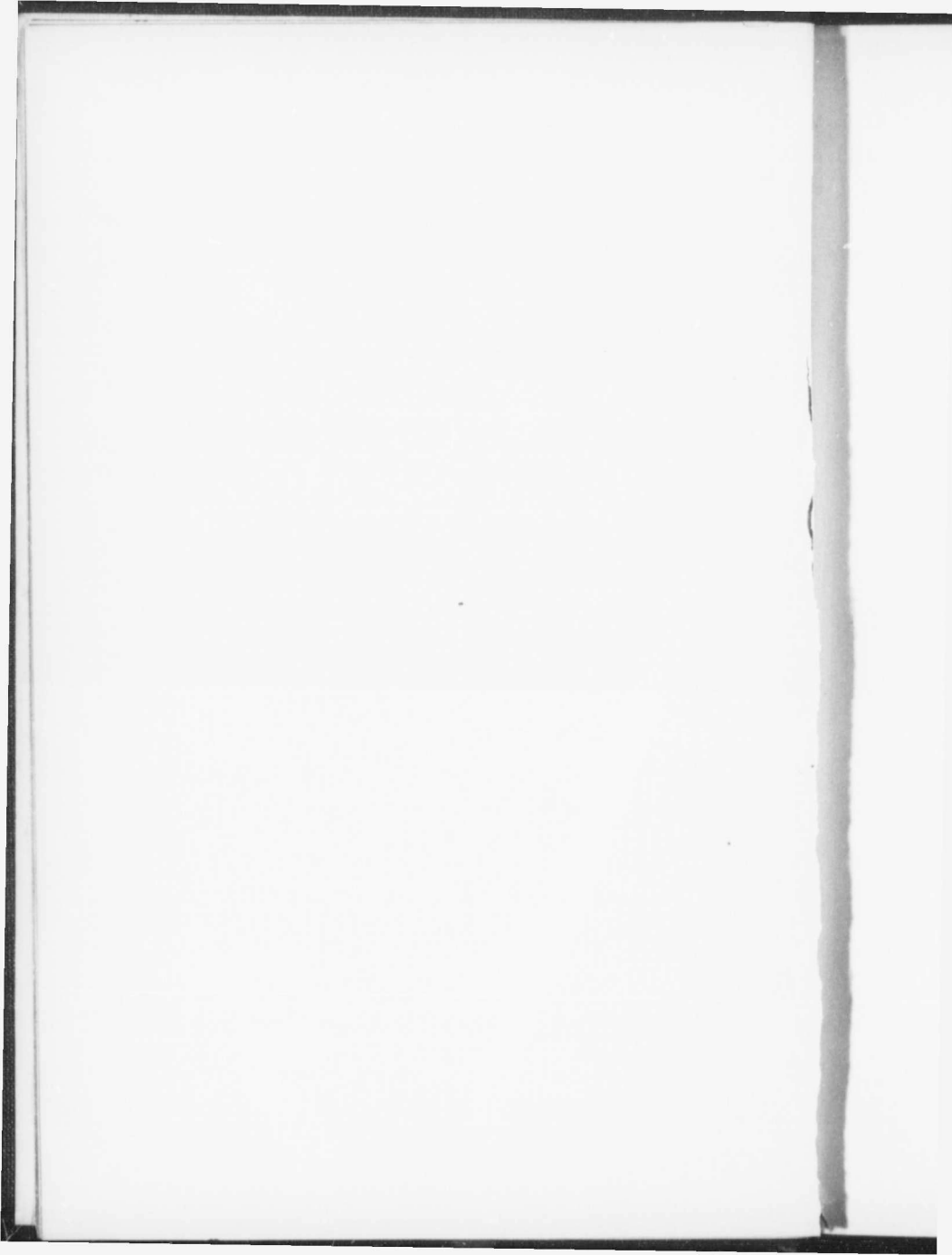


THE ROMANCE OF  
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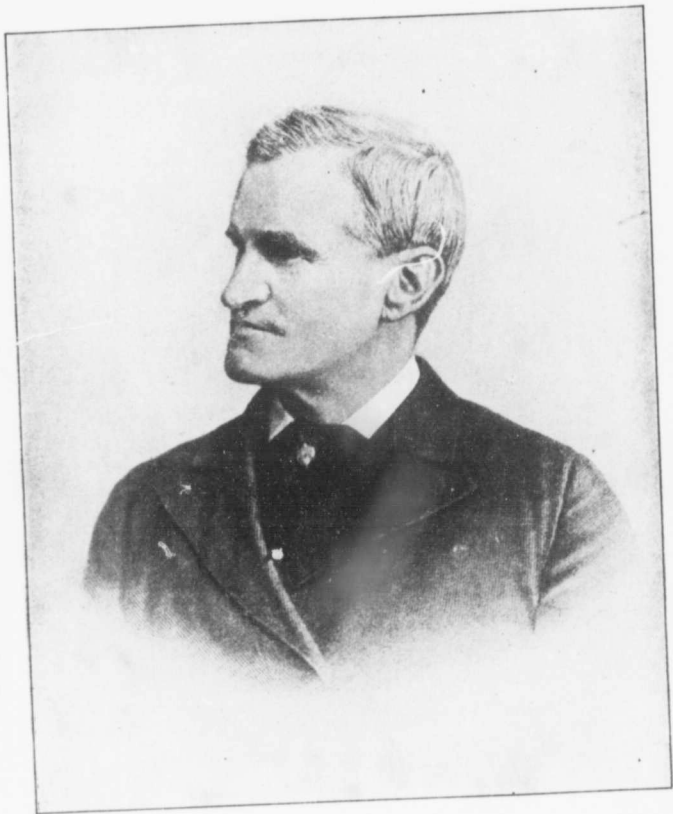
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The Romance of Canadian History







PORTRAIT OF FRANCIS PARKMAN.

# The Romance of Canadian History

*Edited from the Writings of  
Francis Parkman*

By  
Pelham Edgar, Ph.D.

Professor in the French Language and Literature, Victoria College, University of  
Toronto, and formerly Fellow in English in the  
Johns Hopkins University

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## Editor's Note

IN the following pages the effort has been made to present a succinct and continuous narrative of early Canadian history, based upon the masterly volumes of Francis Parkman. The editor has sought to preserve the picturesqueness of the incidents which Parkman has so graphically described, and to this end has not deviated from the actual language of the original, save to furnish the necessary connecting links. The chief difficulty of the work was so to select the material that it should be alike intrinsically interesting and tell a consecutive story.

PELHAM EDGAR.

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## INTRODUCTION

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FRANCIS PARKMAN, the historian of early Canada, was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on the 16th of September, 1823. His father, the Rev. Francis Parkman, and his mother, Caroline Hall, were both descended from many generations that had lived since the days of the early Puritan settlement in the heart of New England.

After an uneventful boyhood, Francis Parkman entered Harvard College in the year 1840. During his college course, as his biographer Mr. Farnham relates, "he devoted himself with ardor and concentration to his special interests, — the study of rhetoric and history, the pursuit of physical development, and a knowledge of the American wilderness."

Still early in his college career he seems to have shaped with characteristic determination the purpose of his life's work. His vacations were not the customary periods of indolent relaxation. In the summer of 1841 he began those researches in the wilderness which were resumed in successive vacations, until scarcely a battle-field of the old colonial days was unfamiliar to his eyes. His investigations led him first to the neighboring wilderness, then already subdued by the advance of civilization. In 1846, however, two years after his graduation, he determined to penetrate into the far West, where savage life in all its primitiveness might still be seen. Thus originated that adventurous expedition of the Oregon

Trail, which was to give him such an intimate knowledge of Indian and frontier life, but which, to his misfortune, induced or aggravated the severe physical maladies which left him a sufferer until his death.

"The Oregon Trail trip," as Mr. Farnham writes, "thus cost Parkman his health for life; but so predominant was his ambition, so much did he value his Indian studies, and so little compassion had he for his physical being, that he never regretted this costly but fruitful experience. From that time onward he was never free from illness of some sort. One or another of his maladies was always undermining his forces; making his persistent industry and fortitude one of the most impressive examples of human achievement and endurance."

After his return from the West, despite his harassing infirmities, he persisted in his literary labors, and soon carried to their conclusion an account of the Oregon Trail, and the story of the "Conspiracy of Pontiac," which, though written first, stands chronologically last in the series of his historical works.<sup>1</sup>

The rest of his life is the record of the ambition of his youth realizing itself in the face of physical and mental infirmities which might well have given pause to the strongest

<sup>1</sup> The list of Parkman's historical works, with the dates of their appearance, is as follows:

- 1851. *The Conspiracy of Pontiac.* 2 vols.  
France and England in North America.
- 1865. *Part I. The Pioneers of France in the New World.* 1 vol.
- 1867. *Part II. The Jesuits in North America.* 1 vol.
- 1869. *Part III. La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West.* 1 vol.
- 1874. *Part IV. The Old Régime.* 1 vol.
- 1877. *Part V. Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV.* 1 vol.
- 1884. *Part VII. Montcalm and Wolfe.* 2 vols.
- 1892. *Part VI. A Half-Century of Conflict.* 2 vols.

nature. "I have not yet abandoned any plan which I have ever formed," he once wrote to a friend, and the plans which he formed demanded the severest application for their fulfilment.

Apart from the successive appearance of his histories there are few events to record in his life. In 1850 he married, and in his eight years of happy married life three children were born. He suffered a great bereavement in the loss of his son in 1857, to be followed in the next year by the death of his wife.

The crisis of his illness was reached in 1859, and for fourteen years his physical and mental condition were so precarious as utterly to preclude the prosecution of his historical researches. No signs of actual insanity ever made their appearance, but literary exertion during this period might have led to a breaking down of his mental faculties. "The condition of his brain," his biographer writes, "made the least literary labor suicidal; he was called upon to face the certainty of permanent invalidism and the probability of never reaching the goal of his ambition. The way in which he met 'the enemy' was characteristic of his courage, cheerfulness, and common sense. Out of the most depressing circumstances he not only wrung a notable success in the conduct of his life, but contributed greatly to the happiness of others. Seeing the temple of fame closed against him, he turned to Nature for consolation. Horticulture became his exclusive occupation for several years — until his health permitted him to resume his pen. His success in this field is the more noteworthy, because he had neither scientific training nor much money to devote to the undertaking. After mastering the principles of the science by reading, he threw into gardening the same ardor and painstaking perseverance

ance that subsequently carried him to success in writing history."

His long enforced idleness was broken in 1865 by the appearance of the "Pioneers of France." From then until 1892 his works continued to appear in steady succession. At the time of his death, on the 8th of November, 1893, his fame was assured throughout Europe and America.

The pages which follow will attest the qualities of his genius. The natural dignity of his life and his force of character find their true reflection in his work. His faculties are held in perfect equipoise. Always master of his emotion, he never permits false sentiment to deface his treatment of character, nor his presentation of events. Yet his enthusiasm for the more virile of his personages, for La Salle, for Frontenac, and for Wolfe is unmistakable, and his admiration for suffering heroically endured has all the virtue of unobtrusive sympathy.

To these qualities of mind and heart, which of themselves would suffice to furnish forth an historian of rare merit, must be added a conscientious regard for truth of detail, which was born of the love of his subject, and nourished by years of unremitting industry. But it must be borne in mind that "faithfulness to the truth of history" as Parkman once wrote, "involves far more than a research, however patient and scrupulous, into special facts. Such facts may be detailed with the most minute exactness, and yet the narrative, taken as a whole, may be unmeaning or untrue." "These," said Professor John Fiske, "are golden words for the student of the historical art to ponder. To make a truthful record of a vanished age, patient scholarship is needed, and something more. Into the making of a historian there should enter something of the philosopher,

something of the naturalist, something of the poet. In Parkman this rare union of qualities was realized in a greater degree than in any other American historian. Indeed, I doubt if the nineteenth century can show in any part of the world another historian quite his equal in respect of such a union."

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# THE ROMANCE OF CANADIAN HISTORY

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## FRANCE AND ENGLAND IN THE NEW WORLD.—INTRODUCTORY

THE subject is that of "France in the New World,"<sup>1</sup>—the attempt of Feudalism, Monarchy, and Rome to master a continent;—Feudalism still strong in life, though enveloped and overborne by new-born Centralization; Monarchy in the flush of triumphant power; Rome, nerved by disaster, springing with renewed vitality from ashes and corruption, and ranging the earth to reconquer abroad what she had lost at home. These banded powers, pushing into the wilderness their indomitable soldiers and devoted priests, unveiled the secrets of the barbarous continent, pierced the forests, traced and mapped out the streams, planted their emblems, built their forts, and claimed all as their own. New France was all head. Under king, noble, and Jesuit, the lank, lean body would not thrive. Even commerce wore the sword, decked itself with badges of nobility, aspired to forest seigniories and hordes of savage retainers.

Along the borders of the sea an adverse power was strengthening and widening, with slow but steadfast growth, full of blood and muscle,—a body without a head. Each had its strength, each its weakness, each its own modes of vigorous

<sup>1</sup> From the Introduction to "Pioneers of France in the New World."

## 2 The Romance of Canadian History

life: but the one was fruitful, the other barren; the one instinct with hope, the other darkening with shadows of despair.

By name, local position, and character, one of these communities of freemen stands forth as the most conspicuous representative of this antagonism;— Liberty and Absolutism, New England and New France. The one was the offspring of a triumphant government; the other, of an oppressed and fugitive people: the one, an unflinching champion of the Roman Catholic reaction; the other, a vanguard of the Reform. Each followed its natural laws of growth, and each came to its natural result. Vitalized by the principles of its foundation, the Puritan commonwealth grew apace. New England was pre-eminently the land of material progress. Here the prize was within every man's reach; patient industry need never doubt its reward; nay, in defiance of the four Gospels, assiduity in pursuit of gain was promoted to the rank of a duty, and thrift and godliness were linked in equivocal wedlock. Politically she was free; socially she suffered from that subtle and searching oppression which the dominant opinion of a free community may exercise over the members who compose it. As a whole, she grew upon the gaze of the world, a signal example of expansive energy; but she has not been fruitful in those salient and striking forms of character which often give a dramatic life to the annals of nations far less prosperous.

We turn to New France, and all is reversed. Here was a bold attempt to crush under the exactions of a grasping hierarchy, to stifle under the curbs and trappings of a feudal monarchy, a people compassed by influences of the wildest freedom,— whose schools were the forest and the sea, whose trade was an armed barter with savages, and whose daily

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### France and England in the New World 3

life a lesson of lawless independence. But this fierce spirit had its vent. The story of New France is from the first a story of war: of war—for so her founders believed—with the adversary of mankind himself; war with savage tribes and potent forest commonwealths; war with the encroaching powers of Heresy and of England. Her brave, unthinking people were stamped with the soldier's virtues and the soldier's faults; and in their leaders were displayed, on a grand and novel stage, the energies, aspirations, and passions which belong to hopes vast and vague, ill-restricted powers, and stations of command.

The growth of New England was a result of the aggregate efforts of a busy multitude, each in his narrow circle toiling for himself, to gather competence or wealth. The expansion of New France was the achievement of a gigantic ambition striving to grasp a continent. It was a vain attempt. Long and valiantly her chiefs upheld their cause, leading to battle a vassal population, warlike as themselves. Borne down by numbers from without, wasted by corruption from within, New France fell at last; and out of her fall grew revolutions whose influence to this hour is felt through every nation of the civilized world.

The French dominion is a memory of the past; and when we evoke its departed shades, they rise upon us from their graves in strange, romantic guise. Again their ghostly camp-fires seem to burn, and the fitful light is cast around on lord and vassal and black-robed priest, mingled with wild forms of savage warriors, knit in close fellowship on the same stern errand. A boundless vision grows upon us; an untamed continent; vast wastes of forest verdure; mountains silent in primeval sleep; river, lake, and glimmering pool; wilderness oceans mingling with the sky. Such was the domain

#### 4 The Romance of Canadian History

which France conquered for Civilization. Plumed helmets gleamed in the shade of its forests, priestly vestments in its dens and fastnesses of ancient barbarism. Men steeped in antique learning, pale with the close breath of the cloister, here spent the noon and evening of their lives, ruled savage hordes with a mild, parental sway, and stood serene before the direst shapes of death. Men of courtly nurture, heirs to the polish of a far-reaching ancestry, here, with their dauntless hardihood, put to shame the boldest sons of toil.

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THE STORY OF CARTIER'S DISCOVERIES, 1534<sup>1</sup>

THE ancient town of St. Malo, thrust out like a buttress into the sea, strange and grim of aspect, breathing war from its walls and battlements of ragged stone, a stronghold of privateers, the home of a race whose intractable and defiant independence neither time nor change has subdued, has been for centuries a nursery of hardy mariners. Among the earliest and most eminent on its list stands the name of Jacques Cartier. His portrait hangs in the town-hall of St. Malo, — bold, keen features bespeaking a spirit not apt to quail before the wrath of man or of the elements.



*Jacques Cartier*

Sailing from St. Malo on the twentieth of April, 1534, Cartier steered for Newfoundland, passed through the Straits of Belle Isle, entered the Gulf of Chaleurs, planted a

<sup>1</sup> Pioneers of France in the New World. Samuel de Champlain, Ch. I.

cross at Gaspé, and, never doubting that he was on the high road to Cathay, advanced up the St. Lawrence till he saw the shores of Anticosti. But autumnal storms were gathering. The voyagers took counsel together, turned their prows eastward, and bore away for France, carrying thither, as a sample of the natural products of the New World, two young Indians, lured into their clutches by an act of villanous treachery. The voyage was a mere reconnaissance.

The spirit of discovery was awakened. A passage to India could be found, and a new France built up beyond the Atlantic. Mingled with such views of interest and ambition was another motive scarcely less potent. The heresy of Luther was convulsing Germany, and the deeper heresy of Calvin infecting France. Devout Catholics, kindling with redoubled zeal, would fain requite the Church for her losses in the Old World by winning to her fold the infidels of the New. But, in pursuing an end at once so pious and so politic, Francis the First was setting at naught the supreme Pontiff himself, since, by the preposterous bull of Alexander the Sixth, all America had been given to the Spaniards.

In October, 1534, Cartier received from Chabot<sup>1</sup> another commission, and, in spite of secret but bitter opposition from jealous traders of St. Malo, he prepared for a second voyage. Three vessels, the largest not above a hundred and twenty tons, were placed at his disposal, and Claude de Pontbriand, Charles de la Pommeraye, and other gentlemen of birth, enrolled themselves for the adventure. On the sixteenth of May, 1535, officers and sailors assembled in the cathedral of St. Malo, where, after confession and mass, they received the parting blessing of the bishop. Three days later they set sail. The dingy walls of the rude old seaport, and the white

<sup>1</sup> The Admiral of France. — Ed.

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rocks that line the neighboring shores of Brittany, faded from their sight, and soon they were tossing in a furious tempest. The scattered ships escaped the danger, and, reuniting at the Straits of Belle Isle, steered westward along the coast of Labrador, till they reached a small bay opposite the island of Anticosti. Cartier called it the Bay of St. Lawrence, a name afterwards extended to the entire gulf, and to the great river above.<sup>1</sup>

To ascend this great river, and tempt the hazards of its

<sup>1</sup> Cartier calls the St. Lawrence the "River of Hochelaga," or "the great river of Canada." He confines the name of *Canada* to a district extending from the Isle aux Coudres in the St. Lawrence to a point at some distance above the site of Quebec. The country below, he adds, was called by the Indians *Saguenay*, and that above, *Hochelaga*. In the map of Gérard Mercator (1569) the name *Canada* is given to a town, with an adjacent district, on the river *Stadin* (St. Charles). Lescarbot, a later writer, insists that the country on both sides of the St. Lawrence, from Hochelaga to its mouth, bore the name of *Canada*.

In the second map of Ortelius, published about the year 1572, New France, *Nova Francia*, is thus divided:—*Canada*, a district on the St. Lawrence above the River Saguenay; *Chilaga* (Hochelaga), the angle between the Ottawa and the St. Lawrence; *Saguenai*, a district below the river of that name; *Moscosa*, south of the St. Lawrence and east of the River Richelieu; *Avalach*, west and south of *Moscosa*; *Norumbega*, Maine and New Brunswick; *Apalachen*, Virginia, Pennsylvania, etc.; *Terra Cortereal's*, Labrador; *Florida*, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida.

Mercator confines the name of New France to districts bordering on the St. Lawrence. Others give it a much broader application. The use of this name, or the nearly allied names of *Francisca* and *La Franciscane*, dates back, to say the least, as far as 1525, and the Dutch geographers are especially free in their use of it, out of spite to the Spaniards.

The derivation of the name of *Canada* has been a point of discussion. It is, without doubt, not Spanish, but Indian. In the vocabulary of the language of Hochelaga, appended to the journal of Cartier's second voyage, *Canada* is set down as the word for a town or village. "Is appellent une ville, *Canada*." It bears the same meaning in the Mohawk tongue. Both languages are dialects of the Iroquois. Lescarbot affirms that *Canada* is simply an Indian proper name, of which it is vain to seek a meaning. Belleforest also calls it an Indian word, but translates it "Terre," as does also Thevet.

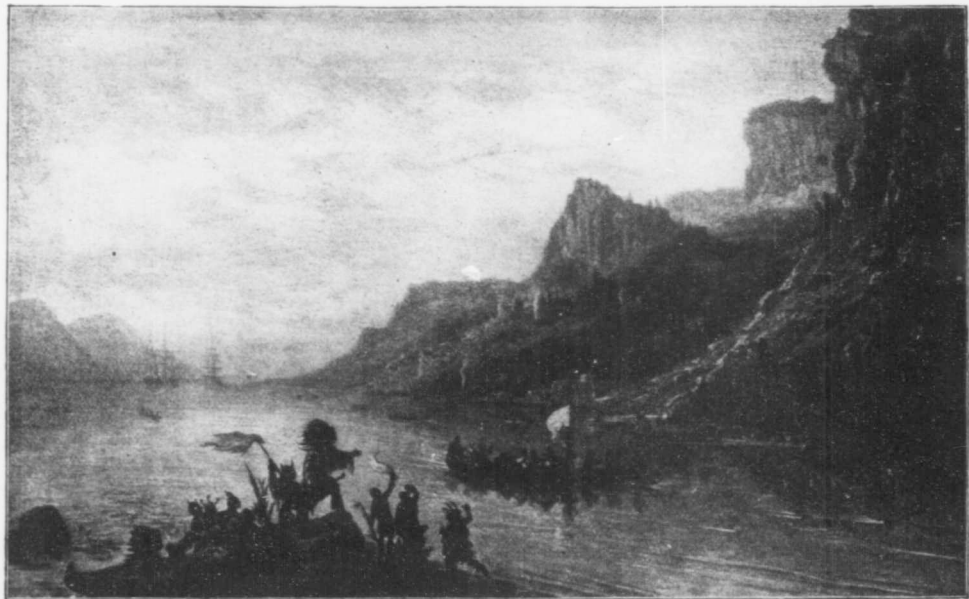
intricate navigation with no better pilots than the two young Indians kidnapped the year before, was a venture of no light risk. But skill or fortune prevailed; and, on the first of September, the voyagers reached in safety the gorge of the gloomy Saguenay, with its towering cliffs and sullen depth of waters. Passing the Isle aux Coudres, and the lofty promontory of Cape Tourmente, they came to anchor in a quiet channel between the northern shore and the margin of a richly wooded island, where the trees were so thickly hung with grapes that Cartier named it the Island of Bacchus.

Indians came swarming from the shores, paddled their canoes about the ships, and clambered to the decks to gaze in bewilderment at the novel scene, and listen to the story of their travelled countrymen, marvellous in their ears as a visit to another planet. Cartier received them kindly, listened to the long harangue of the great chief Donnacona, regaled him with bread and wine; and, when relieved at length of his guests, set forth in a boat to explore the river above.

As he drew near the opening of the channel, the Hochelaga again spread before him the broad expanse of its waters. A mighty promontory, rugged and bare, thrust its scarped front into the surging current. Here, clothed in the majesty of solitude, breathing the stern poetry of the wilderness, rose the cliffs now rich with heroic memories, where the fiery Count Frontenac cast defiance at his foes, where Wolfe, Montcalm, and Montgomery fell. As yet, all was a nameless barbarism, and a cluster of wigwams held the site of the rock-built city of Quebec. Its name was Stadaconé, and it owned the sway of the royal Donnacona.

Cartier set out to visit this greasy potentate, ascended the river St. Charles, by him called the St. Croix, landed,





JACQUES CARTIER DISCOVERS THE RIVER ST. LAWRENCE.

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crossed the meadows, climbed the rocks, threaded the forest, and emerged upon a squalid hamlet of bark cabins. When, having satisfied their curiosity, he and his party were rowing for the ships, a friendly interruption met them at the mouth of the St. Charles. An old chief harangued them from the bank, men, boys, and children screeched welcome from the meadow, and a troop of hilarious squaws danced knee-deep in the water. The gift of a few strings of beads completed their delight and redoubled their agility; and, from the distance of a mile, their shrill songs of jubilation still reached the ears of the receding Frenchmen.

The hamlet of Stadaconé, with its king, Donnacona, and its naked lords and princes, was not the metropolis of this forest state, since a town far greater — so the Indians averred — stood by the brink of the river, many days' journey above. It was called Hochelaga, and the great river itself, with a wide reach of adjacent country, had borrowed its name. Thither, with his two young Indians as guides, Cartier resolved to go; but misgivings seized the guides, as the time drew near, while Donnacona and his tribesmen, jealous of the plan, set themselves to thwart it. The Breton captain turned a deaf ear to their dissuasions; on which, failing to touch his reason, they appealed to his fears.

One morning, as the ships still lay at anchor, the French beheld three Indian devils descending in a canoe towards them, dressed in black and white dog-skins, with faces black as ink, and horns long as a man's arm. Thus arrayed, they drifted by, while the principal fiend, with fixed eyes, as of one piercing the secrets of futurity, uttered in a loud voice a long harangue. Then they paddled for the shore; and no sooner did they reach it than each fell flat like a dead man in the bottom of the canoe. Aid, however, was at hand; for

Donnacona and his tribesmen, rushing pell-mell from the adjacent woods, raised the swooning masqueraders, and, with shrill clamors, bore them in their arms within the sheltering thickets. Here, for a full half hour, the French could hear them haranguing in solemn conclave. Then the two young Indians whom Cartier had brought back from France came out of the bushes, enacting a pantomime of amazement and terror, clasping their hands, and calling on Christ and the Virgin; whereupon Cartier, shouting from the vessel, asked what was the matter. They replied, that the god Coudouagny had sent to warn the French against all attempts to ascend the great river, since, should they persist, snows, tempests, and drifting ice would requite their rashness with inevitable ruin. The French replied that Coudouagny was a fool; that he could not hurt those who believed in Christ; and that they might tell this to his three messengers. The assembled Indians, with little reverence for their deity, pretended great contentment at this assurance, and danced for joy along the beach.

Cartier now made ready to depart. And, first, he caused the two larger vessels to be towed for safe harborage within the mouth of the St. Charles. With the smallest, a galleon of forty tons, and two open boats, carrying in all fifty sailors, besides Pontbriand, La Pommeraye, and other gentlemen, he set out for Hochelaga.

Slowly gliding on their way by walls of verdure brightened in the autumnal sun, they saw forests festooned with grapevines, and waters alive with wild-fowl; they heard the song of the blackbird, the thrush, and, as they fondly thought, the nightingale. The galleon grounded; they left her, and, advancing with the boats alone, on the second of October neared the goal of their hopes, the mysterious Hochelaga.

Just below where now are seen the quays and storehouses of Montreal, a thousand Indians thronged the shore, wild with delight, dancing, singing, crowding about the strangers, and showering into the boats their gifts of fish and maize; and, as it grew dark, fires lighted up the night, while, far and near, the French could see the excited savages leaping and rejoicing by the blaze.

At dawn of day, marshalled and accoutred, they marched for Hochelaga. An Indian path led them through the forest which covered the site of Montreal. The morning air was chill and sharp, the leaves were changing hue, and beneath the oaks the ground was thickly strewn with acorns. They soon met an Indian chief with a party of tribesmen, or, as the old narrative has it, "one of the principal lords of the said city," attended with a numerous retinue. Greeting them after the concise courtesy of the forest, he led them to a fire kindled by the side of the path for their comfort and refreshment, seated them on the ground, and made them a long harangue, receiving in requital of his eloquence two hatchets, two knives, and a crucifix, the last of which he was invited to kiss. This done, they resumed their march, and presently came upon open fields, covered far and near with the ripened maize, its leaves rustling, and its yellow grains gleaming between the parting husks. Before them, wrapped in forests painted by the early frosts, rose the ridgy back of the Mountain of Montreal, and below, encompassed with its cornfields, lay the Indian town. Nothing was visible but its encircling palisades. They were of trunks of trees, set in a triple row. The outer and inner ranges inclined till they met and crossed near the summit, while the upright row between them, aided by transverse braces, gave to the whole an abundant strength. Within were galleries for the defenders, rude

ladders to mount them, and magazines of stones to throw down on the heads of assailants. It was a mode of fortification practised by all the tribes speaking dialects of the Iroquois.

The voyagers entered the narrow portal. Within, they saw some fifty of those large oblong dwellings so familiar in after years to the eyes of the Jesuit apostles in Iroquois and Huron forests. They were about fifty yards in length, and twelve or fifteen wide, framed of sapling poles closely covered with sheets of bark, and each containing several fires and several families. In the midst of the town was an open area, or public square, a stone's throw in width. Here Cartier and his followers stopped, while the surrounding houses of bark disgorged their inmates, — swarms of children, and young women and old, their infants in their arms. They crowded about the visitors, crying for delight, touching their beards, feeling their faces, and holding up the screeching infants to be touched in turn. The marvellous visitors, strange in hue, strange in attire, with moustached lip and bearded chin, with arquebuse, halberd, helmet, and cuirass, seemed rather demigods than men.

