the best word to cover both. Now, Canada had ten times as many people as Louisiana; and Louisiana by itself was helplessly weak. But that was the very reason why the French were so keen about the country south of the lakes, where Canada and Louisiana met. For, so long as they held it, they held the gateways of the West, kept the valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi to themselves, and shut up the British colonies between the Allegheni es and the Atlantic. But there was something even more important yet for them to hold. And that was the mouth of the St. Lawrence. Canada could live only by getting help from France; and as this help could not come up the Mississippi, it had to come up the St. Lawrence.

So the general position of the French was this: Firstly, and most important of all, they had to hold the line of the St. Lawrence for a thousand miles in from the sea. Here were their three chief strongholds: Louisbourg, Quebec, and Lake Champlain.

Secondly, they had to hold another thousand miles westward, to and across the lakes; but especially the country south of Lakes Ontario and Erie, into the valley of the Ohio. Here there were a few forts, but no settlements worth speaking of.

Thirdly, they had to hold the valley of the Mississippi, two thousand miles from north to south. Here there were very few forts, very few men, and no settlements of any kind at all. In fact, they held the Mississippi only by the merest thread, and chiefly because the British colonies had not yet grown out in that direction. The Mississippi did not come into the war, though it might have, if Montcalm had survived the Battle of the Plains, and if the defence of Canada in 1760 had seemed to him utterly hopeless. His plan then would probably have been to take his best soldiers down to New Orleans and make a last desperate stand for France among the swamps. But this died with him; and we may leave the valley of the Mississippi out of our reckoning altogether.

Not so the valley of the Ohio, which, as

we have seen, was the meeting-place of Canada and Louisiana, and the chief gateway to the West, and which the French and British rivals were both most fiercely set on possessing. It was here that the world-wide Seven Years' War first broke out; here that George Washington first appeared as an American commander; here that Braddock led the first westbound British army, and here that Montcalm struck his first blow for French America.

But, as we have also seen, even the valley of the Ohio was less important than the line of the St. Lawrence. It was certainly the right arm of French America. But the St. Lawrence was the body, of which the lungs were Louisbourg, and the head and heart were Quebec. Montcalm saw this at once; and he made no single mistake in choosing the proper kind of attack or defence during the whole of his four campaigns.

The British colonies were very different in every way from the French. Instead of being a long, thin line of four thousand miles, running round an inland loop from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, with only

one hundred thousand people sparsely settled in certain spots, they filled up the solid inside of this loop with over twelve hundred thousand people, who had an open seaboard on the Atlantic for two thousand miles, from Nova Scotia to Florida.

Now, what could have made such a great difference between the French and British colonies, when France had begun with all the odds of European force and numbers in her favour? There can be only one answer — fleets and freedom.

Firstly, fleets. The mere fact that the Old and New Worlds had a sea between them meant that whichever rival had the better navy would have a great advantage. The Portuguese, Spaniards, Dutch, and French all tried to build empires across the sea. But they all failed whenever they came to blows with Britain, simply because no empire can live if it is cut up into separate parts. And the sea divided the other empires, while it united the British. The French were a nation of landsmen. They had two land frontiers to attack and defend. Their kings and statesmen

understood armies better than navies. And their people themselves liked soldiers better than sailors. The British, on the other hand, liked the sailors better. Their rulers understood navies better than armies. They had no land frontiers to defend. And the sea had always been their second home.

Whenever war broke out, the British navy won victories and "the command of the sea"; that is, the sea became a safe road for British ships and a very unsafe road for French ships. In those days, in America, everything used in war, from the regular fleet and armies themselves down to the powder and shot, cannons and muskets, swords and bayonets, tools and tents, and so on, all had to be brought across the Atlantic. This was well enough for the British. But for the French it was always very hard and risky work. In time of war their ships were watched, chased, and taken, right and left. And even during peace they had much the worse of it, for then they were building and launching to make up for all the men-of-war and merchant ships that they had lost and the British had won. Thus the British

always began the race again with a good start, and more ships than ever.

We must remember, too, that every sort of trade and money-making also depended on the command of the sea, which itself depended on the stronger navy. Even the trade with the Indians, two thousand miles inland, depended on defeat or victory at sea. The French would send out ships full of things to trade with the Indians. But if they lost the ships, they lost the trade and so the friendship of the Indians. In the same way the navy helped or hindered the return trade from America to Europe. The furs and food from the British colonies crossed over in safety, and the money or other goods in exchange came safely back. But the French merchants were often ruined by having the sea on both sides closed to their ships.

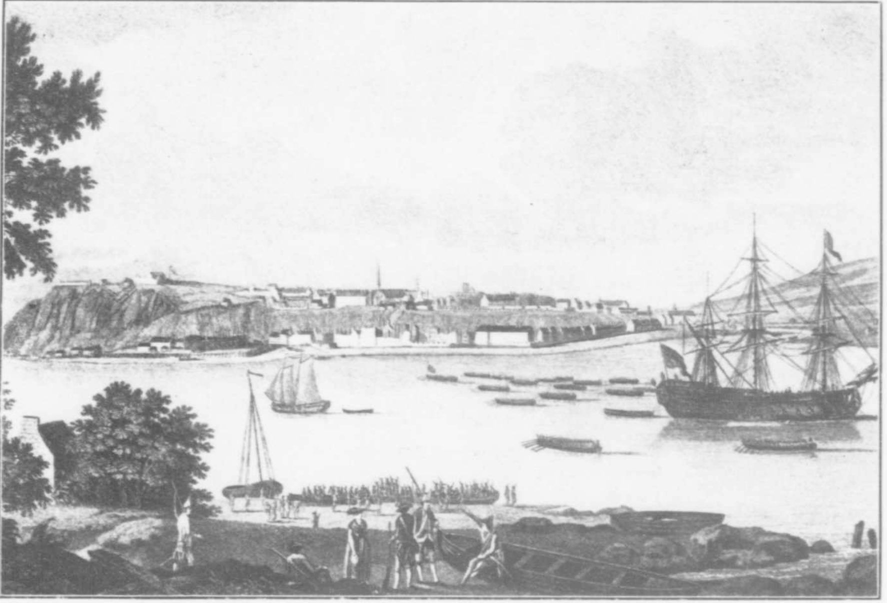
To follow out all the causes and effects of the command of the sea would be far too long a story even to begin here. But the gist of it all is quite short and quite plain: No navy, no empire; no empire, no Canada. That is what it meant to us then, and that is what it means to us now.

Secondly, freedom. Of course, freedom itself, no matter how good it is and how much we love it, would have been nothing without fleets. All the freedom in the world cannot hold two countries on opposite sides of the sea together without strong fleets between. But neither would the strongest fleet have helped New France to grow as fast and well as New England. The French were not free at home. And they were not free as colonists in Canada; because all kinds of laws and rules were made for them thousands of miles away. These laws were made by men who knew scarcely anything about Canada, except what they were told by other men whom they themselves sent out under strict orders. And these other men, the men on the spot, if they were bad and clever enough, just hoodwinked the government in France and did what they liked in Canada.

Now, Bigot was the man on the spot; and he was one of the worst and cleverest scoundrels ever known, with a country just made for him to ruin. He had nothing to fear from the people, the poor, ignorant, down-trodden

French Canadians. He had nothing to fear from their governor, a conceited fool like Vaudreuil. And he was three thousand miles away from the French court, which was full of scoundrels itself. He had been given great power in Canada. As intendant he was the head of everything except the army, the navy, and the church. He had charge of all the public money and all the public works, and whatever else might be called public business. Of course, he was supposed to look after the interests of France and Canada, not after his own; and intendants like Talon had done this with perfect honesty. But Bigot soon formed a gang of men like himself, and gathered all the private as well as the public business into his grasping hands.

One example will show how he worked. In case of great danger the intendant's duty was to buy up all the food in Canada, put it into the king's stores, and sell out only enough for the people to live on till the danger was over. There was a reason for this, as Canada, cut off from France, was like a besieged fortress, and all the people in it were then quite



A GENERAL VIEW OF QUEBEC FROM LEVIS

properly treated like a garrison, for the good of the whole. But when Bigot had formed his gang and had won over Vaudreuil, he declared Canada in danger when it was not, seized all the food he could lay hands on, and sent it over to France in the king's ships, so that it was carried free. Then he had Vaudreuil tell the king that Canada was starving. In the meantime his friends in France had put the food into their own stores there, and had told the king that there was plenty at hand which they could ship out to Canada at once. Then friends in Paris had this bought by the king and sent back to Canada in the king's ships again. Then Bigot and his friends in Canada put it into their own stores in Quebec, sold it to the king's stores once more, as they had in France, and then sold it back to the wretched French Canadians from whom they had bought it for next to nothing at first. Thus both the king and the French Canadians were each robbed twice over.

Bigot had been some time in Canada before Vaudreuil arrived as governor in 1755. He had cheated a good deal already. But it was

only when he found out what sort of a man Vaudreuil was that he set to work to do his worst. Bigot was all knave, Vaudreuil was all fool. Vaudreuil was a French Canadian born, and very jealous of any one from France, unless the Frenchman flattered him as Bigot did. He loved all sorts of pomp and show, and thought himself the greatest man in America. Bigot played on this weakness with ease and could persuade him to sign any orders, no matter how bad they were.

Now, when an owl like Vaudreuil and a fox like Bigot were ruining Canada between them, they were anything but pleased to see a lion like Montcalm come out with an army from France. Vaudreuil, indeed, had done all he could to prevent Montcalm from being sent. He wrote to France several times, saying that no French general was needed, only separate regiments under their own colonels, and that he could command them all himself, just as he did the Canadians.

But how did he command the Canadians? By law, every Canadian had to serve as a soldier, without pay, whenever the country was in

danger. By law, every man needed for carrying supplies to the far-off outposts could also be taken, but had to be paid. Now, all the supplies and the carrying of them were under Bigot's care. So, when the Canadians were called out as soldiers, without pay, Bigot's gang would ask them if they would rather go and be shot for nothing or carry supplies in safety for pay. Of course they chose the carrier's work, though half the pay for it was stolen from them. Yet their names were still kept on the muster rolls as soldiers. This was the reason why Montcalm often had only half the militia that was called out for him, and only the half that was made up of those men whom Bigot's gang did not think good enough for carriers.

But there were more troubles still for Montcalm and his army. Vaudreuil was, of course, the head of the whole country, and so of the army as well. And this was right enough, if he had been fit for his post, because a country must have a supreme head, and the army is only a part, though the most important part in war. A soldier may also be a

statesman and the head of everything, like Cromwell, Napoleon, or Frederick the Great. But a statesman who is not a soldier only ruins an army if he tries to command it himself. And this was just what Vaudreuil did. Indeed, he did worse. For he did not go into the field himself, while, at the same time, he kept on bothering Montcalm at every turn from the rear. And instead of making all the various forces on the French side into one army, he kept them as separate as he could — five parts and no whole.

First, there were the French regulars, the best of all, who were under Montcalm, who was himself under Vaudreuil. Then there were the Canadian regulars and the Canadian militia, both directly under Vaudreuil. Then there were the French sailors, under their own officers, but subject to Vaudreuil. Montcalm had to report to the minister of war in Paris about the French regulars, and to the minister of marine about the Canadians of both kinds. Vaudreuil reported to both ministers, usually against Montcalm; and the French naval commander reported to his own

minister on his own account. So there was plenty of chance to make trouble between the four French forces. But there was more trouble still with the fifth force, the Indians, who were under their own chiefs. These men admired Montcalm; but they had to make treaties with Vaudreuil. They were cheated by Bigot and offered presents by the British. And, as they very naturally desired to keep their own country for themselves in their own way, they always wished to side with the stronger of the two white rivals, if they could not get rid of both.

Such was the Canada of 1756, a country in quite as much danger from French parasites as from British patriots. It might have lasted for some years longer if there had been no general war. The American colonists, though more than twelve to one, could not have conquered it alone, because they had no fleet and no regular army. But the war came, and it was a great one. And a country of parasites has no chance against a country of patriots in a great war. All the sins of sloth and wilful weakness, of demagogues and courtiers, and

whatever else is rotten in the state, are soon found out and punished by war. Canada under Vaudreuil and Bigot was no match for the British under Pitt. For one's own parasites are always the worst of all one's enemies. So the last great fight for Canada was not a fight of three against three; but of five against one. Montcalm the lion stood utterly alone, with two secret foes behind him and three open foes in front—Vaudreuil the owl, and Bigot the fox, behind, and Pitt, Saunders, and Wolfe, three lions like himself, in front.

CHAPTER III

OSWEGO

1756

In 1753 the governor of Virginia sent Washington, then a young major of only twenty-one, to see what the French were doing in the valley of the Ohio, where they had been busy building forts to shut the gateway of the West against the British and keep it open for themselves. The French officers at Venango received Washington very politely and asked him to supper. In his diary he wrote that, after they had drunk a good deal of wine, "they told me that it was their absolute design to take possession of the Ohio, and they would do it." The Virginians then sent Washington back with a small force to turn the French out. But the French had meanwhile been making themselves much stronger, and on July 4th, 1754, Washington had to sur-

render — a strange Fourth of July for him to look back upon!

In 1755 Braddock came out from England with a small army of regulars to take command of all the British forces in America, and to drive the French from the Ohio valley. But the thirteen British colonies were jealous of each other and of the government in Britain, and their militia were jealous of the regulars, who looked down on them. In the end Braddock marched into a country perfectly new to him and his men, with only a few Virginians to assist him. The French and Indians were quite at home in the dense forest, where they surrounded and shot down the regulars, who stood bravely, but could not see a single enemy to fire at. In the centre of Canada, beside Lake George, the French general, Baron Dieskau, was defeated almost as badly as Braddock had been. Down by the Gulf the French Acadians were rooted out of Nova Scotia, for fear that they might join the other French in the coming war. Their lot was a hard one. But as they had been British subjects for forty years and had always refused

to take the oath of allegiance to the British crown, and as they were being constantly stirred up against British rule, they could not be safely left inside the British frontier.

At sea the French had also suffered loss. Admiral Boscawen had taken two ships with 400 seasoned French regulars on board. The French then sent out another 400 to replace them. But no veteran soldiers could be spared. So this second 400, raised from all sorts of men, were a poor lot, and spoiled the discipline of the regiments they joined in Canada. One of these regiments, that had the worst of the recruits, was the shakiest at the Battle of the Plains. Thus the power of the British navy in the Gulf of St. Lawrence in 1755 made itself felt four years later, and a long distance away, at the very crisis of the war on land.

In 1756 the great war broke out in Europe, and many plans were made in America for the conquest of Canada. The British forces were greater than the French, all told on both sides, both then and throughout the war. But the thirteen colonies could not agree. Some of them were hot, others lukewarm,

others cold, like Quakerish Pennsylvania. Then, the British generals were of little use, and the colonial ones squabbled like the colonies. Pitt had not yet taken charge of the war. And the whole British side in America was either doing nothing or doing harm.

There was only one good general on the whole continent; and that general was Montcalm. Though new to warfare in the wilds, he soon understood it as well as those who had waged it all their lives; and he saw at a glance that an attack on Oswego was the key to the whole campaign. Louisbourg was safe enough. And the British movements against Lake Champlain were so slow and foolish that he turned them to good account for his own purposes.

At the end of June Montcalm arrived at Ticonderoga, where he had already posted his second-in-command, Chevalier de Lévis, with 3,000 men. He walked all over the country thereabouts and took in the lie of the land so well that he knew every foot of it when he came back, two years later, and won his greatest victory. He kept his men busy,

too. He moved them boldly forward and threatened the British so cleverly that they never thought of attacking him, but only of defending themselves. Then, suddenly, while Lévis kept up this show of force, Montcalm himself left secretly for Montreal, saw Vaudreuil, who was still all bows and smiles, like Bigot, and left again, with equal suddenness, for Fort Frontenac (now Kingston) on July 21st.

At the entrance to the Thousand Islands there was a point called by the *voyageurs,* Point Baptism, where every newcomer into the "Upper Countries" had to pay the old hands to drink his health. The French regulars, 1,300 strong, were all new to the West, and as they formed nearly half of Montcalm's little army, there was a great deal of jollity in camp that night. Fort Frontenac was reached on the twenty-ninth; and the report that Villiers, with the advance guard, had already taken 200 canoes and 300 prisoners soon flew round and raised the men's spirits to the highest pitch.

Montcalm at once sent out two armed ships, with twenty-eight cannons between them, to

cut off Oswego by water, while he sent a picked body of Canadians and Indians into the woods on the south shore to cut it off by land. There was no time to lose, as the British were, on the whole, so much stronger and they might make up their slow minds to send an army to the rescue. But Montcalm certainly lost none. He sailed across the lake with his 3,000 men and all his guns and stores, and landed at Sackett's Harbour, which his advance guard had already seized and prepared. Then, hiding in the mouths of rivers by day and marching and rowing by night, at midnight on August 10th his army arrived safely within cannon-shot of Oswego under cover of the dark.

There were three forts at the mouth of the Oswego. The first was Fort Ontario; then, across the river, stood Fort Oswego; and, beyond that again, little Fort George. These forts were held by about 1,800 British, mostly American colonists, with 123 guns of all kinds.

While it was still dark Montcalm gave out his orders; and at the first streak of dawn the Indians and Canadians were in position

to protect the engineers and working parties. Only one accident marred the success of the opening day. One of the French engineers was returning to camp through the woods at dusk, when an Indian, mistaking him for an enemy, shot him dead. It is said that this Indian felt so sorry for what he had done that he did not stop scalp-hunting during the rest of the war; and he is also said to have lifted as many as thirty scalps from the hated British heads. In the meantime the other engineer had traced out the road from the bay to the battery. Led by their officers, the French regulars set to work with such good-will that the road was ready the very next day for the siege train of twenty-two cannons, which was landed in the nick of time.

Every different part of the siege was made to fit in perfectly with every other part. When the guns were being landed, the British, who had only just taken alarm, sent round two armed vessels to prevent this. But Montcalm had placed a battery all ready to beat off these ships, and the landing went on like clockwork. The next day, again, the

soldiers were all as busy as bees round the doomed British forts. Canadians and Indians filled the woods. Canadians and French hauled the cannons up to the battery commanding Fort Ontario, but left them hidden near by till after dark. The engineers made the first parallel. French troops raised the battery; and at daylight the next morning it was ready. Fort Ontario fired hard. The distance was only a musket shot, 200 yards. But the French fire was so furious that the British guns were silenced the same afternoon.

Colonel Mercer, the British commander, called in the garrison, who crossed the river after spiking the guns. Without a moment's delay Montcalm seized the fort and kept his working parties hauling guns all night long. In the morning Fort Oswego was commanded by a heavier battery than the one that had taken Fort Ontario the day before. More than this, the Canadians and Indians had crossed the river and had cut off the little Fort George, half a mile beyond. There was a stiff fight for it, but Mercer's men were driven off into the forts with considerable loss.

Montcalm's new battery beside the river was on higher ground than Fort Oswego, which was only 500 yards away. At six o'clock it opened fire and ploughed up the whole area of this fort with terrible effect. There was not a spot left which the French shells did not search out. The British reply, fired uphill, began to weaken in a couple of hours. The French fire was redoubled. Mercer was cut in two. The second-in-command kept up the unequal fight for another couple of hours. Then, finding that he could not induce his men to face the murderous fire any longer and seeing his fort cut off by land and water, he ran up the white flag.

Montcalm gave him an hour to surrender both fort and garrison. Again there was no time to lose, and again Montcalm lost none. That morning a letter found on a British messenger showed that Colonel Webb, with 2,000 men, was somewhere up the river Oswego waiting for news. So, while Montcalm was attacking the fort with his batteries, he was preparing his army to attack Webb also. He did not intend to wait; but to march out and

meet the new enemy, so as not to be caught between two fires.

At eleven the fort surrendered with 1,600 prisoners, 123 cannons, powder, shot, stores and provisions of all kinds, five armed ships, and 200 boats. There was also a large quantity of wine and rum, which Montcalm at once had spilt into the lake, lest the Indians should get hold of it and begin a massacre. As it was, they were anything but pleased to find that he was conducting the war on European principles and that he would not let them scalp the sick and wounded British. Some of them sneaked in and, in the first confusion, took a few scalps. But Montcalm was among them at once and stopped them short. He had been warned not to offend them; and so he promised them rich presents if they would behave properly. In his despatch to the minister of war he said: "I am afraid my promises will cost ten thousand francs; but the keeping of them will attach the Indians more to our side. In any case, there is nothing I would not have done to prevent any breach of faith with the enemy."

In a single week every part of all three forts was levelled with the ground. This delighted the Indians more than anything else, for they rightly feared that any British advance in this direction would be sure to end in their being driven out of their own country. By August 21st, ten days from the time the first shot was fired, Montcalm was leading his victorious army back again.

The news spread like wildfire. No such sudden, complete, and surprising victory had ever before been won in the West. The name and fame of Montcalm ran through the war-paths of the endless forest and passed from mouth to mouth along 10,000 leagues of inland waters. In one short summer the magic of that single word, Montcalm, became as great in America as it had been for centuries in France. The whole face of the war was changed. At the beginning of the year the British had thought of nothing but attack. Then, when Montcalm had shown them so bold a front at Ticonderoga, they had paused to make sure. Now, after Oswego, they thought of nothing but defence.

People could hardly believe that one and the same man had checked the threatened British invasion at Lake Champlain in July and in August had taken the stronghold of British power on Lake Ontario. Every step of the way had to be done by force of the men's own legs and arms, marching, paddling, hauling, carrying, and, in short, moving a whole army, siege train and all, as fast through the wilderness without horses as another army would have been moved with them over good roads in Europe. And the wonder grew when the numbers became known. With 3,000 men and 22 guns Montcalm had taken three forts with a garrison of 1,800 men and 123 guns; and had done this in face of five armed British vessels against his own two, and in spite of the fact that 2,000 more British soldiers were close behind him in the forest.

Canada had great rejoicings. All the churches sang *Te Deums.* The five captured flags were carried in triumph through Montreal, Three Rivers, and Quebec. The news was received with great jubilation in France, and many officers were promoted. In the

midst of all this glory Montcalm was busy looking after the health and comfort of his men, seeing that the Canadians were sent home as soon as possible to gather in their harvest, and engaging the Indians to join him for a still greater war next year. Nor did he forget any one who had done him faithful service. He asked, as a special favour, that an old sergeant, Marcel, who had come out as his orderly and clerk, should be made a captain. And Marcel, on his side, never forgot Montcalm. It was his hand that wrote the last letter that Montcalm ever dictated and signed, the one to the British commander after the Battle of the Plains.

Another man whom Montcalm specially praised was Bougainville, his aide-de-camp, of whom we shall hear again very often. Bougainville, though still under thirty, was already a well-known man of science and had been made a Fellow of the Royal Society of London. "You could hardly believe how full of resource he is," wrote the admiring Montcalm, and added, modestly: "As the account of this expedition may be printed, I have got him

to correct it carefully, because he writes much better than I do."

Only one thing spoiled the triumph. And that was Vaudreuil, who tried to claim all the credit of the plan for himself and the carrying out of it for the Canadians. He had certainly been saying for some time before Montcalm arrived that Oswego ought to be taken. But everybody on both sides knew perfectly well that Oswego was the gateway of the West; so in this respect Vaudreuil was no better than many others. And though, in a way, he made the plan, it was Montcalm who really worked it out. Vaudreuil pressed the button that launched the ship. But it was Montcalm who took her into action and brought her out victorious.

Montcalm's crew worked well together. But this did not suit Vaudreuil at all. He wrote to both the minister of war and the minister of marine in France, praising the Canadians and Indians and making as little as possible of the French. "The French regulars showed their wonted zeal; but the enemy did not give them a chance to do much

work." "Our troops, the Canadians and Indians, fought with courage. They have all done very well." True enough. But, all the same, the regulars were, from first to last, the backbone of the defence of Canada. "The measures I took made our victory certain. If I had been less firm, Oswego would still have been in the hands of the British. I cannot sufficiently congratulate myself on the zeal which my brother and the Canadians and Indians showed. Without them my orders would have been given in vain." And so on, and so on.

Montcalm saw the real strength and weakness of the Canadians and wrote his own opinion to the minister of war. "Our French regulars did all I required with splendid zeal. . . . I made good use of the militia, but not at the works exposed to the enemy's fire. These militiamen have no discipline. In six months I could make grenadiers of them. But at present I would not rely on them, nor believe what they say about themselves; for they think themselves quite the finest fellows in the world. The governor is a

native of Canada, was married here, and is surrounded by his relatives on all sides."

The fact was that the war was no longer an affair of little raids, first on one side and then on the other, but was becoming, more and more, a war on a great scale, with long campaigns, larger numbers of men, trains of artillery, fortifications, and all the other things that require well-drilled men who have thoroughly learned the soldier's duty and are ready to do it at any time and in any place. War is like everything else in the world. The men whose regular business it is will wage it better than the men who only do it as an odd job. Of course, if you take the best men and make them militia, and the worst and make them regulars, the militia may beat the regulars, even on equal terms. And if you put regulars into a strange country, quite unlike the ones they have been trained to fight in, they will begin by making a good many mistakes. But, for all-round work, the same men, as regulars, are worth much more than twice what they are as militia, everywhere and always.

CHAPTER IV

FORT WILLIAM HENRY

1757

In January Montcalm paid a visit to Quebec, and began to see there how Bigot and his fellow-vampires were sucking away the life-blood of Canada. "The intendant lives in grandeur, and has given two splendid balls, where I have seen over eighty very charming and well-dressed ladies. I think Quebec is a town of very good style, and I do not believe we have a dozen cities in France that could rank before it as a social centre." This was well enough; though not when armies were only half-fed. But here is the real crime: "The intendant's strong taste for gambling, and the governor's weakness in letting him have his own way, are causing a great deal of play for very high stakes. Many officers will repent it soon and bitterly."

Montcalm was placed in a most awkward position. He wished to stop the ruinous gambling. But he was under Vaudreuil, had no power over the intendant, and, as he said himself, "felt obliged not to oppose either of them in public, because they were invested with the king's authority."

Vaudreuil nearly did Canada a very good turn this winter, by falling ill on his way to Montreal. But, luckily for the British and unluckily for the French, he got well again. On February 14th he began hatching more mischief. The British, having been stopped in the West at Oswego, were certain to try another advance, in greater force, by the centre, up Lake Champlain. The French, with fewer men and very much less food and stores of all kinds, could hope to win only by giving the British another sudden, smashing blow and then keeping them in check for the rest of the summer. The whole strength of Canada was needed to give this blow, and every pound of food was precious. But Vaudreuil organized a raid under his brother, Rigaud, not telling Montcalm a word about

it till the whole plan was made, even though he had taken some of the French regulars. Montcalm told Vaudreuil that it was a pity not to keep their whole strength for one decisive dash, and that Lévis or some other regular French officer should be sent, if this raid was to take place at all, and with so many as 1,600 men.

But this time there was not to be any question of credit for any one but Canadians, Indians, Vaudreuil, and his brother. As for making sure of victory: well, Vaudreuil would trust to luck, hit or miss, as he always had before. And a strange stroke of luck very nearly did serve his unworthy turn. For on March 17th, when the 1,600 raiders were drawing quite close to Fort William Henry, most of its little garrison of 400 men were drinking so much New England rum in honour of St. Patrick's Day that their muskets would have hurt more friends than foes, if an attack had been made that night. The next evening the sentries heard a tapping noise on the lake, which turned out to be made by a Canadian who was trying the strength

of the ice with the back of his axe, to see if it would bear. The British gunners were called out quietly; and they sent such a hail of grape-shot crashing along this precarious foothold that the enemy were glad to scamper off as hard as possible.

Two days later Vaudreuil's brother arrayed all his 1,600 men against the fort and summoned it to surrender. But as he had no guns, the garrison would not listen to him. All he could do was to burn everything outside the fort. This certainly made a splendid bonfire; the wild, red flames leaping into the sky from the open, snow-white clearings beside the fort, with the long, white reaches of Lake George in front and the high, dark, densely wooded hills around. A great deal was burnt: four small ships, 350 boats, a saw-mill, sheds, magazines, immense piles of fire-wood, and a large supply of provisions. But the British could afford this loss much better than the French could afford the cost of the raid. And the cost, of course, was five times as great as it ought to have been. Bigot's gang took care of that.

Then the raiders set out for home on snowshoes. There had been a tremendous storm before they left, and the spring sun was now shining full on the glaring, white snow. Many of them, even among the Canadians and Indians, were struck snowblind so badly that they had to be led by the hand — no easy thing on snowshoes. At the end of the month they were safely back in Montreal, where Vaudreuil and his brother went strutting about like a pair of turkey-cocks.

Montcalm's first Canadian winter wore away. Vaudreuil and Bigot still kept up outward politeness. But they were beginning to fear that he was far too wise and honest for them, though he was under Vaudreuil's foolish orders and had no power over Bigot's knaveries. He was already getting into debt, much against his will. Vaudreuil had plenty of money as governor. Bigot stole as much as he wished. But Montcalm was not well paid. Yet, as the commander-in-chief, he had to be asking people to dinners and receptions almost every day, though he was becoming less and less able to meet the expense. The Bigot gang

made things so scarce and so dear that only the thieves themselves could pay for them. Well might the sorely tried general write home: "What a country; where knaves grow rich and honest men are ruined!"

In June there was such a sight in Montreal as Canada had never seen before, and never saw again. All the autumn, winter, and spring messengers had been going along every war-path, and waterway, east and west for thousands of miles, to summon the tribes to meet Onontio, as they called the French governor, at Montreal. And the ice had hardly gone in April when the first of the braves began to arrive in flotillas of bark canoes. The surrender of Washington at Fort Necessity and the capture and rebuilding of Fort Duquesne in 1754, the bloody defeat of Braddock in 1755, and Montcalm's sudden, smashing blow against Oswego in 1756, all led the western Indians to think that the French were everything and the British nothing. The Indians in Canada itself were equally sure that the French were going to be the victors there. And the Abenakis in

Acadia were as bitter as the Acadians themselves against the British in the east. So, whether eager for more victories or thirsting for revenge, the warriors came to Montreal from far and near.