Due time having been allowed for this exuberance of feminine rapture, the warriors interposed, banished the women and children to a distance, and squatted on the ground around the French, row within row of swarthy forms and eager faces, "as if," says Cartier, "we were going to act a play." Then appeared a troop of women, each bringing a mat, with which they carpeted the bare earth for the behoof of their guests. The latter being seated, the chief of the nation was borne before them on a deer-skin by a number of his tribesmen, a bedridden old savage, paralyzed and helpless, squalid as the rest in his attire, and distinguished only by a red

fillet, inwrought with the dyed quills of the Canada porcupine, encircling his lank black hair. They placed him on the ground at Cartier's feet and made signs of welcome for him, while he pointed feebly to his powerless limbs, and implored the healing touch from the hand of the French chief. Cartier complied, and received in acknowledgment the red fillet of his grateful patient. Then from surrounding dwellings appeared a woful throng, the sick, the lame, the blind, the maimed, the decrepit, brought or led forth and placed on the earth before the perplexed commander, "as if," he says, "a god had come down to cure them." His skill in medicine being far behind the emergency, he pronounced over his petitioners a portion of the Gospel of St. John, made the sign of the cross, and uttered a prayer, not for their bodies only, but for their miserable souls. Next he read the passion of the Saviour, to which, though comprehending not a word, his audience listened with grave attention. Then came a distribution of presents. The squaws and children were recalled, and, with the warriors, placed in separate groups. Knives and hatchets were given to the men, and beads to the women, while pewter rings and images of the Agnus Dei were flung among the troop of children, whence ensued a vigorous scramble in the square of Hochelaga. Now the French trumpeters pressed their trumpets to their lips, and blew a blast that filled the air with warlike din and the hearts of the hearers with amazement and delight. Bidding their hosts farewell, the visitors formed their ranks and defiled through the gate once more, despite the efforts of a crowd of women, who, with clamorous hospitality, beset them with gifts of fish, beans, corn, and other viands of uninviting aspect, which the Frenchmen courteously declined.

A troop of Indians followed, and guided them to the top

of the neighboring mountain. Cartier called it *Mont Royal*, Montreal; and hence the name of the busy city which now holds the site of the vanished Hochelaga. Stadaconé and Hochelaga, Quebec and Montreal, in the sixteenth century as in the nineteenth, were the centres of Canadian population.

From the summit, that noble prospect met his eye which at this day is the delight of tourists, but strangely changed, since, first of white men, the Breton voyager gazed upon it. Tower and dome and spire, congregated roofs, white sail and gliding steamer, animate its vast expanse with varied life. Cartier saw a different scene. East, west, and south, the mantling forest was over all, and the broad blue ribbon of the great river glistened amid a realm of verdure. Beyond, to the bounds of Mexico, stretched a leafy desert, and the vast hive of industry, the mighty battle-ground of later centuries, lay sunk in savage torpor, wrapped in illimitable woods.

The French re-embarked, bade farewell to Hochelaga, retraced their lonely course down the St. Lawrence, and reached Stadaconé in safety. On the bank of the St. Charles, their companions had built in their absence a fort of palisades, and the ships, hauled up the little stream, lay moored before it. Here the self-exiled company were soon besieged by the rigors of the Canadian winter. The rocks, the shores, the pine trees, the solid floor of the frozen river, all alike were blanketed in snow, beneath the keen cold rays of the dazzling sun. The drifts rose above the sides of their ships; masts, spars, and cordage were thick with glittering incrustations and sparkling rows of icicles; a frosty armor, four inches thick, encased the bulwarks. Yet, in the bitterest weather, the neighboring Indians, "hardy," says the journal, "as so many beasts," came daily to the fort, wading, half



naked, waist-deep through the snow. At length, their friendship began to abate; their visits grew less frequent, and during December had wholly ceased, when a calamity fell upon the French.

A malignant scurvy broke out among them. Man after man went down before the hideous disease, till twenty-five were dead, and only three or four were left in health. The sound were too few to attend the sick, and the wretched sufferers lay in helpless despair, dreaming of the sun and the vines of France. The ground, hard as flint, defied their feeble efforts, and, unable to bury their dead, they hid them in snow-drifts. Cartier appealed to the saints; but they turned a deaf ear. Then he nailed against a tree an image of the Virgin, and on a Sunday summoned forth his woe-begone followers, who, haggard, reeling, bloated with their maladies, moved in procession to the spot, and, kneeling in the snow, sang litanies and psalms of David. That day died Philippe Rougemont of Amboise, aged twenty-two years. The Holy Virgin deigned no other response.

There was fear that the Indians, learning their misery, might finish the work that scurvy had begun. None of them, therefore, were allowed to approach the fort; and when a party of savages lingered within hearing, Cartier forced his invalid garrison to beat with sticks and stones against the walls, that their dangerous neighbors, deluded by the clatter, might think them engaged in hard labor. These objects of their fear proved, however, the instruments of their salvation. Cartier, walking one day near the river, met an Indian, who not long before had been prostrate, like many of his fellows, with the scurvy, but who was now, to all appearance, in high health and spirits. What agency had wrought this marvellous recovery? According to the

Indian, it was a certain evergreen, called by him *amedu*, a decoction of the leaves of which was sovereign against the disease. The experiment was tried. The sick men drank copiously of the healing draught, — so copiously indeed that in six days they drank a tree as large as a French oak. Thus vigorously assailed, the distemper relaxed its hold, and health and hope began to revisit the hapless company.

When this winter of misery had worn away, and the ships were thawed from their icy fetters, Cartier prepared to return. He had made notable discoveries; but these were as nothing to the tales of wonder that had reached his ear, — of a land of gold and rubies, of a nation white like the French, of men who lived without food, and of others to whom Nature had granted but one leg. Should he stake his credit on these marvels? It were better that they who had recounted them to him should, with their own lips recount them also to the king, and to this end he resolved that Donnacona and his chiefs should go with him to court. He lured them therefore to the fort, and led them into an ambuscade of sailors, who, seizing the astonished guests, hurried them on board the ships. Having accomplished this treachery, the voyagers proceeded to plant the emblem of Christianity. The cross was raised, the fleur-de-lis planted near it, and, spreading their sails, they steered for home. It was the sixteenth of July, 1536, when Cartier again cast anchor under the walls of St. Malo.

[Cartier made a third voyage to the New World in 1541 as captain-general under De Roberval, whose commission appointed him Lord of Norumbega,<sup>1</sup> Viceroy and Lieuten-

<sup>1</sup> Norumbega included the present state of Maine, and was sometimes held to include New Brunswick and Nova Scotia on the north, and part of New England on the south. — Ed.

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ant-General in Canada, Hochelaga, Saguenay, Newfoundland, etc., etc. When De Roberval reached Newfoundland in June of the following year he met Cartier, who, proving faithless to his trust, had broken up his colony at Cap Rouge above Quebec, and was returning to France. His defection was fatal to the enterprise. De Roberval made his way up the St. Lawrence to Cap Rouge, but winter, famine, and disease, joined to the despotism of the leader, cut short the life of the infant colony.

"With De Roberval closes the prelude of the French-American drama," says Parkman; "tempestuous years and a reign of blood and fire were in store for France. The religious wars begot the hapless colony of Florida, but for more than half a century left New France a desert," visited alone by the hardy Breton fishermen who plied their trade upon the lonely banks of Newfoundland, or, prompted by the adventurous love of gain, sailed up the broad St. Lawrence to barter with the Indians for their furs.

At the close of the sixteenth century the Marquis de la Roche obtained a patent from the king to establish a colony in New France. The enterprise was signally unsuccessful. Laden with a crew of convicts and desperadoes the tiny vessel held its course until the shores of Sable Island rose above the sea. Here the convicts, forty in number, were landed, while La Roche, with his more trusty followers, sailed to explore the neighboring coasts and choose a site for the capital of his new dominion. A tempest swept him back to France, and for five years the wretched remnant languished on the island, when a Norman pilot was dispatched to bring the outcasts home.

In the meantime, on the ruin of La Roche's enterprise, a new one had been founded. Pontgravé, a merchant of

St. Malo, leagued himself with Chauvin, a captain of the marine who had influence at court. A patent was granted them, and an unsuccessful effort was made towards colonization. Upon the death of Chauvin in 1602 a new patent was granted to De Chastes, who allied himself with Pontgravé, and secured the services of the already distinguished Champlain.<sup>1</sup>

This voyage of 1603 was devoted merely to exploration. On Champlain's return to France he discovered that his employer, De Chastes, was dead.

In 1603, De Monts, a Huguenot gentleman of the court, received another royal patent, conferring upon him the duty and the privilege of colonizing Acadia, at that time and afterwards an ill-defined territory extending from the latitude of Philadelphia northward through New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Champlain's second voyage was made in 1604 in the service of De Monts. From 1604 to 1607 he was for the most part at Port Royal (now Annapolis) in the Acadian peninsula, but many months in each year were spent in exploration. — Ed.]

<sup>1</sup> Samuel de Champlain was born in 1567 at the small sea-port of Brouage on the Bay of Biscay. He had fought for the king's cause in Brittany, and Henry the Fourth out of his own slender revenues had given him a pension to maintain him near his person. But Champlain's roving

nature was not to be denied, and the war in Brittany over, he voyaged for two years in the Spanish Indies, conceiving the idea of a ship canal across the Isthmus of Panama. His first voyage to Canada was made in the service of De Chastes and Pontgravé. — Ed.

CHAMPLAIN'S THIRD VOYAGE TO CANADA<sup>1</sup>

A LONELY ship sailed up the St. Lawrence. The white whales floundering in the Bay of Tadoussac, and the wild duck diving as the foaming prow drew near,—there was no life but these in all that watery solitude, twenty miles from shore to shore. The ship was from Honfleur, and was commanded by Samuel de Champlain.

De Monts, after his exclusive privilege of trade was revoked, and his Acadian enterprise ruined, had abandoned it to Poutrincourt. Perhaps it would have been well for him had he abandoned with it all Transatlantic enterprises; but the passion for discovery and the noble ambition of founding colonies had taken possession



*Samuel de Champlain*

of his mind. These, rather than a mere hope of gain, seem to have been his controlling motives; yet the profits of the fur-trade were vital to the new designs he was meditating, to meet the heavy outlay they demanded; and he solicited and obtained a fresh monopoly of the traffic for one year.

<sup>1</sup> *Pioneers of France in the New World.* Samuel de Champlain, Ch. IX.

Champlain was, at the time, in Paris; but his unquiet thoughts turned westward. He was enamored of the New World, whose rugged charms had seized his fancy and his heart; and as explorers of Arctic seas have pined in their repose for polar ice and snow, so did his restless thoughts revert to the fog-wrapped coasts, the piny odors of forests, the noise of waters, the sharp and piercing sunlight, so dear to his remembrance. He longed to unveil the mystery of that boundless wilderness, and plant the Catholic faith and the power of France amid its ancient barbarism.

Five years before, he had explored the St. Lawrence as far as the rapids above Montreal. On its banks, as he thought, was the true site for a settlement, — a fortified post, whence, as from a secure basis, the waters of the vast interior might be traced back towards their sources, and a western route discovered to China and Japan. For the fur-trade, too, the innumerable streams that descended to the great river might all be closed against foreign intrusion by a single fort at some commanding point, and made tributary to a rich and permanent commerce; while — and this was nearer to his heart, for he had often been heard to say that the saving of a soul was worth more than the conquest of an empire — countless savage tribes, in the bondage of Satan, might by the same avenues be reached and redeemed.

De Monts embraced his views; and, fitting out two ships, gave command of one to the elder Pontgravé, of the other to Champlain. The former was to trade with the Indians and bring back the cargo of furs which, it was hoped, would meet the expense of the voyage. To Champlain fell the harder task of settlement and exploration.

Pontgravé, laden with goods for the Indian trade of Tadoussac, sailed from Honfleur on the fifth of April, 1608.

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Champlain, with men, arms, and stores for the colony, followed, eight days later. On the fifteenth of May he was on the Grand Bank; on the thirtieth he passed Gaspé, and on the third of June neared Tadoussac. No living thing was to be seen. He anchored, lowered a boat, and rowed into the port, round the rocky point at the southeast, then, from the fury of its winds and currents, called La Pointe de Tous les Diabes. There was life enough within, and more than he cared to find. In the still anchorage under the cliffs lay Pontgravé's vessel, and at her side another ship, which proved to be a Basque fur-trader.

Pontgravé, arriving a few days before, had found himself anticipated by the Basques, who were busied in a brisk trade with bands of Indians cabined along the borders of the cove. He displayed the royal letters, and commanded a cessation of the prohibited traffic; but the Basques proved refractory, declared that they would trade in spite of the king, fired on Pontgravé with cannon and musketry, wounded him and two of his men, and killed a third. They then boarded his vessel, and carried away all his cannon, small arms, and ammunition, saying that they would restore them when they had finished their trade and were ready to return home.

Champlain found his comrade on shore, in a disabled condition. The Basques, though still strong enough to make fight, were alarmed for the consequences of their conduct, and anxious to come to terms. A peace, therefore, was signed on board their vessel; all differences were referred to the judgment of the French courts, harmony was restored, and the choleric strangers betook themselves to catching whales.

This port of Tadoussac was long the centre of the Canadian fur-trade. A desolation of barren mountains closes

round it, betwixt whose ribs of rugged granite, bristling with savins, birches, and firs, the Saguenay rolls its gloomy waters from the northern wilderness. Centuries of civilization have not tamed the wildness of the place; and still, in grim repose, the mountains hold their guard around the waveless lake that glistens in their shadow, and doubles, in its sullen mirror, crag, precipice, and forest.

Near the brink of the cove or harbor where the vessels lay, and a little below the mouth of a brook which formed one of the outlets of this small lake, stood the remains of the wooden barrack built by Chauvin eight years before. Above the brook were the lodges of an Indian camp,—stacks of poles covered with birch-bark. They belonged to an Algonquin horde, called *Montagnais*, denizens of surrounding wilds, and gatherers of their only harvest,—skins of the moose, caribou, and bear; fur of the beaver, marten, otter, fox, wild-cat, and lynx. Nor was this all, for they were intermediate traders betwixt the French and the shivering bands who roamed the weary stretch of stunted forest between the head-waters of the Saguenay and Hudson's Bay. Indefatigable canoe-men, in their birchen vessels, light as egg-shells, they threaded the devious tracks of countless rippling streams, shady by-ways of the forest, where the wild duck scarcely finds depth to swim; then descended to their mart along those scenes of picturesque yet dreary grandeur which steam has made familiar to modern tourists. With slowly moving paddles, they glided beneath the cliff whose shaggy brows frown across the zenith, and whose base the deep waves wash with a hoarse and hollow cadence; and they passed the sepulchral Bay of the Trinity, dark as the tide of Acheron,—a sanctuary of solitude and silence: depths which, as the fable runs, no sounding line



can fathom, and heights at whose dizzy verge the wheeling eagle seems a speck.

Peace being established with the Basques, and the wounded Pontgravé busied, as far as might be, in transferring to the hold of his ship the rich lading of the Indian canoes, Champlain spread his sails, and again held his course up the St. Lawrence. Far to the south, in sun and shadow, slumbered the woody mountains whence fell the countless springs of the St. John, behind tenantless shores, now white with glimmering villages, — La Chenaie, Granville, Kamouraska, St. Roche, St. Jean, Vincelot, Berthier. But on the north the jealous wilderness still asserts its sway, crowding to the river's verge its walls, domes, and towers of granite, and to this hour, its solitude is scarcely broken.

FOUNDING OF QUEBEC<sup>1</sup>

ABOVE the point of the Island of Orleans, a constriction of the vast channel narrows it to less than a mile, with the green heights of Point Levi on one side, and on the other the cliffs of Quebec.<sup>2</sup> Here, a small stream, the St. Charles, enters the St. Lawrence, and in the angle betwixt them rises the promontory, on two sides a natural fortress. Between the cliffs and the river lay a strand covered with walnuts and other trees. From this strand, by a rough passage gullied downward from the place where Prescott Gate now guards the way, one might climb the heights to the broken plateau above, now burdened with its ponderous load of churches, convents, dwellings, ramparts, and batteries. Thence, by a

<sup>1</sup> Pioneers of France in the New World. Samuel de Champlain, Ch. IX.

<sup>2</sup> The origin of this name has been disputed, but there is no good ground to doubt its Indian origin, which is distinctly affirmed by Champlain and Lescarbot. Charlevoix, *Fastes Chronologiques* (1608), derives it from the Algonquin word *Quebeio*, or *Quebêce*, signifying a *narrowing* or *contracting* (*retrécissement*). A half-breed Algonquin told Garneau that the word *Quebec*, or *Ouabec*, means a *strait*. The same writer was told by M. Malo, a missionary among the Micmacs, a branch of the Algonquins, that in their dialect the word *Kibec* had the same meaning. Martin says, "Les Algonquins l'appellent *Ouabec*, et les Micmacs *Kebêque*, c'est à dire, 'là où la rivière est fermée.'" Martin's *Bressani*, App., 326. The derivations given by La Potherie, Le Beau, and others, are purely fanciful. The circumstance of the word *Quebec* being found engraved on the ancient seal of Lord Suffolk (see Hawkins, *Picture of Quebec*) can only be regarded as a curious coincidence. In Cartier's times the site of Quebec was occupied by a tribe of the Iroquois race, who called their village *Stadaconé*. The Hurons called it, says Sagard, *Atou-ta-requee*. In the modern Huron dialect, *Tiatou-ta-ritu* means *the narrows*.

gradual ascent, the rock sloped upward to its highest summit, Cape Diamond, looking down on the St. Lawrence from a height of three hundred and fifty feet. Here the citadel now stands; then the fierce sun fell on the bald, baking rock, with its crisped mosses and parched lichens. Two centuries and a half have quickened the solitude with swarming life, covered the deep bosom of the river with barge and steamer and gliding sail, and reared cities and villages on the site of forests: but nothing can destroy the surpassing grandeur of the scene.

On the strand between the water and the cliffs Champlain's axemen fell to their work. They were pioneers of an advancing host, — advancing, it is true, with feeble and uncertain progress: priests, soldiers, peasants, feudal scutcheons, royal insignia. Not the Middle Age, but engendered of it by the stronger life of modern centralization; sharply stamped with a parental likeness: heir to parental weakness and parental force.

In a few weeks a pile of wooden buildings rose on the brink of the St. Lawrence, on or near the site of the marketplace of the Lower Town of Quebec. The pencil of Champlain, always regardless of proportion and perspective, has preserved its likeness. A strong wooden wall, surmounted by a gallery loopholed for musketry, enclosed three buildings, containing quarters for himself and his men, together with a courtyard, from one side of which rose a tall dove-cot, like a belfry. A moat surrounded the whole, and two or three small cannon were planted on salient platforms towards the river. There was a large storehouse near at hand, and a part of the adjacent ground was laid out as a garden.

In this garden Champlain was one morning directing his laborers, when Têtu, his pilot, approached him with an

anxious countenance, and muttered a request to speak with him in private. Champlain assenting, they withdrew to the neighboring woods, when the pilot disburdened himself of his secret. One Antoine Natel, a locksmith, smitten by conscience or fear, had revealed to him a conspiracy to murder his commander and deliver Quebec into the hands of the Basques and Spaniards then at Tadoussac. Another locksmith, named Duval, was author of the plot, and, with the aid of three accomplices, had befooled or frightened nearly all the company into taking part in it. Each was assured that he should make his fortune, and all were mutually pledged to poniard the first betrayer of the secret. The critical point of their enterprise was the killing of Champlain. Some were for strangling him, some for raising a false alarm in the night and shooting him as he came out from his quarters.

Having heard the pilot's story, Champlain, remaining in the woods, desired his informant to find Antoine Natel and bring him to the spot. Natel soon appeared, trembling with excitement and fear, and a close examination left no doubt of the truth of his statement. A small vessel, built by Pontgravé at Tadoussac, had lately arrived, and orders were now given that it should anchor close at hand. On board was a young man in whom confidence could be placed. Champlain sent him two bottles of wine, with a direction to tell the four ringleaders that they had been given him by his Basque friends at Tadoussac, and to invite them to share the good cheer. They came aboard in the evening, and were seized and secured. "Voyla donc mes galants bien estonnez,"<sup>1</sup> writes Champlain.

<sup>1</sup> "That was a fine surprise for my brave rascals." — Ed.

It was ten o'clock, and most of the men on shore were asleep. They were wakened suddenly, and told of the discovery of the plot and the arrest of the ringleaders. Pardon was then promised them, and they were dismissed again to their beds, greatly relieved, for they had lived in trepidation, each fearing the other. Duval's body, swinging from a gibbet, gave wholesome warning to those he had seduced; and his head was displayed on a pike, from the highest roof of the buildings, food for birds, and a lesson to sedition. His three accomplices were carried by Pontgravé to France, where they made their atonement in the galleys.

It was on the eighteenth of September that Pontgravé set sail, leaving Champlain with twenty-eight men to hold Quebec through the winter. Three weeks later, and shores and hills glowed with gay prognostics of approaching desolation, — the yellow and scarlet of the maples, the deep purple of the ash, the garnet hue of young oaks, the crimson of the tupelo at the water's edge, and the golden plumage of birch saplings in the fissures of the cliff. It was a short-lived beauty. The forest dropped its festal robes. Shrivelled and faded, they rustled to the earth. The crystal air and laughing sun of October passed away, and November sank upon the shivering waste, chill and sombre as the tomb.

A roving band of Montagnais had built their huts near the buildings, and were busying themselves with their autumn eel-fishery, on which they greatly relied to sustain their miserable lives through the winter. Their slimy harvest being gathered, and duly smoked and dried, they gave it for safe-keeping to Champlain, and set out to hunt beavers. It was deep in the winter before they came back, reclaimed their eels, built their birch cabins again, and disposed themselves for a life of ease, until famine or their

enemies should put an end to their enjoyments. These were by no means without alloy. While, gorged with food, they lay dozing on piles of branches in their smoky huts, where, through the crevices of the thin birch-bark, streamed in a cold capable at times of congealing mercury, their slumbers were beset with nightmare visions of Iroquois forays, scalplings, butcherings, and burnings. As dreams were their oracles, the camp was wild with fright. They sent out no scouts and placed no guard; but, with each repetition of these nocturnal terrors, they came flocking in a body to beg admission within the fort. The women and children were allowed to enter the yard and remain during the night, while anxious fathers and jealous husbands shivered in the darkness without.

On one occasion, a group of wretched beings was seen on the farther bank of the St. Lawrence, like wild animals driven by famine to the borders of the settler's clearing. The river was full of drifting ice, and there was no crossing without risk of life. The Indians, in their desperation, made the attempt; and midway their canoes were ground to atoms among the tossing masses. Agile as wildcats, they all leaped upon a huge raft of ice, the squaws carrying their children on their shoulders, a feat at which Champlain marvelled when he saw their starved and emaciated condition. Here they began a wail of despair; when happily the pressure of other masses thrust the sheet of ice against the northern shore. They landed and soon made their appearance at the fort, worn to skeletons and horrible to look upon. The French gave them food, which they devoured with a frenzied avidity, and, unappeased, fell upon a dead dog left on the snow by Champlain for two months past as a bait for foxes. They broke this carrion into fragments, and thawed and

devoured it, to the disgust of the spectators, who tried vainly to prevent them.

This was but a severe access of the periodical famine which, during winter, was a normal condition of the Algonquin tribes of Acadia and the Lower St. Lawrence, who, unlike the cognate tribes of New England, never tilled the soil, or made any reasonable provision against the time of need.

One would gladly know how the founders of Quebec spent the long hours of their first winter; but on this point the only man among them, perhaps, who could write, has not thought it necessary to enlarge. He himself beguiled his leisure with trapping foxes, or hanging a dead dog from a tree and watching the hungry martens in their efforts to reach it. Towards the close of winter, all found abundant employment in nursing themselves or their neighbors, for the inevitable scurvy broke out with virulence. At the middle of May, only eight men of the twenty-eight were alive, and of these half were suffering from disease.

This wintry purgatory wore away; the icy stalactites that hung from the cliffs fell crashing to the earth; the clamor of the wild geese was heard; the bluebirds appeared in the naked woods; the water-willows were covered with their soft caterpillar-like blossoms; the twigs of the swamp-maple were flushed with ruddy bloom; the ash hung out its black tufts; the shad-bush seemed a wreath of snow; the white stars of the bloodroot gleamed among dank, fallen leaves; and in the young grass of the wet meadows, the marsh-marigolds shone like spots of gold.

Great was the joy of Champlain when, on the fifth of June, he saw a sailboat rounding the Point of Orleans, betokening that the spring had brought with it the longed for succors. A son-in-law of Pontgravé, named Marais, was on board,

and he reported that Pontgravé was then at Tadoussac, where he had lately arrived. Thither Champlain hastened, to take counsel with his comrade. His constitution or his courage had defied the scurvy. They met, and it was determined betwixt them, that, while Pontgravé remained in charge of Quebec, Champlain should enter at once on his long-meditated explorations, by which, like La Salle seventy years later, he had good hope of finding a way to China.

But there was a lion in the path. The Indian tribes, to whom peace was unknown, infested with their scalping parties the streams and pathways of the forest, and increased tenfold its inseparable risks. The after career of Champlain gives abundant proof that he was more than indifferent to all such chances; yet now an expedient for evading them offered itself, so consonant with his instincts that he was glad to accept it.

During the last autumn, a young chief from the banks of the then unknown Ottawa had been at Quebec; and, amazed at what he saw, he had begged Champlain to join him in the spring against his enemies. These enemies were a formidable race of savages, the Iroquois, or Five Confederate Nations, who dwelt in fortified villages within limits now embraced by the State of New York, and who were a terror to all the surrounding forests. They were deadly foes of their kindred, the Hurons, who dwelt on the lake which bears their name, and were allies of Algonquin bands on the Ottawa.<sup>1</sup> All

<sup>1</sup> The tribes east of the Mississippi, between the latitudes of Lake Superior and of the Ohio, were divided, with slight exceptions, into two groups or families, distinguished by a radical difference of language. One of these families of tribes is called *Algonquin*, from the name of a small Indian community on the Ottawa. The other is called the *Huron-Iroquois*, from the names of its two principal members.



alike were tillers of the soil, living at ease when compared with the famished Algonquins of the Lower St. Lawrence.

By joining these Hurons and Algonquins against their Iroquois enemies, Champlain might make himself the indispensable ally and leader of the tribes of Canada, and at the same time fight his way to discovery in regions which otherwise were barred against him. From first to last, it was the policy of France in America to mingle in Indian politics, hold the balance of power between adverse tribes, and envelop in the network of her power and diplomacy the remotest hordes of the wilderness. Of this policy the Father of New France may perhaps be held to have set a rash and premature example. Yet, while he was apparently following the dictates of his own adventurous spirit, it became evident, a few years later, that under his thirst for discovery and spirit of knight-errantry lay a consistent and deliberate purpose. That it had already assumed a definite shape is not likely; but his after course makes it plain that, in embroiling himself and his colony with the most formidable savages on the continent, he was by no means acting so recklessly as at first sight would appear.

CHAMPLAIN'S EXPEDITION AGAINST THE  
IROQUOIS, 1609<sup>1</sup>

It was past the middle of June, and the expected warriors from the upper country had not come: a delay which seems to have given Champlain little concern, for, without waiting longer, he set out with no better allies than a band of Montagnais. But, as he moved up the St. Lawrence, he saw, thickly clustered in the bordering forest, the lodges of an Indian camp, and, landing, found his Huron and Algonquin allies. Few of them had ever seen a white man, and they surrounded the steel-clad strangers in speechless wonder. Champlain asked for their chief, and the staring throng moved with him towards a lodge where sat, not one chief, but two, for each band had its own. There were feasting, smoking, and speeches; and, the needful ceremony over, all descended together to Quebec; for the strangers were bent on seeing those wonders of architecture, the fame of which had pierced the recesses of their forests.

On their arrival, they feasted their eyes and glutted their appetites; yelped consternation at the sharp explosions of the arquebuse and the roar of the cannon; pitched their camps, and bedecked themselves for their war-dance. In the still night, their fire glared against the black and jagged cliff, and the fierce red light fell on tawny limbs convulsed with frenzied gestures and ferocious stampings; on contorted

<sup>1</sup> Pioneers of France in the New World. Samuel de Champlain, Ch. X.

visages, hideous with paint; on brandished weapons, stone war-clubs, stone hatchets, and stone-pointed lances; while the drum kept up its hollow boom, and the air was split with mingled yells.

The war-feast followed, and then all embarked together. Champlain was in a small shallop, carrying besides himself, eleven men of Pontgravé's party, including his son-in-law, Marais, and the pilot La Route. They were armed with the arquebuse, a matchlock or firelock somewhat like the modern carbine, and from its shortness not ill suited for use in the forest. On the twenty-eighth of June they spread their sails and held their course against the current, while around them the river was alive with canoes, and hundreds of naked arms plied the paddle with a steady, measured sweep. They crossed the Lake of St. Peter, threaded the devious channels among its many islands, and reached at last the mouth of the Rivière des Iroquois, since called the Richelieu, or the St. John. Here, probably on the site of the town of Sorel, the leisurely warriors encamped for two days, hunted, fished, and took their ease, regaling their allies with venison and wild-fowl. They quarrelled, too; three fourths of their number seceded, took to their canoes in dudgeon, and paddled towards their homes, while the rest pursued their course up the broad and placid stream.