Fifty-one of the tribes were ready for the warpath. Their chiefs had sat round the council fires. Their medicine men had made charms in secret wigwams and seen visions of countless British scalps and piles of British booty. So, when the braves of these fifty-one tribes met at Montreal, there was war in every heart among them. No town in the world had ever had such startling contrasts in its streets. Here were outward signs of the highest civilization and lowest barbarism, side by side. Here were the most refined of ladies, dressed in the latest Paris fashions, mincing about in silks and satins and high-heeled, golden-buckled shoes. Here were the most courtly gentlemen of Europe, in the same embroidered and beruffled uniforms that they would have worn before the king of France. Yet in and out of this gay throng of polite society went hundreds of copper-

coloured braves, some of them more than half-naked, most of them cannibals after a victory, when they revelled in stews of white man's flesh, and all of them decked in waving plumes, all of them grotesquely painted, like demons in a nightmare, and all of them armed to the teeth.

Much to Vaudreuil's disgust the man the Indians really wanted to see most was not himself, the "Great Onontio," much less Bigot, prince of thieves, but the warrior chief, Montcalm. They had the good sense to prefer the lion to the owl or the fox. Three hundred of the wildest Ottawas came striding down one day, each man a model of agility and strength, a living bronze, a sculptor's dream, the whole making a picture for the greatest painter's brush. "We want to see the chief who tramples the British to death and sweeps their forts off the face of the earth." Montcalm, though every inch a soldier, was rather short than tall; and the Ottawa chief looked surprised at first. "We thought your head would be lost in the clouds," he said. But then, as he caught Montcalm's piercing glance, he added:

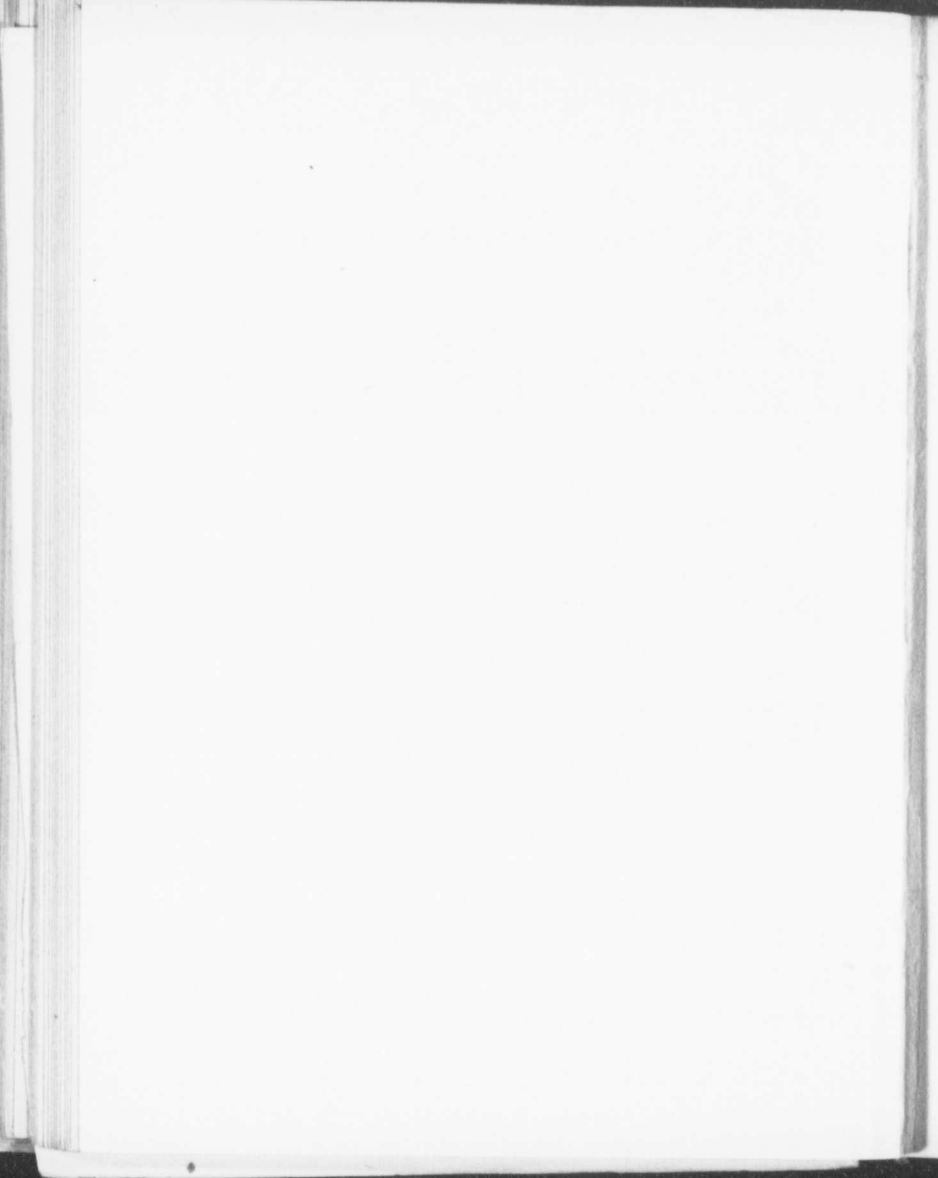
"Yet when we look into your eyes, we see the height of the pine and the wings of the eagle."

Meanwhile, prisoners, scouts, spies, and despatches from France had been coming in and confirming the rumours that the greater part of the British army was to attack Louisbourg, and that the French were well able to defend it. Here was a chance for another Oswego-like blow in July against the British forts at the southern end of Lake George. But Vaudreuil's raid there in March, and Bigot's bill for it, had eaten up so much of the supplies and money, that nothing like a large force could be got ready to strike before August. And the month's delay might give the British American militia, slow as they were, time to come to the help of the forts.

Once clear of Montreal and its gang of parasites Montcalm soon had his motley army in hand, in spite of all kinds of difficulties. In May Bourlamaque had begun rebuilding Ticonderoga. In July Lake Champlain began to swarm with boats, canoes, and sailing vessels, all moving south towards Lake George. Montcalm's whole force was 8,000. Of these

3,000 were regulars, 3,000 militia, and 2,000 were Indians from the fifty-one different tribes, very few of whom knew anything of war except on Indian principles. By the end of the month these 8,000 men were camped along the four-mile valley between Lakes Champlain and George. Meanwhile, the British were at the other end of Lake George, only a little more than thirty miles away. Their first post was Fort William Henry, with 2,200 men under Colonel Monro. Fourteen miles inland beyond that was Fort Edward, where Webb commanded 3,600. There were 900 more British troops still farther on, but well within call. And it was known that a large force of militia were being assembled somewhere near Albany. Thus Montcalm knew that the British had nearly as many men as his own regulars and militia put together, while their militia might come on at any time and in any numbers. He therefore had to strike as hard and fast as he could, and then retire on Ticonderoga. He knew the Indians would go home at once after the fight; he had to send the Canadian militia back in August to save

CHEVALIER DE LÉVIS



their harvest, and he would then be left with only 3,000 regulars, who could not be fed for the rest of the summer so far from headquarters. With this 3,000 he could not advance far, in any case, because of lack of food and the presence of Webb's 4,500, increased by an unknown number of American militia.

The first skirmish on Lake George was fought while the main bodies of both armies were still at the opposite ends. A party of 400 Indians and 50 Canadians were paddling south when they spied a number of British boats with 300 men, mostly raw militia from New Jersey. The Indians went ashore and hid. The doomed militiamen rowed on in careless, straggling disorder. Suddenly, as they passed a wooded point, the calm air was rent with blood-curdling war-whoops, and the lake seemed alive with red-skinned fiends, who had paddled in among them in one bewildering moment. The militiamen were seized with a panic and tried to escape. But they were nowhere beside the finest paddlers in the world, who cut them off, upset their boats, tomahawked them right and left, and

speared a good many like fish in the water. Only two boats, out of twenty-three, escaped to tell the tale. That night the forest resounded with yells of triumph as the prisoners, out of reach of all help from either army, were killed and scalped to the last man.

On August 1st Montcalm advanced by land and water. He sent Lévis by land with 3,000 men to cut off Fort William Henry from Fort Edward, while he went himself, with the rest of his army, in boats and canoes. The next day they met at a little bay quite close to the fort. On the third the final advance was made. The French canoes formed lines stretching right across the lake. While the artillery was being landed in a cove out of reach of the guns of the fort, Lévis was having a lively skirmish with the British, who were trying to drive in their cattle and save their tents. About 500 of them held the fort, and 1,700 were in the entrenched camp some way beyond.

Montcalm sent in his summons; but old Colonel Monro replied that he was ready to fight. On the fourth and fifth the French bat-

teries rose as if by magic. But the Indians, not used to sieges, grew angry and impatient, and swarmed all over the French lines, asking why they were treated like slaves, why their advice had not been sought, and why the big guns were not being fired. Montcalm had been ordered to humour them as much as possible and, on no account whatever, to offend them. Their help was needed, and the British were quite ready to win them over to their own side if possible. So, on the afternoon of the fifth, he held a grand pow-wow, told them that the French had to be slow at first, but that the very next day the big guns would begin to shoot and they would all be in the fight together. The fort was timbered and made a good target. The Indians greeted the first roar of the siege guns with yells of delight, and when they saw shells bursting and scattering earth and timbers in all directions, they shrieked and whooped so loudly that their savage voices woke almost as many wild echoes along those beautiful shores as the thunder of the guns themselves.

Presently a man came in with a letter from

Webb to Monro, which the Indians had found in a hollow bullet on a British messenger whom they had killed. This letter advised Monro to make the best terms he could with Montcalm, as Webb did not feel strong enough to relieve him. Montcalm stopped his batteries and sent the letter in by Bougainville, with his compliments. But Monro, while thanking him for his courtesy, still said he would hold out to the last.

Montcalm now decided to bring matters to a head at once. His batteries were too far off, and between them and the fort lay first a marsh and then a little hill. By sheer hard work the French made a road for their cannon across the marsh, and Monro saw, to his horror, that Montcalm's new batteries were rising, in spite of the British fire, right opposite the fort, on top of the little hill, and only 250 yards away.

Monro knew he was lost. Small-pox was raging in the fort. Webb would not move. Montcalm was able to knock the whole place to pieces and kill out the garrison. On the ninth the white flag went up. Montcalm

granted the honours of war. The British were to march off the next morning to Fort Edward, carrying their arms, and under escort of a body of French regulars. Every precaution was taken about the Indians. Montcalm assembled them, told them the terms, and persuaded them to promise obedience. He took care to keep all strong drink out of their way, and asked Monro to destroy all the liquor in the British fort and camp.

But while the garrison were marching out of the fort towards their own camp, some Indians climbed in without being seen and began to scalp the sick and wounded, till the French guard, hearing cries, rushed in and stopped them by force. The British had not poured out the rum and so the Indians stole enough to make them drunk. Montcalm came down himself, at the first alarm, and did his utmost. He seized and destroyed all the liquor; and he arranged with two chiefs from each tribe to be ready to start in the morning with the armed British and their armed escort. He went back to his tent only at nine o'clock, when everything was quiet.

The next morning the British, who had some women and children with them, and who still kept a good deal of rum in their canteens, began to stir much earlier than had been arranged for. Their French escort had not arrived when they began to straggle out on the road to Fort Edward; so that when the march began, the column stretched two or three times as far as it ought to have done. Before daylight the Abenakis of Acadia, who hated the British most of all, had slunk off unseen and prepared an ambush for the first stragglers they could find. The other Indians had come down later and had begun asking for rum, which many of the British gave them to get rid of them. Suddenly a war-whoop was raised and a wild rush was made. The British column, long and straggling already, broke up, and the French escort could defend only those who kept together. At the first news Montcalm ordered out another guard, and rushed down himself with all his staff officers, who, like him, ran every risk to save their prisoners from massacre. Several French officers and soldiers were

wounded, and all did their best. But the Canadians, more hardened to Indian ways, simply looked on. Most of the British were got together again and safely taken to Fort Edward. Cannon were fired from Fort William Henry to guide fugitives back. And those who were made prisoners by the Indians in the woods were nearly all ransomed by Vaudreuil, who afterwards sent them to Halifax in a French ship.

Such was the "massacre of Fort William Henry," about which people took opposite views at the time, as they still do to-day. It is quite clear that Montcalm did almost everything any man in his place could possibly do beforehand. It is also clear that he did everything possible during and after the massacre, even to risking his life and the lives of his officers and men. "Almost," but not quite, "beforehand." He might have turned out all his French regulars at first. But there were only 2,500 of them, not many more than the British, who were armed, who ought to have poured out every drop of rum the night before, and who ought to have started

only at the proper time and in proper order. There were faults on both sides, as there usually are. But, except for not having the whole of his regulars ready at the spot, which did not seem necessary the night before, Montcalm stands quite clear of all blame as a general. And his efforts to stop the bloody work — and they were dangerous and successful efforts — clear him of all blame as a man.

The number of persons massacred has been given by some few British and American writers as high as 1,500. Most people know now that this is nonsense. All but about a single hundred were accounted for otherwise. They were either killed in battle, or died of sickness, or were given up at Fort Edward, or were sent back by way of Halifax. In any case it is simply impossible that more than a hundred were massacred.

But a massacre is a massacre; all sorts of evil is sure to come of it; and this one was no exception to the rule. It unjustly blackened the good name of Montcalm. It led to intensely bitter hate against the Canadians, many of whom were given no quarter after-

wards. It caused the British to break the terms of surrender, which required the prisoners not to fight again for the next eighteen months. And it hurt the Indians most of all, guilty and innocent alike. Many of them took scalps from men who had smallpox, and so they carried this dread disease throughout the wilderness, where it killed fifty times as many of their own people as they had killed of the British.

As for the rights and wrongs of the whole case about the Indians, perhaps it would be a good thing to make them quite clear at once, since the massacre of Fort William Henry is one of those special cases that always raise the whole of any great vexed question. The Indians themselves naturally wished to live in their own country in their own way — as other people do. They did not like any of the whites to push them aside — who does like being pushed aside? But, if they had to choose between different kinds of whites, they would naturally choose the ones that changed their country the least. Now, the British colonists were many, and were always taking more

and more land from them, one way or another; while the French were few, wanted less of their land, were more inclined to trade than farm, and managed to get on with them better in general. Therefore most of the Indians took sides with the French; and therefore most of the scalps that were lifted were British. The question of sheer barbarity remains. But the Indians were living the same sort of barbarous life that the ancestors of the French and British had lived two or three thousand years before. So they, of course, did just what the French and British would have done at a corresponding age. Peoples take centuries to grow up into civilized nations; and it is absurd to expect savages to change more in a hundred years than Europeans have in a thousand.

One other point also remains. Who was right and who was wrong, as among the French and Canadians, the British and Americans? The fact is, there were plenty of rights and wrongs all round. Each side excused itself and accused the other. And, generally the pot was simply calling the kettle black.