Walls of verdure stretched on left and right. Now, aloft in the lonely air rose the cliffs of Belœil, and now, before them, framed in circling forests, the Basin of Chambly spread its tranquil mirror, glittering in the sun. The shallop out-sailed the canoes. Champlain, leaving his allies behind, crossed the basin and tried to pursue his course; but, as he listened in the stillness, the unwelcome noise of rapids reached his ear, and, by glimpses through the dark foliage of the

Islets of St. John, he could see the gleam of snowy foam and the flash of hurrying waters. Leaving the boat by the shore in charge of four men, he went with Marais, La Route, and five others, to explore the wild before him. They pushed their way through the damps and shadows of the wood, through thickets and tangled vines, over mossy rocks and mouldering logs. Still the hoarse surging of the rapids followed them; and when, parting the screen of foliage, they looked out upon the river, they saw it thick set with rocks, where, plunging over ledges, gurgling under drift-logs, darting along clefts, and boiling in chasms, the angry waters filled the solitude with monotonous ravings.

Champlain retraced his steps. He had learned the value of an Indian's word. His allies had promised him that his boat could pass unobstructed throughout the whole journey. "It afflicted me," he says, "and troubled me exceedingly to be obliged to return without having seen so great a lake, full of fair islands and bordered with the fine countries which they had described to me."

When he reached the boat, he found the whole savage crew gathered at the spot. He mildly rebuked their bad faith, but added, that, though they had deceived him, he, as far as might be, would fulfil his pledge. To this end, he directed Marais, with the boat and the greater part of the men, to return to Quebec, while he, with two who offered to follow him, should proceed in the Indian canoes.

The warriors lifted their canoes from the water, and bore them on their shoulders half a league through the forest to the smoother stream above. Here the chiefs made a muster of their forces, counting twenty-four canoes and sixty warriors. All embarked again, and advanced once more, by marsh, meadow, forest, and scattered islands, then full of game, for

it was an uninhabited land, the war-path and battle-ground of hostile tribes. The warriors observed a certain system in their advance. Some were in front as a vanguard; others formed the main body; while an equal number were in the forests on the flanks and rear, hunting for the subsistence of the whole; for, though they had a provision of parched maize pounded into meal, they kept it for use when, from the vicinity of the enemy, hunting should become impossible.

Late in the day they landed and drew up their canoes, ranging them closely, side by side. Some stripped sheets of bark, to cover their camp sheds; others gathered wood, the forest being full of dead, dry trees; others felled the living trees, for a barricade. They seem to have had steel axes, obtained by barter from the French; for in less than two hours they had made a strong defensive work, in the form of a half-circle, open on the river side, where their canoes lay on the strand, and large enough to enclose all their huts and sheds. Some of their number had gone forward as scouts, and, returning, reported no signs of an enemy. This was the extent of their precaution, for they placed no guard, but all, in full security, stretched themselves to sleep,—a vicious custom from which the lazy warrior of the forest rarely departs.

They had not forgotten, however, to consult their oracle. The medicine-man pitched his magic lodge in the woods, formed of a small stack of poles, planted in a circle and brought together at the tops like stacked muskets. Over these he placed the filthy deer-skins which served him for a robe, and, creeping in at a narrow opening, hid himself from view. Crouched in a ball upon the earth, he invoked the spirits in mumbling inarticulate tones; while his naked

auditory, squatted on the ground like apes, listened in wonder and awe. Suddenly, the lodge moved, rocking with violence to and fro, by the power of the spirits, as the Indians thought, while Champlain could plainly see the tawny fist of the medicine-man shaking the poles. They begged him to keep a watchful eye on the peak of the lodge, whence fire and smoke would presently issue; but with the best efforts of his vision, he discovered none. Meanwhile the medicine-man was seized with such convulsions, that, when his divination was over, his naked body streamed with perspiration. In loud, clear tones, and in an unknown tongue, he invoked the spirit, who was understood to be present in the form of a stone, and whose feeble and squeaking accents were heard at intervals, like the wail of a young puppy.<sup>1</sup>

In this manner they consulted the spirit — as Champlain thinks, the Devil — at all their camps. His replies, for the most part, seem to have given them great content; yet they took other measures, of which the military advantages were less questionable. The principal chief gathered bundles of sticks, and, without wasting his breath, stuck them in the earth in a certain order, calling each by the name of some warrior, a few taller than the rest representing the subordinate chiefs. Thus was indicated the position which each was to hold in the expected battle. All gathered round and attentively studied the sticks, ranged like a child's wooden

<sup>1</sup>This mode of divination was universal among the Algonquin tribes, and is not extinct to this day among their roving Northern bands. Le Jeune, Laffiteau, and other early Jesuit writers, describe it with great minuteness. The former (*Relation*, 1634) speaks of an audacious conjurer, who, having invoked the Manitou, or spirit, killed him with a hatchet. To all appearance he was a stone, which, however, when struck with the hatchet, proved to be full of flesh and blood. A kindred superstition prevails among the Crow Indians.

soldiers, or the pieces on a chessboard; then, with no further instruction, they formed their ranks, broke them, and reformed them again and again with excellent alacrity and skill.

Again the canoes advanced, the river widening as they went. Great islands appeared, leagues in extent, — Isle à la Motte, Long Island, Grande Isle. Channels where ships might float and broad reaches of water stretched between them, and Champlain entered the lake which preserves his name to posterity. Cumberland Head was passed, and from the opening of the great channel between Grande Isle and the main he could look forth on the wilderness sea. Edged with woods, the tranquil flood spread southward beyond the sight. Far on the left rose the forest ridges of the Green Mountains, and on the right the Adirondacks, haunts in these later years of amateur sportsmen from counting-rooms or college halls. Then the Iroquois made them their hunting-ground; and beyond, in the valleys of the Mohawk, the Onondaga, and the Genesee, stretched the long line of their five cantons and palisaded towns.

At night they encamped again. The scene is a familiar one to many a tourist; and perhaps, standing at sunset on the peaceful strand, Champlain saw what a roving student of this generation has seen on those same shores, at that same hour: the glow of the vanished sun behind the western mountains, darkly piled in mist and shadow along the sky; near at hand, the dead pine, mighty in decay, stretching its ragged arms athwart the burning heaven, the crow perched on its top like an image carved in jet; and aloft, the night-hawk, circling in his flight, and, with a strange whirring sound, diving through the air each moment for the insects he makes his prey.

The progress of the party was becoming dangerous. They changed their mode of advance, and moved only in the night. All day, they lay close in the depth of the forest, sleeping, lounging, smoking tobacco of their own raising, and beguiling the hours, no doubt, with the shallow banter and obscene jesting with which knots of Indians are wont to amuse their leisure. At twilight they embarked again, paddling their cautious way till the eastern sky began to redden. Their goal was the rocky promontory where Fort Ticonderoga was long afterward built. Thence, they would pass the outlet of Lake George, and launch their canoes again on that Como of the wilderness, whose waters, limpid as a fountain-head, stretched far southward between their flanking mountains. Landing at the future site of Fort William Henry, they would carry their canoes through the forest to the river Hudson, and, descending it, attack perhaps some outlying town of the Mohawks. In the next century this chain of lakes and rivers became the grand highway of savage and civilized war, linked to memories of momentous conflicts.

The allies were spared so long a progress. On the morning of the twenty-ninth of July, after paddling all night, they hid as usual in the forest on the western shore, apparently between Crown Point and Ticonderoga. The warriors stretched themselves to their slumbers, and Champlain, after walking till nine or ten o'clock through the surrounding woods, returned to take his repose on a pile of spruce-boughs. Sleeping, he dreamed a dream, wherein he beheld the Iroquois drowning in the lake; and, trying to rescue them, he was told by his Algonquin friends that they were good for nothing, and had better be left to their fate. For some time past he had been beset every morning by his superstitious allies, eager to learn about his dreams; and, to this moment,

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his unbroken slumbers had failed to furnish the desired prognostics. The announcement of this auspicious vision filled the crowd with joy, and at nightfall they embarked, flushed with anticipated victories.<sup>1</sup>

It was ten o'clock in the evening, when, near a projecting point of land, which was probably Ticonderoga, they descried dark objects in motion on the lake before them. These were a flotilla of Iroquois canoes, heavier and slower than theirs, for they were made of oak bark.<sup>2</sup> Each party saw the other, and the mingled war-cries pealed over the darkened water. The Iroquois, who were near the shore, having no stomach for an aquatic battle, landed, and, making night hideous with their clamors, began to barricade themselves. Champlain could see them in the woods, laboring like beavers, hacking down trees with iron axes taken from the Canadian tribes in war, and with stone hatchets of their own making. The allies remained on the lake, a bowshot from the hostile barricade, their canoes made fast together by poles lashed across. All night they danced with as much vigor as the frailty of their vessels would permit, their throats making amends for

<sup>1</sup> The power of dreams among Indians in their primitive condition can scarcely be over-estimated. Among the ancient Hurons and cognate tribes, they were the universal authority and oracle; but while a dreamer of reputation had unlimited power, the dream of a *vaurien* was held in no account. There were professed interpreters of dreams. Brébeuf, *Rel. des Hurons*, 117. A man, dreaming that he had killed his wife, made it an excuse for killing her in fact. All these tribes, including the Iroquois, had a staled game called *Ouonhara*, or the dreaming game, in which dreams were made the pretext for the wildest extravagances. See Lafitau, Charlevoix, Sagard, Brébeuf, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Champlain, (1613.) 232. Probably a mistake; the Iroquois canoes were usually of elm bark. The paper-birch was used wherever it could be had, being incomparably the best material. All the tribes, from the mouth of the Saco northward and eastward, and along the entire northern portion of the valley of the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes, used the birch. The best substitutes were elm and spruce. The birch bark, from its laminated texture, could be peeled at any time; the others only when the sap was in motion.

the enforced restraint of their limbs. It was agreed on both sides that the fight should be deferred till daybreak; but meanwhile a commerce of abuse, sarcasm, menace, and boasting gave unceasing exercise to the lungs and fancy of the combatants, — "much," says Champlain, "like the besiegers and besieged in a beleaguered town."

As day approached, he and his two followers put on the light armor of the time. Champlain wore the doublet and long hose then in vogue. Over the doublet he buckled on a breastplate, and probably a back-piece, while his thighs were protected by cuisses of steel, and his head by a plumed casque. Across his shoulder hung the strap of his bandoleer, or ammunition-box; at his side was his sword, and in his hand his arquebuse. Such was the equipment of this ancient Indian-fighter, whose exploits date eleven years before the landing of the Puritans at Plymouth, and sixty-six years before King Philip's War.

Each of the three Frenchmen was in a separate canoe, and, as it grew light, they kept themselves hidden, either by lying at the bottom, or covering themselves with an Indian robe. The canoes approached the shore, and all landed without opposition at some distance from the Iroquois, whom they presently could see filing out of their barricade, tall, strong men, some two hundred in number, the boldest and fiercest warriors of North America. They advanced through the forest with a steadiness which excited the admiration of Champlain. Among them could be seen three chiefs, made conspicuous by their tall plumes. Some bore shields of wood and hide, and some were covered with a kind of armor made of tough twigs interlaced with a vegetable fibre supposed by Champlain to be cotton.

The allies, growing anxious, called with loud cries for their

champion, and opened their ranks that he might pass to the front. He did so, and, advancing before his red companions in arms, stood revealed to the gaze of the Iroquois, who, beholding the warlike apparition in their path, stared in mute amazement. "I looked at them," says Champlain, "and they looked at me. When I saw them getting ready to shoot their arrows at us, I levelled my arquebuse, which I had loaded with four balls, and aimed straight at one of the three chiefs. The shot brought down two, and wounded another. On this, our Indians set up such a yelling that one could not have heard a thunder-clap, and all the while the arrows flew thick on both sides. The Iroquois were greatly astonished and frightened to see two of their men killed so quickly, in spite of their arrow-proof armor. As I was reloading, one of my companions fired a shot from the woods, which so increased their astonishment that, seeing their chiefs dead, they abandoned the field and fled into the depth of the forest." The allies dashed after them. Some of the Iroquois were killed, and more were taken. Camp, canoes, provisions, all were abandoned, and many weapons flung down in the panic flight. The victory was complete.

At night, the victors led out one of the prisoners, told him that he was to die by fire, and ordered him to sing his death-song, if he dared. Then they began the torture, and presently scalped their victim alive, when Champlain, sickening at the sight, begged leave to shoot him. They refused, and he turned away in anger and disgust; on which they called him back and told him to do as he pleased. He turned again and a shot from his arquebuse put the wretch out of misery.

The scene filled him with horror; but, a few months later, on the Place de la Grève at Paris, he might have witnessed tortures equally revolting and equally vindictive, inflicted on

the regicide Ravaillac by the sentence of grave and learned judges.

The allies made a prompt retreat from the scene of their triumph. Three or four days brought them to the mouth of the Richelieu. Here they separated; the Hurons and Algonquins made for the Ottawa, their homeward route, each with a share of prisoners for future torments. At parting they invited Champlain to visit their towns, and aid them again in their wars, an invitation which this paladin of the woods failed not to accept.

The companions now remaining to him were the Montagnais. In their camp on the Richelieu, one of them dreamed that a war party of Iroquois was close upon them; on which, in a torrent of rain, they left their huts, paddled in dismay to the islands above the Lake of St. Peter, and hid themselves all night in the rushes. In the morning, they took heart, emerged from their hiding-places, descended to Quebec, and went thence to Tadoussac, whither Champlain accompanied them. Here the squaws swam out to the canoes to receive the heads of the dead Iroquois, and, hanging them from their necks, danced in triumph along the shore. One of the heads and a pair of arms were then bestowed on Champlain, — touching memorials of gratitude, which, however, he was by no means to keep for himself, but to present to the king.

Thus did New France rush into collision with the redoubted warriors of the Five Nations. Here was the beginning, and in some measure doubtless the cause, of a long suite of murderous conflicts, bearing havoc and flame to generations yet unborn. Champlain had invaded the tiger's den; and now, in smothered fury, the patient savage would lie biding his day of blood.

CHAMPLAIN'S SEARCH FOR A ROUTE TO  
THE INDIES<sup>1</sup>

[IN 1610 a young French adventurer, Nicolas de Vignau, offered to join some trading Indians on their homeward journey, and winter among them. He embarked in the Algonquin canoes, passed up the Ottawa, and was seen no more for a twelvemonth. — Ed.]

In 1612 he reappeared in Paris, bringing a tale of wonders; for, says Champlain, "he was the most impudent liar that has been seen for many a day." He averred that at the sources of the Ottawa he had found a great lake; that he had crossed it, and discovered a river flowing northward; that he had descended this river, and reached the shores of the sea; that here he had seen the wreck of an English ship, whose crew, escaping to land, had been killed by the Indians; and that this sea was distant from Montreal only seventeen days by canoe. The clearness, consistency, and apparent simplicity of his story deceived Champlain, who had heard of a voyage of the English to the northern seas, coupled with rumors of wreck and disaster,<sup>2</sup> and was thus confirmed in his belief of Vignau's honesty. The Maréchal de Brissac, the President Jeannin, and other persons of eminence about the court, greatly in-

<sup>1</sup> Pioneers of France in the New World. Samuel de Champlain, Ch. XII.

<sup>2</sup> Evidently the voyage of Henry Hudson in 1610-12, when that navigator, after discovering Hudson's Strait, lost his life through a mutiny.

terested by these dexterous fabrications, urged Champlain to follow up without delay a discovery which promised results so important; while he, with the Pacific, Japan, China, the Spice Islands, and India stretching in flattering vista before his fancy, entered with eagerness on the chase of this illusion. Early in the spring of 1613 the unwearied voyager crossed the Atlantic, and sailed up the St. Lawrence. On Monday, the twenty-seventh of May, he left the island of St. Helen, opposite Montreal, with four Frenchmen, one of whom was Nicolas de Vignau, and one Indian, in two small canoes. They passed the swift current at St. Ann's, crossed the Lake of Two Mountains, and advanced up the Ottawa till the rapids of Carillon and the Long Saut checked their course. So dense and tangled was the forest, that they were forced to remain in the bed of the river, trailing their canoes along the bank with cords, or pushing them by main force up the current. Champlain's foot slipped; he fell in the rapids, two boulders, against which he braced himself, saving him from being swept down, while the cord of the canoe, twisted round his hand, nearly severed it. At length they reached smoother water, and presently met fifteen canoes of friendly Indians. Champlain gave them the most awkward of his Frenchmen, and took one of their number in return,—an exchange greatly to his profit.

All day they plied their paddles, and when night came they made their camp-fire in the forest. He who now, when two centuries and a half are passed, would see the evening bivouac of Champlain, has but to encamp, with Indian guides, on the upper waters of this same Ottawa, or on the borders of some lonely river of New Brunswick or of Maine.

Day dawned. The east glowed with tranquil fire, that pierced, with eyes of flame, the fir-trees whose jagged tops

stood drawn in black against the burning heaven. Beneath the glossy river slept in shadow, or spread far and wide in sheets of burnished bronze; and the white moon, paling in the face of day, hung like a disk of silver in the western sky. Now, a fervid light touched the dead top of the hemlock, and, creeping downward, bathed the mossy beard of the patriarchal cedar, unstirred in the breathless air. Now, a fiercer spark beamed from the east; and now, half risen on the sight, a dome of crimson fire, the sun blazed with floods of radiance across the awakened wilderness.

The canoes were launched again, and the voyagers held their course. Soon the still surface was flecked with spots of foam; islets of froth floated by, tokens of some great convulsion. Then, on their left, the falling curtain of the Rideau shone like silver betwixt its bordering woods, and in front, white as a snow-drift, the cataracts of the Chaudière barred their way. They saw the unbridled river careering down its sheeted rocks, foaming in unfathomed chasms, wearying the solitude with the hoarse outcry of its agony and rage.

On the brink of the rocky basin where the plunging torrent boiled like a caldron, and puffs of spray sprang out from its concussion like smoke from the throat of a cannon, Champlain's two Indians took their stand, and, with a loud invocation, threw tobacco into the foam, an offering to the local spirit, the Manitou of the cataract.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An invariable custom with the upper Indians on passing this place. When many were present, it was attended with solemn dances and speeches, a contribution of tobacco being first taken on a dish. It was thought to insure a safe voyage; but was often an occasion of disaster, since hostile war parties, lying in ambush at the spot, would surprise and kill the votaries of the Manitou in the very presence of their guardian. It is on the return voyage that Champlain particularly describes the sacrifice.

They shouldered their canoes over the rocks, and through the woods; then launched them again, and, with toil and struggle, made their amphibious way, pushing, dragging, lifting, paddling, shoving with poles; till, when the evening sun poured its level rays across the quiet Lake of the Chaudière, they landed, and made their camp on the verge of a woody island.

Day by day brought a renewal of their toils. Hour by hour, they moved prosperously up the long windings of the solitary stream; then, in quick succession, rapid followed rapid, till the bed of the Ottawa seemed a slope of foam. Now, like a wall bristling at the top with woody islets, the Falls of the Chats faced them with the sheer plunge of their sixteen cataracts. Now they glided beneath overhanging cliffs, where, seeing but unseen, the crouched wild-cat eyed them from the thicket; now through the maze of water-girded rocks, which the white cedar and the spruce clasped with serpent-like roots, or among islands where old hemlocks darkened the water with deep green shadow. Here, too, the rock-maple reared its verdant masses, the beech its glistening leaves and clean, smooth stem, and behind, stiff and sombre, rose the balsam-fir. Here, in the tortuous channels, the muskrat swam and plunged, and the splashing wild duck dived beneath the alders or among the red and matted roots of thirsty water-willows. Aloft, the white pine towered above a sea of verdure; old fir-trees, hoary and grim, shaggy with pendent mosses, leaned above the stream, and beneath, dead and submerged, some fallen oak thrust from the current its bare, bleached limbs, like the skeleton of a drowned giant. In the weedy cove stood the moose, neck-deep in water to escape the flies, wading shoreward, with glistening sides, as the canoes drew near, shaking



his broad antlers and writhing his hideous nostril, as with clumsy trot he vanished in the woods.

In these ancient wilds, to whose ever verdant antiquity the pyramids are young and Nineveh a mushroom of yesterday; where the sage wanderer of the Odyssey, could he have urged his pilgrimage so far, would have surveyed the same grand and stern monotony, the same dark sweep of melancholy woods; — here, while New England was a solitude, and the settlers of Virginia scarcely dared venture inland beyond the sound of a cannon-shot, Champlain was planting on shores and islands the emblems of his faith. Of the pioneers of the North American forests, his name stands foremost on the list. It was he who struck the deepest and boldest strokes into the heart of their pristine barbarism. At Chantilly, at Fontainebleau, at Paris, in the cabinets of princes and of royalty itself, mingling with the proud vanities of the court; then lost from sight in the depths of Canada, the companion of savages, sharer of their toils, privations, and battles, more hardy, patient, and bold than they; — such, for successive years, were the alternations of this man's life.

[Arrived among the Ottawas Champlain urged them to give him canoes that he might pursue his journey into the country of the Nipissings, but the canoes were denied. — Ed.]

With a troubled mind he hastened again to the hall of council, and addressed the naked senate in terms better suited to his exigencies than to their dignity.

“I thought you were men; I thought you would hold fast to your word; but I find you children, without truth. You call yourselves my friends, yet you break faith with me. Still I would not incommode you; and if you cannot give me four canoes, two will serve.”

The burden of the reply was, rapids, rocks, cataracts, and

the wickedness of the Nipissings. "We will not give you the canoes, because we are afraid of losing you," they said.

"This young man," rejoined Champlain, pointing to Vignau, who sat by his side, "has been to their country, and did not find the road or the people so bad as you have said."

"Nicolas," demanded Tessouat, "did you say that you had been to the Nipissings?"

The impostor sat mute for a time, and then replied, "Yes, I have been there."

Hereupon an outcry broke from the assembly, and they turned their eyes on him askance, "as if," says Champlain, "they would have torn and eaten him."

"You are a liar," returned the unceremonious host; "you know very well that you slept here among my children every night, and got up again every morning; and if you ever went to the Nipissings, it must have been when you were asleep. How can you be so impudent as to lie to your chief, and so wicked as to risk his life among so many dangers? He ought to kill you with tortures worse than those with which we kill our enemies."

Champlain urged him to reply, but he sat motionless and dumb. Then he led him from the cabin, and conjured him to declare if in truth he had seen this sea of the north. Vignau, with oaths, affirmed that all he had said was true. Returning to the council, Champlain repeated the impostor's story: how he had seen the sea, the wreck of an English ship, the heads of eighty Englishmen, and an English boy, prisoner among the Indians.

At this, an outcry rose louder than before, and the Indians turned in ire upon Vignau.

"You are a liar." "Which way did you go?" "By what rivers?" "By what lakes?" "Who went with you?"

Vignau had made a map of his travels, which Champlain now produced, desiring him to explain it to his questioners; but his assurance failed him, and he could not utter a word.

Champlain was greatly agitated. His heart was in the enterprise; his reputation was in a measure at stake; and now, when he thought his triumph so near, he shrank from believing himself the sport of an impudent impostor. The council broke up; the Indians displeased and moody, and he, on his part, full of anxieties and doubts.

"I called Vignau to me in presence of his companions," he says. "I told him that the time for deceiving me was ended; that he must tell me whether or not he had really seen the things he had told of; that I had forgotten the past, but that, if he continued to mislead me, I would have him hanged without mercy."

Vignau pondered for a moment; then fell on his knees, owned his treachery, and begged forgiveness. Champlain broke into a rage, and, unable, as he says, to endure the sight of him, ordered him from his presence, and sent the interpreter after him to make further examination. Vanity, the love of notoriety, and the hope of reward, seem to have been his inducements; for he had in fact spent a quiet winter in Tessouat's cabin, his nearest approach to the northern sea; and he had flattered himself that he might escape the necessity of guiding his commander to this pretended discovery. The Indians were somewhat exultant. "Why did you not listen to chiefs and warriors, instead of believing the lies of this fellow?" And they counselled Champlain to have him killed at once, adding, "Give him to us, and we promise you that he shall never lie again."

[**Advent of the Récollets.** — In the interval between 1613 and his death in 1635, Champlain was unwearied in his efforts on behalf of the struggling colony. To retain the sympathy and aid of king and nobles, he made almost yearly the arduous voyage to France. In his concern for the spiritual welfare of the colony he addressed himself to a convent of Récollet friars, a branch of the great Franciscan order, founded early in the thirteenth century by St. Francis of Assisi. Four of these friars were named for the mission in New France, and arrived at Quebec at the end of May, 1615.

“Their first care,” says Parkman, “was to choose a site for their convent, near the fortified dwellings and storehouses built by Champlain.<sup>1</sup> This done, they made an altar, and celebrated the first mass ever said in Canada. Dolbeau was the officiating priest; all New France kneeled on the bare earth around him, and cannon from the ship and the ramparts hailed the mystic rite. Then, in imitation of the Apostles, they took counsel together, and assigned to each his province in the vast field of their mission: to Le Caron, the Hurons, and to Dolbeau, the Montagnais; while Jamay and Du Plessis were to remain for the present near Quebec.”

The Indians, however, were more eager for temporal than for spiritual succour, and beset Champlain with clamors for aid against the Iroquois. In a rash moment, though in pursuance of a deliberate policy, Champlain assented. His aim was to bind the northern tribes in a bond of self-interest, and make them entirely dependent upon French aid. One hundred and fifty years of Iroquois reprisals was the price the colony paid for this misguided policy. — ED.]

<sup>1</sup> Pioneers of France in the New World. Samuel de Champlain, Ch. XIII.

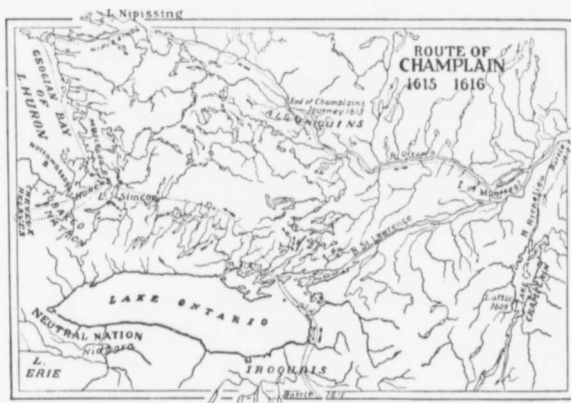
DISCOVERY OF LAKE HURON<sup>1</sup>

THE chiefs and warriors met in council, — Algonquins of the Ottawa, and Hurons from the borders of the great Fresh-Water Sea. Champlain promised to join them with all the men at his command, while they, on their part, were to muster without delay twenty-five hundred warriors for an inroad into the country of the Iroquois. He descended at once to Quebec for needful preparation; but when, after a short delay, he returned to Montreal, he found, to his chagrin, a solitude. The wild concourse had vanished; nothing remained but the skeleton poles of their huts, the smoke of their fires, and the refuse of their encampments. Impatient at his delay, they had set out for their villages, and with them had gone Father Joseph le Caron.

Twelve Frenchmen, well armed, had attended him. Summer was at its height, and as his canoe stole along the bosom of the glassy river, and he gazed about him on the tawny multitude whose fragile craft covered the water like swarms of gliding insects, he thought, perhaps, of his whitewashed cell in the convent of Brouage, of his book, his table, his rosary, and all the narrow routine of that familiar life from which he had awakened to contrasts so startling. That his progress up the Ottawa was far from being an excursion of pleasure is attested by his letters, fragments of which have come down to us.

<sup>1</sup> Pioneers of France in the New World. Samuel de Champlain, Ch. XIII.

"It would be hard to tell you," he writes to a friend, "how tired I was with paddling all day, with all my strength, among the Indians; wading the rivers a hundred times and more, through the mud and over the sharp rocks that cut my feet; carrying the canoe and luggage through the woods to avoid the rapids and frightful cataracts; and half starved all the while, for we had nothing to eat but a little *sagamite*, a sort of porridge of water and pounded maize, of which they



gave us a very small allowance every morning and night. But I must needs tell you what abundant consolation I found under all my troubles; for when one sees so many infidels needing nothing but a drop of water to make them children of God, one feels an inexpressible ardor to labor for their conversion, and sacrifice to it one's repose and life."

While through tribulations like these Le Caron made his way towards the scene of his apostleship, Champlain was following on his track. With two canoes, ten Indians,

Étienne Brulé his interpreter, and another Frenchman, he pushed up the Ottawa till he reached the Algonquin villages which had formed the term of his former journeying. He passed the two lakes of the Allumettes; and now, for twenty miles, the river stretched before him, straight as the bee can fly, deep, narrow, and black, between its mountain shores. He passed the rapids of the Joachims and the Caribou, the Rocher Capitaine, and the Deux Rivières, and reached at length the tributary waters of the Mattawan. He turned to the left, ascended this little stream forty miles or more, and, crossing a portage track, well trodden, reached the margin of Lake Nipissing. The canoes were launched again, and glided by leafy shores and verdant islands till at length appeared signs of human life and clusters of bark lodges, half hidden in the vastness of the woods. It was the village of an Algonquin band, called the Nipissings,— a race so beset with spirits, infested by demons, and abounding in magicians, that the Jesuits afterwards stigmatized them as "the Sorcerers." In this questionable company Champlain spent two days, feasted on fish, deer, and bears. Then, descending to the outlet of the lake, he steered his canoes westward down the current of French River.