The French and British both made use of Indians, some of whom would gladly have remained neutral. The French and British regulars, being trained in European discipline, were less inclined to "act the Indian"; but both of them did so on occasion. The first thing Wolfe's regulars did at Louisbourg was to scalp an Indian chief. The French regulars also did a little scalping on their own account, now and then. The Canadian regulars did more than a little. And the Canadian militiamen, roughened by their many raids, did a great deal. The American rangers were scalpers when their blood was up and nobody stopped them. They scalped under Wolfe at Quebec. They scalped whites as well as Indians, at Baie St. Paul, at St. Joachim, and elsewhere. Even Washington, when sending in a batch of Indian scalps for the usual reward to be paid by Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia, asked that an extra one might be paid for at the usual rate, "although it is not an Indian's."

A week after its surrender Fort William Henry was wiped off the face of the earth, as Oswego had been the year before, and

Montcalm's army was homeward bound. But Montcalm was sick at heart. Vaudreuil had been behaving worse than ever. He had written and ordered Montcalm to push on and take Fort Edward at once. But, as we have seen, the Indians had melted away, the Canadians had gone home for the harvest, only 3,000 regulars were left, and these could not be kept a month longer in the field, for lack of food. Yet with them Vaudreuil thought Montcalm ought to advance into British territory, besiege a larger army than his own, and beat it in spite of all the British militia that were coming to its aid.

Even before leaving for the front Montcalm had written to France asking to be recalled from Canada. He spoke very freely in this letter to the minister of marine. He pointed out that if Vaudreuil had died in the winter, the new governor would have been Rigaud, Vaudreuil's brother, a still bigger fool than Vaudreuil himself. He gives the Canadians their due. "What a people, when called upon! They have talent and courage enough, but nobody has called it forth."

In fact, the wretched Canadian was both bullied and flattered by Vaudreuil, robbed by Bigot, bothered by all kinds of foolish rules on his farm, and then expected to be a model subject and soldier. How could he be a soldier when he had never been anything but a mere raider, not properly trained, not properly armed, not properly fed, and not paid at all?

While Montcalm was writing the truth, Vaudreuil was writing lie after lie, in order to do all the harm he could to him. Busy tell-tales repeated and twisted every impatient word Montcalm spoke. And the whole of Canada was more at sixes and sevens than ever. Vaudreuil, sitting comfortably at his desk and eating three good meals a day, had written to Montcalm saying that there would be no trouble about provisions, if Fort Edward was attacked. Yet, at this very time, he had given orders that the Canadians at home should not have more than a quarter of a pound of bread a day. Canada was drawing very near a famine, though its soil could grow some of the finest crops in the world. But what can any country do under knaves and fools, especially

when it is gagged as well as robbed? Even Montcalm's complaints did not all reach the minister of marine, who was the special person in France to look after Canada; for the minister's own right-hand man was one of the Bigot gang, and knew how to steal a letter as well as a shipload of stores.

To outward view, and especially in the eyes of the British Americans, 1757 was a year of nothing but triumph for the French in America. Louisbourg was safer than ever; the British fleet and army had not even dared to attack it. Canada had never been so large. The *Fleur-de-lys* floated over the whole of the valleys of the St. Lawrence, Ohio, and Mississippi, as well as over the Great Lakes, where all three valleys met. But the whole of this show of strength depended on the splendid army of Montcalm, motley as that army was. Behind its dauntless front everything was hollow and rotten to the last degree. And the time was coming when even the bravest of armies could no longer stand against lions in front and foxes behind.

CHAPTER V

TICONDEROGA

1758

Montcalm's second winter was worse than his first. Vaudreuil, Bigot, and all the men in what would nowadays be business, politics, and the civil service, lived on the fat of the land; but the rest only on what was left. One reason was that there was no business at all, in our meaning of the word "business." There were no real merchants in Canada then, no real tradesmen, no bankers, no shippers, no men of honest business at all. Everything was done by or under the government, and the government was done by or under the Bigot gang. This gang stole a great deal in Canada, and most of what came out from France as well. So things became scarcer and scarcer and dearer and dearer. And the worst of it was that the gang

wished things to be scarce and dear, so that more stores and money might be sent out and stolen on arrival. For France, in spite of all her faults in governing, did help Canada, and help her generously. It seems too awful for belief; but it is true that the parasites in Canada did their best on this account to keep the people half-starved. Montcalm saw through the scheme. But, as we have just seen, many of his letters were stopped before they reached the head men in France. And, to cap all, the wretched army was no longer paid in gold, which always has its own fixed value, but in paper bills which had no real money to back them, as bank-notes have to-day. The result was that every officer who had to support himself, when not campaigning, fell into debt, Montcalm, of course, more than the others. "What a country; where knaves grow rich and honest men are ruined!"

As the winter wore away, the food grew scarcer—except for the gang. The soldiers were allowed only about a pound of meat a day. This would have been luxury, if the meat had

been good, and if they had had anything else to eat with it. But a pound of bad beef, or scraggy horse-flesh, or flabby salt cod, with a quarter of a pound of bread, and nothing else but a little Indian corn, is not a good ration for an army. The Canadians were worse off still. And in the spring the bread ration was halved again — only a couple of ounces. The 2,000 Acadians who had escaped up the St. Lawrence added to the misery; for they could not yet grow as much as they ate, even if they had had a fair chance.

The poor, patient, down-trodden Canadians at last began to grumble. A crowd of angry women threw their horse-flesh at Vaudreuil's door. And one day even the grenadiers refused to eat their rations. Lévis, who ate horse-flesh himself, for the sake of example, told them that Canada was now like a besieged fortress and that the garrison would have to put up with hardships. Then the pride of the soldier in them came out at once. Next day they brought him some roast horse, which was better served than what he had had cooked for himself. He gave each grenadier

a gold coin to drink the king's health; and order was once more restored.

The Canadians and Indians made two successful raids. One was against a place near Schenectady, where many stores and provisions were destroyed. The other ended in a fight with Rogers and his rangers, who were badly cut up near Ticonderoga. The Canadians were splendid at raids. But raids hardly counted any more. The war had outgrown them. Larger and larger armies were taking the field. They had artillery, engineers, and transport on a large scale. The mere raider, or odd-job soldier, though always good in his own place and kind of country, was getting less and less important compared with the regular. And the larger an army grows the more the difference of value widens between regulars and militia. For great wars there must be men trained to act together at any time, in any place, and in any numbers. And this is only possible with those all-the-year-round soldiers who either are regulars already or who, though militia to start with, become by practice the same as regulars.

Now, as Montcalm looked forward to the campaign of 1758, he saw what a desperate plight he was in. He would gladly have done without Indians at all. But some were always needed as scouts and guides; and it was a good thing to keep them, anyway, so as to prevent their joining the enemy. The trouble was that they were beginning to fail. Some of the ships with trade goods for them were taken by the British fleet. Those that arrived were almost as much "taken" by the Bigot gang. "If," said Montcalm, in one of his despairing letters to the minister, "if all the presents that the king sends out to the Indians were really given to them, we should have every tribe in America on our own side."

The Canadians were robbed even more; and they and the Canadian regulars were set against Montcalm and the French by every lie that Vaudreuil could speak in Canada or write to France. The wonder is, not that the French Canadians of those dreadful days did badly now and then, but that they did so well on the whole; that they were so brave, so loyal, so patient, so hopeful, and so true to

many of the best features of their race. One other point about them must be noted — their priests. Protestants would think them too much under the domination of the priests. But, however that may be, there is this to be said, that the church and the army, with all their faults, were the glory of Canada, while the government was nothing but its shame. The priests stood by their people like men, suffered every hardship with them, and helped them to face every trial of fortune against false friends and open foes alike.

But the mainstay of the defence was the French regulars. There were eight battalions of them, belonging to seven regiments whose names deserve to be held in honour wherever the fight for Canada is known: La Reine, Guienne, Béarn, Languedoc, La Sarre, Royal Roussillon, and Berry. Each battalion had about 500 fighting men, making about 4,000 in all. About 2,000 more men were sent out to Quebec to fill up gaps at different times. So that, one way and another, at least 6,000 French soldiers landed there between 1755 and 1759. But when Lévis laid down the

arms of France for ever in 1760, only 2,000 of all these 6,000 remained. About 1,000 had been taken prisoners on sea or land. A few had deserted. But almost 3,000 were lost by sickness or in battle. How many armies have a record of greater loyalty than that, and against foes behind as well as in front?

From the very first these gallant men showed their mettle. They were not forced out to Canada. They went willingly. When the first four battalions went, the general who had to arrange their departure was afraid he might have trouble in filling the gaps by getting men to volunteer from the other battalions of the same regiments. But no. He could have filled every gap ten times over. It was the same with the officers. Every one was eager to fight for the honour of France in Canada. One officer actually offered his whole fortune to another, in hopes of getting this other's place. But in vain. France had parasites at court, plenty of them. But the French troops that went out were patriots to a man. The only exception was the one we have noticed before, when 400 riff-raff were

sent out to take the places of the 400 good men that Boscawen captured in the Gulf during the summer of 1755.

The year 1758 saw the turn of the tide. Pitt was now at the head of the war in Britain and the patriots had gained the upper hand of the parasites throughout the British Empire. Canada could no longer attack; indeed she was hard pressed for defence. Pitt's plan was to send one army against the west, a fleet and army against the east at Louisbourg, and a third army straight at the centre, along the line of Lake Champlain. This third, or central, army was the one Montcalm was called upon to meet. It was the largest yet seen in the New World. There were 6,000 British regulars and 9,000 American militia, with plenty of guns and all the other arms and stores required. Its general, Abercromby, was its weakest point. He was a muddle-headed man, whom Pitt had not yet been able to replace by a better. But Lord Howe, whom Wolfe and Pitt both thought "a perfect model of military virtue," was second-in-command, and the real head.

He was young, as full of calm wisdom as of fiery courage, and the idol of Americans and British regulars alike.

The campaign was not in August this year, but in July. And by the middle of June it was known that Abercromby was coming. Montcalm and his regulars were ready. But nothing and nobody else were. Every one knew that Ticonderoga was the key to the south of Canada. But the fort was not ready, though the Canadian engineers had been tinkering at it for two whole summers. The fact was that these engineers were friends of Bigot, and they found that they made more money by spinning the work out as long as they could, charging for good material and putting in bad, and letting the gang plunder the stores on the way. Montcalm had settled everything in 1756, and there was no good reason why Ticonderoga should not have been in perfect order in 1758, when the fate of Canada was hanging on its strength. But it was not. It was not even rightly planned. The engineers were fools as well as knaves. When the proper French army engineers ar-

rived, having been sent out at the last moment, they were horrified at the mess that had been made of the work. But it was then too late. Montcalm and Abercromby were both advancing; and Montcalm would have to make up with the lives of his men for all that the knaves and fools had done against him.

Bad as this was there was a still worse trouble. Vaudreuil thought he saw a chance for another raid which would please the Canadians and hurt Montcalm. So he actually took away 1,600 men in June and sent them off to the Mohawk Valley under Lévis, who ought to have known better than to allow himself to be flattered into taking command. This came near to wrecking the whole defence. But the owls did not see that, and the foxes did not care.

Meanwhile, Montcalm was hurrying his little handful of regulars off to the front. He was to leave on June 24th. On the night of the twenty-third Vaudreuil sent a long string of foolish orders, worded in such a way by some of his foxy parasites that the credit for any victory would come to himself, while the blame

for any failure would rest on Montcalm. This was more than flesh and blood could stand. Montcalm had once before tried to open Vaudreuil's eyes to the mischief that was going on. Now he spoke out again, and proved his case so plainly that Vaudreuil had, for very shame, to change the orders. He arrived at Ticonderoga with his new engineers on the thirtieth. Here he found 3,000 men and one bad fort. And the British were closing in with 15,000 men and good artillery.

The two armies lay only the length of Lake George apart, a little over thirty miles; the same as last year, except that Montcalm was now on the defensive with less than half as many men, and the British were on the offensive with more than twice as many. Montcalm's great object was to gain time. Every minute was precious. He sent messenger after messenger, begging Vaudreuil to hurry forward the Canadians and call back the Mohawk Valley raiding party of 1,600 men. Meanwhile, his 3,000 regulars were working almost night and day. The fort was patched up. Nothing more could be done, without

pulling it down and building anew. An entrenched camp was dug out in front of it. And the little army that was doing all this was actually making such a show of force about the four-mile valley between the lakes that the British gave up their plan of seizing an advanced position there as a cover for the main body later on. Montcalm, with 3,000 toiling soldiers, had out-generalled Abercromby and Howe with 15,000 fresh ones. Four priceless days had been gained.

But on July 5th the British advanced in full force. It was a great sight the year before, when Montcalm had gone south along Lake George with 5,000 men. But it was a much greater now, when Abercromby came north with 15,000. There have been larger armies many a time, and many more crafts afloat together. But perhaps there never has been any other occasion on which the pride and pomp of glorious war have been set in a scene of such wonderful peace and beauty. The midsummer day was perfectly calm. Not a cloud was in the sky. The lovely lake shone like a burnished mirror. And the forest-

clad mountains never looked greener or cooler, nor did their few bare crags or pinnacles ever stand out more clearly against the endless blue than when a thousand boats rowed on to what the 15,000 men thought certain victory. The procession of boats was wide enough to stretch from shore to shore; yet it was much longer than its width. On each side went the Americans, 9,000 men in blue and buff. In the centre came 6,000 British regulars in scarlet and gold, and among them a thousand kilted Highlanders of the splendid "Black Watch," led by their major, Duncan Campbell of Inverawe, whose weird had told him a year before that he would fight and fall at a place with what was then an unknown name — Ticonderoga. In rear the larger boats were lashed together, two by two, and platforms laid across them for artillery.

And so the brave array went on. The regimental colours flew with the motion of the boats. The thousands of brilliant scarlet uniforms showed gaily between the masses of more sober blue. The drums were beating, the bugles blowing, the bagpipes screaming

defiance to the foe; and every echo in the surrounding hills was roused to send its own defiance back.

The British halted for the night a few miles short of the north end of the lake, and set out again the next morning, the sixth, in time to land about noon within four miles of Ticonderoga in a straight line. There were two ways for an army to march from Lake George to Lake Champlain. The first, and short way, was to go eastward across the four-mile valley. The second was twice as far, north and then east, all the way round through the woods. The valley road led to a bridge which Montcalm had blown up. So Lord Howe went round through the woods with a party of rangers to see if that way would do. While he was pushing ahead there, the French reconnoitring party that had been following the British movements from under cover the day before was trying to find its own way back to Montcalm through the same woods. Its Indian guides had run away in the night, scared out of their wits by the size of the British army. It soon got lost and, circling

round, came between Howe and Abercromby. Suddenly the rangers and French met in the dense forest. "Who goes there?" shouted a Frenchman. "Friends!" answered a British soldier in perfect French. But the uniforms were seen and both sides fired. The French were soon overpowered by numbers, and the fifty or so survivors were glad to scurry off into the bush. But they had dealt one mortal blow. Lord Howe had fallen; and, with him, the head and heart of the whole British force.

Abercromby pottered about all the next day, not knowing what to do. Meanwhile Montcalm kept his men hard at work, and by night he was ready and hopeful. He had just written to his friend Doreil, the commissary of war: "We have only eight days' provisions. I have no Canadians and no Indians. The British have a very strong army. But I do not despair. My soldiers are good. From the movements of the British I can see they are in doubt. If they are slow enough to let me entrench the heights of Ticonderoga, I shall beat them." He had ended his despatch to

Vaudreuil with the same words: "If they only let me entrench the heights, I shall beat them." And now, on the night of the seventh, he actually was holding the heights with his 3,000 French regulars against the total British force of 15,000. Would he win on the eighth?