Days passed, and no sign of man enlivened the rocky desolation. Hunger was pressing them hard, for the ten gluttonous Indians had devoured already nearly all their provision for the voyage, and they were forced to subsist on the blueberries and wild raspberries that grew abundantly in the meagre soil, when suddenly they encountered a troop of three hundred savages, whom, from their strange and startling mode of wearing their hair, Champlain named the *Chereue Relvés*. "Not one of our courtiers," he says, "takes so much pains in dressing his locks." Here, however, their care of

the toilet ended; for, though tattooed on various parts of the body, painted, and armed with bows, arrows, and shields of bison-hide, they wore no clothing whatever. Savage as was their aspect, they were busied in the pacific task of gathering blueberries for their winter store. Their demeanor was friendly; and from them the voyager learned that the great lake of the Hurons was close at hand.<sup>1</sup>

Now, far along the western sky was traced the watery line of that inland ocean, and, first of white men except the Friar Le Caron, Champlain beheld the "Mer Douce," the Fresh-Water Sea of the Hurons. Before him, too far for sight, lay the spirit-haunted Manitoualins, and, southward, spread the vast bosom of the Georgian Bay. For more than a hundred miles, his course was along its eastern shores, among islets countless as the sea-sands, — an archipelago of rocks worn for ages by the wash of waves. He crossed Byng Inlet, Franklin Inlet, Parry Sound, and the wider bay of Matchedash, and seems to have landed at the inlet now called Thunder Bay, at the entrance of the Bay of Matchedash, and a little west of the Harbor of Penetanguishine.

An Indian trail led inland, through woods and thickets, across broad meadows, over brooks, and along the skirts of green acclivities. To the eye of Champlain, accustomed to the desolation he had left behind, it seemed a land of beauty and abundance. He reached at last a broad opening in the forest, with fields of maize, pumpkins ripening in the sun, patches of sunflowers, from the seeds of which the Indians made hair-oil, and, in the midst, the Huron town of Otouacha. In all essential points, it resembled that which Cartier, eighty

<sup>1</sup> These savages belonged to a numerous Algonquin tribe who occupied a district west and southwest of the Nottawassaga Bay of Lake Huron, within the modern counties of Bruce and Grey.



years before, had seen at Montreal : the same triple palisade of crossed and intersecting trunks, and the same long lodges of bark, each containing several families. Here, within an area of thirty or forty miles, was the seat of one of the most remarkable savage communities on the continent. By the Indian standard, it was a mighty nation ; yet the entire Huron population did not exceed that of a third or fourth class American city.<sup>1</sup>

To the south and southeast lay other tribes of kindred race and tongue, all stationary, all tillers of the soil, and all in a state of social advancement when compared with the roving bands of Eastern Canada: the Neutral Nation<sup>2</sup> west of the Niagara, and the Eries and Andastes in Western New York and Pennsylvania ; while from the Genesee eastward to the Hudson lay the banded tribes of the Iroquois, leading members of this potent family, deadly foes of their kindred, and at last their destroyers.

[Accompanied by his dusky allies, Champlain portaged to Lake Couchiching ; passing thence into Lake Simcoe he ascended the Talbot River, and made his way from the headquarters of the River Trent to Lake Ontario. He crossed the lake with his savage army, penetrated into the heart of the Iroquois country, and there gave unsuccessful battle some miles to the south of Lake Oneida.—ED.]

<sup>1</sup> Champlain estimates the number of Huron villages at seventeen or eighteen. Le Jeune, Sagard, and Lalemant afterwards reckoned them at from twenty to thirty-two. Le Clerc, following Le Caron, makes the population about ten thousand souls ; but several later observers, as well as Champlain himself, set it at above thirty thousand.

<sup>2</sup> A warlike people, called Neutral from their neutrality between the Hurons and the Iroquois, which did not save them from sharing the destruction which overwhelmed the former.

## CHAMPLAIN'S CLOSING YEARS

[ON his return to Quebec he was beset with new difficulties. The merchants, unscrupulous and jealous, were a constant menace to his authority, while the religious strife between Catholics and Huguenots was daily becoming more embittered. The Récollets, active as was their missionary zeal, found themselves unable alone, and hampered by Huguenot ascendancy, to supply the religious needs of Canada. They accordingly applied to the Jesuits for aid. Three of their brotherhood, Charles Lalemant, Enemond Masse, and Jean de Brébeuf, accordingly embarked; and in 1625, fourteen years after the Jesuits had landed in Acadia, Canada beheld for the first time those whose names stand so prominent in her annals,—the mysterious followers of Loyola.

Meantime Richelieu had become supreme in France. One of his first cares was to reorganize the dilapidated affairs of Canada. To this end, he annulled the privileges of the Huguenot brothers De Caen, who had held the monopoly of trade. The "Company of New France," commonly called "The Company of the Hundred Associates," was established in 1627, with sovereign power over the whole of New France, from Florida to the Arctic Circle. Every settler must be a Frenchman and a Catholic; and for every new settlement at least three ecclesiastics must be provided.

"Thus," says Parkman, "was New France to be forever free from the taint of heresy. The stain of her infancy was to be wiped away. Against the foreigner and the Huguenot the door was closed and barred. England threw open her colonies to all who wished to enter, — to the suffering and oppressed, the bold, active, and enterprising. France shut out those who wished to come, and admitted only those who did not, — the favored class who clung to the old faith and had no motive or disposition to leave their homes. English colonization obeyed a natural law, and sailed with wind and tide, French colonization spent its whole struggling existence in futile efforts to make head against them. The English colonist developed inherited freedom on a virgin soil; the French colonist was pursued across the Atlantic by a paternal despotism better in intention and more withering in effect than that which he left behind. If, instead of excluding Huguenots, France had given them an asylum in the west, and left them there to work out their own destinies, Canada would never have been a British province, and the United States would have shared their vast domain with a vigorous population of self-governing Frenchmen."<sup>1</sup> Quebec had not yet reached the lowest ebb of her prosperity. The Calvinists had broken out into armed revolt in France, and Charles I. of England had despatched a fleet to their aid. An enterprise was promptly set on foot to capture the French possessions in North America. At its head was a subject of France, David Kirk, a Calvinist of Dieppe. With him were his brothers, Louis and Thomas Kirk; and many Huguenot refugees were among the crews. Quebec was incapable of defence, and when the hostile fleet had wellnigh reduced the town by starvation Champlain was

<sup>1</sup> Pioneers of France in the New World. Samuel de Champlain, Ch. XV.

forced to surrender upon honorable terms. This was in 1629, and one hundred and thirty years were to pass before the British flag was again victoriously planted upon the citadel.

In 1632 by the convention of Suza New France was restored to the French crown. — Ed.]

DEATH OF CHAMPLAIN<sup>1</sup>

CHRISTMAS DAY, 1635, was a dark day in the annals of New France. In a chamber of the fort, breathless and cold, lay the hardy frame which war, the wilderness, and the sea had buffeted so long in vain. After two months and a half of illness, Champlain, stricken with paralysis, at the age of sixty-eight, was dead. His last cares were for his colony and the succor of its suffering families. Jesuits, officers, soldiers, traders, and the few settlers of Quebec, followed his remains to the church; Le Jeune pronounced his eulogy, and the feeble community built a tomb to his honor.

*Père le Jeune*

The colony could ill spare him. For twenty-seven years he had labored hard and ceaselessly for its welfare, sacrificing fortune, repose, and domestic peace to a cause embraced with enthusiasm and pursued with intrepid persistency. His character belonged partly to the past, partly to the present. The *preux chevalier*, the crusader, the romance-loving explorer, the curious, knowledge-seeking traveller, the practical

<sup>1</sup> Pioneers of France in the New World. Samuel de Champlain, Ch. XVII.

navigator, all claimed their share in him. His views, though far beyond those of the mean spirits around him, belonged to his age and his creed. He was less statesman than soldier. He leaned to the most direct and boldest policy, and one of his last acts was to petition Richelieu for men and munitions for repressing that standing menace to the colony, the Iroquois. His dauntless courage was matched by an unwearyed patience, proved by life-long vexations, and not wholly subdued even by the saintly follies of his wife. He is charged with credulity, from which few of his age were free, and which in all ages has been the foible of earnest and generous natures, too ardent to criticise, and too honorable to doubt the honor of others. Perhaps the heretic might have liked him more if the Jesuit had liked him less. The adventurous explorer of Lake Huron, the bold invader of the Iroquois, befits but indifferently the monastic sobrieties of the fort of Quebec, and his sombre environment of priests.

His books mark the man,—all for his theme and his purpose, nothing for himself. Crude in style, full of the superficial errors of carelessness and haste, rarely diffuse, often brief to a fault, they bear on every page the palpable impress of truth.

With the life of the faithful soldier closes the opening period of New France. Heroes of another stamp succeed; and it remains to tell the story of their devoted lives, their faults, follies, and virtues.

FRANCE AND ENGLAND IN AMERICA,  
1608-1763<sup>1</sup>

THE American colonies of France and England grew up to maturity under widely different auspices. Canada, the offspring of Church and State, nursed from infancy in the lap of power, its puny strength fed with artificial stimulants, its movements guided by rule and discipline, its limbs trained to martial exercise, languished, in spite of all, from the lack of vital sap and energy. The colonies of England, outcast and neglected, but strong in native vigor and self-confiding courage, grew yet more strong with conflict and with striving, and developed the rugged proportions and unyielding strength of a youthful giant.

In the valley of the St. Lawrence, and along the coasts of the Atlantic, adverse principles contended for the mastery. Feudalism stood arrayed against Democracy; Popery against Protestantism; the sword against the ploughshare. The priest, the soldier, and the noble ruled in Canada. The ignorant, light-hearted Canadian peasant knew nothing and cared nothing about popular rights and civil liberties. Born to obey, he lived in contented submission, without the wish or the capacity for self-rule. Power, centred in the heart of the system, left the masses inert. The settlements along the margin of the St. Lawrence were like a

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. II.

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camp, where an army lay at rest, ready for the march or the battle, and where war and adventure, not trade and tillage, seemed the chief aims of life. The lords of the soil were petty nobles, for the most part soldiers, or the sons of soldiers, proud and ostentatious, thriftless and poor; and the people were their vassals. Over every cluster of small white houses glittered the sacred emblem of the cross. The church, the convent, and the roadside shrine were seen at every turn; and in the towns and villages, one met each moment the black robe of the Jesuit, the gray garb of the Récollet, and the formal habit of the Ursuline nun. The names of saints, St. Joseph, St. Ignatius, St. Francis, were perpetuated in the capes, rivers, and islands, the forts and villages of the land; and with every day, crowds of simple worshippers knelt in adoration before the countless altars of the Roman faith.

If we search the world for the sharpest contrast to the spiritual and temporal vassalage of Canada, we shall find it among her immediate neighbors, the Puritans of New England, where the spirit of non-conformity was sublimed to a fiery essence, and where the love of liberty and the hatred of power burned with sevenfold heat. The English colonist, with thoughtful brow and limbs hardened with toil; calling no man master, yet bowing reverently to the law which he himself had made; patient and laborious, and seeking for the solid comforts rather than the ornaments of life; no lover of war, yet, if need were, fighting with a stubborn, indomitable courage, and then bending once more with steadfast energy to his farm or his merchandise, — such a man might well be deemed the very pith and marrow of a commonwealth.

In every quality of efficiency and strength, the Canadian



fell miserably below his rival; but in all that pleases the eye and interests the imagination, he far surpassed him. Booyant and gay, like his ancestry of France, he made the frozen wilderness ring with merriment, answered the surly howling of the pine forest with peals of laughter, and warmed with revelry the groaning ice of the St. Lawrence. Careless and thoughtless, he lived happy in the midst of poverty, content if he could but gain the means to fill his tobacco-pouch, and decorate the cap of his mistress with a ribbon. The example of a beggared nobility, who, proud and penniless, could only assert their rank by idleness and ostentation, was not lost upon him. A rightful heir to French bravery and French restlessness, he had an eager love of wandering and adventure; and this propensity found ample scope in the service of the fur-trade, the engrossing occupation and chief source of income to the colony. When the priest of St. Ann's had shrived him of his sins; when, after the parting carousal, he embarked with his comrades in the deep-laden canoe, when their oars kept time to the measured cadence of their song, and the blue, sunny bosom of the Ottawa opened before them; when their frail bark quivered among the milky foam and black rocks of the rapid; and when, around their camp-fire, they wasted half the night with jests and laughter,—then the Canadian was in his element. His footsteps explored the farthest hiding-places of the wilderness. In the evening dance, his red cap mingled with the scalp-locks and feathers of the Indian braves; or, stretched on a bear-skin by the side of his dusky mistress, he watched the gambols of his hybrid offspring, in happy oblivion of the partner whom he left unnumbered leagues behind.

The fur-trade engendered a peculiar class of restless bush-

rangers, more akin to Indians than to white men. Those who had once felt the fascinations of the forest were unfitted ever after for a life of quiet labor; and with this spirit the whole colony was infected. From this cause, no less than from occasional wars with the English, and repeated attacks of the Iroquois, the agriculture of the country was sunk to a low ebb; while feudal exactions, a ruinous system of monopoly, and the intermeddlings of arbitrary power, cramped every branch of industry. Yet by the zeal of priests and the daring enterprise of soldiers and explorers, Canada, though sapless and infirm, spread forts and missions through all the western wilderness. Feebly rooted in the soil, she thrust out branches which overshadowed half America, a magnificent object to the eye, but one which the first whirlwind would prostrate in the dust.

Such excursive enterprise was alien to the genius of the British colonies. Daring activity was rife among them, but it did not aim at the founding of military outposts and forest missions. By the force of energetic industry, their population swelled with an unheard-of rapidity, their wealth increased in a yet greater ratio, and their promise of future greatness opened with every advancing year. But it was a greatness rather of peace than of war. The free institutions, the independence of authority, which were the source of their increase, were adverse to that unity of counsel and promptitude of action which are the soul of war. It was far otherwise with their military rival. France had her Canadian forces well in hand. They had but one will, and that was the will of a mistress. Now here, now there, in sharp and rapid onset, they could assail the cumbrous masses and unwieldy strength of their antagonists, as the king-bird

attacks the eagle, or the sword-fish the whale. Between two such combatants the strife must needs be a long one.

Canada was a true child of the Church, baptized in infancy and faithful to the last. Champlain, the founder of Quebec, a man of noble spirit, a statesman and a soldier, was deeply imbued with fervid piety. "The saving of a soul," he would often say, "is worth more than the conquest of an empire," and to forward the work of conversion, he brought with him, as we have seen, four Franciscan monks from France. At a later period, the task of colonization would have been abandoned, but for the hope of casting the pure light of the faith over the gloomy wastes of heathendom. All France was filled with the zeal of proselytism. Men and women of exalted rank lent their countenance to the holy work. From many an altar daily petitions were offered for the well-being of the mission; and in the Holy House of Mont-Martre, a nun lay prostrate day and night before the shrine, praying for the conversion of Canada. In one convent, thirty nuns offered themselves for the labors of the wilderness; and priests flocked in crowds to the colony. The powers of darkness took alarm; and when a ship, freighted with the apostles of the faith, was tempest-tost upon her voyage, the storm was ascribed to the malice of demons, trembling for the safety of their ancient empire.

The general enthusiasm was not without its fruits. The Church could pay back with usury all that she received of aid and encouragement from the temporal power; and the ambition of Richelieu could not have devised a more efficient enginery for the accomplishment of its schemes, than that supplied by the zeal of the devoted propagandists. The priest and the soldier went hand in hand; and the cross and the fleur-de-lis were planted side by side.

## THE JESUITS

**The Missionaries.**<sup>1</sup>—Foremost among the envoys of the faith were the members of that mighty order, who, in another hemisphere, had already done so much to turn back the advancing tide of religious freedom, and strengthen the arm of Rome. To the Jesuits was assigned, for many years, the entire charge of the Canadian missions, to the exclusion of the Franciscans, early laborers in the same barren field. Inspired with a self-devoting zeal to snatch souls from perdition, and win new empires to the cross; casting from them every hope of earthly pleasure or earthly aggrandizement, the Jesuit fathers buried themselves in deserts, facing death with the courage of heroes, and enduring torments with the constancy of martyrs. Their story is replete with marvels—miracles of patient suffering and daring enterprise. They were the pioneers of Northern America. We see them among the frozen forests of Acadia, struggling on snow-shoes, with some wandering Algonquin horde, or crouching in the crowded hunting-lodge, half stifled in the smoky den, and battling with troops of famished dogs for the last morsel of sustenance. Again we see the black-robed priest wading among the white rapids of the Ottawa, toiling with his savage comrades to drag the canoe against the headlong water. Again, radiant in the vestments of his priestly office, he administers the sacramental bread to kneeling crowds of plumed and

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. 1., Ch. II.

painted proselytes in the forests of the Hurons; or, bearing his life in his hand, carries his sacred mission into the strongholds of the Iroquois, like one who invades unarmed a den of angry tigers. Jesuit explorers traced the St. Lawrence to its source, and said masses among the solitudes of Lake Superior, where the boldest fur-trader scarcely dared to follow. They planted missions at St. Mary's and at Michillimackinac; and one of their fraternity, the illustrious Marquette, discovered the Mississippi, and opened a new theatre to the boundless ambition of France.

**Jesuit Daily Life.**<sup>1</sup> — In respect to the commodities of life, the Jesuits were but a step in advance of the Indians. Their house, though well ventilated by numberless crevices in its bark walls, always smelt of smoke, and, when the wind was in certain quarters, was filled with it to suffocation. At their meals, the fathers sat on logs around the fire, over which their kettle was slung in the Indian fashion. Each had his wooden platter, which, from the difficulty of transportation, was valued, in the Huron country, at the price of a robe of beaver-skin or a hundred francs. Their food consisted of sagamite, or "mush," made of pounded Indian-corn, boiled with scraps of smoked fish. Chaumonot compares it to the paste used for papering the walls of houses. The repast was occasionally varied by a pumpkin or squash baked in the ashes, or, in the season, by Indian corn roasted in the ear. They used no salt whatever. They could bring their cumbersome pictures, ornaments, and vestments through the savage journey of the Ottawa; but they could not bring the common necessaries of life. By day, they read and studied by the light that streamed in through the large smoke-holes in the roof, — at night, by the blaze of the fire. Their only candles

<sup>1</sup> The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century, Ch. XI.

were a few of wax, for the altar. They cultivated a patch of ground, but raised nothing on it except wheat for making the sacramental bread. Their food was supplied by the Indians, to whom they gave, in return, cloth, knives, awls, needles, and various trinkets. Their supply of wine for the Eucharist was so scanty that they limited themselves to four or five drops for each mass.

Their life was regulated with a conventual strictness. At four in the morning, a bell roused them from the sheets of bark on which they slept. Masses, private devotions, reading religious books, and breakfasting, filled the time until eight, when they opened their door and admitted the Indians. As many of these proved intolerable nuisances, they took what Lalemant calls the *honnête* liberty of turning out the most intrusive and impracticable,—an act performed with all tact and courtesy, and rarely taken in dudgeon. Having thus winnowed their company, they catechized those that remained, as opportunity offered. In the intervals, the guests squatted by the fire and smoked their pipes.

As among the Spartan virtues of the Hurons that of thieving was especially conspicuous, it was necessary that one or more of the Fathers should remain on guard at the house all day. The rest went forth on their missionary labors, baptizing and instructing, as we have seen. To each priest who could speak Huron was assigned a certain number of houses,—in some instances, as many as forty; and as these often had five or six fires, with two families to each, his spiritual flock was as numerous as it was intractable. It was his care to see that none of the number died without baptism, and by every means in his power to commend the doctrines of his faith to the acceptance of those in health.

At dinner, which was at two o'clock, grace was said in

Huron,—for the benefit of the Indians present,—and a chapter of the Bible was read aloud during the meal. At four or five, according to the season, the Indians were dismissed, the door closed, and the evening spent in writing, reading, studying the language, devotion, and conversation on the affairs of the mission.

Such intrepid self-devotion may well call forth<sup>1</sup> our highest admiration; but when we seek for the results of these toils and sacrifices, we shall seek in vain. Patience and zeal were thrown away upon lethargic minds and stubborn hearts. The reports of the Jesuits, it is true, display a copious list of conversions; but the zealous fathers reckoned the number of conversions by the number of baptisms; and, as Le Clercq observes, with no less truth than candor, an Indian would be baptized ten times a day for a pint of brandy or a pound of tobacco. Neither can more flattering conclusions be drawn from the alacrity which they showed to adorn their persons with crucifixes and medals. The glitter of the trinkets pleased the fancy of the warrior; and, with the emblem of man's salvation pendent from his neck, he was often at heart as thorough a heathen as when he wore in its place a necklace made of the dried forefingers of his enemies. At the present day, with the exception of a few insignificant bands of converted Indians in Lower Canada, not a vestige of early Jesuit influence can be found among the tribes. The seed was sown upon a rock.

While the church was reaping but a scanty harvest, the labors of the missionaries were fruitful of profit to the monarch of France. The Jesuit led the van of French colonization; and at Detroit, Michillimackinac, St. Mary's, Green Bay, and other outposts of the west, the establishment

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. II.

of a mission was the precursor of military occupancy. In other respects no less, the labors of the wandering missionaries advanced the welfare of the colony. Sagacious and keen of sight, with faculties stimulated by zeal and sharpened by peril, they made faithful report of the temper and movements of the distant tribes among whom they were distributed. The influence which they often gained was exerted in behalf of the government under whose auspices their missions were carried on; and they strenuously labored to win over the tribes to the French alliance, and alienate them from the heretic English. In all things they approved themselves the stanch and steadfast auxiliaries of the imperial power; and the Marquis du Quesne observed of the missionary Piquet, that in his single person he was worth ten regiments.



## THE FOUNDING OF MONTREAL

[To an outburst of religious enthusiasm we owe the founding of the city of Montreal. Cartier had found the site occupied by the Indian village of Hochelaga. Champlain had realized its importance as a trading-post advantageously situated at the confluence of the Ottawa with the St. Lawrence; and the Jesuits had marked it out as an advanced centre for missionary enterprise. The position, however, was eminently dangerous, for it was within easy striking distance of the Iroquois.

The story of Jesuit hardships embodied in the famous "Jesuit Relations" had filled France with a spirit of religious exaltation. A devout noble named de la Dauversière had experienced, according to his own account, a series of remarkable visions wherein he was commanded to found a new order of hospital nuns; and he was further ordered to establish, on the island called Montreal, a hospital, or Hôtel-Dieu, to be conducted by these nuns. By a strange coincidence a priest named Olier affirmed that he had received a series of similar visions. They presently met by a providential chance, and determined upon a plan of action. "They proposed," writes Parkman,<sup>1</sup> "to found at Montreal three religious communities,—*three* being the mystic number,—one of secular priests to direct the colonists and convert the Indians, one of nuns to nurse the sick, and one of nuns to

<sup>1</sup> The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century, Ch. XV.

teach the Faith to the children, white and red. To borrow their own phrase, they would plant the banner of Christ in an abode of desolation and a haunt of demons; and to this end a band of priests and women were to invade the wilderness, and take post between the fangs of the Iroquois." It will be observed that the colony was to be established for the convents, not the convents for the colony, a curious reversal



*Maisonneuve*

of the natural course of things. These events culminated in the year 1640. The Island of Montreal belonged to Lauson, former president of the great company of the Hundred Associates. Having secured their title from him and from his company, Dauversière and Olier rapidly matured their plans.

A military leader of the expedition was secured in the person of the devout and intrepid *Sieur de Maisonneuve*. "He loved his profession of arms, and wished to consecrate his sword to the Church. Past all comparison, he is the manliest figure that appears in this group of zealots. The piety of the design, the miracles that inspired it, the adventure and the peril, all combined to charm him; and he eagerly embraced the enterprise."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century*, Ch. XV.

The imperative need for money was soon satisfied through the zeal of Dauversière, and it only remained to find a woman of sufficient devotion to sacrifice worldly ease to the sacred cause. Such a woman was found in Mademoiselle Mance, who eagerly embraced this opportunity of possible martyrdom.

In August, 1641, Maisonneuve and Mademoiselle Mance, accompanied by forty men and four women, arrived at Quebec, too late to attempt the journey to Montreal for that season. In fact the Governor Montmagny threw every obstacle into their way to frustrate the enterprise, deeming it, and with justice, inexpedient and rash to establish a new colony beyond the reach of reinforcements from Quebec. He probably foresaw also a future rival should the new town prosper according to the expectations of its optimistic founders.



*Madame de la Peltrie*

Maisonneuve expressed his surprise that Montmagny and his advisers should thus seek to direct his affairs. "I have not come here," he said, "to deliberate, but to act. It is my duty and my honor to found a colony at Montreal; and I would go, if every tree were an Iroquois!"

The winter was spent at St. Michel, three miles from Quebec, in building boats to ascend to Montreal, and in various other labors for the behoof of the future colony. — Ed.]

Early in May, 1642, Maisonneuve and his followers<sup>1</sup> embarked. They had gained an unexpected recruit during the

<sup>1</sup> The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century, Ch. XV.

winter, in the person of Madame de la Peltrie. The piety, the novelty, and the romance of their enterprise, all had their charms for the fair enthusiast; and an irresistible impulse — imputed by a slandering historian to the levity of her sex — urged her to share their fortunes. Her zeal was more admired by the Montrealists whom she joined than by the Ursulines whom she abandoned. She carried off all the furniture she had lent them, and left them in the utmost destitution. Nor did she remain quiet after reaching Montreal, but was presently seized with a longing to visit the Hurons, and preach the Faith in person to those benighted heathen. It needed all the eloquence of a Jesuit, lately returned from that most arduous mission, to convince her that the attempt would be as useless as rash.

It was the eighth of May when Maisonneuve and his followers embarked at St. Michel; and as the boats, deep-laden with men, arms, and stores, moved slowly on their way, the forest, with leaves just opening in the warmth of spring, lay on their right hand and on their left, in a flattering semblance of tranquillity and peace. But behind woody islets, in tangled thickets and damp ravines, and in the shade and stillness of the columned woods, lurked everywhere a danger and a terror.

What shall we say of these adventurers of Montreal, — of these who bestowed their wealth and, far more, of these who sacrificed their peace and risked their lives, on an enterprise at once so romantic and so devout? Surrounded as they were with illusions, false lights, and false shadows, — breathing an atmosphere of miracle, — compassed about with angels and devils, — urged with stimulants most powerful, though unreal, — their minds drugged, as it were, to preternatural excitement, — it is very difficult to judge of them. High

merit, without doubt, there was in some of their number; but one may beg to be spared the attempt to measure or define it. To estimate a virtue involved in conditions so anomalous demands, perhaps, a judgment more than human.

The Roman Church, sunk in disease and corruption when the Reformation began, was roused by that fierce trumpet-blast to purge and brace herself anew. Unable to advance, she drew back to the fresher and comparatively purer life of the past; and the fervors of mediæval Christianity were renewed in the sixteenth century. In many of its aspects, this enterprise of Montreal belonged to the time of the first Crusades. The spirit of Godfrey de Bouillon lived again in Chomedey de Maisonneuve; and in Marguerite Bourgeoys<sup>1</sup> was realized that fair ideal of Christian womanhood, a flower of Earth expanding in the rays of Heaven, which soothed with gentle influence the wildness of a barbarous age.

On the seventeenth of May, 1642, Maisonneuve's little flotilla—a pinnace, a flat-bottomed craft moved by sails, and two row-boats—approached Montreal; and all on board raised in unison a hymn of praise. Montmagny was with them, to deliver the island, in behalf of the Company of the Hundred Associates, to Maisonneuve, representative of the Associates of Montreal. And here, too, was Father Vimont, Superior of the missions; for the Jesuits had been prudently invited to accept the spiritual charge of the young colony. On the following day, they glided along the green and solitary shores now thronged with the life of a busy city, and landed on the spot which Champlain, thirty-one years before, had chosen as the fit site of a settlement. It was a tongue or triangle of land, formed by the junction of a rivulet with the St. Lawrence, and known afterwards as Point Callière. The

<sup>1</sup> Marguerite Bourgeoys renounced her inheritance in 1653, and sailed for Montreal, the scene of her future labors. — Ed.

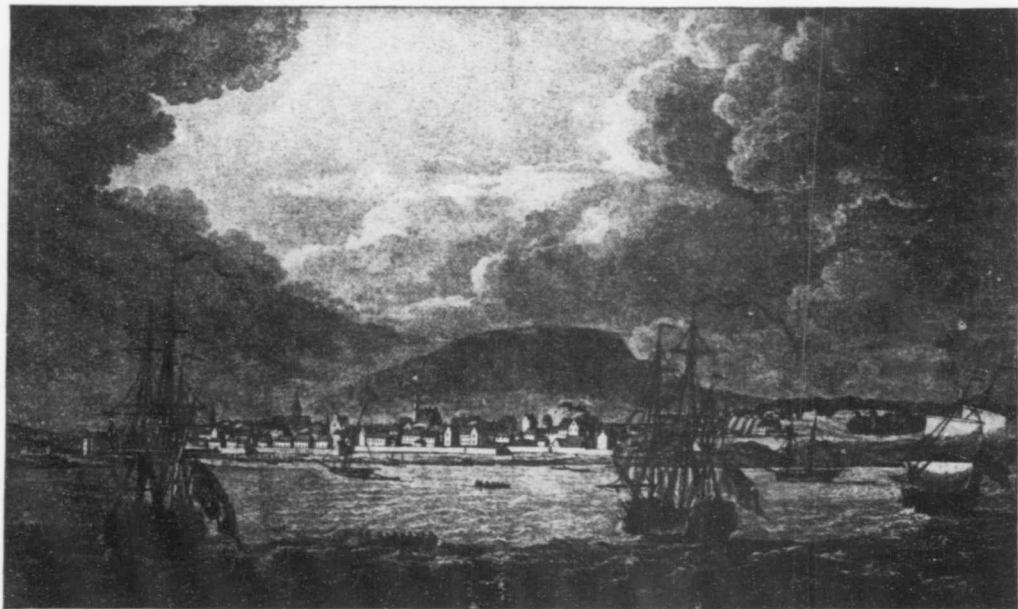
rivulet was bordered by a meadow, and beyond rose the forest with its vanguard of scattered trees. Early spring flowers were blooming in the young grass, and birds of varied plumage flitted among the boughs.