Late in the evening 300 regulars arrived under Pouchot. At five the next morning, the fateful July 8th, Lévis came in with 100 more. These, and 400 Canadians that arrived in driblets, some while the battle was actually going on, were all. Vaudreuil had changed his mind again and had decided to recall the Mohawk Valley raiders. But too late. Lévis, Pouchot, and the Canadians had managed to get through only after a terrible forced march, spurred on by the hope of reaching their beloved Montcalm in time. The other men from the raid, and five times as many more from Canada, came in afterwards. But again too late.

The odds were four to one against Montcalm in numbers. And even in the matter of position he was anything but safe. The British could have forced him out of it

by taking 10,000 men through the woods towards Crown Point, to cut off his retreat to the north, while leaving 5,000 in front of him to protect their march and harass his own embarkation. And even if they had chosen to attack him where he was, they could have used their cannon with great effect from Rattlesnake Hill, overlooking his left flank, only a mile away, or from the bush straight in front of him, at much less than half that distance, or from both places together. Always on the alert, he was ready for anything, retreat included, though he preferred fighting where he was, especially if the British were foolish enough to attack without guns. And this was just what they seemed about to do. After Howe's death they made mistakes that worked both ways against them. They waited long enough to let Montcalm get ready to meet their infantry; but not long enough to let their guns get ready to meet him.

And then blundering Abercromby believed a stupid engineer who said the trenches could be rushed with the bayonet. But that was just

what they could not be. The peninsula of Ticonderoga was strong towards Lake Champlain, the Narrows of which it entirely commanded. But, against infantry, it was even stronger towards the land, where the trenches were. It was almost a square. It jutted out into the lake about three-quarters of a mile, and its neck was nearly as far across. Facing landward, the way the British came from, the left half of it was high, the right low. Montcalm entrenched the left half and put his French regulars there. He made a small trench in the middle of the right half for the Canadian regulars and militia; and cut down the trees everywhere, all round. The Canadian post was not strong in itself. But if the British rushed it, they would be taken in flank by the French and in front by the fort, which was half-a-mile in rear of the trenches and could fire in any direction; while if they turned to rush the French right, they would have to charge up hill with the fire of the fort on their left.

Montcalm's men were already at work again when Lévis marched in at five o'clock;

and they went on working like ants till the battle began, though the heat was terrific all day. Some of the trees cut down were piled up like a log-cabin wall, only not straight but zigzag, like a snake fence, so that the enemy would be caught between the two fires at every angle. This zigzag wooden wall was, of course, well loopholed. In front of it was its zigzag ditch; and in front of the ditch were the rest of the trees, with all their branches carefully trimmed and sharpened, and pointing outwards against the enemy. To make sure that all his men knew their places in battle Montcalm held a short rehearsal. Then they all fell to work again with shovel, pick, and axe.

Presently 500 British Indians under Sir William Johnson appeared on Rattlesnake Hill and began to amuse themselves by firing off their muskets, which, of course, were perfectly useless at a distance of a mile. In the meantime, Abercromby had drawn back his men from the woods and had made up his mind to take the short cut through the valley and rebuild the bridge Montcalm had destroyed.

This took up the whole morning; and it was not till noon that the British advance guard began to drive in the French outposts.

A few shots were heard. The outposts came in to the trenches. French officers on the lookout spied the blue rangers coming towards the far side of the clearings and spreading out cautiously to right and left. Then, in the centre, a mass of moving red and the fitful glitter of steel told Montcalm that his supreme moment had come at last. He raised his hand above his head. An officer, posted in the rear, made a signal to the fort half a mile farther back. A single cannon fired one shot; and every soldier laid down his tools and took up his musket. In five minutes the three-deep line was formed behind the zigzag stockade, which looked almost like the front half of a square. The face towards the enemy was about 500 yards long. The left face was about 200 yards, and the right, overlooking the low ground, ran back quite 300. Lévis had charge of the right, Bourlamaque of the left. Montcalm himself took the centre, straight in the enemy's way. And as he

looked round, for the last time, and saw how steadily that long, white, three-deep, zigzag line was standing at its post of danger, with the blue Royal Roussillon in the middle of it, and all the grenadiers drawn up in handy bodies just behind, ready to rush to the first weak spot, he thrilled with the pride of the soldier born who has an army fit to follow him.

All round the far side of the clearing the blue rangers were running and stooping, and increasing in numbers every second. In a few minutes there was not a stump near the edge of the bush that had not a muzzle pointing out from beside it. And soon there were not one but four great, solid masses of redcoats showing through the trees, less than a quarter of a mile away. Presently they all formed up correctly, and stood quite still for an anxious minute or two. Then, as if each red column was a single being, with a heart and nerves of its own, the whole four stirred with that short, tense quiver which runs through every mass of men when they prepare to meet death face to face. Behind the loopholed wall there

was a murmur from three thousand lips — "Here they come!" And the answering quiver ran through the zigzag, white ranks of the French. Montcalm's officers had their eyes on their men and repeated his last caution: "Steady, boys. Do not fire till the redcoats reach the stakes and you get the word!"

At the edge of the trees the British officers were also cautioning their men about orders. "Remember: no firing at all; nothing but the bayonet; and follow the officers in!" *Quick — March!* and the four dense columns came out of the wood, drew clear of it altogether, and advanced with steady tramp, their muskets at the shoulder and their bayonets gleaming with a deadly sheen under the fierce, hot, noonday sun. On they came, four magnificent processions, full of the pride of arms and hope of glorious victory. Three of them were uniform masses of ordinary redcoats. But the fourth, just making straight for Montcalm himself, was half grenadiers, huge men with high-pointed hats, and half Highlanders, with swinging kilts and dancing plumes. The march was a short one;

but it seemed long, for the suspense became greater and greater at every step. At last the leading officers suddenly waved their swords, the bugles rang out the *Charge!* and as if the four eager columns had been slipped from one single leash together, they dashed at the trees with an exultant roar that echoed round the hills like thunder.

Montcalm gripped his sword, and every French finger tightened on the trigger. All his colonels watched him eagerly. Up went his sword and up went theirs. *Ready!— Present!——Fire!!* and a terrific, double-shotted, point-blank volley crashed out of that zigzag wall and simply swept away the heads of the columns. But the men in front were no sooner cut down than the next behind them swarmed forward. Again the French fired, again the leading British fell, and again more British rushed forward. The British sharp-shooters now spread out in swarms on the flanks of the columns and fired back, as did the first ranks of the columns themselves. But they had much the worst of this fire-fight. Again the columns surged forward, broke up as

they reached the trees, and were shot down as they struggled madly among the sharpened branches.

Montcalm had given orders that each man was to fire for himself, whenever he could get a good shot at an enemy; and that the officers were only to look after the powder and shot, see that none was wasted, and keep their men steady in line. His own work was to watch the whole fight and send parties of grenadiers from his reserve to wherever the enemy seemed likely to break in. But the defence weakened only in one place, where the regiment of Berry, which had a good many recruits, wavered and began to sway back from its loopholes. Its officers, however, were among the men in a moment and put them into their places again before the grenadiers Montcalm had sent running down could reach them.

Again and again the British sharpshooters repeated their fire; again and again the heads of the columns were renewed by the men behind, as those in front were mown down by the French. At last, slowly, sullenly, and turning to have shot after shot at that stub-

born defence of Montcalm's, the redcoats gave way and retreated, leaving hundreds of killed and wounded behind them. Montcalm was sure now that all was going well. He had kept several officers moving about the line, and their reports were all of the same kind — "men steady, firing well, no waste of ammunition, not many killed and wounded, all able to hold their own." Here and there a cartridge or grenade had set the wooden walls alight. But men were ready with water; and even when the flames caught on the side towards the enemy, there was no lack of volunteers to jump down and put them out. The fort, half a mile in rear and overlooking the whole scene, did good work with its guns. And once it stopped an attack on the extreme left by a flotilla of barges which came out of the mouth of the river running through the four-mile valley between the lakes. Two barges were sent to the bottom. Several others were well peppered by the French reserves, who ran down to the bank of the river; and the rest turned round and rowed back as hard as they could.

Vaudreuil was not forgotten in all this heat of action. But he would not have felt flattered by what the soldiers said. All of them knew how slow he had been about sending the Canadians, 3,000 of whom were long overdue already. "Bah!" they said during the first lull in the battle; "the governor has sold the colony; but we shall not let him deliver the goods! God save the king and Montcalm!"

This lull was not for long. On came the four red columns again, just as stubborn as before. Again they charged. Again they split up in front as they reached the fatal trees. Again they were shot down. Again rank after rank replaced the one that fell before it. Again the sharpshooters stood up to that death-dealing loopholed wall. And again the British retired slowly and sullenly, leaving another four heaps of killed and wounded men behind them.

A strange mistake on both sides had nearly brought the two armies hand-to-hand this time. Whenever the French soldiers shouted " God save the king and Montcalm," the ensigns carrying the colours of the regi-

ment of Guienne waved them high in the air. The flags were almost white, and some of the British mistook them for a sign of surrender. Calling out " Quarter, quarter! " the redcoats held their muskets above their heads and ran in towards the wall. The French then thought it was the British who wished to surrender, and called out " Ground Arms! " But Pouchot, the officer who had marched night and day from the Mohawk Valley to join Montcalm, seeing what he thought a serious danger of breaking through, shouted " Fire! " and his men, most of them leaning over the top of the wall, poured in a volley that cut down more than a hundred of the enemy.

The Canadians in the separate trench on the low ground, at the extreme right, were not closely engaged at all. They and the American rangers took pot-shots at each other, without doing much harm on either side. In the middle of the battle the Canadians were joined by 250 of their friends, who came in from Lake Champlain. But even with this reinforcement they made only a very feeble attack on the exposed left flank of the British

column nearest to them on the higher ground, though it was fighting hard with the French in its front and getting much the worst of it. Lévis sent two French officers down to lead this attack, and the Canadian officers joined it at once. But the mass of the men hung back. They were raiders and bush-fighters. They had no bayonets. And they did not intend to come to close quarters, if they could help it. Ticonderoga was no French-Canadian victory, and no American attack. It was a stand-up fight between the French and British regulars, who settled it between themselves alone.

About five o'clock the two left columns joined forces to make a supreme effort. They were led by the Highlanders, who charged with the utmost fury, while the other two columns made an equally brave attack elsewhere. The front ranks were shot down as before. But the men in rear rushed forward so fast — every fallen man seeming to make ten more spring over his body — that Montcalm himself ran down at the head of his grenadiers to the point where the fight was hottest.

At the same time Lévis, finding his own front clear of the old fourth column, brought over the regiment of La Reine and posted it in rear of the men who most needed its support. These two reinforcements turned the scale of victory. The last great British charge had failed.

Abercromby, unlike Montcalm, never showed himself on the field at all. But, for the second time, he sent word that the trenches must be taken with the bayonet. Another attack was made. But the men were tired out by the sweltering heat and a whole afternoon of desperate fighting. They advanced, fired, had their front ranks shot down again; and once more retired in sullen silence. Their sharpshooters and the American rangers covered the retreat. Montcalm had won the day, the most glorious that French arms had seen in the whole of their long American career.

The British had lost 2,000 men, nearly all regulars. But they still had 4,000 regulars left, more than Montcalm's entire command could muster now. He went into action with

3,500 French regulars, 150 Canadian regulars, 250 Canadian militia, and 15 Indians; total, 3,915. At four o'clock 250 more Canadians arrived. But as his loss was 400 killed and wounded, nearly all French regulars, he did not have 4,000 fit for action, of all kinds together, at any one time; and he ended the day with only 3,765. On the other hand, Abercromby still had nearly all his 9,000 militia, besides 500 Indians, who, though worthless in the battle, were dangerous in the bush. Under these conditions it would have been sheer madness for Montcalm to have followed the British into their own country, especially as he lacked food almost more than he lacked men.

The losses of the different kinds of troops on both sides show who did most of the fighting. The Indians lost nobody, from among either the fifteen French or the 500 British. The Canadians and the American militia each lost about one man in every twenty-seven. The French regulars, fighting behind entrenchments and under a splendid general, lost about three times as many in proportion, or one man

in every nine. The British regulars, fighting against the entrenchments and under a stupid commander, lost about three times as many again, or nearly one man in every three.

Abercromby, having been pig-headed in his advance, now became chicken-hearted in his retreat. He was in no danger. Yet he ran like a hare. Had it not been for his steady regulars and some old hands among the rangers, his return would have become a perfect rout. Pitt soon got rid of him; and he retired into private life with the well-earned nickname of "Mrs. Nabby-Cromby."

Montcalm was a devout man. He felt that the issue of the day had been the result of an appeal to the God of Battles. And he put up a cross on the ground he had won, with a Latin inscription that shows both his modesty and his scholarship:

> "Quid dux? Quid miles? Quid strata ingentia ligna?
> En signum! En victor! Deus hic, Deus ipse, triumphat!"

> "General, soldier, and ramparts are as naught!
> Behold the conquering Cross! 'Tis God the triumph wrought!"

But the joy of victory did not last long. Vaudreuil claimed most of the credit for himself and the Canadians. He wrote lying despatches to France and senseless orders to Montcalm. Now that reinforcements were worse than useless, because they ate up the food and could not attack the enemy, he kept on sending them every day. Montcalm was stung to the quick. After getting three foolish orders to march into the British colonies he wrote back: "I think it very strange that you find yourself, at a distance of a hundred and fifty miles, so well able to make war in a country you have never seen!" Nor was this all. Vaudreuil had also sent Indians, of course after the need for them had passed. They were idle, and a perfect nuisance to the French. They began stealing the hospital stores and all the strong drink they could lay their hands on. Montcalm stopped them. They complained to Vaudreuil, and Vaudreuil reproached Montcalm.

It was the same wretched story, over and over again: the owls and foxes in the rear thwarting, spiting, and robbing the lions at the

front. Montcalm was more sick at heart than ever. He saw that nothing he could say or do was of any use; and he again asked to be recalled. But he soon heard news which made him change his mind, no matter what the cost was to his feelings. The East and West had both fallen into British hands. Louisbourg and the Ohio were gone. Only Canada itself remained; and, even now, Pitt was planning to send in the next year overpowering forces against it both by sea and land. Montcalm would not, could not, leave the ruined colony he had fought for so long against such fearful odds. And, in the desperate hope of once more saving it from impending doom, he decided to stay to the end.

CHAPTER VI

QUEBEC

1759

Having decided to stay in Canada, Montcalm did all he could to come to terms with Vaudreuil, so that the whole strength of the country might meet the terrible dangers of the next campaign with a united front. He spoke straight out in a letter written on August 2nd, less than a month after his victory at Ticonderoga: "I think the real trouble lies with the people who compose your letters and with the mischief-makers who are trying to set you against me. You may be sure that none of the things which are being done against me will ever lessen my zeal for the good of the country or any respect towards you, the governor. Why not change your secretary's style? Why not give me more of your confidence? I take the liberty of saying that the

king's service would gain by it, and we should no longer appear so disunited that even the British know all about it. I enclose a newspaper printed in New York which mentions it. False reports are made to you. Efforts are made to embitter you against me. I think you need not suspect my military conduct, when I am really doing all I can. After my three years of command under your orders, what need is there for your secretary to tell me about the smallest trifles and give me petty orders that I should blush to give myself to a junior captain?"

When Montcalm wrote this, he had not yet heard the bad news from Louisbourg and the Ohio, and he was still anxious to be recalled to France. Vaudreuil, of course, was delighted at the prospect of getting rid of him: "I beseech you to ask the king to recall the Marquis of Montcalm. He desires it himself. The king has confided Canada to my own care, and I cannot help thinking that it would be a very bad thing for the marquis to remain here any longer!" There spoke the owl. And here the lion, when the bad

news came: "I had asked for my recall after Ticonderoga. But since the affairs of Canada are getting worse, it is my duty to help in setting them right again, or at least to stave off ruin so long as I can."

Vaudreuil and Montcalm met and talked the matter over. Even the governor began to see that the end was near, unless France should send out help in the spring of 1759. He was so scared at the idea of losing his governorship that he actually agreed with Montcalm that two honest and capable men should be sent to France to tell the king and his ministers the truth. Bougainville and Doreil were chosen. They sailed in November with letters from both Montcalm and Vaudreuil. Nothing could have been better or truer than the letters Vaudreuil gave them to present at court. "Colonel Bougainville is, in all respects, better fitted than anybody else to inform you of the state of the Colony. I have given him my orders, and you can trust entirely to everything he tells you." "Mr. Doreil, the commissary of war, may be entirely trusted. Everybody likes him here." But, by the same ship, the

same Vaudreuil wrote a secret letter against both them and Montcalm. "In order to condescend to the Marquis of Montcalm and do all I can to keep on good terms with him, I have given letters to Colonel Bougainville and Mr. Doreil. But I must tell you that they do not really know Canada well, and I warn you that they are nothing but creatures of the Marquis of Montcalm."

The winter of 1758-1759 was like the two before it, only very much worse. The three might be described, in so many words, as bad, worse, and worst of all. Doreil had seen the stores and provisions of the army plundered by the Bigot gang, the soldiers half starved, the presents for the Indians sold to them at the highest possible price, and the forts badly built of bad materials by bad engineers, who made a Bigot-gang profit out of their work. A report was also going home from a French inspector who had been sent out to see why the cost of the government had been rising by leaps and bounds. Things were cheap in those days, and money was scarce and went a long way. So the whole public expense of

Canada should not have been more than one million dollars. But in Montcalm's first year it had already passed two millions. In his second it had passed four. And now, in his third, it was getting very near to eight.

Where did it all go to? Just where all public money always goes when parasites govern a country. The inspector found out that all the items of cost for supplies to the different posts had a cipher added to them. The officials told him why: "We have to do it because the price of living has gone up ten times over." But how was that rise made? The goods were sold from favourite to favourite, each man getting his wholly illegal profit, till the limit was reached beyond which Bigot thought it would not be safe to go. By means of false accounts, lying reports, and friends in France to stop letters from Montcalm and other honest men, the game went on for two years. Now it was found out. But the gang was still too strong to be broken up; though it was too bad even for the parasites in France. Another couple of years, and all its members would have been turned out by

the French. They knew this; and, seeing that their end was coming, one way or another, they thought a British conquest could not be much worse than a French prison. Indeed, it might be better, for a complete and general ruin might destroy most of the proof of their own guilt. The lions would die fighting — and a good thing too! But the owls and foxes might escape with the spoils.

Montcalm wrote home to his family by every ship. He might not have long to do so. Just after Ticonderoga he wrote to his wife: "Thank God! it is all over now until the beginning of May. We shall have desperate work in the next campaign. The enemy will have 50,000 men in the field, all together; and we, how many? I dare not tell it. Adieu, my heart, I long for peace and you. When shall I see my Candiac again?" On November 21st the last ship left for France. He wrote to his old mother, to whom he had always told the story of all his wars from the time when, thirty-one years before, as a stripling of fifteen, he had joined his father's regiment in the very year that Wolfe was born:

" You will be glad to hear from me up to the last moment and know, for the hundredth time, that I am always thinking of you all at home, in spite of the fate of New France and my duty with the army and the state. We did our best these last three years; and so, God helping us, we shall in 1759 — unless you can make a peace for us in Europe."

The wretched winter dragged along. The French were on half rations, the Canadians worse off still. In January Montcalm wrote in his diary: " Terrible distress round Quebec." Then, the same day, " Balls, amusements, picnics, and tremendous gambling." Another entry: " In spite of the distress and impending ruin of the Colony pleasure parties are going on the whole time." He had only horse-flesh and the soldier's half ration of bread on his table. No wonder the vampires hated him!

May came; but not a word from France. For eight whole months no ship had crossed that British sea. Day by day the half-starved people scanned the St. Lawrence for sight of a sail. At last, on the tenth, the first ship came

in; and by the twentieth there were twenty-three in the harbour, all laden with provisions, stores, and men. There were only 326 soldiers for Montcalm on board, and not enough stores and provisions to keep the soldiers and people on full rations through the summer, even with the help of what harvest could be raised when the farmers were all under arms. But Montcalm made the best of it: "A little is precious to those who have nothing."

Bougainville brought out plenty of promotions and honours for Ticonderoga. Montcalm was made lieutenant-general of the king in Canada. Bougainville told him his name was known all over France, "even the children use it in their games." Old Marshal Belle Isle, a gallant veteran, now at the head of the French army, and a great admirer of Montcalm, had sent out the king's last orders: "No matter how small the space may be that you can hold, you must somehow keep a foothold in America; for if we once lose the whole country, we shall never get it back again. The king counts upon your zeal, your courage, and your firmness to spare

no pains and no exertion. You must hold out to the very last, whatever happens. I have answered for you to the king." Montcalm replied: "I shall do everything to maintain a foothold in New France, or die in its defence." And he kept his word.

There was both joy and sorrow in the news from Candiac. His eldest daughter was happily married. His eldest son no less happily engaged. But, at the last minute, Bougainville had heard that another daughter had died suddenly, he did not know which one. "It must be poor Mirète," said Montcalm, "I love her so much." His last letters home show with what a brave despair he faced the coming campaign. "Can we hope for another miracle to save us? God's will be done! I await news from France with impatience and dread. We had none for eight months, and who knows if we shall have any more this year. How dearly I have to pay for the dismal privilege of figuring in the *Gazette*. I would give up all my honours to see you again. But the king must be obeyed. Adieu, my heart, I believe I love you more than ever!"

Bougainville had also brought out the news that Pitt was sending enormous forces to conquer Canada for good and all. One army was to attack the last French posts on the Lakes. Another was to come up Lake Champlain and take Montreal. And a combined fleet and army, under Saunders and Wolfe, was to besiege Quebec. There was no time to lose. Even Vaudreuil saw that. Pouchot was left at Niagara with 1,000 men. De la Corne had another 1,000 along Lake Ontario. And Bourlamaque held Lake Champlain with 3,000. But the key of all Canada was Quebec; and so every other man that could be found was brought there to defend it. The total thus collected to meet Saunders and Wolfe — who had 27,000 men of all kinds, 9,000 soldiers and 18,000 sailors, mostly man-of-warsmen — was 17,000. Of these 17,000 only 4,000 were French regulars. There were over 1,000 Canadian regulars; less than 2,000 sailors, very few of whom were man-of-warsmen; about 10,000 Canadian militia, and a few hundred Indians. The militia included old men and young boys, any one, in fact, who

could fire off a musket. The grand totals, all over the seat of war, were 44,000 British against 22,000 French.

Having done all he could for Niagara, Ontario, and Lake Champlain, Montcalm hurried down to Quebec on May 22nd. Vaudreuil followed on the twenty-third. On the same day the advance guard of the British fleet arrived at Bic. From that time forward New France was sealed up as completely as if it had shrunk to a single fort. Nothing came in and nothing went out. The strangling coils of British sea-power were all round it. But still Montcalm stood defiantly at bay. "You must maintain your foothold to the very last." — "I shall do it or die."

His plan was to keep the British at arm's length as long as possible. The "Traverse" from the north channel to the south, at the lower end of the Island of Orleans, was a good place to begin. Strong batteries there might perhaps sink enough of the fleet to block the way for the rest. He was eager to build them, but Vaudreuil was not. Had not Vaudreuil's Canadian pilots prophesied that no British

fleet could get through safely, even without any batteries to hinder it? And was not Vaudreuil so sure of this himself that he had never had the Traverse properly sounded at all? All he would allow was a couple of useless batteries, which the first British warships soon put to silence. Captain Cook then took soundings in three days; and the fleet of forty warships and a hundred transports went through without a scratch.

Vaudreuil's second chance was with the seven fireships, fitted out by the Bigot gang at ten times the proper cost, and commanded by a favourite braggart called Delouche. The night after the British fleet had arrived in the Orleans channel the whole French camp turned out to watch. The fireships went down with the ebb-tide, straight for the crowded British fleet. But Delouche lost his nerve, fired his ship too soon, jumped into a boat and rowed away. Five of the others did the same. The seventh was a hero, Dubois de la Milletière, who stuck to his post, but was burned to death there in a vain effort to get among the enemy. Had the six others waited

longer, the whole of the seven French crews might have escaped together, and some damage might have been done to the British. As it was there were splendid fireworks for both sides; the best man on the French side was killed for nothing; no harm was done to the British at all; and the Bigot gang put another hundred thousand stolen dollars into their thievish pockets.

Vaudreuil's third chance was with Point Levis, which Montcalm wished to hold as long as possible, so that the British fleet could not run past Quebec, being between two fires, and Wolfe could not bombard the town from the Levis Heights. But, early in July, Vaudreuil withdrew the French troops, and Wolfe at once went there and began to build his batteries. As soon as the British had made themselves secure, Vaudreuil thought it time to turn them out. But he sent only 1,500 men; and so many of these were boys and youths at school and college that the French troops dubbed them "The Royal Syntax." This precious 1,500 went up the north shore, crossed over after dark, and started to march

in two separate columns down the south shore towards Levis. Presently the first column heard a noise in the woods and ran back to join the second. But the second, seeing what it mistook for the enemy, fired into the first and ran for dear life. Then the first, making a similar mistake, blazed into the second, and, charmed with its easy victory, started hot-foot in pursuit. After shooting each other a little more, just to make sure, the two lost columns joined together again and beat a hasty retreat.

Montcalm now had no means of keeping Wolfe at any distance. But his position was chosen with such skill, and was so strong by nature, that it might yet be held till the fall, if only he were allowed to defend it in his own way. His left was protected by the Montmorency River, narrow, but deep and rapid, with only two fords, one in thick bush, where the British regulars would have least chance, and another at its mouth, right under the fire of the French left. His centre was the six miles of ground between the Montmorency and the St. Charles. Here the bulk of his

army was strongly entrenched, mostly on rising ground, just beyond the oozy tidal flats which the British would have to cross if they tried to attack him in front. His right was Quebec itself and the heights of the north shore above.

Wolfe pitched his camp on the far side of the cliffs near the Falls of Montmorency; and one day tried to cross the upper fords, four miles above the falls. But Montcalm was ready for him in the bush and beat him back.

The next British move was against the left of Montcalm's entrenchments. On July 31st Wolfe's army was busy at an early hour; and men-of-war were under way all along the French front with their decks cleared for action. At ten o'clock, when the tide was high, two small, armed ships were run aground opposite the redoubt on the beach a mile from the Falls; and they, the men-of-war and Wolfe's batteries beyond the Falls, all began to fire on the redoubt and the trenches behind it. Montcalm fired back so hard at the two armed ships that the British had to leave them. Then he sent word for his army to be ready

to come at a moment's notice, but to keep away from the threatened point for the present. By this means, and from the fact that his trenches had been very cleverly made by his own French engineers, he lost very few men.

The British kept cannonading all day. By four o'clock one British brigade was trying to land beside the two armed ships, and the two other brigades were seen to be ready to join it from their camp at Montmorency. The redcoats had plenty of trouble in landing; and it was not till six that their grenadiers, a thousand strong, were forming up to lead the attack. Suddenly there was an outburst of cheering from the sailors; and the grenadiers broke their ranks and dashed madly at the redoubt. The garrison at once left it and ran back, up the hill, into the trenches. The grenadiers climbed into it, pell-mell; but, as it was open towards its rear, it gave them no cover from the terrific fire that the French, on Montcalm's signal, now poured into them. Again they made a mad charge, this time straight at the trenches. Montcalm had called in every man there was room for, and such a

storm of bullets, grape-shot, cannon-balls, and shells now belched forth that even British grenadiers could not face it. A thunderstorm burst, with a deluge of rain; and, amid the continued roar of nature's and man's artillery, half the grenadiers were seen retreating, while half remained dead or wounded on the field.

The two redcoat brigades from Montmorency had now joined the first, and Montcalm kept his men well in hand to meet them all. But Wolfe had had enough. The first brigade went back to its boats. The two armed ships were set on fire. And the second and third brigades marched back to Montmorency along the beach in splendid order, the men waving their hats in defiance at the French, who jumped up on top of their earthworks and waved defiance back.

August was a hard month for both armies. Montcalm had just won his fourth victory over the British; and if only he could keep Wolfe out of Quebec till October, he would have saved Canada once more. Wolfe was ill, weak, disappointed, twice repulsed. But

Wolfe's army was at least perfectly safe. Montcalm could never hope to attack it in face of the fleet. And it was always well provisioned. Even luxuries could be bought in the British camp. The fleet patrolled the whole course of the St. Lawrence; convoys of provision ships kept coming up throughout the siege, and Montcalm had no means of stopping a single one.

He could not stop the ships; but the ships could stop him. He was completely cut off from all the rest of the world, except the country above Quebec; and that was being hard pressed by invasion too. The line of the St. Lawrence between Quebec and Montreal was the only link connecting the different parts of New France, and the only way by which Quebec could be provisioned. The course of the campaign could not have been foretold; and Montcalm had to keep provisions in several places along the river above Quebec, in case he had to retreat. It would have been foolish to have put all the food into Quebec, as he would not have been able to take enough away with him, if he had been

obliged to leave for Montreal or perhaps for the Great Lakes, or even for a last desperate stand among the swamps of New Orleans. "You must keep a foothold in America."— "I shall do everything to keep it, or die." Quebec was the best of all footholds. But if not Quebec, then some other: Montreal, an outpost on the Great Lakes, a camp beyond the Mississippi, or even one beside the Gulf of Mexico.

So, for every reason, he was quite as anxious about the St. Lawrence above Quebec as he was about the part of it in front of him. And ever since July 18th Saunders had been sending more and more ships up the river, under cover of the fire from the Levis batteries. In August things had grown worse. Admiral Holmes commanded a strong squadron there; and under his convoy was one of Wolfe's brigades, which landed at Deschambault, forty miles above Quebec and burnt a magazine of food and other stores. Montcalm sent Bougainville up along the north shore with 1,000 men to watch the enemy and help any of the French posts there to prevent a landing.

Whenever Saunders and Wolfe strengthened their forces in that direction, Montcalm did the same with his own. He gave Bougainville more men. He strengthened both the shore and floating batteries, and he kept in almost hourly touch with what was going on by means of mounted messengers.