Maisonneuve sprang ashore, and fell on his knees. His followers imitated his example; and all joined their voices in enthusiastic songs of thanksgiving. Tents, baggage, arms, and stores were landed. An altar was raised on a pleasant spot near at hand; and Mademoiselle Mance, with Madame de la Peltrie, aided by her servant, Charlotte Barré, decorated it with a taste which was the admiration of the beholders. Now all the company gathered before the shrine. Here stood Vimont, in the rich vestments of his office. Here were the two ladies, with their servant; Montmagny, no very willing spectator; and Maisonneuve, a warlike figure, erect and tall, his men clustering around him,—soldiers, sailors, artisans, and laborers,—all alike soldiers at need. They kneeled in reverent silence as the Host was raised aloft; and when the rite was over, the priest turned and addressed them:—

“You are a grain of mustard-seed, that shall rise and grow till its branches overshadow the earth. You are few, but your work is the work of God. His smile is on you, and your children shall fill the land.”

The afternoon waned; the sun sank behind the western forest, and twilight came on. Fireflies were twinkling over the darkened meadow. They caught them, tied them with threads into shining festoons, and hung them before the altar, where the Host remained exposed. Then they pitched their tents, lighted their bivouac fires, stationed their guards, and lay down to rest. Such was the birth-night of Montreal.

Is this true history, or a romance of Christian chivalry? It is both.



AN EAST VIEW OF MONTREAL.





RUIN OF THE HURONS, 1649<sup>1</sup>

MORE than eight months had passed since the catastrophe of St. Joseph.<sup>2</sup> The winter was over, and that dreariest of seasons had come, the churlish forerunner of spring. Around Sainte Marie the forests were gray and bare, and, in the cornfields, the oozy, half-thawed soil, studded with the sodden stalks of the last autumn's harvest, showed itself in patches through the melting snow.

At nine o'clock on the morning of the sixteenth of March, the priests saw a heavy smoke rising over the naked forest

<sup>1</sup> The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century, Ch. XXVII.

The most extensive mission which the Jesuits established in the seventeenth century was among the Huron Indians who dwelt beside the waters of the great lake which bears their name. The Iroquois, the vindictive ancestral foes of the Huron race, almost completely annihilated that tribe in the year 1649. — Ed.

<sup>2</sup> The Jesuit settlements were near the shores of what is now the Georgian Bay. St. Joseph (Teanaustayé) had been the chief town of the Hurons, and lay on the south-eastern frontier of their country about fifteen miles from Sainte Marie. Father Daniel had labored zealously and with success in their midst. On the fourth of July he had just finished mass in the mission church; the savages were still kneeling at their devotions, when suddenly the cry arose "The Iroquois! the Iroquois." Daniel refused to fly. His flesh was torn with arrows, a ball pierced his heart, and he fell dead, gasping the name of Jesus. The savages rushed upon him with yells of triumph, stripped and gashed his lifeless body, and scooping his blood in their hands, bathed their faces in it to make them brave. "The town was in a blaze; when the flames reached the church, they flung the priest into it, and both were consumed together. Teanaustayé was a heap of ashes, and the victors took up their march with a train of nearly seven hundred prisoners, many of whom they killed on their way." — Ed.

towards the south-east, about three miles distant. They looked at each other in dismay. "The Iroquois! They are burning St. Louis!" Flames mingled with the smoke; and, as they stood gazing, two Christian Hurons came, breathless and aghast, from the burning town. Their worst fear was realized. The Iroquois were there; but where were the priests of the mission, Brébeuf and Lalemant?

Late in the autumn, a thousand Iroquois, chiefly Senecas and Mohawks, had taken the war-path for the Hurons. They had been all winter in the forests, hunting for subsistence, and moving at their leisure towards their prey. The destruction of the two towns of the mission of St. Joseph had left a wide gap, and in the middle of March they entered the heart of the Huron country, undiscovered. Common vigilance and common sense would have averted the calamities that followed; but the Hurons were like a doomed people, stupefied, sunk in dejection, fearing everything, yet taking no measures for defence. They could easily have met the invaders with double their force, but the besotted warriors lay idle in their towns, or hunted at leisure in distant forests; nor could the Jesuits, by counsel or exhortation, rouse them to face the danger.

Before daylight of the sixteenth, the invaders approached St. Ignace, which, with St. Louis and three other towns, formed the mission of the same name. They reconnoitred the place in the darkness. It was defended on three sides by a deep ravine, and further strengthened by palisades fifteen or sixteen feet high, planted under the direction of the Jesuits. On the fourth side it was protected by palisades alone; and these were left, as usual, unguarded. This was not from a sense of security; for the greater part of the population had abandoned the town, thinking it too much

exposed to the enemy, and there remained only about four hundred, chiefly women, children, and old men, whose infatuated defenders were absent hunting, or on futile scalping-parties against the Iroquois. It was just before dawn, when a yell, as of a legion of devils, startled the wretched inhabitants from their sleep; and the Iroquois, bursting in upon them, cut them down with knives and hatchets, killing many, and reserving the rest for a worse fate. They had entered by the weakest side; on the other sides there was no exit, and only three Hurons escaped. The whole was the work of a few minutes. The Iroquois left a guard to hold the town, and secure the retreat of the main body in case of a reverse; then, smearing their faces with blood, after their ghastly custom, they rushed, in the dim light of the early dawn, towards St. Louis, about a league distant.

The three fugitives had fled, half naked, through the forest, for the same point, which they reached about sunrise, yelling the alarm. The number of inhabitants here was less, at this time, than seven hundred; and, of these, all who had strength to escape, excepting about eighty warriors, made in wild terror for a place of safety. Many of the old, sick, and decrepit were left perforce in the lodges. The warriors, ignorant of the strength of the assailants, sang their war-songs, and resolved to hold the place to the last. It had not the natural strength of St. Ignace; but, like it, was surrounded by palisades.

Here were the two Jesuits, Brébeuf and Lalemant. Brébeuf's converts entreated him to escape with them; but the Norman zealot, bold scion of a warlike stock, had no thought of flight. His post was in the teeth of danger, to cheer on those who fought, and open Heaven to those who fell. His

colleague, slight of frame and frail of constitution, trembled despite himself; but deep enthusiasm mastered the weakness of Nature, and he, too, refused to fly.

Scarcely had the sun risen, and scarcely were the fugitives gone, when, like a troop of tigers, the Iroquois rushed to the assault. Yell echoed yell, and shot answered shot. The Hurons, brought to bay, fought with the utmost desperation, and with arrows, stones, and the few guns they had, killed thirty of their assailants, and wounded many more. Twice the Iroquois recoiled, and twice renewed the attack with unabated ferocity. They swarmed at the foot of the palisades, and hacked at them with their hatchets, till they had cut them through at several different points. For a time there was a deadly fight at these breaches. Here were the two priests, promising Heaven to those who died for their faith, — one giving baptism, and the other absolution. At length the Iroquois broke in, and captured all the surviving defenders, the Jesuits among the rest. They set the town on fire; and the helpless wretches who had remained, unable to fly, were consumed in their burning dwellings. Next they fell upon Brébeuf and Lalemant, stripped them, bound them fast, and led them with the other prisoners back to St. Ignace, where all turned out to wreak their fury on the two priests, beating them savagely with sticks and clubs as they drove them into the town. At present, there was no time for further torture, for there was work in hand.

The victors divided themselves into several bands, to burn the neighboring villages and hunt their flying inhabitants. In the flush of their triumph, they meditated a bolder enterprise; and, in the afternoon, their chiefs sent small parties to reconnoitre Sainte Marie, with a view to attacking it on the next day.

Meanwhile the fugitives of St. Louis, joined by other bands as terrified and as helpless as they, were struggling through the soft snow which clogged the forests towards Lake Huron, where the treacherous ice of spring was still unmelted. One fear expelled another. They ventured upon it, and pushed forward all that day and all the following night, shivering and famished, to find refuge in the towns of the Tobacco Nation. Here, when they arrived, they spread a universal panic.

Ragueneau, Bressani, and their companions waited in suspense at Sainte Marie. On the one hand, they trembled for Brébeuf and Lalemant; on the other, they looked hourly for an attack: and when at evening they saw the Iroquois scouts prowling along the edge of the bordering forest, their fears were confirmed. They had with them about forty Frenchmen, well armed; but their palisades and wooden buildings were not fire-proof, and they had learned from fugitives the number and ferocity of the invaders. They stood guard all night, praying to the Saints, and above all to their great patron, Saint Joseph, whose festival was close at hand.

In the morning they were somewhat relieved by the arrival of about three hundred Huron warriors, chiefly converts from La Conception and Sainte Madeleine, tolerably well armed, and full of fight. They were expecting others to join them; and meanwhile, dividing into several bands, they took post by the passes of the neighboring forest, hoping to waylay parties of the enemy. Their expectation was fulfilled; for, at this time, two hundred of the Iroquois were making their way from St. Ignace, in advance of the main body, to begin the attack on Sainte Marie. They fell in with a band of the Hurons, set upon them, killed many, drove the rest to headlong flight, and, as they plunged in terror through

the snow, chased them within sight of Sainte Marie. The other Hurons, hearing the yells and firing, ran to the rescue, and attacked so fiercely, that the Iroquois in turn were routed, and ran for shelter to St. Louis, followed closely by the victors. The houses of the town had been burned, but the palisade around them was still standing, though breached and broken. The Iroquois rushed in; but the Hurons were at their heels. Many of the fugitives were captured, the rest killed or put to utter rout, and the triumphant Hurons remained masters of the place.

The Iroquois who escaped fled to St. Ignace. Here, or on the way thither, they found the main body of the invaders; and when they heard of the disaster, the whole swarm, beside themselves with rage, turned towards St. Louis to take their revenge. Now ensued one of the most furious Indian battles on record. The Hurons within the palisade did not much exceed a hundred and fifty; for many had been killed or disabled, and many, perhaps, had straggled away. Most of their enemies had guns, while they had but few. Their weapons were bows and arrows, war-clubs, hatchets, and knives; and of these they made good use, sallying repeatedly, fighting like devils, and driving back their assailants again and again. There are times when the Indian warrior forgets his cautious maxims, and throws himself into battle with a mad and reckless ferocity. The desperation of one party, and the fierce courage of both, kept up the fight after the day had closed; and the scout from Sainte Marie, as he bent listening under the gloom of the pines, heard, far into the night, the howl of battle rising from the darkened forest. The principal chief of the Iroquois was severely wounded, and nearly a hundred of their warriors were killed on the spot. When, at length, their numbers

and persistent fury prevailed, their only prize was some twenty Huron warriors, spent with fatigue and faint with loss of blood. The rest lay dead around the shattered palisades which they had so valiantly defended. Fatuity, not cowardice, was the ruin of the Huron nation.

The lamps burned all night at Sainte Marie, and its defenders stood watching till daylight, musket in hand. The Jesuits prayed without ceasing, and Saint Joseph was besieged with invocations. "Those of us who were priests," writes Ragueneau, "each made a vow to say a mass in his honor every month, for the space of a year; and all the rest bound themselves by vows to divers penances." The expected onslaught did not take place. Not an Iroquois appeared. Their victory had been bought too dear, and they had no stomach for more fighting. All the next day, the eighteenth, a stillness, like the dead lull of a tempest, followed the turmoil of yesterday,—as if, says the Father Superior, "the country were waiting, palsied with fright, for some new disaster."

On the following day,—the journalist fails not to mention that it was the festival of Saint Joseph,—Indians came in with tidings that a panic had seized the Iroquois camp, that the chiefs could not control it, and that the whole body of invaders was retreating in disorder, possessed with a vague terror that the Hurons were upon them in force. They had found time, however, for an act of atrocious cruelty. They planted stakes in the bark houses of St. Ignace, and bound to them those of their prisoners whom they meant to sacrifice, male and female, from old age to infancy, husbands, mothers, and children, side by side. Then, as they retreated, they set the town on fire, and laughed with savage glee at the shrieks of anguish that rose from the blazing dwellings.

They loaded the rest of their prisoners with their baggage and plunder, and drove them through the forest southward, braining with their hatchets any who gave out on the march. An old woman, who had escaped out of the midst of the flames of St. Ignace, made her way to St. Michel, a large town not far from the desolate site of St. Joseph. Here she found about seven hundred Huron warriors, hastily mustered. She set them on the track of the retreating Iroquois, and they took up the chase, — but evidently with no great eagerness to overtake their dangerous enemy, well armed as he was with Dutch guns, while they had little beside their bows and arrows. They found, as they advanced, the dead bodies of prisoners tomahawked on the march, and others bound fast to trees and half burned by the fagots piled hastily around them. The Iroquois pushed forward with such headlong speed, that the pursuers could not, or would not, overtake them; and, after two days, they gave over the attempt.



THE MARTYRS<sup>1</sup>

On the morning of the twentieth, the Jesuits at Sainte Marie received full confirmation of the reported retreat of the invaders; and one of them, with seven armed Frenchmen, set out for the scene of havoc. They passed St. Louis, where the bloody ground was strown thick with corpses, and, two or three miles farther on, reached St. Ignace. Here they saw a spectacle of horror; for among the ashes of the burnt town were scattered in profusion the half-consumed bodies of those who had perished in the flames. Apart from the rest, they saw a sight that banished all else from their thoughts; for they found what they had come to seek,—the scorched and mangled relics of Brébeuf and Lalemant.

They had learned their fate already from Huron prisoners, many of whom had made their escape in the panic and confusion of the Iroquois retreat. They described what they had seen, and the condition in which the bodies were found confirmed their story.

On the afternoon of the sixteenth,—the day when the two priests were captured,—Brébeuf was led apart, and bound to a stake. He seemed more concerned for his captive converts than for himself, and addressed them in a loud voice, exhorting them to suffer patiently, and promising Heaven as their reward. The Iroquois, incensed, scorched him from head to foot, to silence him; whereupon, in the

<sup>1</sup> The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century, Ch. XXVIII.

tone of a master, he threatened them with everlasting flames, for persecuting the worshippers of God. As he continued to speak, with voice and countenance unchanged, they cut away his lower lip and thrust a red-hot iron down his throat. He still held his tall form erect and defiant, with no sign or sound of pain; and they tried another means to overcome him. They led out Lalemant, that Brébeuf might see him tortured. They had tied strips of bark, smeared with pitch, about his naked body. When he saw the condition of his Superior, he could not hide his agitation, and called out to him, with a broken voice, in the words of Saint Paul, "We are made a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men." Then he threw himself at Brébeuf's feet; upon which the Iroquois seized him, made him fast to a stake, and set fire to the bark that enveloped him. As the flame rose, he threw his arms upward with a shriek of supplication to Heaven. Next they hung around Brébeuf's neck a collar made of hatchets heated red-hot; but the indomitable priest stood like a rock. A Huron in the crowd, who had been a convert of the mission, but was now an Iroquois by adoption, called out, with the malice of a renegade, to pour hot water on their heads, since they had poured so much cold water on those of others. The kettle was accordingly slung, and the water boiled and poured slowly on the heads of the two missionaries. "We baptize you," they cried, "that you may be happy in Heaven; for nobody can be saved without a good baptism." Brébeuf would not flinch; and, in a rage, they cut strips of flesh from his limbs, and devoured them before his eyes. Other renegade Hurons called out to him, "You told us, that, the more one suffers on earth, the happier he is in Heaven. We wish to make you happy; we torment you because we love you; and you ought to thank us for it."

After a succession of other revolting tortures, they scalped him; when, seeing him nearly dead, they laid open his breast, and came in a crowd to drink the blood of so valiant an enemy, thinking to imbibe with it some portion of his courage. A chief then tore out his heart, and devoured it.

Thus died Jean de Brébeuf, the founder of the Huron mission, its truest hero, and its greatest martyr. He came of a noble race, — the same, it is said, from which sprang the English Earls of Arundel; but never had the mailed barons of his line confronted a fate so appalling, with so prodigious a constancy. To the last he refused to flinch, and "his death was the astonishment of his murderers." In him an enthusiastic devotion was grafted on an heroic nature. His bodily endowments were as remarkable as the temper of his mind. His manly proportions, his strength, and his endurance, which incessant fasts and penances could not undermine, had always won for him the respect of the Indians, no less than a courage unconscious of fear, and yet redeemed from rashness by a cool and vigorous judgment; for, extravagant as were the chimeras which fed the fires of his zeal, they were consistent with the soberest good sense on matters of practical bearing.

Lalemant, physically weak from childhood, and slender almost to emaciation, was constitutionally unequal to a display of fortitude like that of his colleague. When Brébeuf died, he was led back to the house whence he had been taken, and tortured there all night, until, in the morning, one of the Iroquois, growing tired of the protracted entertainment, killed him with a hatchet. It was said, that, at times, he seemed beside himself; then, rallying, with hands uplifted, he offered his sufferings to Heaven as a sacrifice. His robust companion had lived less than four hours under

the torture, while he survived it for nearly seventeen. Perhaps the Titanic effort of will with which Brébeuf repressed all show of suffering conspired with the Iroquois knives and

firebrands to exhaust his vitality; perhaps his tormentors, enraged at his fortitude, forgot their subtlety, and struck too near the life.

The bodies of the two missionaries were carried to Sainte Marie, and buried in the cemetery there; but the skull of Brébeuf was preserved as a relic. His family sent from France a silver bust of their martyred kinsman, in the



*Jean de Brébeuf*

base of which was a recess to contain the skull; and, to this day, the bust and the relic within are preserved with pious care by the nuns of the Hôtel-Dieu at Quebec.

FAILURE OF THE JESUITS<sup>1</sup>

WITH the fall of the Hurons, fell the best hope of the Canadian mission. They, and the stable and populous communities around them, had been the rude material from which the Jesuit would have formed his Christian empire in the wilderness; but, one by one, these kindred peoples were uprooted and swept away, while the neighboring Algonquins, to whom they had been a bulwark, were involved with them in a common ruin. The land of promise was turned to a solitude and a desolation. There was still work in hand, it is true, — vast regions to explore, and countless heathens to snatch from perdition; but these, for the most part, were remote and scattered hordes, from whose conversion it was vain to look for the same solid and decisive results.

In a measure, the occupation of the Jesuits was gone. Some of them went home, "well resolved," writes the Father Superior, "to return to the combat at the first sound of the trumpet;" while of those who remained, about twenty in number, several soon fell victims to famine, hardship, and the Iroquois. A few years more, and Canada ceased to be a mission; political and commercial interests gradually became ascendant, and the story of Jesuit propagandism was interwoven with her civil and military annals.

<sup>1</sup> The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century, Ch. XXXIV.

Here, then, closes this wild and bloody act of the great drama of New France; and now let the curtain fall, while we ponder its meaning.

The cause of the failure of the Jesuits is obvious. The guns and tomahawks of the Iroquois were the ruin of their hopes. Could they have curbed or converted those ferocious bands, it is little less than certain that their dream would have become a reality. Savages tamed — not civilized, for that was scarcely possible — would have been distributed in communities through the valleys of the Great Lakes and the Mississippi, ruled by priests in the interest of Catholicity and of France. Their habits of agriculture would have been developed, and their instincts of mutual slaughter repressed. The swift decline of the Indian population would have been arrested; and it would have been made, through the fur-trade, a source of prosperity to New France. Unmolested by Indian enemies, and fed by a rich commerce, she would have put forth a vigorous growth. True to her far-reaching and adventurous genius, she would have occupied the West with traders, settlers, and garrisons, and cut up the virgin wilderness into fiefs, while as yet the colonies of England were but a weak and broken line along the shore of the Atlantic; and when at last the great conflict came, England and Liberty would have been confronted, not by a depleted antagonist, still feeble from the exhaustion of a starved and persecuted infancy, but by an athletic champion of the principles of Richelieu and of Loyola.

Liberty may thank the Iroquois, that, by their insensate fury, the plans of her adversary were brought to nought, and a peril and a woe averted from her future. They ruined the trade which was the life-blood of New France; they stopped the current of her arteries, and made all her early years a

misery and a terror. Not that they changed her destinies. The contest on this continent between Liberty and Absolutism was never doubtful; but the triumph of the one would have been dearly bought, and the downfall of the other incomplete. Populations formed in the ideas and habits of a feudal monarchy, and controlled by a hierarchy profoundly hostile to freedom of thought, would have remained a hindrance and a stumbling-block in the way of that majestic experiment of which America is the field.

The Jesuits saw their hopes struck down; and their faith, though not shaken, was sorely tried. The Providence of God seemed in their eyes dark and inexplicable; but, from the stand-point of Liberty, that Providence is clear as the sun at noon. Meanwhile let those who have prevailed yield due honor to the defeated. Their virtues shine amidst the rubbish of error, like diamonds and gold in the gravel of the torrent.

[In 1653 a temporary peace was patched up between the French and the Iroquois. In order to obtain a lasting influence over this dangerous race a Jesuit mission was established in 1656 among the Onondagas, the central tribe of the five nation confederacy. "The Jesuits," says Parkman, "had essayed a fearful task, to convert the Iroquois to God and to the king, thwart the Dutch heretics of the Hudson, save souls from hell, avert ruin from Canada, and thus raise their order to a place of honor and influence both hard earned and well earned. The mission at Lake Onondaga was but a base of operations."<sup>1</sup>

The desperate enterprise was doomed to failure. Within two years the situation of the Jesuits was perilous in the extreme. The Mohawks by murder and pillage had openly

<sup>1</sup> The Old Régime in Canada, Ch. IV.

defied the French, and the missionaries heard ominous rumors that their death had been decreed. They determined to escape, and as forceful means were beyond their power, they resorted to a device which the gluttonous habits of the Indians alone rendered possible of success. The Jesuit fathers invited all the warriors to a sumptuous banquet where the laws of hospitality demanded that the guests should eat whatever was placed before them. At midnight, when they were sleeping stupefied with bestial excess, the Jesuits silently withdrew and cautiously descended to the shore, where their comrades, already embarked, lay on their oars anxiously awaiting them. When the Indians woke in the morning their ghostly hosts had vanished. — Ed.]



THE HEROES OF THE LONG SAUT<sup>1</sup>

IN April, 1660, before the designs of the Iroquois were known, a young officer named Daulac,<sup>2</sup> commandant of the garrison of Montreal, asked leave of Maisonneuve, the governor, to lead a party of volunteers against the enemy. His plan was bold to desperation. It was known that Iroquois warriors in great numbers had wintered among the forests of the Ottawa. Daulac proposed to waylay them on their descent of the river, and fight them without regard to disparity of force. The settlers of Montreal had hitherto acted solely on the defensive, for their numbers had been too small for aggressive war. Of late their strength had been somewhat increased, and Maisonneuve, judging that a display of enterprise and boldness might act as a check on the audacity of the enemy, at length gave his consent.

Adam Daulac, or Dollard, *Sieur des Ormeaux*, was a young man of good family, who had come to the colony three years before, at the age of twenty-two. He had held some military command in France, though in what rank does not appear. It was said that he had been involved in some affair which made him anxious to wipe out the memory of the past by a noteworthy exploit; and he had been busy for some time among the young men of Montreal, inviting them to join him in the enterprise he meditated. Sixteen of them caught

<sup>1</sup> The Old Régime in Canada, Ch. VI.

<sup>2</sup> Sometimes this name is spelled "Dollard." — Ed.

his spirit, struck hands with him, and pledged their word. They bound themselves by oath to accept no quarter; and, having gained Maisonneuve's consent, they made their wills, confessed, and received the sacraments. As they knelt for the last time before the altar in the chapel of the Hôtel-Dieu, that sturdy little population of pious Indian-fighters gazed on them with enthusiasm, not unmingled with an envy which had in it nothing ignoble. Some of the chief men of Montreal, with the brave Charles Le Moyne at their head, begged them to wait till the spring sowing was over, that they might join them; but Daulac refused. He was jealous of the glory and the danger, and he wished to command, which he could not have done had Le Moyne been present.

The spirit of the enterprise was purely mediæval. The enthusiasm of honor, the enthusiasm of adventure, and the enthusiasm of faith, were its motive forces. Daulac was a knight of the early crusades among the forests and savages of the New World. Yet the incidents of this exotic heroism are definite and clear as a tale of yesterday. The names, ages, and occupations of the seventeen young men may still be read on the ancient register of the parish of Montreal; and the notarial acts of that year, preserved in the records of the city, contain minute accounts of such property as each of them possessed. The three eldest were of twenty-eight, thirty, and thirty-one years respectively. The age of the rest varied from twenty-one to twenty-seven. They were of various callings, — soldiers, armorers, locksmiths, lime-burners, or settlers without trades. The greater number had come to the colony as part of the reinforcement brought by Maisonneuve in 1653.

After a solemn farewell they embarked in several canoes well supplied with arms and ammunition. They were very

indifferent canoe-men; and it is said that they lost a week in vain attempts to pass the swift current of St. Anne, at the head of the island of Montreal. At length they were more successful, and entering the mouth of the Ottawa, crossed the Lake of Two Mountains, and slowly advanced against the current.

Meanwhile, forty warriors of that remnant of the Hurons who, in spite of Iroquois persecutions, still lingered at Quebec, had set out on a war-party, led by the brave and wily Étienne Annahotaha, their most noted chief. They stopped by the way at Three Rivers, where they found a band of Christian Algonquins under a chief named Mituvemeg. Annahotaha challenged him to a trial of courage, and it was agreed that they should meet at Montreal, where they were likely to find a speedy opportunity of putting their mettle to the test. Thither, accordingly, they repaired, the Algonquin with three followers, and the Huron with thirty-nine.

It was not long before they learned the departure of Daulac and his companions. "For," observes the honest Dollier de Casson, "the principal fault of our Frenchmen is to talk too much." The wish seized them to share the adventure, and to that end the Huron chief asked the governor for a letter to Daulac, to serve as credentials. Maisonneuve hesitated. His faith in Huron valor was not great, and he feared the proposed alliance. Nevertheless, he at length yielded so far as to give Annahotaha a letter in which Daulac was told to accept or reject the proffered reinforcement as he should see fit. The Hurons and Algonquins now embarked and paddled in pursuit of the seventeen Frenchmen.

They meanwhile had passed with difficulty the swift current at Carillon, and about the first of May reached the foot

of the more formidable rapid called the Long Saut, where a tumult of waters, foaming among ledges and boulders, barred the onward way. It was needless to go farther. The Iroquois were sure to pass the Saut, and could be fought here as well as elsewhere. Just below the rapid, where the forests sloped gently to the shore, among the bushes and stumps of the rough clearing made in constructing it, stood a palisade fort, the work of an Algonquin war-party in the past autumn. It was a mere enclosure of trunks of small trees planted in a circle, and was already ruinous. Such as it was, the Frenchmen took possession of it. Their first care, one would think, should have been to repair and strengthen it; but this they seem not to have done; possibly, in the exaltation of their minds, they scorned such precaution. They made their fires, and slung their kettles on the neighboring shore; and here they were soon joined by the Hurons and Algonquins. Daulac, it seems, made no objection to their company, and they all bivouacked together. Morning and noon and night they prayed in three different tongues; and when at sunset the long reach of forests on the farther shore basked peacefully in the level rays, the rapids joined their hoarse music to the notes of their evening hymn.

In a day or two their scouts came in with tidings that two Iroquois canoes were coming down the Saut. Daulac had time to set his men in ambush among the bushes at a point where he thought the strangers likely to land. He judged aright. The canoes, bearing five Iroquois, approached, and were met by a volley fired with such precipitation that one or more of them escaped the shot, fled into the forest, and told their mischance to their main body, two hundred in number, on the river above. A fleet of canoes suddenly appeared, bounding down the rapids, filled with warriors

eager for revenge. The allies had barely time to escape to their fort, leaving their kettles still slung over the fires. The Iroquois made a hasty and desultory attack, and were quickly repulsed. They next opened a parley, hoping, no doubt, to gain some advantage by surprise. Failing in this, they set themselves, after their custom on such occasions, to building a rude fort of their own in the neighboring forest.

This gave the French a breathing-time, and they used it for strengthening their defences. Being provided with tools, they planted a row of stakes within their palisade, to form a double fence, and filled the intervening space with earth and stones to the height of a man, leaving some twenty loop-holes, at each of which three marksmen were stationed. Their work was still unfinished when the Iroquois were upon them again. They had broken to pieces the birch canoes of the French and their allies, and, kindling the bark, rushed up to pile it blazing against the palisade; but so brisk and steady a fire met them that they recoiled and at last gave way. They came on again, and again were driven back, leaving many of their number on the ground, among them the principal chief of the Senecas. Some of the French dashed out, and, covered by the fire of their comrades, hacked off his head, and stuck it on the palisade, while the Iroquois howled in a frenzy of helpless rage. They tried another attack, and were beaten off a third time.