The defence of the north shore above Quebec was of the last importance. The only safe way of feeding Quebec was by barges from Montreal, Sorel, and Three Rivers, which came down without any trouble to the Richelieu Rapids, a swift and narrow part of the St. Lawrence near Deschambault, forty miles up. There the French frigates and the natural difficulties in the way would probably keep Holmes from going any farther. Besides, Wolfe could not take his army there from Montmorency without being found out in good time to let Montcalm march up to meet him.

But it would never do to land provisions above Deschambault and cart them down by road. To begin with, there were not enough carts and horses, not enough men to be spared

for driving them; and the roads were bad as well. Then, transport by land was not to be compared with transport by water. It was easier to carry a hundred tons by water than one by land. So the French barges would creep down, close alongshore, at night, and try to get into the Foulon, a cove less than two miles above Quebec. Here they would unload their cargoes, which were then drawn up the hill, carted across the Plains of Abraham, and down the other side, over the bridge of boats, into the French camp.

Montcalm was anxious, but not despairing. Vaudreuil was as bad as ever. But, now that the two enemies were facing each other, in much the same way, for weeks together, there was less mischief for him to make. However, he made as much as he could. Everything that happened in the French camp was known next day in the British, because he could not keep any news to himself, though he often kept it from Montcalm, when possible, and made plans behind his back as well. News from the British camp, on the contrary, was always stale, because the fleet was a perfect

screen and no one on the French side could tell what was going on behind it.

One day Captain Vauquelin, a French naval officer, offered to board a British man-of-war that was in the way of the provision boats, if Vaudreuil would let him take 500 men and two frigates, which he would bring down in the night. Vauquelin was a patriot hero, who had done well at Louisbourg the year before, and who was to do well at Quebec the year after. He, of course, was not a member of the Bigot gang. So he was set aside in favour of a parasite, who made a hopeless bungle of the whole affair.

The siege dragged on, and every day seemed to tell in favour of Montcalm, in spite of all the hardships the French were suffering. Wolfe was pounding the city into ruins from his Levis batteries; but not getting any nearer to taking it. He was also laying most of the country waste. But that was of no use, either, unless the French barges on the river could be stopped altogether, and a landing in force could be made on the north shore close to Quebec.

Wolfe was right to burn the farms from which his men were fired at. Armies may always destroy whatever is used to destroy them. But one of his British regular officers was disgracefully wrong in another matter. The greatest blackguard on either side, during the whole war, was Captain Alexander Montgomery of the 43rd Regiment, brother of the general who led the American invasion of Canada in 1775 and fell defeated before Quebec. Montgomery had a fight with the villagers of St. Joachim, who had very foolishly dressed up as Indians. No quarter was given while the fight lasted, as Indians never gave it themselves. But some Canadians who surrendered were afterwards butchered in cold blood, by Montgomery's own orders, and actually scalped as well.

The siege went on with move and countermove. Both sides knew that September must be the closing month, and the French hopes rose. There was bad news from Lake Champlain; but it might have been much worse. Amherst was advancing very slowly. Bourlamaque was retreating before

him, but thought Montreal would be safe till next year, if some French reinforcements could be sent up from Quebec. Only good troops would be of any use, and Montcalm had too few of them already. But if Amherst took Montreal, the line of the St. Lawrence would be cut at once. So Lévis was sent off with a thousand men, a fact which Wolfe knew the very day they left.

September came. The first and second days passed quietly enough. But on the third the whole scene of action was suddenly changed. From this time on, for the next ten days, Montcalm and his army were desperately trying to stave off the last and fatal move, which ended with one of the great historic battles of the world.

CHAPTER VII

THE PLAINS OF ABRAHAM

September 13th, 1759

September 3rd looked like July 31st over again. One brigade of redcoats came in boats from the Point of Levy and rowed about in front of the left of Montcalm's entrenchments. The two others marched down the hill to the foot of the Falls of Montmorency. But here, instead of fording the mouth and marching along the beach, they got into boats and joined the first brigade. Meanwhile, the main squadron of the fleet, under Saunders himself, was closing in, with all decks cleared for action. Montcalm hoped that this was to be Wolfe's last move, for he felt sure he could beat him again. But no. As the ships closed in towards the shore the densely crowded boats rowed off to the Point of Levy, and Wolfe had broken camp without the loss of a single man.

Now began ten terrible days and nights for Montcalm. From the time Wolfe left Montmorency to the time he stood upon the Plains of Abraham, Montcalm had no means whatever of finding out where the bulk of the British army was or what it intended to do. Vaudreuil had not sense enough to hold his tongue, even now; and all the French movements were soon known to Wolfe, especially as the Canadians were beginning to desert in large numbers. But Wolfe kept his own counsel; the very few deserters from the British side knew little or nothing, and the fleet became a better screen than ever. For thirty miles, from the Falls of Montmorency up to above Pointe-aux-Trembles, its ships kept moving up and down, threatening first one part of the north shore and then another, and screening the south altogether. Sometimes there were men-of-war, sometimes transports, sometimes boats, sometimes any two of these, sometimes all three together. Sometimes there were redcoats on board one, or two, or all three kinds of craft, and sometimes not. It was a dreadful puzzle, made ten times worse for

Montcalm by the fact that all the news that could be found out was first told to Vaudreuil.

Gradually it seemed as if Wolfe was aiming at the thirteen miles of the north shore between Cap Rouge, nine miles above Quebec, and Pointe-aux-Trembles, twenty-two miles above. Camp gossip, the reports from Bougainville, who was still watching Holmes up there, and whatever other news could be gathered, all seemed to point the same way. But Saunders was still opposite the Beauport entrenchments; and the British camps at the Island of Orleans, the Point of Levy, and the Levis batteries still seemed to have a good many redcoats. Some of the redcoats, however, made the puzzle harder than ever at this time, because Saunders had over 2,000 marines, who were dressed in red and who could not be told from Wolfe's own soldiers at a distance.

Perhaps Wolfe was only making a feint at Pointe-aux-Trembles, and might come down against the entrenchments, after all, if he saw Montcalm had weakened them. And perhaps he would try to land at neither end of

the French line, but somewhere in the middle, between Cap Rouge and Quebec. Nothing could be found out for certain. Perhaps the British were only looking for the weakest spot, wherever it was. So Montcalm did the best he could to defend nearly thirty miles of shoreline with the 13,000 men he had left. Sickness, desertion, losses in battle, and the reinforcements for Lake Champlain had taken away a good 4,000. He reinforced Bougainville again, and told him to watch the threatened thirteen miles between Cap Rouge and Pointe-aux-Trembles more carefully than ever. He saw to the garrison of Quebec itself. He made sure that the bulk of his army was ready to defend the Beauport entrenchments as well as before, and that it was also ready to march up the river at a moment's notice. And he sent a good battalion of French regulars to guard the heights between Quebec and Cap Rouge, which were so strong by nature that nobody else seemed to think they needed defending at all.

This French battalion, La Guienne, marched up on the fifth and made the nine miles be-

tween Quebec and Cap Rouge safe enough against any British attack, as there were also various small French posts and batteries wherever a body of men could get up the cliffs. By the seventh Vaudreuil had decided that Montcalm was all wrong, especially about the Plains of Abraham, that there could be no danger between Quebec and Cap Rouge, that there was not enough firewood for both the Guienne battalion and the men at the posts and batteries, and that therefore the French regulars must march back to the entrenchments. So back they came.

On the eighth and ninth the British vessels swarmed round Pointe-aux-Trembles. How many soldiers there were on board was more than Bougainville could tell. He knew only that a great many had been first seen from Cap Rouge, that a great many were afterwards seen from Pointe-aux-Trembles, and that a great many were landed and taken on board again every day at St. Nicholas, on the south shore, between these two positions of Cap Rouge and Pointe-aux-Trembles. The British plan seemed to be to wear him out. And

the odds grew daily against him; for shiploads of redcoats would move up and down with the strong tide and keep his own wretched, half-starved men tramping and scrambling along the rough ground of the heights in order to follow and forestall them.

On the tenth a French officer near the Foulon saw, through his telescope, that six British officers on the south shore were looking at the heights all round him. He reported at once. Montcalm then tried again to reinforce this place. He also tried to send a good officer to command the Foulon post, instead of Vergor, who was one of the Bigot gang and a great friend of Vaudreuil's. Vergor had disgraced himself by giving up Fort Beauséjour in Acadia without a fight. He was now disgracing himself again, by allowing fifty of his hundred men to go and work at their farms in the valley of the St. Charles, provided they put in an equal amount of work on his own farm there. And the worst of it was that his utter worthlessness was as well known to Wolfe as it was to Montcalm.

On the eleventh and twelfth the movements

of the fleet became still more puzzling than before. They seemed to point to a landing somewhere along those much-threatened thirteen miles between Cap Rouge and Pointe-aux-Trembles, but, more especially, at Pointe-aux-Trembles itself. By this time Bougainville's 2,000 men were fairly worn out; and on the evening of the twelfth they were for the most part too tired to cook their suppers. Bougainville kept the bulk of them for the night near St. Augustin, five miles below Pointe-aux-Trembles and eight miles above Cap Rouge, so that he could go to either end of his line in the morning. He knew that some British vessels were still off Pointe-aux-Trembles at sunset. He knew that most of them went down for the night to St. Nicholas, on the south shore, only four miles nearer Quebec than he was at St. Augustin. And he and everybody else on both sides — except Wolfe and Montcalm themselves — thought the real attack was going to be made close to Pointe-aux-Trembles, as the news had now leaked out that this was the plan formed by the British brigadiers with Wolfe's own approval.

Down in his six miles of Beauport entrenchments Montcalm was getting more and more uneasy on the fatal twelfth. Where was Wolfe's army? The bulk of it, two brigades, was said to be at St. Nicholas, thirteen miles above Quebec, facing the same thirteen miles that Bougainville's worn-out men had been defending for so long. But where was the third brigade? Saunders was opposite Beauport, as usual. His boats were very busy laying buoys, as if to mark out good landing-places for another attack. And he had redcoats with him, too. Which were they? Marines? Soldiers? Nobody could see. There were more redcoats at the island, more at the Point of Levy, more yet near the Levis batteries. Were any of these marines? Why was Saunders beginning to bombard the entrenchments and send boats along the shore there after dark? Was this a feint or not? Why were the Levis batteries thundering so furiously against Quebec? Was it to cover Wolfe's crowded boats coming down to join Saunders?

Montcalm was up all night, keeping his

men ready for anything. Bougainville reported much the same news as for several days past. He expected to see Holmes and Wolfe back at Pointe-aux-Trembles in the morning. But still he was ready to march down to Cap Rouge as fast as his tired-out men could go. His thirteen miles were being well watched.

But how about the nine miles between Cap Rouge and Quebec? Vaudreuil was as stubborn about them as ever. They were a line of high cliffs, and Vergor was his friend. But Montcalm saw what a chance they offered to a man of such daring skill as Wolfe. He again tried to have Vergor recalled. But in vain. Then, in the afternoon, he took the bold but only course of ordering the Guienne battalion, 400 strong, to go up at once and camp for the night at the top of the Foulon, near Vergor. The men were all ready to march when Vaudreuil found out what they were going to do. It was no order of his! It would belittle him to let Montcalm take his place! And, anyhow, it was all nonsense! Raising his voice so that the staff could hear

him, he then said: "The English haven't wings! Let La Guienne stay where it is! I'll see about that Foulon myself to-morrow morning!"

"To-morrow morning" began early, long before Vergor and Vaudreuil were out of bed. Vergor was up first. There were redcoats running at his tent with fixed bayonets. He was off, like a flash, in his nightshirt, and Wolfe had taken his post. He ought to have been on the alert for friends as well as foes that early morning, because all the French posts had been warned to look out for a provision convoy, which was expected down the north shore and in at the Foulon itself. But Vergor was asleep instead, and half his men were away at his farm. So Vaudreuil lost his chance to "see about the Foulon himself" on that "to-morrow morning."

Saunders had been threatening the entrenchments all night and the Levis batteries had redoubled their fire against Quebec before daylight. But about five o'clock Montcalm's quick ear caught the sound of a new cannonade above Quebec. It came from

the Foulon, which was only two miles and a half from the St. Charles bridge of boats, though the tableland of the Plains of Abraham rose, 300 feet high, between. His first thought was for the provision convoy, so badly needed in his half-starved camp. He knew it was expected down at the Foulon this very night, and that the Samos battery was to try to protect it from the British men-of-war as it ran in. But he did not know that it had been stopped by a British frigate above Pointe-aux-Trembles, and that Wolfe's boats were taking its place and fooling the French sentries, who had been ordered to pass it quietly.

Yet he knew Wolfe. He knew Vergor. And, setting spurs to his horse, he galloped down from Beauport to the bridge of boats, giving orders as he went to turn out every man at once.

At the bridge he found Vaudreuil writing a letter to Bougainville. If Vaudreuil had written nothing else in his life, this single letter would be enough to condemn him for ever at the bar of history. With the British on the Plains of Abraham and the fate of half a

continent trembling in the scale, he prattled away on his official foolscap as if Wolfe was at the head of only a few naughty boys whom a squad of police could easily arrest. *"I have set the army in motion. I have sent the Marquis of Montcalm with one hundred Canadians, as a reinforcement."*

Montcalm took up a good deal more than the *"one hundred men"* that Vaudreuil had ordered him to take, and sent a very different message to Bougainville from the one Vaudreuil had written. What hero was ever more sorely tried? When he caught sight of the redcoats marching towards Quebec, in full view of the place where Vaudreuil was writing that idiotic letter, he exclaimed, as he well might: "Ah! there they are, where they have no right to be!" Then, turning to the officers with him, he added: "Gentlemen, this is a serious affair. Let every one take post at once!"

The camp was all under arms. Montcalm ordered up all the French and Canadian regulars and all the militia, except 2,000. Vaudreuil at once ordered a battalion of regulars

and all the militia, except 2,000, to stay where they were. Montcalm asked for the whole of the twenty-five field guns in Quebec. Vaudreuil gave him three.

Wolfe's 5,000 were already on the Plains when Montcalm galloped up to the crest of ground from which he could see them, only 600 yards away. The line was very thin, only two-deep; and its right did not seem to have come up yet. Some sailors were dragging a gun along, not far from the Foulon. Perhaps Wolfe's landing was not quite completed?

Meanwhile, half the 5,000 that Montcalm was able to get into action was beginning to fire at the redcoats from under cover and at some distance. This half was militia and Indians, 2,000 of the first and 500 of the second. The flat and open battlefield that Wolfe had in his front was almost empty. It was there that Montcalm would have to fight with his other 2,500, in eight small battalions of regulars, five French and three Canadian.

These regulars wasted no time, once they were clear of Vaudreuil, who still thought some of them should stay down at Montmorency.

They crossed the bridge of boats and valley of the St. Charles, mounted the Heights of Abraham, and formed up about as far on the inner side of the crest of ground as Wolfe's men were on the outer side. Montcalm called his brigadiers, colonels, and staff together, to find out if any one knew anything about the British. No one knew for certain. But most of them thought that the enemy's line was not yet complete, and that, for this reason, as well as because the sailors were beginning to land entrenching tools and artillery, it would be better to attack at once.

Montcalm agreed. In fact, he had no choice. He was completely cut off from the St. Lawrence. His army could not be fed for another week by land. And he might get in a blow before Wolfe was quite ready. There was nothing to wait for. Bougainville must have started down as hard as his tired-out men could march. But waiting for French reinforcements meant waiting for British ones too. And the British would gain more than the French. The fleet was closing in. Boats crowded with marines and sailors were row-

ing to the Foulon, with tools and guns for a siege. And there was a naval brigade on the beach already.

Montcalm gave the signal, and the eight battalions stepped off, reached the top of the crest, and came in sight of their opponents. Wolfe's front was of six battalions two-deep, about equal in numbers to Montcalm's eight battalions six-deep. The redcoats marched forward a hundred paces and halted. The two fronts were now a quarter of a mile apart. Some of the other half of Wolfe's army were curved back to protect the flanks against the other half of Montcalm's, and some were in reserve, ready for Bougainville.

Montcalm rode along his little line for the last time. There stood the heroes of his four great victories — Oswego, Fort William Henry, Ticonderoga, Montmorency. He knew that at least half of them would follow wherever he led. The three Canadian battalions on his right and left might not close with an enemy who had bayonets and knew how to use them, when they themselves had none. And the Languedoc battalion of Frenchmen

was a little shaky, because it had been obliged to take most of the bad recruits sent out to replace the tried soldiers captured by the British fleet in 1755. But the remainder were true as steel.

"Won't you take a little more rest before you begin?" asked Montcalm, as he passed the veteran Royal Roussillon. "No, no; we're never tired before a battle!" the men shouted back. And so he rode along, stopping to say a word to each battalion on the way. He had put on his full uniform that morning, thinking a battle might be fought. He wore the green, gold-embroidered coat he had worn at court when he presented his son to the king and took leave of France for ever. It was open in front, showing his polished cuirass. The Grand Cross of St. Louis glittered on his breast, over as brave a heart as any of the Montcalms had ever shown for centuries in presence of the foe. From head to foot he looked the hero that he was, and he sat his jet-black charger as if the horse and man were one.

He reined up beside the Languedoc bat-

talion, hoping to steady it by leading it in person. As he did so he saw that the Canadians and Indians were pressing Wolfe's flanks more closely from under cover and that there was some confusion in the thin red line itself, where its skirmishers, having been called in, were trying to find their places in too much of a hurry. This was his only chance. Up went his sword, and the advance began, the eight six-deep battalions stepping off together at the slow march, with shouldered arms. "Long live the king and Montcalm!" they shouted, as they had at Ticonderoga; and the ensigns waved the *Fleur-de-lys* aloft.

Half the distance was covered in good formation. But when the three battalions of Canadian regulars came within musket-shot, they suddenly began to fire without orders, and then dropped down flat to reload. This threw the line out; and there was more wavering when the French saw that the Canadians, far from regaining their places, were running off to the flanks to join the militia and Indians under cover. Montcalm was now left with only his five French battalions — five

short, thick lines, four white and one blue, against Wolfe's long, six-jointed, thin red line. He halted a moment, to steady the men, and advanced again in the way that regulars then fought each other on flat and open battlefields: a short march of fifty paces or so, in slow time, a halt to fire, another advance and another halt to fire, until close quarters were reached, when a bayonet charge gave the victory to whichever side had kept its formation the better.

A single British gun was firing grape-shot straight into the French left and cutting down a great many men. But the thin red line itself was silent; silent as the grave and steadfast as a wall. Presently the bad characters in the Languedoc battalion could not endure the strain any longer. They fired without orders and could not be stopped. At the same time Montcalm saw that his five little bodies of men were drifting apart. When the Canadian regulars moved off, they left the French flanks quite open. And so the nearest French battalions kept edging outwards, the ones on the right towards their

own right and the ones on the left towards their own left, to prevent themselves from being overlapped by the long red line of fire and steel when the two fronts closed. But this drift outwards, while not enough to reach Wolfe's flanks, was quite enough to make a dreadful gap in Montcalm's centre. Thus the British, at the final moment, took the French on both outer and both inner flanks as well as straight in front.

The distance was growing less and less. A hundred paces now! Would that grim line of redcoats never fire? Seventy-five!! — Fifty!! — Forty!!! — the glint of a sword-blade on the British right! — the word of command to their grenadiers! — "*Ready! — Present! — — Fire!!!*" Like six single shots from as many cannon the British volleys crashed forth, from right to left, battalion by battalion, all down that first of thin red lines.

The front rank of the French went down before these double-shotted volleys almost to a man. When the smoke cleared off, the British had come nearer still. They had closed up twenty paces to their front, reload-

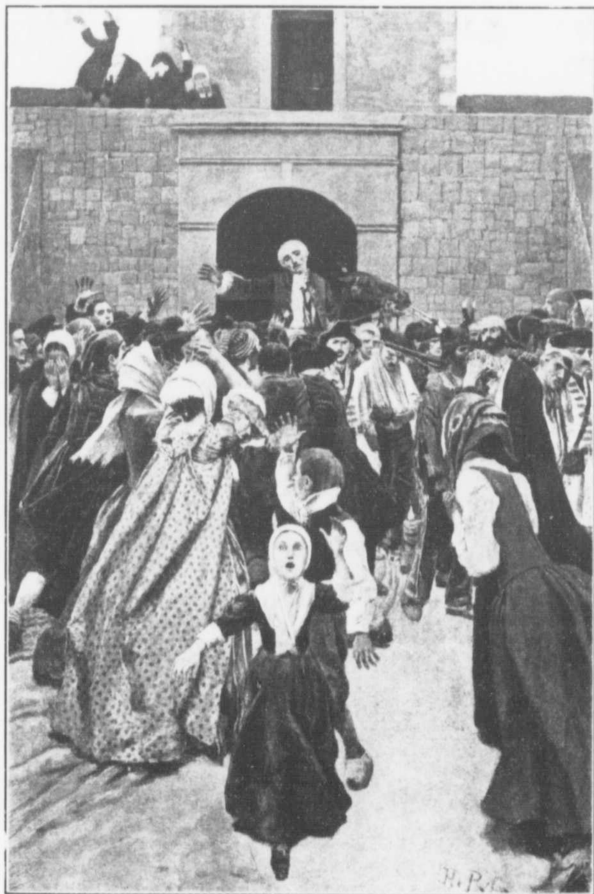
ing as they came. And now, taking the six-deep French in front and flanks, they fired as fast as they could, but steadily and under perfect control. The French, on the other hand, were firing wildly, and simply crumbling away before that well-aimed storm of lead. The four white lines melted into shapeless masses. They rocked and reeled like sinking vessels. In vain their officers faced and found death in a last effort to lead them on. All three brigadiers and two of the colonels were down. Montcalm was the only one of four French generals still on horseback; and he was wounded while trying to keep the Languedoc men in action.

Suddenly, on the right, the Sarre and Languedoc battalions turned and ran. A moment more, and Béarn and Guienne, in the centre, had followed them. The wounded Montcalm rode alone among the mad rush of panic-stricken fugitives. But over towards the St. Lawrence cliffs he saw the blue line of the Royal Roussillon still fighting desperately against the overlapping redcoats. He galloped up. But, even as he arrived, the whole

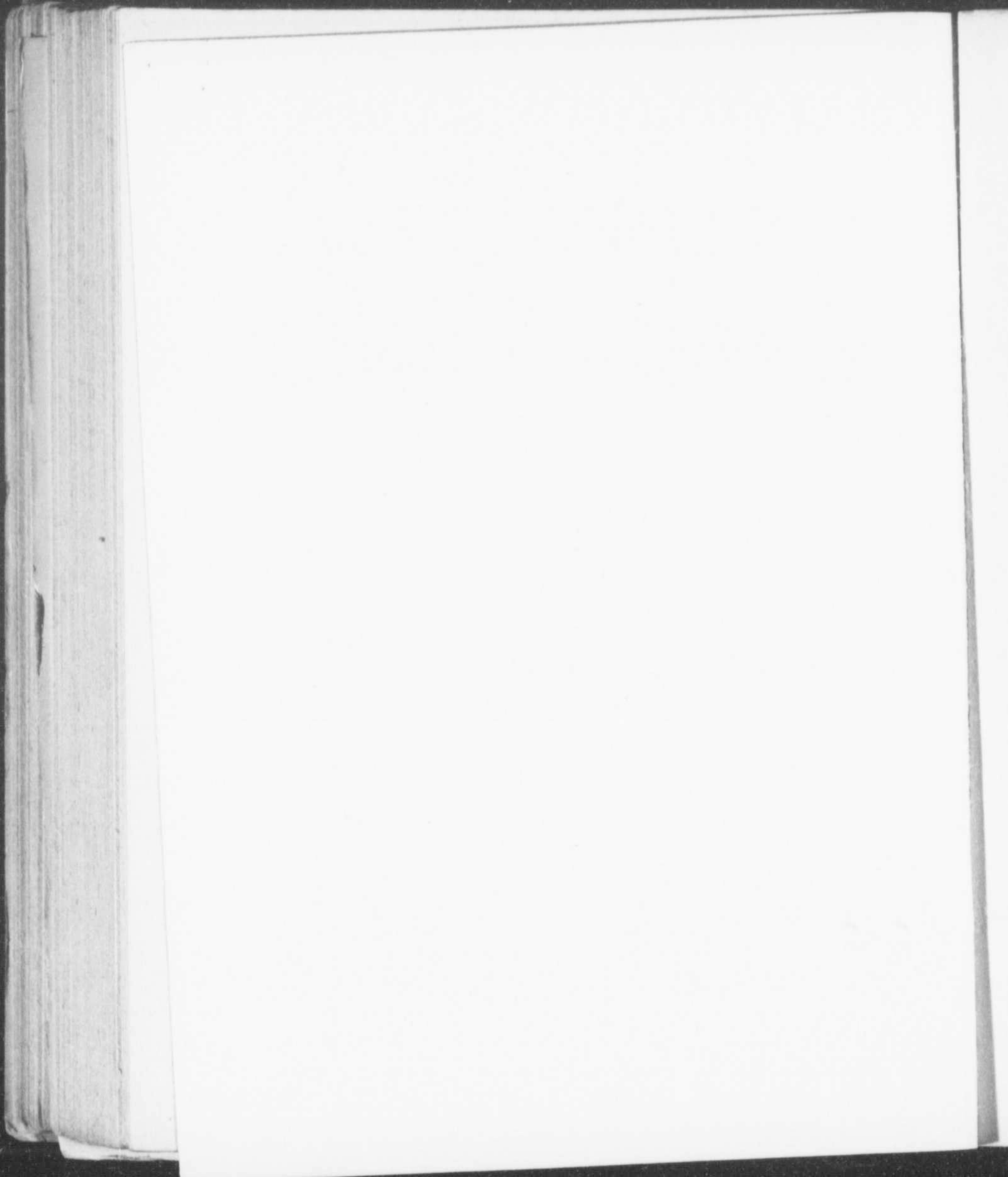
mass swayed, turned, and broke in wild confusion. Only three officers remained. Half the battalion was killed or wounded. Nothing could stay its flight.

On the top of the crest of ground, where he had formed his line of attack only a few minutes before, Montcalm was trying to rally some men to keep back the pursuing British when he was hit again, this time with a mortal wound. He reeled in the saddle, and would have fallen from it, if two faithful grenadiers had not sprung to his side and held him up. His splendid black charger seemed to know what was the matter with his master, and walked on gently at a foot's pace down the Grande Allée and into Quebec by the St. Louis Gate. Pursuers and pursued were now racing for the valley of the St. Charles, and Quebec itself was, for the moment, safe.

Never was there a greater rout than on the Plains of Abraham at ten o'clock that morning. The French and Canadians ran for the bridge of boats, their only safety. But they came very close to being cut off both in front and



THE FALL OF MONTCALM



rear. Vaudreuil had poked his nose out of one of the gates of Quebec when the flight began. He then galloped down to the bridge, telling the Canadians on the Côte d'Abraham, which was the road from the Plains to the St. Charles, to make a stand there. Having got safe over the bridge himself, he was actually having it cut adrift, when some officers rushed up and stopped this crowning act of shame. This saved the fugitives in front.

Meanwhile the flying troops were being saved in rear by the Canadians at the Côte d'Abraham, under a French officer called Dumas. These Canadians had not done much in the battle, where the fighting was in the open, to which they were not trained, and where the British used bayonets, of which they had none themselves. But in the bush along the crest of the cliffs overlooking the valley they fought splendidly. After holding back the pursuit for twenty minutes and losing a quarter of their numbers, they gave way. But a few of them made a second stand in a mill and bakery in the valley itself and were killed or wounded to a man.

Montcalm heard the outburst of firing at the Côte d'Abraham. But he knew that all was over now, and Canada was lost; all he had fought for so nobly, so wisely, and so well; all he had suffered for so keenly and so long. As he rode through the St. Louis Gate, with the two grenadiers holding him up in his saddle, a terrified woman shrieked out, "Oh! look at the marquis, he's killed, he's killed!" "It is nothing at all, my kind friend," answered Montcalm, trying to sit up straight, "you must not be so much alarmed!" Five minutes later the doctor told him he had only a few hours to live. "So much the better," he replied, "I shall not see the surrender of Quebec."

On hearing he had such a short time before him, his first thought was to leave no possible duty undone. He told the commandant of Quebec that he had no advice to give about the surrender. He told Vaudreuil's messenger that there were only three courses for the army to follow: to fight again, surrender, or retreat towards Montreal; and that he would advise a retreat. And he dictated this letter

to the British commander. It was written by his devoted secretary, Marcel, and delivered to Wolfe's successor, Townshend:

"Sir, being obliged to surrender Quebec to your arms I have the honour to recommend our sick and wounded to Your Excellency's kindness, and to ask you to carry out the exchange of prisoners, as agreed upon between His Most Christian Majesty and His Britannic Majesty. I beg Your Excellency to rest assured of the high esteem and great respect with which I have the honour to be

"Your most humble and obedient servant,

"Montcalm."

And then, his public duty over, he sent a message to each member of his family at Candiac, including "poor Mirète," for not a word had come from France since the British fleet had sealed up the St. Lawrence, and he did not yet know which of his daughters had died.

His family remembered, he gave the rest of his thoughts to his God and that other

world he was so soon to enter. All night long his lips were seen to move in prayer. And, just as the dreary dawn was breaking, he breathed his last.

"War is the grave of the Montcalms."

EPILOGUE

Which is the greater, Wolfe or Montcalm? That is a question to which only one answer is possible — theirs is a twin renown.

MORTEM VIRTUS COMMUNEM
FAMAM HISTORIA
MONUMENTUM POSTERITAS
DEDIT

PATRIOTS
THEY DIED TOGETHER
TOGETHER ARE ON THE ROLL OF FAME
TOGETHER ARE REMEMBERED BY POSTERITY

Wolfe fell victorious in the war that made a British Empire; Montcalm, defeated, in the war that lost a French one.

But this takes nothing from Montcalm himself. His life can tell its own tale now, and prove his title to the world's acclaim on at least three splendid counts: he had the heart of a hero with the head of a leader of men, he won consummate victories against great double odds, and no commander that ever lived could be more truly glorious in defeat.