This dashed their spirits, and they sent a canoe to call to their aid five hundred of their warriors who were mustered near the mouth of the Richelieu. These were the allies whom, but for this untoward check, they were on their way to join for a combined attack on Quebec, Three Rivers, and Montreal. It was maddening to see their grand project

thwarted by a few French and Indians ensconced in a paltry redoubt, scarcely better than a cattle-pen; but they were forced to digest the affront as best they might.

Meanwhile, crouched behind trees and logs, they beset the fort, harassing its defenders day and night with a spattering fire and a constant menace of attack. Thus five days passed. Hunger, thirst, and want of sleep wrought fatally on the strength of the French and their allies, who, pent up together in their narrow prison, fought and prayed by turns. Deprived as they were of water, they could not swallow the crushed Indian corn, or "hominy," which was their only food. Some of them, under cover of a brisk fire, ran down to the river and filled such small vessels as they had; but this pittance only tantalized their thirst. They dug a hole in the fort, and were rewarded at last by a little muddy water oozing through the clay.

Among the assailants were a number of Hurons, adopted by the Iroquois and fighting on their side. These renegades now shouted to their countrymen in the fort, telling them that a fresh army was close at hand; that they would soon be attacked by seven or eight hundred warriors; and that their only hope was in joining the Iroquois, who would receive them as friends. Annahotaha's followers, half dead with thirst and famine, listened to their seducers, took the bait, and, one, two, or three at a time, climbed the palisade and ran over to the enemy, amid the hootings and execrations of those whom they deserted. Their chief stood firm; and when he saw his nephew, La Mouche, join the other fugitives, he fired his pistol at him in a rage. The four Algonquins, who had no mercy to hope for, stood fast, with the courage of despair.

On the fifth day an uproar of unearthly yells from seven

hundred savage throats, mingled with a clattering salute of musketry, told the Frenchmen that the expected reinforcement had come; and soon, in the forest and on the clearing, a crowd of warriors mustered for the attack. Knowing from the Huron deserters the weakness of their enemy, they had no doubt of an easy victory. They advanced cautiously, as was usual with the Iroquois before their blood was up, screeching, leaping from side to side, and firing as they came on; but the French were at their posts, and every loophole darted its tongue of fire. Besides muskets, they had heavy musketoons of large calibre, which, scattering scraps of lead and iron among the throng of savages, often maimed several of them at one discharge. The Iroquois, astonished at the persistent vigor of the defence, fell back discomfited. The fire of the French, who were themselves completely under cover, had told upon them with deadly effect. Three days more wore away in a series of futile attacks, made with little concert or vigor; and during all this time Daulac and his men, reeling with exhaustion, fought and prayed as before, sure of a martyr's reward.

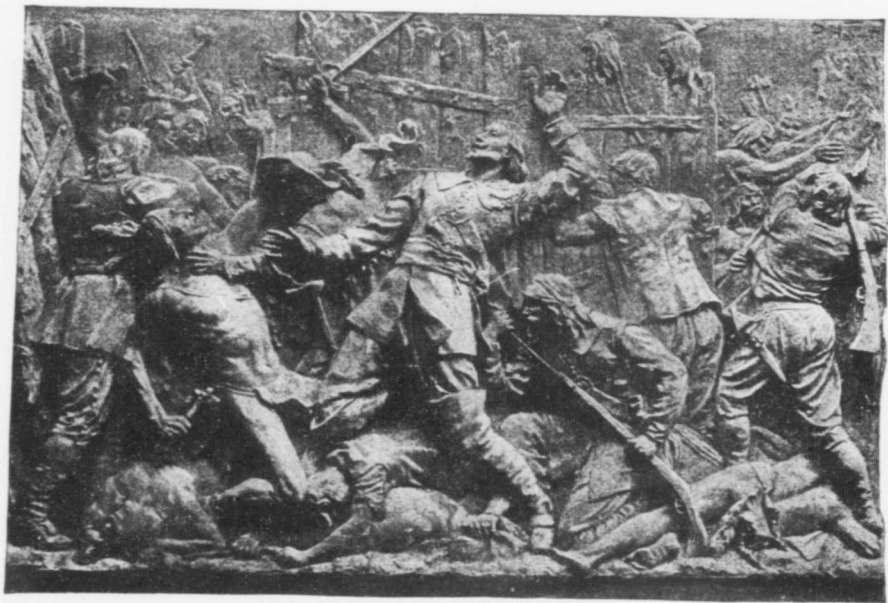
The uncertain, vacillating temper common to all Indians now began to declare itself. Some of the Iroquois were for going home. Others revolted at the thought, and declared that it would be an eternal disgrace to lose so many men at the hands of so paltry an enemy, and yet fail to take revenge. It was resolved to make a general assault, and volunteers were called for to lead the attack. After the custom on such occasions, bundles of small sticks were thrown upon the ground, and those picked them up who dared, thus accepting the gage of battle, and enrolling themselves in the forlorn hope. No precaution was neglected. Large and heavy shields four or five feet high were made by lashing

together three split logs with the aid of cross-bars. Covering themselves with these mantelets, the chosen band advanced, followed by the motley throng of warriors. In spite of a brisk fire, they reached the palisade, and, crouching below the range of shot, hewed furiously with their hatchets to cut their way through. The rest followed close, and swarmed like angry hornets around the little fort, hacking and tearing to get in.

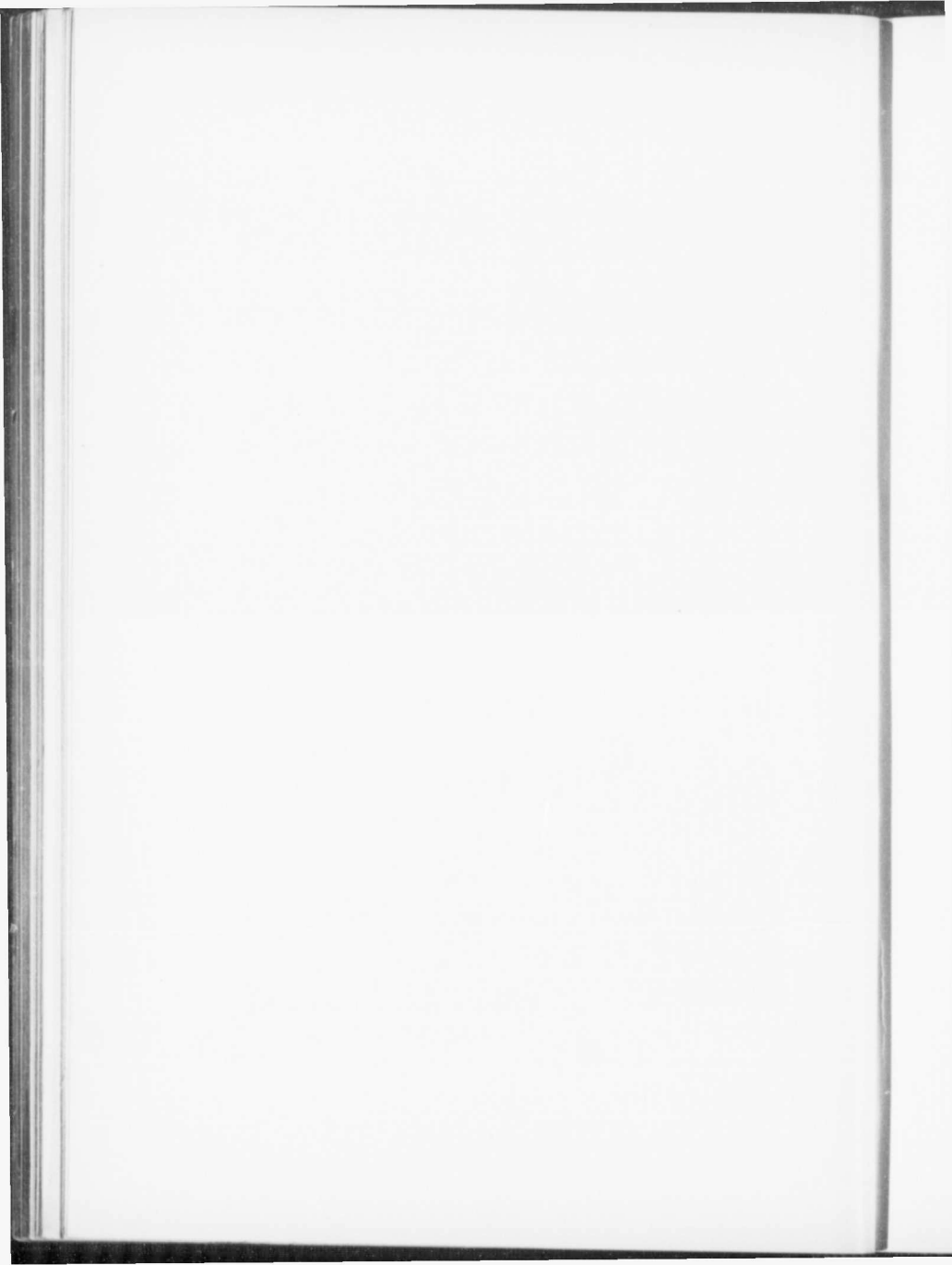
Daulac had crammed a large musketoon with powder, and plugged up the muzzle. Lighting the fuse inserted in it, he tried to throw it over the barrier, to burst like a grenade among the crowd of savages without; but it struck the ragged top of one of the palisades, fell back among the Frenchmen and exploded, killing and wounding several of them, and nearly blinding others. In the confusion that followed, the Iroquois got possession of the loopholes, and, thrusting in their guns, fired on those within. In a moment more they had torn a breach in the palisade; but, nerved with the energy of desperation, Daulac and his followers sprang to defend it. Another breach was made, and then another. Daulac was struck dead, but the survivors kept up the fight. With a sword or a hatchet in one hand and a knife in the other, they threw themselves against the throng of enemies, striking and stabbing with the fury of madmen; till the Iroquois, despairing of taking them alive, fired volley after volley and shot them down. All was over, and a burst of triumphant yells proclaimed the dear-bought victory.

Searching the pile of corpses, the victors found four Frenchmen still breathing. Three had scarcely a spark of life, and, as no time was to be lost, they burned them on the spot. The fourth, less fortunate, seemed likely to survive, and they reserved him for future torments. As for the





THE DEATH OF DOLLARD.



Huron deserters, their cowardice profited them little. The Iroquois, regardless of their promises, fell upon them, burned some at once, and carried the rest to their villages for a similar fate. Five of the number had the good fortune to escape, and it was from them, aided by admissions made long afterwards by the Iroquois themselves, that the French of Canada derived all their knowledge of this glorious disaster.

To the colony it proved a salvation. The Iroquois had had fighting enough. If seventeen Frenchmen, four Algonquins, and one Huron, behind a picket fence, could hold seven hundred warriors at bay so long, what might they expect from many such, fighting behind walls of stone? For that year they thought no more of capturing Quebec and Montreal, but went home dejected and amazed, to howl over their losses, and nurse their dashed courage for a day of vengeance.

[**The Old Régime.**— Before turning our attention to the adventurous career of La Salle and the exploration of the Great West, it would be well to gain some idea of the manner of life of the inhabitants of the older settlements in New France, and of the political institutions under which they were governed.

Colbert had taken upon himself, subject to the supreme authority of Louis XIV., the administration of Canada. At home his reforms were salutary, though often violent; but "it is in his commercial, industrial, and colonial policy that the profound defects of the great minister's system are most apparent," wrote Parkman in "The Old Régime." It was a system of authority, monopoly, and exclusion, in which the government, and not the individual, acted always the foremost part. Upright, incorruptible, ardent

for the public good, inflexible, arrogant, and domineering, Colbert sought to drive France into paths of prosperity, and create colonies by the energy of the imperial will. He feared, and with reason, that the want of enterprise and capital among the merchants would prevent the broad and immediate results at which he aimed; and to secure these results, he established a series of great trading corporations, in which the principles of privilege and exclusion were pushed to their utmost limits.



*Louis XIV*

The Company of the Hundred Associates had been founded in 1627 with Richelieu at its head. It controlled the trade of the country, except the fisheries, and, subject only to the remote authority of the king, it exercised sovereign power in New France. Under its direction the colony thrived but ill. At the time when

they forfeited their charter to the Crown, in 1663, the whole French population in Canada scarcely reached 2,500 souls. In that year, Canada was constituted a Royal Province, and Louis XIV. exercised a paternal sway which soon manifested itself in the expansion of trade, and in a remarkable development of immigration.

Louis XIV. still clung, however, to the Company idea, and close upon the dissolution of the Hundred Associates he created the new Company of the West by a royal edict issued on the twenty-fourth of May, 1664. "Scarcely was the grand

machine set in motion," writes Parkman in "The Old Régime," "when its directors betrayed a narrowness and blindness of policy which boded the enterprise no good. Canada was a chief sufferer. Once more, bound hand and foot, she was handed over to a selfish league of merchants; monopoly in trade, monopoly in religion, monopoly in government. Nobody but the company had a right to bring her the necessaries of life; and nobody but the company had a right to exercise the traffic which alone could give her the means of paying for these necessaries." In the face of this storm of disapproval even the king was forced to act. The privileges of the company were curtailed. Their power to name the governor and the intendant was revoked, and the king, in 1665, appointed to these high offices Daniel de Rémy, Sieur de Courcelle, as governor, and Jean Baptiste Talon, as intendant. But before appointing rulers for Canada, Louis XIV. had appointed, as representative of the Crown for all his American domains, the Marquis de Tracy, with the title of lieutenant-general.

The Canadian careers of Courcelle and Tracy need but briefly occupy our attention. When they arrived in the colony the Iroquois terror was at its height. Courcelle determined to strike a killing blow, and discomfiture, if not defeat, was the result. In the heart of winter, January, 1666, he led his expedition to the head waters of the Hudson river. They mistook the route, and blundered into the Anglo-Dutch settlements about Schenectady. A disheartened retreat to Canada bore every evidence of disaster, with men dropping out to perish from cold and starvation, and the vindictive and stealthy Mohawks dogging the line of march.

In September of the same year Tracy led the attack in

person. This time the route was unerringly followed into the heart of the Mohawk country. When he retired, he left behind him a waste of desolation and smouldering ashes, but the foe had slipped from his clutches.

"Tracy's work was done," says Parkman, "and he left Canada with the glittering *noblesse* in his train. Courcelle and Talon remained to rule alone; and now the great experiment was begun. Paternal royalty would try its hand at building up a colony, and Talon was its chosen agent."<sup>1</sup> — Ed.]

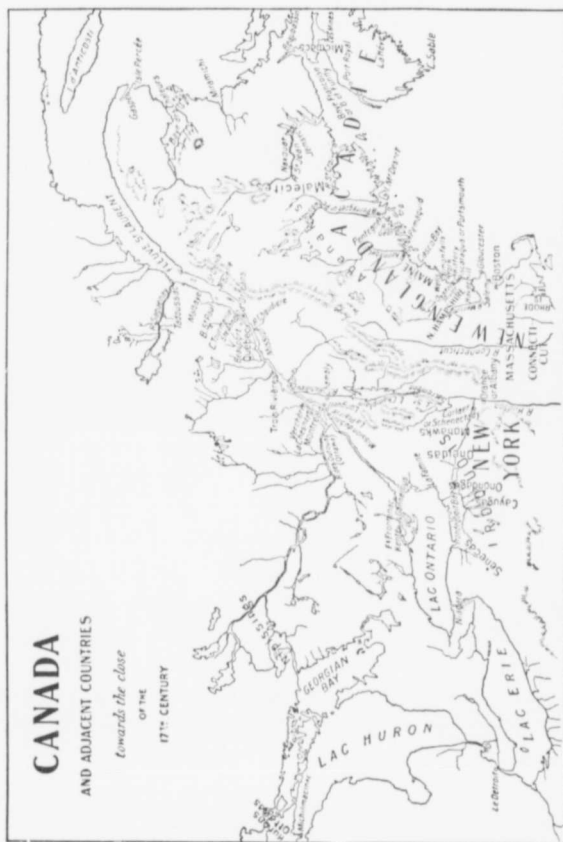
<sup>1</sup> The Old Régime in Canada, Ch. XV.

CANADA AS A ROYAL PROVINCE<sup>1</sup>

THE governor-general and the intendant of Canada answered to those of a French province. The governor, excepting in the earliest period of the colony, was a military noble; in most cases bearing a title and sometimes of high rank. The intendant, as in France, was usually drawn from the *gens de robe*, or legal class. The mutual relations of the two officers were modified by the circumstances about them. The governor was superior in rank to the intendant; he commanded the troops, conducted relations with foreign countries and Indian tribes, and took precedence on all occasions of ceremony. Unlike a provincial governor in France, he had great and substantial power. The king and the minister, his sole masters, were a thousand leagues distant, and he controlled the whole military force. If he abused his position, there was no remedy but in appeal to the court, which alone could hold him in check. There were local governors at Montreal and Three Rivers; but their power was carefully curbed, and they were forbidden to fine or imprison any person without authority from Quebec.

The intendant was virtually a spy on the governor-general, of whose proceedings and of everything else that took place he was required to make report. Every year he wrote to the minister of state, one, two, three, or four letters, often forty

<sup>1</sup> The Old Régime in Canada, Ch. XIX.





or fifty pages long, filled with the secrets of the colony, political and personal, great and small, set forth with a minuteness often interesting, often instructive, and often excessively tedious. The governor, too, wrote letters of pitiless length; and each of the colleagues was jealous of the letters of the other. In truth, their relations to each other were so critical, and perfect harmony so rare, that they might almost be described as natural enemies. The court, it is certain, did not desire their perfect accord; nor, on the other hand, did it wish them to quarrel: it aimed to keep them on such terms that, without deranging the machinery of administration, each should be a check on the other.

The governor, the intendant, and the supreme council or court, were absolute masters of Canada under the pleasure of the king. Legislative, judicial, and executive power, all centred in them. We have seen already the very unpromising beginnings of the supreme council. It had consisted at first of the governor, the bishop, and five councillors chosen by them. The intendant was soon added to form the ruling triumvirate; but the appointment of the councillors, the occasion of so many quarrels, was afterwards exercised by the king himself. Even the name of the council underwent a change in the interest of his autocracy, and he commanded that it should no longer be called the *Supreme*, but only the *Superior* Council. The same change had just been imposed on all the high tribunals of France. Under the shadow of the fleur-de-lis, the king alone was to be supreme.

In 1675, the number of councillors was increased to seven, and in 1703 it was again increased to twelve; but the character of the council or court remained the same. It issued decrees for the civil, commercial, and financial government of the colony, and gave judgment in civil and criminal causes

according to the royal ordinances and the *Coutume de Paris*. It exercised also the function of registration borrowed from the Parliament of Paris. That body, it will be remembered, had no analogy whatever with the English Parliament. Its ordinary functions were not legislative, but judicial; and it was composed of judges hereditary under certain conditions. Nevertheless, it had long acted as a check on the royal power through its right of registration. No royal edict had the force of law till entered upon its books, and this custom had so deep a root in the monarchical constitution of France, that even Louis XIV., in the flush of his power, did not attempt to abolish it. He did better; he ordered his decrees to be registered, and the humbled parliament submissively obeyed. In like manner all edicts, ordinances, or declarations relating to Canada were entered on the registers of the superior council at Quebec. The order of registration was commonly affixed to the edict or other mandate, and nobody dreamed of disobeying it.<sup>1</sup>

The council or court had its attorney-general, who heard complaints and brought them before the tribunal if he thought necessary; its secretary, who kept its registers, and its *huissiers* or attendant officers. It sat once a week; and, though it was the highest court of appeal, it exercised at first original jurisdiction in very trivial cases. It was empowered to establish subordinate courts or judges throughout the colony. Besides these there was a judge appointed by the king for each of the three districts into which Canada was divided, those of Quebec, Three Rivers, and Montreal. To each of the three royal judges were joined a clerk and an

<sup>1</sup> Many general edicts relating to the whole kingdom are also registered on the books of the council, but the practice in this respect was by no means uniform.

attorney-general under the supervision and control of the attorney-general of the superior court, to which tribunal appeal lay from all the subordinate jurisdictions. The jurisdiction of the seigniors within their own limits has already been mentioned. They were entitled by the terms of their grants to the exercise of "high, middle, and low justice;" but most of them were practically restricted to the last of the three, that is, to petty disputes between the *habitants*, involving not more than sixty sous, or offences for which the fine did not exceed ten sous. Thus limited, their judgments were often useful in saving time, trouble, and money to the disputants. The corporate seigniors of Montreal long continued to hold a feudal court in form, with attorney-general, clerk, and *huissier*; but very few other seigniors were in a condition to imitate them. Added to all these tribunals was the bishop's court at Quebec to try causes held to be within the province of the church.

TALON'S ADMINISTRATION<sup>1</sup>

TALON'S appearance did him no justice.<sup>2</sup> The regular contour of his oval face, about which fell to his shoulders a cataract of curls, natural or supposititious; the smooth lines of his well-formed features, brows delicately arched, and a mouth more suggestive of feminine sensibility than of masculine force, — would certainly have misled the disciple of Lavater. Yet there was no want of manhood in him. He was most happily chosen for the task placed in his hands, and from first to last approved himself a vigorous executive officer.



*Jean Talon*

He was a true disciple of

Colbert, formed in his school and animated by his spirit.

Being on the spot, he was better able than his master to judge the working of the new order of things. With regard

<sup>1</sup> The Old Régime in Canada, Ch. XV.

<sup>2</sup> In the intendant Talon, the Crown had a loyal servant, and the colony an able and incorruptible officer. He is one of the most remarkable figures in the annals of New France, whose labors though lacking in picturesque glamour were still invaluable to the country of his adoption. His portrait is at the Hôtel-Dieu of Quebec. — ED.

to the company, he writes that it will profit by impoverishing the colony; that its monopolies dishearten the people and paralyze enterprise; that it is thwarting the intentions of the king, who wishes trade to be encouraged; and that, if its exclusive privileges are maintained, Canada in ten years will be less populous than now. But Colbert clung to his plan, though he wrote in reply that to satisfy the colonists he had persuaded the company to forego the monopolies for a year. As this proved insufficient, the company was at length forced to give up permanently its right of exclusive trade, still exacting its share of beaver and moose skins. This was its chief source of profit; it begrudged every sou deducted from it for charges of government, and the king was constantly obliged to do at his own cost that which the company should have done. In one point it showed a ceaseless activity; and this was the levying of duties, in which it was never known to fail.

Trade, even after its exercise was permitted, was continually vexed by the hand of authority. One of Tracy's first measures had been to issue a decree reducing the price of wheat one half. The council took up the work of regulation, and fixed the price of all imported goods in three several tariffs, — one for Quebec, one for Three Rivers, and one for Montreal. It may well be believed that there was in Canada little capital and little enterprise. Industrially and commercially, the colony was almost dead. Talon set himself to galvanize it; and, if one man could have supplied the intelligence and energy of a whole community, the results would have been triumphant.

He had received elaborate instructions, and they indicate an ardent wish for the prosperity of Canada. Colbert had written to him that the true means to strengthen the colony

was to "cause justice to reign, establish a good police, protect the inhabitants, discipline them against enemies, and procure for them peace, repose, and plenty." "And as," the minister further says, "the king regards his Canadian subjects, from the highest to the lowest, almost as his own children, and wishes them to enjoy equally with the people of France the mildness and happiness of his reign, the Sieur Talon will study to solace them in all things and encourage them to trade and industry. And, seeing that nothing can better promote this end than entering into the details of their households and of all their little affairs, it will not be amiss that he visit all their settlements one after the other in order to learn their true condition, provide as much as possible for their wants, and, performing the duty of a good head of a family, put them in the way of making some profit." The intendant was also told to encourage fathers to inspire their children with piety, together with "profound love and respect for the royal person of his Majesty."

Talon entered on his work with admirable zeal. Sometimes he used authority, sometimes persuasion, sometimes promises of reward. Sometimes, again, he tried the force of example. Thus he built a ship to show the people how to do it, and rouse them to imitation. Three or four years later, the experiment was repeated. This time it was at the cost of the king, who applied the sum of forty thousand livres to the double purpose of promoting the art of ship-building, and saving the colonists from vagrant habits by giving them employment. Talon wrote that three hundred and fifty men had been supplied that summer with work at the charge of government.

He despatched two engineers to search for coal, lead, iron, copper, and other minerals. Important discoveries of iron

were made; but three generations were destined to pass before the mines were successfully worked.<sup>1</sup> The copper of Lake Superior raised the intendant's hopes for a time, but he was soon forced to the conclusion that it was too remote to be of practical value. He labored vigorously to develop arts and manufactures; made a barrel of tar, and sent it to the king as a specimen; caused some of the colonists to make cloth of the wool of the sheep which the king had sent out; encouraged others to establish a tannery, and also a factory of hats and of shoes. The Sieur Follin was induced by the grant of a monopoly to begin the making of soap and potash. The people were ordered to grow hemp, and urged to gather the nettles of the country as material for cordage; and the Ursulines were supplied with flax and wool, in order that they might teach girls to weave and spin.

Talon was especially anxious to establish trade between Canada and the West Indies; and, to make a beginning, he freighted the vessel he had built with salted cod, salmon, eels, pease, fish-oil, staves, and planks, and sent her thither to exchange her cargo for sugar, which she was in turn to exchange in France for goods suited for the Canadian market. Another favorite object with him was the fishery of seals and white porpoises for the sake of their oil; and some of the chief merchants were urged to undertake it, as well as the establishment of stationary cod-fisheries along the Lower St. Lawrence. But, with every encouragement, many years passed before this valuable industry was placed on a firm basis.

<sup>1</sup> Charlevoix speaks of these mines as having been forgotten for seventy years, and rediscovered in his time. After passing through various hands, they were finally worked on the king's account.

Talon saw with concern the huge consumption of wine and brandy among the settlers, costing them, as he wrote to Colbert, a hundred thousand livres a year; and, to keep this money in the colony, he declared his intention of building a brewery. The minister approved the plan, not only on economic grounds, but because "the vice of drunkenness would thereafter cause no more scandal by reason of the cold nature of beer, the vapors whereof rarely deprive men of the use of judgment." The brewery was accordingly built, to the great satisfaction of the poorer colonists.

Nor did the active intendant fail to acquit himself of the duty of domiciliary visits, enjoined upon him by the royal instructions; a point on which he was of one mind with his superiors, for he writes that "those charged in this country with his Majesty's affairs are under a strict obligation to enter into the detail of families." Accordingly we learn from Mother Juchereau, that "he studied with the affection of a father how to succor the poor and cause the colony to grow; entered into the minutest particulars; visited the houses of the inhabitants, and caused them to visit him; learned what crops each one was raising; taught those who had wheat to sell it at a profit, helped those who had none, and encouraged everybody." And Dollier de Casson represents him as visiting in turn every house at Montreal, and giving aid from the king to such as needed it. Horses, cattle, sheep, and other domestic animals, were sent out at the royal charge in considerable numbers, and distributed gratuitously, with an order that none of the young should be killed till the country was sufficiently stocked. Large quantities of goods were also sent from the same high quarter. Some of these were distributed as gifts, and the rest bartered for corn to supply the troops. As the intendant



perceived that the farmers lost much time in coming from their distant clearings to buy necessaries at Quebec, he caused his agents to furnish them with the king's goods at their own houses, to the great annoyance of the merchants of Quebec, who complained that their accustomed trade was thus forestalled.

These were not the only cares which occupied the mind of Talon. He tried to open a road across the country to Acadia, an almost impossible task, in which he and his successors completely failed. Under his auspices, Albanel penetrated to Hudson's Bay, and Saint Lussou took possession in the king's name of the country of the Upper Lakes. It was Talon, in short, who prepared the way for the remarkable series of explorations described in another work.<sup>1</sup> Again and again he urged upon Colbert and the king a measure from which, had it taken effect, momentous consequences must have sprung. This was the purchase or seizure of New York, involving the isolation of New England, the subjection of the Iroquois, and the undisputed control of half the continent.

Great as were his opportunities of abusing his trust, it does not appear that he took advantage of them. He held lands and houses in Canada, owned the brewery which he had established, and embarked in various enterprises of productive industry; but, so far as I can discover, he is nowhere accused of making illicit gains, and there is reason to believe that he acquitted himself of his charge with entire fidelity. His health failed in 1668, and for this and other causes he asked for his recall. Colbert granted it with strong expressions of regret; and when, two years later, he resumed the intendency, the colony seems to have welcomed his return.

<sup>1</sup> La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West.

THE COUREURS DE BOIS<sup>1</sup>

OUT of the beaver trade rose a huge evil, baneful to the growth and the morals of Canada. All that was most active and vigorous in the colony took to the woods, and escaped from the control of intendants, councils, and priests, to the savage freedom of the wilderness. Not only were the possible profits great; but, in the pursuit of them, there was a fascinating element of adventure and danger. The bush-rangers or *coureurs de bois* were to the king an object of horror.<sup>2</sup> They defeated his plans for the increase of the population, and shocked his native instinct of discipline and order. Edict after edict was directed against them; and more than once the colony presented the extraordinary spectacle of the greater part of its young men turned into forest outlaws. But severity was dangerous. The offenders might be driven over to the English, or converted into a lawless banditti, renegades of civilization and the faith. Therefore, clemency alternated with rigor, and declarations of amnesty with edicts of proscription. Neither threats nor blandishments were of much avail. We hear of seigniories abandoned; farms turning again into forests; wives and children left in destitution. The exodus of the *coureurs de bois* would take, at times, the character of an organized movement. The

<sup>1</sup> The Old Régime in Canada, Ch. XXI.

<sup>2</sup> The most dangerous element in the population, and withal, the most picturesque, with whom successive intendants and governors had to deal, were the roving and lawless *coureurs de bois* (roamers of the woods, forest-rangers). — Ed.

famous Du Lhut is said to have made a general combination of the young men of Canada to follow him into the woods. Their plan was to be absent four years, in order that the edicts against them might have time to relent. The intendant Duchesneau reported that eight hundred men out of a population of less than ten thousand souls had vanished from sight in the immensity of a boundless wilderness. Whereupon the king ordered that any person going into the woods without a license should be whipped and branded for the first offence, and sent for life to the galleys for the second.<sup>1</sup> The order was more easily given than enforced. "I must not conceal from you, monseigneur," again writes the intendant Duchesneau, "that the disobedience of the *coureurs de bois* has reached such a point that everybody boldly contravenes the king's interdictions; that there is no longer any concealment; and that parties are collected with astonishing insolence to go and trade in the Indian country. I have done all in my power to prevent this evil, which may cause the ruin of the colony. I have enacted ordinances against the *coureurs de bois*; against the merchants who furnish them with goods; against the gentlemen and others who harbor them, and even against those who have any knowledge of them, and will not inform the local judges. All has been in vain; inasmuch as some of the most considerable families are interested with them, and the governor lets them go on and even shares their profits." "You are aware, monseigneur," writes Denonville,<sup>2</sup> some years later,

<sup>1</sup> *Le Roi à Frontenac*, 30 Avril, 1681. On another occasion, it was ordered that any person thus offending should suffer death.

<sup>2</sup> Between the close of Frontenac's first tenure of office in 1682, and his return to Canada in 1689, there were two governors, namely, — Sieur de la Barre, 1682-1685, and Marquis de Denonville, 1685-1689. La Barre's administration was corrupt and ineffective, Denonville's merely ineffective. — ED.

"that the *coureurs de bois* are a great evil, but you are not aware how great this evil is. It deprives the country of its effective men; makes them indocile, debauched, and incapable of discipline, and turns them into pretended nobles, wearing the sword and decked out with lace, both they and their relations, who all affect to be gentlemen and ladies. As for cultivating the soil, they will not hear of it. This, along with



*Marquis de Denonville*

the scattered condition of the settlements, causes their children to be as unruly as Indians, being brought up in the same manner. Not that there are not some very good people here, but they are in a minority." In another despatch he enlarges on their vagabond and lawless ways, their indifference to marriage, and the mischief caused by their example; describes how, on their return from the woods, they swagger like lords, spend all their gains

in dress and drunken revelry, and despise the peasants, whose daughters they will not deign to marry, though they are peasants themselves.

It was a curious scene when a party of *coureurs de bois* returned from their roving. Montreal was their harboring place, and they conducted themselves much like the crew of a man-of-war paid off after a long voyage. As long as their beaver-skins lasted, they set no bounds to their riot. Every house in the place, we are told, was turned into a drinking

shop. The new-comers were bedizened with a strange mixture of French and Indian finery; while some of them, with instincts more thoroughly savage, stalked about the streets as naked as a Pottawattamie or a Sioux. The clamor of tongues was prodigious, and gambling and drinking filled the day and night. When at last they were sober again, they sought absolution for their sins; nor could the priests venture to bear too hard on their unruly penitents, lest they should break wholly with the Church and dispense thenceforth with her sacraments.

Under such leaders as Du Lhut, the *coureurs de bois* built forts of palisades at various points throughout the West and Northwest. They had a post of this sort at Detroit some time before its permanent settlement, as well as others on Lake Superior and in the valley of the Mississippi. They occupied them as long as it suited their purposes, and then abandoned them to the next comer. Michillimackinac was, however, their chief resort; and thence they would set out, two or three together, to roam for hundreds of miles through the endless meshwork of interlocking lakes and rivers which seams the northern wilderness.

No wonder that a year or two of bush-ranging spoiled them for civilization. Though not a very valuable member of society, and though a thorn in the side of princes and rulers, the *coureur de bois* had his uses, at least from an artistic point of view; and his strange figure, sometimes brutally savage, but oftener marked with the lines of a dare-devil courage, and a reckless, thoughtless gayety, will always be joined to the memories of that grand world of woods which the nineteenth century is fast civilizing out of existence. At least, he is picturesque, and with his red-skin companion serves to animate forest scenery. Perhaps he could some-

times feel, without knowing that he felt them, the charms of the savage nature that had adopted him.<sup>1</sup> Rude as he was, her voice may not always have been meaningless for one who knew her haunts so well; deep recesses where, veiled in foliage, some wild shy rivulet steals with timid music through breathless caves of verdure; gulfs where feathered crags rise like castle walls, where the noonday sun pierces with keen rays athwart the torrent, and the mossed arms of fallen pines cast wavering shadows on the illumined foam; pools of liquid crystal turned emerald in the reflected green of impending woods; rocks on whose rugged front the gleam of sunlit waters dances in quivering light; ancient trees hurled headlong by the storm to dam the raging stream with their forlorn and savage ruin; or the stern depths of immemorial forests, dim and silent as a cavern, columned with innumerable trunks, each like an Atlas upholding its world of leaves, and sweating perpetual moisture down its dark and channelled rind; some strong in youth, some grisly with decrepit age, nightmares of strange distortion, gnarled and knotted with wens and goitres; roots intertwined beneath like serpents petrified in an agony of contorted strife; green and glistening mosses carpeting the rough ground, mantling the rocks, turning pulpy stumps to mounds of verdure, and swathing fallen trunks as, bent in the impotence of rottenness, they lie outstretched over knoll and hollow, like mouldering reptiles of the primeval world, while around, and on, and through them, springs the young growth that battens on their decay, — the forest devouring its own dead.

<sup>1</sup> "It would be false coloring," says Parkman, "to paint the half-savage *coureur de bois* as a romantic lover of nature." He loved rather the lust of freedom, and the spirit of lawless adventure which he could indulge in the secret recesses of the northern forest. — Ed.

Or, to turn from its funereal shade to the light and life of the open woodland, the sheen of sparkling lakes, and mountains basking in the glory of the summer noon, flecked by the shadows of passing clouds that sail on snowy wings across the transparent azure.

[With this roaming element in the population it was inevitable that exploration should make rapid strides. Yet hitherto no systematic effort towards the discovery of new territory had been made. The missionary thought only of the commerce of souls, and the *coureur de bois* only of the traffic in brandy and furs. The results had, therefore, been desultory and evanescent. Under the energetic administrations of Tracy, Courcelle, and Frontenac, and fostered by the commercial sagacity and zeal of Talon, a definite purpose was substituted for the fitful energy that had formerly prevailed. To Talon indeed we indirectly owe the discovery of the Mississippi, for on his initiative Joliet and Marquette were, in 1673, sent in search of that rumored river. They were successful in their quest, but it remained for La Salle to pursue its course to the sea, and to lay the foundations of a New France in the South. — ED.]

LA SALLE<sup>1</sup>

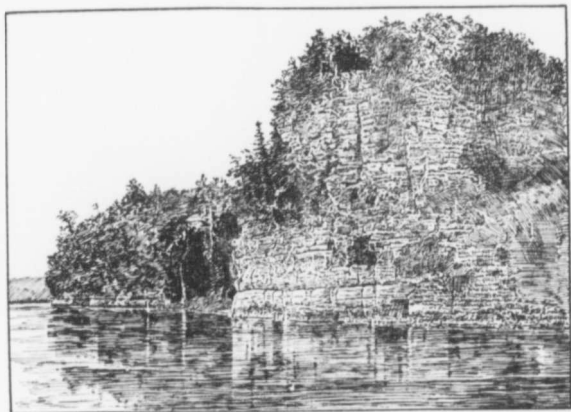
CONSPICUOUS in the annals of Canada stands the memorable name of Robert Cavalier de La Salle, the man who, beyond all his compeers, contributed to expand the boundary of French empire in the west. La Salle commanded at Fort Frontenac, erected near the outlet of Lake Ontario, on its northern shore, and then forming the most advanced military outpost of the colony. Here he dwelt among Indians, and half-breeds, traders, *voyageurs*, bush-rangers, and Franciscan monks, ruling his little empire with absolute sway, enforcing respect by his energy, but offending many by his rigor. Here he brooded upon the grand design which had long engaged his thoughts. He had resolved to complete the achievement of Father Marquette, to trace the unknown Mississippi to its mouth, to plant the standard of his king in the newly discovered regions, and found colonies which should make good the sovereignty of France from the Frozen Ocean to Mexico. Ten years of his early life had passed, it is said, in connection with the Jesuits, and his strong mind had hardened to iron under the discipline of that relentless school. To a sound judgment and a penetrating sagacity, he joined a boundless enterprise and an adamant constancy of purpose. But his nature was stern and austere; he was prone to rule by fear rather than by love; he took counsel of no man, and chilled all who approached him by his cold reserve.

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. II.





At the close of the year 1678, his preparations were complete, and he despatched his attendants to the banks of the river Niagara, whither he soon followed in person. Here he began a little fort of palisades, and was the first military tenant of a spot destined to momentous consequence in future wars. Two leagues above the cataract, on the eastern bank of the river, he built the first vessel which ever ex-



*Starved Rock*

plored the waters of the upper lakes. Her name was the "Griffin," and her burden was forty-five tons. On the seventh of August, 1679, she began her adventurous voyage amid the speechless wonder of the Indians, who stood amazed, alike at the unwonted size of the wooden canoe, at the flash and roar of the cannon from her decks, and at the carved figure of a griffin, which sat crouched upon her prow. She bore on her course along the virgin waters of Lake Erie, through the beautiful windings of the Detroit, and among

the restless billows of Lake Huron, where a furious tempest had well-nigh engulfed her. La Salle pursued his voyage along Lake Michigan in birch canoes, and after protracted suffering from famine and exposure reached its southern extremity on the eighteenth of October.

He led his followers to the banks of the river now called the St. Joseph. Here, again, he built a fort; and here, in after years, the Jesuits placed a mission and the government a garrison. Thence he pushed on into the unknown region of the Illinois; and now dangers and difficulties began to thicken about him. Indians threatened hostility; his men lost heart, clamored, grew mutinous, and repeatedly deserted; and worse than all, nothing was heard of the vessel which had been sent back to Canada for necessary supplies. Weeks wore on, and doubt ripened into certainty. She had foundered among the storms of these wilderness oceans; and her loss seemed to involve the ruin of the enterprise, since it was vain to proceed farther without the expected supplies. In this disastrous crisis, La Salle embraced a resolution characteristic of his intrepid temper. Leaving his men in charge of a subordinate at a fort which he had built on the river Illinois, he turned his face again towards Canada.

LA SALLE'S WINTER JOURNEY ALONG THE  
ILLINOIS RIVER AND THE GREAT LAKES<sup>1</sup>

LA SALLE well knew what was before him, and nothing but necessity spurred him to this desperate journey. He says that he could trust nobody else to go in his stead, and that, unless the articles lost in the "Griffin" were replaced without delay, the expedition would be retarded a full year, and he and his associates consumed by its expenses. "Therefore," he writes to one of them, "though the thaws of approaching spring greatly increased the difficulty of the way, interrupted as it was everywhere by marshes and rivers, to say nothing of the length of the journey, which is about five hundred leagues in a direct line, and the danger of meeting Indians of four or five different nations, through whose country we were to pass, as well as an Iroquois army, which we knew was coming that way; though we must suffer all the time from hunger; sleep on the open ground, and often without food; watch by night and march by day, loaded with baggage, such as blanket, clothing, kettle, hatchet, gun, powder, lead, and skins to make moccasins; sometimes pushing through thickets, sometimes climbing rocks covered with ice and snow, sometimes wading whole days through marshes where the water was waist-deep or even more, at a season when the snow was not entirely melted, — though I knew all this, it did not prevent me from resolving to go on foot to

<sup>1</sup> La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West, Ch. XIV.

Fort Frontenac, to learn for myself what had become of my vessel, and bring back the things we needed."

The winter had been a severe one; and when, an hour after leaving the fort, he and his companions reached the still water of Peoria Lake, they found it sheeted with ice from shore to shore. They carried their canoes up the bank, made two rude sledges, placed the light vessels upon them, and dragged them to the upper end of the lake, where they encamped. In the morning, they found the river still covered with ice, too weak to bear them and too strong to permit them to break a way for the canoes. They spent the whole day in carrying them through the woods, toiling knee-deep in saturated snow. Rain fell in floods, and they took shelter at night in a deserted Indian hut.

In the morning, the third of March, they dragged their canoes half a league farther; then launched them, and, breaking the ice with clubs and hatchets, forced their way slowly up the stream. Again their progress was barred, and again they took to the woods, toiling onward till a tempest of moist, half-liquid snow forced them to bivouac for the night. A sharp frost followed, and in the morning the white waste around them was glazed with a dazzling crust. Now, for the first time, they could use their snow-shoes. Bending to their work, dragging their canoes, which glided smoothly over the polished surface, they journeyed on hour after hour and league after league, till they reached at length the great town of the Illinois, still void of its inhabitants.

It was a desolate and lonely scene: the river gliding dark and cold between its banks of rushes; the empty lodges, covered with crusted snow; the vast white meadows; the distant cliffs, bearded with shining icicles; and the hills

wrapped in forests, which glittered from afar with the icy incrustations that cased each frozen twig. Yet there was life in the savage landscape. The men saw buffalo wading in the snow, and they killed one of them. More than this: they discovered the tracks of moccasins. They cut rushes by the edge of the river, piled them on the bank, and set them on fire, that the smoke might attract the eyes of savages roaming near.

On the following day, while the hunters were smoking the meat of the buffalo, La Salle went out to reconnoitre, and presently met three Indians, one of whom proved to be Chassagoac, the principal chief of the Illinois. La Salle brought them to his bivouac, feasted them, gave them a red blanket, a kettle, and some knives and hatchets, made friends with them, promised to restrain the Iroquois from attacking them, told them that he was on his way to the settlements to bring arms and ammunition to defend them against their enemies, and, as the result of these advances, gained from the chief a promise that he would send provisions to Tonty's party at Fort Crèvecoeur.

After several days spent at the deserted town, La Salle prepared to resume his journey. Before his departure, his attention was attracted to the remarkable cliff of yellow sandstone, now called Starved Rock, a mile or more above the village, — a natural fortress, which a score of resolute white men might make good against a host of savages; and he soon afterwards sent Tonty an order to examine it, and make it his stronghold in case of need.

On the fifteenth, the party set out again, carried their canoes along the bank of the river as far as the rapids above Ottawa;<sup>1</sup> then launched them and pushed their way up-

<sup>1</sup> In the present State of Illinois. —Ed.

ward, battling with the floating ice, which, loosened by a warm rain, drove down the swollen current in sheets. On the eighteenth, they reached a point some miles below the site of Joliet, and here found the river once more completely closed. Despairing of farther progress by water, they hid their canoes on an island, and struck across the country for Lake Michigan.

It was the worst of all seasons for such a journey. The nights were cold, but the sun was warm at noon, and the half-thawed prairie was one vast tract of mud, water, and discolored, half-liquid snow. On the twenty-second, they crossed marshes and inundated meadows, wading to the knee, till at noon they were stopped by a river, perhaps the Calumet. They made a raft of hard-wood timber, for there was no other, and shoved themselves across. On the next day, they could see Lake Michigan dimly glimmering beyond the waste of woods; and, after crossing three swollen streams, they reached it at evening. On the twenty-fourth, they followed its shore, till, at nightfall, they arrived at the fort, which they had built in the autumn at the mouth of the St. Joseph. Here La Salle found Chapelle and Leblanc, the two men whom he had sent from hence to Michillimackinac, in search of the "Griffin." They reported that they had made the circuit of the lake, and had neither seen her nor heard tidings of her. Assured of her fate, he ordered them to rejoin Tonty at Fort Crèvecoeur; while he pushed onward with his party through the unknown wild of Southern Michigan.

"The rain," says La Salle, "which lasted all day, and the raft we were obliged to make to cross the river, stopped us till noon of the twenty-fifth, when we continued our march through the woods, which was so interlaced with thorns and

brambles that in two days and a half our clothes were all torn and our faces so covered with blood that we hardly knew each other. On the twenty-eighth, we found the woods more open, and began to fare better, meeting a good deal of game, which after this rarely failed us; so that we no longer carried provisions with us, but made a meal of roast meat wherever we happened to kill a deer, bear, or turkey. These are the choicest feasts on a journey like this; and till now we had generally gone without them, so that we had often walked all day without breakfast.

"The Indians do not hunt in this region, which is debatable ground between five or six nations who are at war, and, being afraid of each other, do not venture into these parts, except to surprise each other, and always with the greatest precaution and all possible secrecy. The reports of our guns and the carcasses of the animals we killed soon led some of them to find our trail. In fact, on the evening of the twenty-eighth, having made our fire by the edge of a prairie, we were surrounded by them; but as the man on guard waked us, and we posted ourselves behind trees with our guns, these savages, who are called Wapoos, took us for Iroquois, and thinking that there must be a great many of us, because we did not travel secretly, as they do when in small bands, they ran off without shooting their arrows, and gave the alarm to their comrades, so that we were two days without meeting anybody."

La Salle guessed the cause of their fright; and, in order to confirm their delusion, he drew with charcoal, on the trunks of trees from which he had stripped the bark, the usual marks of an Iroquois war-party, with signs for prisoners and for scalps, after the custom of those dreaded warriors. This ingenious artifice, as will soon appear, was near



proving the destruction of the whole party. He also set fire to the dry grass of the prairies over which he and his men had just passed, thus destroying the traces of their passage. "We practised this device every night, and it answered very well so long as we were passing over an open country; but, on the thirtieth, we got into great marshes, flooded by the thaws, and were obliged to cross them in mud or water up to the waist; so that our tracks betrayed us to a band of Mascoutins, who were out after Iroquois. They followed us through these marshes during the three days we were crossing them; but we made no fire at night, contenting ourselves with taking off our wet clothes and wrapping ourselves in our blankets on some dry knoll, where we slept till morning. At last, on the night of the second of April, there came a hard frost, and our clothes, which were drenched when we took them off, froze stiff as sticks, so that we could not put them on in the morning without making a fire to thaw them. The fire betrayed us to the Indians, who were encamped across the marsh; and they ran towards us with loud cries, till they were stopped half way by a stream so deep that they could not get over, the ice which had formed in the night not being strong enough to bear them. We went to meet them, within gun-shot; and whether our fire-arms frightened them, or whether they thought us more numerous than we were, or whether they really meant us no harm, they called out, in the Illinois language, that they had taken us for Iroquois, but now saw that we were friends and brothers; whereupon, they went off as they came, and we kept on our way till the fourth, when two of my men fell ill and could not walk."

In this emergency, La Salle went in search of some water-course by which they might reach Lake Erie, and soon came

upon a small river, which was probably the Huron. Here, while the sick men rested, their companions made a canoe. There were no birch-trees; and they were forced to use elm bark, which at that early season would not slip freely from the wood until they loosened it with hot water. Their canoe being made, they embarked in it, and for a time floated prosperously down the stream, when at length the way was barred by a matted barricade of trees fallen across the water. The sick men could now walk again, and, pushing eastward through the forest, the party soon reached the banks of the Detroit.

La Salle directed two of the men to make a canoe, and go to Michillimackinac, the nearest harborage. With the remaining two, he crossed the Detroit on a raft, and, striking a direct line across the country, reached Lake Erie, not far from Point Pelée. Snow, sleet, and rain pelted them with little intermission; and when, after a walk of about thirty miles, they gained the lake, the Mohegan and one of the Frenchmen were attacked with fever and spitting of blood. Only one man now remained in health. With his aid, La Salle made another canoe, and, embarking the invalids, pushed for Niagara. It was Easter Monday when they landed at a cabin of logs above the cataract, probably on the spot where the "Griffin" was built. Here several of La Salle's men had been left the year before, and here they still remained. They told him woful news. Not only had he lost the "Griffin," and her lading of ten thousand crowns in value, but a ship from France, freighted with his goods, valued at more than twenty-two thousand livres, had been totally wrecked at the mouth of the St. Lawrence; and, of twenty hired men on their way from Europe to join him, some had been detained by his enemy, the Intendant Duchesneau,

while all but four of the remainder, being told that he was dead, had found means to return home.

His three followers were all unfit for travel: he alone retained his strength and spirit. Taking with him three fresh men at Niagara, he resumed his journey, and on the sixth of May descried, looming through floods of rain, the familiar shores of his seigniory and the bastioned walls of Fort Frontenac. During sixty-five days, he had toiled almost incessantly, travelling, by the course he took, about a thousand miles through a country beset with every form of peril and obstruction; "the most arduous journey," says the chronicler, "ever made by Frenchmen in America." Such was Cavalier de La Salle. In him, an unconquerable mind held at its service a frame of iron, and tasked it to the utmost of its endurance. The pioneer of western pioneers was no rude son of toil, but a man of thought, trained amid arts and letters.<sup>1</sup>

He had reached his goal; but for him there was neither rest nor peace. Man and Nature seemed in arms against him. His agents had plundered him; his creditors had seized his property; and several of his canoes, richly laden, had been lost in the rapids of the St. Lawrence. He hastened to Montreal, where his sudden advent caused great astonishment; and where, despite his crippled resources and damaged credit, he succeeded, within a week, in gaining the supplies which he required, and the needful succors for the forlorn band on the Illinois. He had returned to Fort Frontenac,

<sup>1</sup> A Rocky Mountain trapper, being complimented on the hardihood of himself and his companions, once said to the writer, "That's so; but a gentleman of the right sort will stand hardship better than anybody else." The history of Arctic and African travel, and the military records of all time, are a standing evidence that a trained and developed mind is not the enemy, but the active and powerful ally, of constitutional hardihood. The culture that enervates instead of strengthening is always a false or a partial one.

and was on the point of embarking for their relief, when a blow fell upon him more disheartening than any that had preceded. On the twenty-second of July, two *voyageurs*, Messier and Laurent, came to him with a letter from Tonty, who wrote that soon after La Salle's departure nearly all the men had deserted, after destroying Fort Crèveceur, plundering the magazine, and throwing into the river all the arms, goods, and stores which they could not carry off. The messengers who brought this letter were speedily followed by two of the *habitants* of Fort Frontenac, who had been trading on the lakes, and who, with a fidelity which the unhappy La Salle rarely knew how to inspire, had travelled day and night to bring him their tidings. They reported that they had met the deserters, and that, having been reinforced by recruits gained at Michillimackinac and Niagara, they now numbered twenty men. They had destroyed the fort on the St. Joseph, seized a quantity of furs belonging to La Salle at Michillimackinac, and plundered the magazine at Niagara. Here they had separated, eight of them coasting the south side of Lake Ontario to find harborage at Albany, a common refuge at that time of this class of scoundrels; while the remaining twelve, in three canoes, made for Fort Frontenac, along the north shore, intending to kill La Salle, as the surest means of escaping punishment.

He lost no time in lamentation. Of the few men at his command, he chose nine of the trustiest, embarked with them in canoes, and went to meet the marauders. After passing the Bay of Quinté, he took his station, with five of his party, at a point of land suited to his purpose, and detached the remaining four to keep watch. In the morning, two canoes were discovered, approaching without suspicion, one of them far in advance of the other. As the foremost

drew near, La Salle's canoe darted out from under the leafy shore; two of the men handling the paddles, while he, with the remaining two, levelled their guns at the deserters, and called on them to surrender. Astonished and dismayed, they yielded at once; while two more, who were in the second canoe, hastened to follow their example. La Salle now returned to the fort with his prisoners, placed them in custody, and again set forth. He met the third canoe upon the lake at about six o'clock in the evening. His men vainly plied their paddles in pursuit. The mutineers reached the shore took post among rocks and trees, levelled their guns, and showed fight. Four of La Salle's men made a circuit to gain their rear and dislodge them, on which they stole back to their canoe, and tried to escape in the darkness. They were pursued, and summoned to yield; but they replied by aiming their guns at their pursuers, who instantly gave them a volley, killed two of them, and captured the remaining three. Like their companions, they were placed in custody at the fort, to await the arrival of Count Frontenac.

LA SALLE TAKES POSSESSION OF THE  
MISSISSIPPI<sup>1</sup>

AGAIN La Salle embarked for the Illinois. Rounding the vast circuit of the lakes, he reached the mouth of the St. Joseph, and hastened with anxious speed to the fort where he had left his followers. The place was empty. Not a man remained. Terrified, despondent, mutinous, and embroiled in Indian wars, they had fled to seek peace and safety, he knew not whither.

Once more the dauntless discoverer turned back towards Canada. Once more he stood before Count Frontenac, and once more bent all his resources and all his credit to gain means for the prosecution of his enterprise. He succeeded. With his little flotilla of canoes, he left his fort, at the outlet of Lake Ontario, and slowly retraced those interminable waters, and lines of forest-bounded shore, which had grown drearily familiar to his eyes. Fate at length seemed tired of the conflict with so stubborn an adversary. All went prosperously with the voyagers. They passed the lakes in safety, crossed the rough portage to the waters of the Illinois, followed its winding channel, and descended the turbid eddies of the Mississippi, received with various welcome by the scattered tribes who dwelt along its banks. Now the waters grew bitter to the taste; now the trampling of the surf was heard; and now the broad ocean opened upon their sight,

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. II.

and their goal was won. On the ninth of April, 1682, with his followers under arms, amid the firing of musketry, the chanting of the *Te Deum*, and shouts of "Vive le roi," La Salle took formal possession of the vast valley of the Mississippi, in the name of Louis the Great, King of France and Navarre.

The first stage of his enterprise was accomplished, but labors no less arduous remained behind. Repairing to the court of France, he was welcomed with richly merited favor, and soon set sail for the mouth of the Mississippi, with a squadron of vessels freighted with men and material for the projected colony. But the folly and obstinacy of a jealous naval commander blighted his fairest hopes. The squadron missed the mouth of the river; and the wreck of one of the vessels, and the desertion of the commander, completed the ruin of the expedition. La Salle landed with a band of half-famished followers on the coast of Texas; but disaster followed disaster, and as a desperate resource he determined to seek the Mississippi, and follow its tortuous course towards Canada where lay the only hope of rescue for the despairing colony. On this fatal journey he met his death at the hands of one of his own followers.

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HOLDING a northerly course, the travellers crossed the Brazos, and reached the waters of the Trinity. The weather was unfavorable, and on one occasion they encamped in the rain during four or five days together. It was not an harmonious company. La Salle's cold and haughty reserve had returned, at least for those of his followers to whom he was not partial. Duhaut and the surgeon Liotot, both of whom were men of some property, had a large pecuniary stake in the enterprise, and were disappointed and incensed at its ruinous result. They had a quarrel with young Moranget, whose hot and hasty temper was as little fitted to conciliate as was the harsh reserve of his uncle. Already at Fort St. Louis, Duhaut had intrigued among the men; and the mild admonition of Joutel had not, it seems, sufficed to divert him from his sinister purposes. Liotot, it is said, had secretly sworn vengeance against La Salle, whom he charged with having caused the death of his brother, or, as some will have it, his nephew. On one of the former journeys, this young man's strength had failed; and, La Salle having ordered him to return to the fort, he had been killed by Indians on the way.

The party moved again as the weather improved, and on the fifteenth of March encamped within a few miles of a spot which La Salle had passed on his preceding journey,

<sup>1</sup> La Salle and the Discovery of the Great West, Ch. XXVII.



and where he had left a quantity of Indian corn and beans in *cache*; that is to say, hidden in the ground or in a hollow tree. As provisions were falling short, he sent a party from the camp to find it. These men were Duhaut, Liotot, Hiens the buccaneer, Teissier, l'Archevêque, Nika the hunter, and La Salle's servant, Saget. They opened the *cache*, and found the contents spoiled; but, as they returned from their bootless errand, they saw buffalo; and Nika shot two of them. They now encamped on the spot, and sent the servant to inform La Salle, in order that he might send horses to bring in the meat. Accordingly, on the next day, he directed Moranget and De Marle, with the necessary horses, to go with Saget to the hunters' camp. When they arrived, they found that Duhaut and his companions had already cut up the meat, and laid it upon scaffolds for smoking, though it was not yet so dry as, it seems, this process required. Duhaut and the others had also put by, for themselves, the marrow-bones and certain portions of the meat, to which, by woodland custom, they had a perfect right. Moranget, whose rashness and violence had once before caused a fatal catastrophe, fell into a most unreasonable fit of rage, berated and menaced Duhaut and his party, and ended by seizing upon the whole of the meat, including the reserved portions. This added fuel to the fire of Duhaut's old grudge against Moranget and his uncle. There is reason to think that he had harbored deadly designs, the execution of which was only hastened by the present outbreak. The surgeon also bore hatred against Moranget, whom he had nursed with constant attention when wounded by an Indian arrow, and who had since repaid him with abuse. These two now took counsel apart with Hiens, Teissier, and l'Archevêque; and it was resolved to kill Moranget that night. Nika, La Salle's

devoted follower, and Saget, his faithful servant, must die with him. All of the five were of one mind, except the pilot Teissier, who neither aided nor opposed the plot.

Night came; the woods grew dark; the evening meal was finished, and the evening pipes were smoked. The order of the guard was arranged; and, doubtless by design, the first hour of the night was assigned to Moranget, the second to Saget, and the third to Nika. Gun in hand, each stood watch in turn over the silent but not sleeping forms around him, till, his time expiring, he called the man who was to relieve him, wrapped himself in his blanket, and was soon buried in a slumber that was to be his last. Now the assassins rose. Duhaut and Hiens stood with their guns cocked, ready to shoot down any one of the destined victims who should resist or fly. The surgeon, with an axe, stole towards the three sleepers, and struck a rapid blow at each in turn. Saget and Nika died with little movement; but Moranget started spasmodically into a sitting posture, gasping and unable to speak; and the murderers compelled De Marle, who was not in their plot, to compromise himself by despatching him.

The floodgates of murder were open, and the torrent must have its way. Vengeance and safety alike demanded the death of La Salle. Hiens, or "English Jem," alone seems to have hesitated; for he was one of those to whom that stern commander had always been partial. Meanwhile, the intended victim was still at his camp, about six miles distant. It is easy to picture, with sufficient accuracy, the features of the scene, — the sheds of bark and branches, beneath which, among blankets and buffalo-ropes, camp-utensils, pack-saddles, rude harness, guns, powder-horns, and bullet-pouches, the men lounged away the hour, sleeping or smoking, or talking among

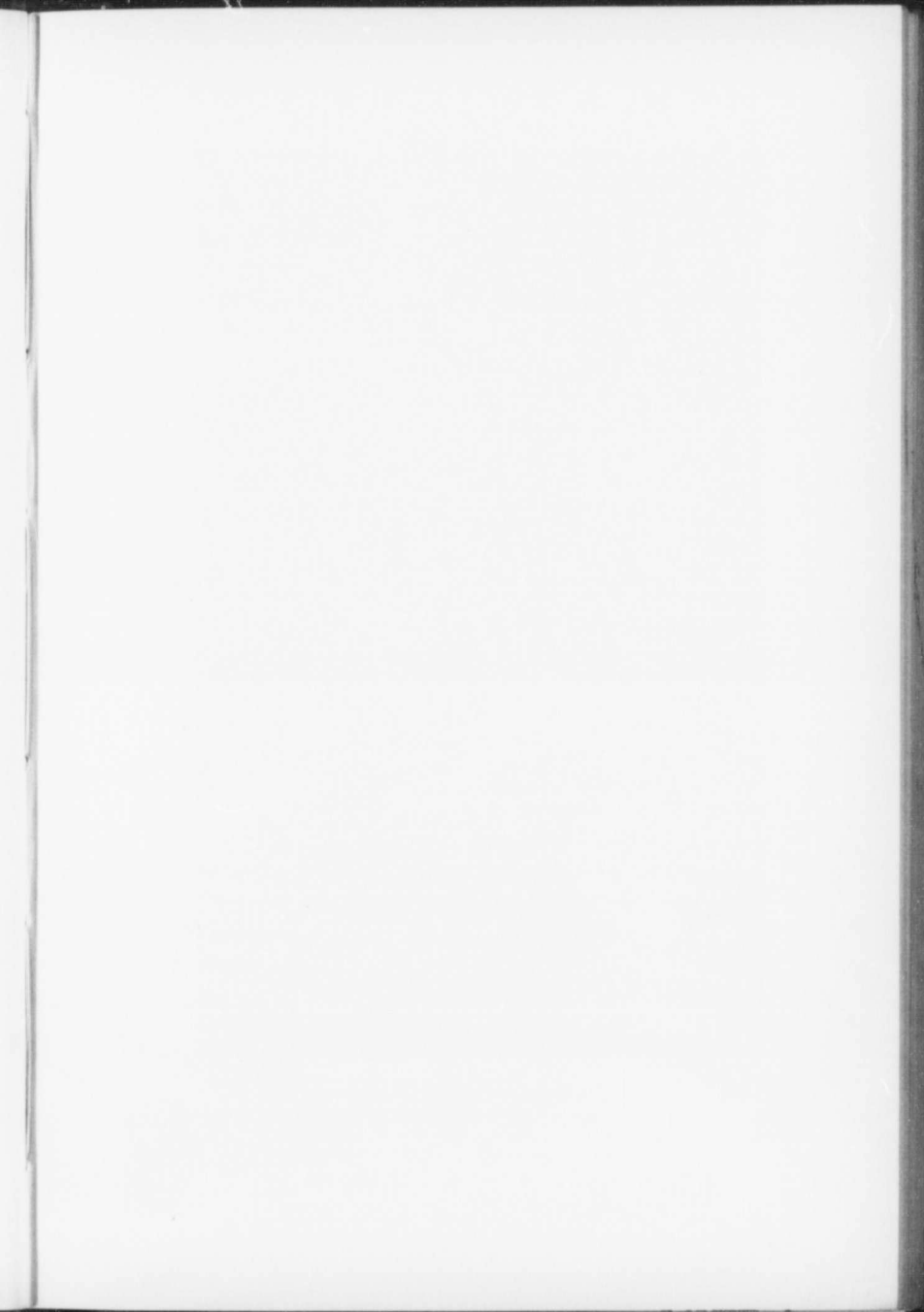
themselves; the blackened kettles that hung from tripods of poles over the fires; the Indians strolling about the place or lying, like dogs in the sun, with eyes half shut, yet all observant; and, in the neighboring meadow, the horses grazing under the eye of a watchman.

It was the eighteenth of March. Moranget and his companions had been expected to return the night before; but the whole day passed, and they did not appear. La Salle became very anxious. He resolved to go and look for them; but, not well knowing the way, he told the Indians who were about the camp that he would give them a hatchet, if they would guide him. One of them accepted the offer; and La Salle prepared to set out in the morning, at the same time directing Joutel to be ready to go with him. Joutel says: "That evening, while we were talking about what could have happened to the absent men, he seemed to have a presentiment of what was to take place. He asked me if I had heard of any machinations against them, or if I had noticed any bad design on the part of Duhaut and the rest. I answered that I had heard nothing, except that they sometimes complained of being found fault with so often; and that this was all I knew, besides which, as they were persuaded that I was in his interest, they would not have told me of any bad design they might have. We were very uneasy all the rest of the evening."

In the morning, La Salle set out with his Indian guide. He had changed his mind with regard to Joutel, whom he now directed to remain in charge of the camp and to keep a careful watch. He told the friar Anastase Douay to come with him instead of Joutel, whose gun, which was the best in the party, he borrowed for the occasion, as well as his pistol. The three proceeded on their way, La Salle, the friar,

and the Indian. "All the way," writes the friar, "he spoke to me of nothing but matters of piety, grace, and predestination; enlarging on the debt he owed to God, who had saved him from so many perils during more than twenty years of travel in America. Suddenly, I saw him overwhelmed with a profound sadness, for which he himself could not account. He was so much moved that I scarcely knew him." He soon recovered his usual calmness; and they walked on till they approached the camp of Duhaut, which was on the farther side of a small river. Looking about him with the eye of a woodsman, La Salle saw two eagles circling in the air nearly over him, as if attracted by carcasses of beasts or men. He fired his gun and his pistol, as a summons to any of his followers who might be within hearing. The shots reached the ears of the conspirators. Rightly conjecturing by whom they were fired, several of them, led by Duhaut, crossed the river at a little distance above, where trees or other intervening objects hid them from sight. Duhaut and the surgeon crouched like Indians in the long, dry, reed-like grass of the last summer's growth, while l'Archevêque stood in sight near the bank. La Salle, continuing to advance, soon saw him, and, calling to him, demanded where was Moranget. The man, without lifting his hat, or any show of respect, replied in an agitated and broken voice, but with a tone of studied insolence, that Moranget was strolling about somewhere. La Salle rebuked and menaced him. He rejoined with increased insolence, drawing back, as he spoke, towards the ambuscade, while the incensed commander advanced to chastise him. At that moment a shot was fired from the grass, instantly followed by another; and, pierced through the brain, La Salle dropped dead.

The friar at his side stood terror-stricken, unable to ad-





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vance or to fly; when Duhaut, rising from the ambushade, called out to him to take courage, for he had nothing to fear. The murderers now came forward, and with wild looks gathered about their victim. "There thou liest, great Bashaw! There thou liest!" exclaimed the surgeon Liotot, in base exultation over the unconscious corpse. With mockery and insult, they stripped it naked, dragged it into the bushes, and left it there, a prey to the buzzards and the wolves.

Thus in the vigor of his manhood, at the age of forty-three, died Robert Cavalier de La Salle, "one of the greatest men," writes Tonty, "of this age;" without question one of the most remarkable explorers whose names live in history. His faithful officer Joutel thus sketches his portrait: "His firmness, his courage, his great knowledge of the arts and sciences, which made him equal to every undertaking, and his untiring energy, which enabled him to surmount every obstacle, would have won at last a glorious success for his grand enterprise, had not all his fine qualities been counterbalanced by a haughtiness of manner which often made him insupportable, and by a harshness towards those under his command, which drew upon him an implacable hatred, and was at last the cause of his death."

The enthusiasm of the disinterested and chivalrous Champlain was not the enthusiasm of La Salle; nor had he any part in the self-devoted zeal of the early Jesuit explorers. He belonged not to the age of the knight-errant and the saint, but to the modern world of practical study and practical action. He was the hero, not of a principle nor of a faith, but simply of a fixed idea and a determined purpose. As often happens with concentrated and energetic natures, his purpose was to him a passion and an inspiration; and he clung to it with a certain fanaticism of devotion. It was

the offspring of an ambition vast and comprehensive, yet acting in the interest both of France and of civilization.

Serious in all things, incapable of the lighter pleasures, incapable of repose, finding no joy but in the pursuit of great designs, too shy for society and too reserved for popularity, often unsympathetic and always seeming so, smothering emotions which he could not utter, schooled to universal distrust, stern to his followers and pitiless to himself, bearing the brunt of every hardship and every danger, demanding of others an equal constancy joined to an implicit deference, heeding no counsel but his own, attempting the impossible and grasping at what was too vast to hold, — he contained in his own complex and painful nature the chief springs of his triumphs, his failures, and his death.

It is easy to reckon up his defects, but it is not easy to hide from sight the Roman virtues that redeemed them. Beset by a throng of enemies, he stands, like the King of Israel, head and shoulders above them all. He was a tower of adamant, against whose impregnable front hardship and danger, the rage of man and of the elements, the southern sun, the northern blast, fatigue, famine, and disease, delay, disappointment, and deferred hope emptied their quivers in vain. That very pride which, Coriolanus-like, declared itself most sternly in the thickest press of foes, has in it something to challenge admiration. Never, under the impenetrable mail of paladin or crusader, beat a heart of more intrepid mettle than within the stoic panoply that armed the breast of La Salle. To estimate aright the marvels of his patient fortitude, one must follow on his track through the vast scene of his interminable journeyings, those thousands of weary miles of forest, marsh, and river, where, again and again, in the bitterness of baffled striving, the untiring pil-



grim pushed onward towards the goal which he was never to attain. America owes him an enduring memory; for, in this masculine figure, she sees the pioneer who guided her to the possession of her richest heritage.

It was left<sup>1</sup> with another to complete the enterprise on which he had staked his life; and in the year 1699, Lemoine d'Iberville planted the germ whence sprang the colony of Louisiana.

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I, Ch. II.

## FRANÇOIS DE LAVAL

[THE dominant figure who moulded the policy of the church in Canada, and stamped his personality upon almost every institution political and religious in the New France of the seventeenth century, now demands our attention.

François Xavier de Laval Montmorency, a cadet of the noble house of Montmorency, sailed for Canada in the year 1659 with the rank of Vicar Apostolic and the title of Bishop of Petrea. He was then thirty-six years of age. After many years of dispute with the Archbishop of Rouen, who desired to exercise a personal sway over all ecclesiastical appointments in Canada, Laval was created, in 1674, the first Bishop of Quebec. He forthwith established the famous seminary at Quebec which now, as Laval University, still preserves the name and memory of its founder. His character was stern and unyielding, and his long career in Canada was marked by incessant conflict with successive governors. With Argenson he quarrelled on the question of precedence. The next governor, Avaugour, incurred his wrath for condoning the distribution of brandy among the Indians. Mézy, his own nominee, presumed to interfere with Laval's predominance in the affairs of the Council, and bitter friction was the result. His actions were prompted by no selfish motives of personal aggrandizement, but resulted from his unflinching loyalty to his church. At last, worn out with his labors, he went to Paris, and there resigned his bishopric in January 1688. Returning to the country of his choice, he died

at Quebec on the sixth of May, 1708, at the age of eighty-six. — ED.]

Several portraits of Laval are extant.<sup>1</sup> A drooping nose of portentous size; a well-formed forehead; a brow strongly arched; a bright, clear eye; scanty hair, half hidden by a black skullcap; thin lips, compressed and rigid, betraying a spirit not easy to move or convince; features of that indescribable cast which marks the priestly type: such is Laval, as he looks grimly down on us from the dingy canvas of two centuries ago.

He is one of those concerning whom Protestants and Catholics, at least ultramontane Catholics, will never agree in judgment. The task of eulogizing him may safely be left to those of his own way of thinking. It is for us to regard him from the standpoint of secular history. And, first, let us credit him with sincerity. He believed firmly that the princes and rulers of this world ought to be subject to guidance and control at the hands of the Pope, the Vicar of Christ on earth. But he himself was the Pope's vicar, and, so far as the bounds of Canada extended, the Holy Father had clothed him with his own authority. The glory of God demanded that this authority should suffer no abatement, and he, Laval,



*Mgr. de Laval*

<sup>1</sup> The Old Régime in Canada, Ch. VIII.

would be guilty before Heaven if he did not uphold the supremacy of the church over the powers both of earth and of hell.

Of the faults which he owed to nature, the principal seems to have been an arbitrary and domineering temper. He was one of those who by nature lean always to the side of authority; and in the English Revolution he would inevitably have stood for the Stuarts; or, in the American Revolution, for the Crown. But being above all things a Catholic and a priest, he was drawn by a constitutional necessity to the ultramontane party, or the party of centralization. He fought lustily, in his way, against the natural man; and humility was the virtue to the culture of which he gave his chief attention, but soil and climate were not favorable. His life was one long assertion of the authority of the church, and this authority was lodged in himself. In his stubborn fight for ecclesiastical ascendancy, he was aided by the impulses of a nature that loved to rule, and could not endure to yield. His principles and his instinct of domination were acting in perfect unison, and his conscience was the handmaid of his fault. Austerities and mortifications, playing at beggar, sleeping in beds full of fleas, or performing prodigies of gratuitous dirtiness in hospitals, however fatal to self-respect, could avail little against influences working so powerfully and so insidiously to stimulate the most subtle of human vices. The history of the Roman Church is full of Laval's.

The Jesuits, adepts in human nature, had made a sagacious choice when they put forward this conscientious, zealous, dogged, and pugnacious priest to fight their battles. Nor were they ill pleased that, for the present, he was not Bishop of Canada, but only vicar apostolic; for, such being the case,

they could have him recalled if, on trial, they did not like him, while an unacceptable bishop would be an evil past remedy.

Canada was entering a state of transition. Hitherto ecclesiastical influence had been all in all. The Jesuits, by far the most educated and able body of men in the colony, had controlled it, not alone in things spiritual, but virtually in things temporal also; and the governor may be said to have been little else than a chief of police, under the direction of the missionaries. The early governors were themselves deeply imbued with the missionary spirit. Champlain was earnest above all things for converting the Indians; Montmagny was half monk, for he was a Knight of Malta; d'Ailleboust was so insanely pious, that he lived with his wife like monk and nun. A change was at hand. From a mission and a trading station, Canada was soon to become, in the true sense, a colony; and civil government had begun to assert itself on the banks of the St. Lawrence. The epoch of the martyrs and apostles was passing away, and the man of the sword and the man of the gown — the soldier and the legislator — were threatening to supplant the paternal sway of priests; or, as Laval might have said, the hosts of this world were beleaguering the sanctuary, and he was called of Heaven to defend it. His true antagonist, though three thousand miles away, was the great minister Colbert, as purely a statesman as the vicar apostolic was purely a priest. Laval, no doubt, could see behind the statesman's back another adversary, the devil.

Argenson was governor when the crozier and the sword began to clash, which is merely another way of saying that he was governor when Laval arrived. He seems to have been a man of education, moderation, and sense, and he was also an

earnest Catholic; but if Laval had his duties to God, so had Argenson his duties to the king, of whose authority he was the representative and guardian. If the first collisions seem trivial, they were no less the symptoms of a grave antagonism. Argenson could have purchased peace only by becoming an agent of the church.

The vicar apostolic, or, as he was usually styled, the bishop, being, it may be remembered, titular Bishop of Petraea in Arabia, presently fell into a quarrel with the governor touching the relative position of their seats in church, — a point which, by the way, was a subject of contention for many years, and under several successive governors. This time the case was referred to the ex-governor, d'Ailleboust, and a temporary settlement took place. A few weeks after, on the fête of St. Francis Xavier, when the Jesuits were accustomed to ask the dignitaries of the colony to dine in their refectory after mass, a fresh difficulty arose, — Should the governor or the bishop have the higher seat at table? The question defied solution; so the fathers invited neither of them.

Again, on Christmas, at the midnight mass, the deacon offered incense to the bishop, and then, in obedience to an order from him, sent a subordinate to offer it to the governor, instead of offering it himself. Laval further insisted that the priests of the choir should receive incense before the governor received it. Argenson resisted, and a bitter quarrel ensued.

The late governor, d'Ailleboust, had been church warden *ex officio*; and in this pious community the office was esteemed as an addition to his honors. Argenson had thus far held the same position; but Laval declared that he should hold it no longer. Argenson, to whom the bishop

had not spoken on the subject, came soon after to a meeting of the wardens, and, being challenged, denied Laval's right to dismiss him. A dispute ensued, in which the bishop, according to his Jesuit friends, used language not very respectful to the representative of royalty.

On occasion of the "solemn catechism," the bishop insisted that the children should salute him before saluting the governor. Argenson, hearing of this, declined to come. A compromise was contrived. It was agreed that when the rival dignitaries entered, the children should be busied in some manual exercise which should prevent their saluting either. Nevertheless, two boys, "enticed and set on by their parents," saluted the governor first, to the great indignation of Laval. They were whipped on the next day for breach of orders.

Next there was a sharp quarrel about a sentence pronounced by Laval against a heretic, to which the governor, good Catholic as he was, took exception. Palm Sunday came, and there could be no procession and no distribution of branches, because the governor and the bishop could not agree on points of precedence. On the day of the Fête Dieu, however, there was a grand procession, which stopped from time to time at temporary altars, or *repositoires*, placed at intervals along its course. One of these was in the fort, where the soldiers were drawn up, waiting the arrival of the procession. Laval demanded that they should take off their hats. Argenson assented, and the soldiers stood uncovered. Laval now insisted that they should kneel. The governor replied that it was their duty as soldiers to stand; whereupon the bishop refused to stop at the altar, and ordered the procession to move on.

The above incidents are set down in the private journal

of the superior of the Jesuits, which was not meant for the public eye. The bishop, it will be seen, was, by the showing of his friends, in most cases the aggressor. The disputes in question, though of a nature to provoke a smile on irreverent lips, were by no means so puerile as they appear. It is difficult in a modern democratic society to conceive the substantial importance of the signs and symbols of dignity and authority, at a time and among a people where they were adjusted with the most scrupulous precision, and accepted by all classes as exponents of relative degrees in the social and political scale. Whether the bishop or the governor should sit in the higher seat at table thus became a political question, for it defined to the popular understanding the position of Church and State in their relations to government.



THE IROQUOIS TERROR<sup>1</sup>

THE closing days of Denonville's administration were days of gloom and consternation for the colony.

In the direction of the Iroquois, there was a long and ominous silence. It was broken at last by the crash of a thunderbolt. On the night between the fourth and fifth of August, 1689, a violent hail-storm burst over Lake St. Louis, an expansion of the St. Lawrence a little above Montreal. Concealed by the tempest and the darkness, fifteen hundred warriors landed at La Chine, and silently posted themselves about the houses of the sleeping settlers, then screeched the war-whoop, and began the most frightful massacre in Canadian history. The houses were burned, and men, women, and children indiscriminately butchered. In the neighborhood were three stockade forts, called Rémy, Roland, and La Présentation; and they all had garrisons. There was also an encampment of two hundred regulars about three miles distant, under an officer named Subercase, then absent at Montreal on a visit to Denonville, who had lately arrived with his wife and family. At four o'clock in the morning, the troops in this encampment heard a cannon-shot from one of the forts. They were at once ordered under arms. Soon after, they saw a man running towards them, just escaped from the butchery. He told his story, and passed on with the news to Montreal, six miles distant.

<sup>1</sup> Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV., Ch. IX.

Then several fugitives appeared, chased by a band of Iroquois, who gave over the pursuit at sight of the soldiers, but pillaged several houses before their eyes. The day was well advanced before Subercase arrived. He ordered the troops to march. About a hundred armed inhabitants had joined them, and they moved together towards La Chine. Here they found the houses still burning, and the bodies of their inmates strewn among them or hanging from the stakes where they had been tortured. They learned from a French surgeon, escaped from the enemy, that the Iroquois were all encamped a mile and a half farther on, behind a tract of forest. Subercase, whose force had been strengthened by troops from the forts, resolved to attack them; and, had he been allowed to do so, he would probably have punished them severely, for most of them were helplessly drunk with brandy taken from the houses of the traders. Sword in hand, at the head of his men, the daring officer entered the forest; but, at that moment, a voice from the rear commanded a halt. It was that of the Chevalier de Vaudreuil, just come from Montreal, with positive orders from Denonville to run no risks and stand solely on the defensive. Subercase was furious. High words passed between him and Vaudreuil, but he was forced to obey.

The troops were led back to Fort Roland, where about five hundred regulars and militia were now collected under command of Vaudreuil. On the next day, eighty men from Fort Rémy attempted to join them; but the Iroquois had slept off the effect of their orgies, and were again on the alert. The unfortunate detachment was set upon by a host of savages, and cut to pieces in full sight of Fort Roland. All were killed or captured, except Le Moyne de Longueuil, and a few others, who escaped within the gate of Fort Rémy.

Montreal was wild with terror. It had been fortified with palisades since the war began; but, though there were troops in the town under the governor himself, the people were in mortal dread. No attack was made either on the town or on any of the forts, and such of the inhabitants as could reach them were safe; while the Iroquois held undisputed possession of the open country, burned all the houses and barns over an extent of nine miles, and roamed in small parties, pillaging and scalping, over more than twenty miles. There is no mention of their having encountered opposition; nor do they seem to have met with any loss but that of some warriors killed in the attack on the detachment from Fort Rémy, and that of three drunken stragglers who were caught and thrown into a cellar in Fort La Présentation. When they came to their senses, they defied their captors, and fought with such ferocity that it was necessary to shoot them. Charlevoix says that the invaders remained in the neighborhood of Montreal till the middle of October, or more than two months; but this seems incredible, since troops and militia enough to drive them all into the St. Lawrence might easily have been collected in less than a week. It is certain, however, that their stay was strangely long. Troops and inhabitants seem to have been paralyzed with fear.

At length, most of them took to their canoes, and recrossed Lake St. Louis in a body, giving ninety yells to show that they had ninety prisoners in their clutches. This was not all; for the whole number carried off was more than a hundred and twenty, besides about two hundred who had the good fortune to be killed on the spot. As the Iroquois passed the forts, they shouted, "Onontio, you deceived us, and now we have deceived you." Towards evening, they encamped on the farther side of the lake, and began to tor-

ture and devour their prisoners. On that miserable night, stupefied and speechless groups stood gazing from the strand of La Chine at the lights that gleamed along the distant shore of Châteaugay, where their friends, wives, parents, or children agonized in the fires of the Iroquois, and scenes were enacted of indescribable and nameless horror. The greater part of the prisoners were, however, reserved to be distributed among the towns of the confederacy, and there tortured for the diversion of the inhabitants. While some of the invaders went home to celebrate their triumph, others roamed in small parties through all the upper parts of the colony, spreading universal terror.

Canada lay bewildered and benumbed under the shock of this calamity; but the cup of her misery was not full. There was revolution in England. James II., the friend and ally of France, had been driven from his kingdom, and William of Orange had seized his vacant throne. Soon there came news of war between the two crowns. The Iroquois alone had brought the colony to the brink of ruin; and now they would be supported by the neighboring British colonies, rich, strong, and populous, compared to impoverished and depleted Canada.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Governor Denonville was succeeded in 1689 by Louis de Buade, Comte de Frontenac, the most distinguished of the governors of New France. He was first appointed to the post in 1672, but was recalled ten years later as the result of bitter friction with the Intendant Duchesneau. The interval between his dismissal in 1682 and his re-appointment in 1689 was rife with disaster for Canada. Frontenac once more at the head of affairs promptly assumed the aggressive. He sent three expeditions across the border to harry the English colonies, who made reprisal in 1690 by a determined attack upon Quebec under the command of Sir William Phips. The English were repulsed and French prestige in America was in consequence much enhanced.

Frontenac's brilliant administration closed with his death in November, 1698, in his seventy-eighth year. — Ed.

THE MASSACHUSETTS EXPEDITION AGAINST  
QUEBEC<sup>1</sup>

WHEN, after his protracted voyage, Phips sailed into the Basin of Quebec,<sup>2</sup> one of the grandest scenes on the western continent opened upon his sight: the wide expanse of waters, the lofty promontory beyond, and the opposing heights of Levi; the cataract of Montmorenci, the distant range of the Laurentian Mountains, the warlike rock with its diadem of walls and towers, the roofs of the Lower Town clustering on the strand beneath, the Château St. Louis perched at the brink of the cliff, and over it the white banner, spangled with fleurs-de-lis, flaunting defiance in the clear autumnal air. Perhaps, as he gazed, a suspicion seized him that the task he had undertaken was less easy than he had thought; but he had conquered once by a simple summons to surrender, and he resolved to try its virtue again.

The fleet anchored a little below Quebec; and towards ten o'clock the French saw a boat put out from the admiral's ship, bearing a flag of truce. Four canoes went from the Lower Town, and met it midway. It brought a subaltern officer, who announced himself as the bearer of a letter from Sir William Phips to the French commander. He was taken into one of the canoes and paddled to the quay, after being completely blindfolded by a bandage which covered half his

<sup>1</sup> Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV., Ch. XIII.

<sup>2</sup> He had with him thirty-four ships in all. Four were large ships, several others were of considerable size, and the rest were brigs, schooners, and fishing-craft, all thronged with men.

face. Prévost received him as he landed, and ordered two sergeants to take him by the arms and lead him to the governor. His progress was neither rapid nor direct. They drew him hither and thither, delighting to make him clamber in the dark over every possible obstruction ; while a noisy crowd hustled him, and laughing women called him Colin Maillard, the name of the chief player in blindman's buff. Amid a prodigious hubbub, intended to bewilder him and impress him with a sense of immense warlike preparation, they dragged him over the three barricades of Mountain Street, and brought him at last into a large room of the château. Here they took the bandage from his eyes. He stood for a moment with an air of astonishment and some confusion. The governor stood before him, haughty and stern, surrounded by French and Canadian officers, Maricourt, Sainte-Hélène, Longueuil, Villebon, Valrenne, Bienville, and many more, bedecked with gold lace and silver lace, perukes and powder, plumes and ribbons, and all the martial foppery in which they took delight, and regarding the envoy with keen, defiant eyes. After a moment, he recovered his breath and his composure, saluted Frontenac, and, expressing a wish that the duty assigned him had been of a more agreeable nature, handed him the letter of Phips. Frontenac gave it to an interpreter, who read it aloud in French that all might hear. It ran thus:—

“ *Sir William Phips, Knight, General and Commander in-chief in and over their Majesties' Forces of New England, by Sea and Land, to Count Frontenac, Lieutenant-General and Governour for the French King at Canada ; or, in his absence, to his Deputy, or him or them in chief command at Quebeck :*

“ The war between the crowns of England and France doth not only sufficiently warrant, but the destruction made by the French

and Indians, under your command and encouragement, upon the persons and estates of their Majesties' subjects of New England, without provocation on their part, hath put them under the necessity of this expedition for their own security and satisfaction. And although the cruelties and barbarities used against them by the French and Indians might, upon the present opportunity, prompt unto a severe revenge, yet, being desirous to avoid all inhumane and unchristian-like actions, and to prevent shedding of blood as much as may be,

"I, the aforesaid William Phips, Knight, do hereby, in the name and in the behalf of their most excellent Majesties, William and Mary, King and Queen of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, Defenders of the Faith, and by order of their said Majesties' government of the Massachuset-colony in New England, demand a present surrender of your forts and castles, undemolished, and the king's and other stores, unimbezled, with a seasonable delivery of all captives; together with a surrender of all your persons and estates to my dispose: upon the doing whereof, you may expect mercy from me, as a Christian, according to what shall be found for their Majesties' service and the subjects' security. Which, if you refuse forthwith to do, I am come provided, and am resolved, by the help of God, in whom I trust, by force of arms to revenge all wrongs and injuries offered, and bring you under subjection to the Crown of England, and, when too late, make you wish you had accepted of the favour tendered.

"Your answer positive in an hour returned by your own trumpet, with the return of mine, is required upon the peril that will ensue."<sup>1</sup>

When the reading was finished, the Englishman pulled his watch from his pocket, and handed it to the governor.

<sup>1</sup> See the Letter in Mather, *Magnalia*, I. 186. The French kept a copy of it, which, with an accurate translation, in parallel columns, was sent to Versailles, and is still preserved in the Archives de la Marine. The text answers perfectly to that given by Mather.

Frontenac could not, or pretended that he could not, see the hour. The messenger thereupon told him that it was ten o'clock, and that he must have his answer before eleven. A general cry of indignation arose; and Valrenne called out that Phips was nothing but a pirate, and that his man ought to be hanged. Frontenac contained himself for a moment, and then said to the envoy:—

“I will not keep you waiting so long. Tell your general that I do not recognize King William; and that the Prince of Orange, who so styles himself, is a usurper, who has violated the most sacred laws of blood in attempting to dethrone his father-in-law. I know no King of England but King James. Your general ought not to be surprised at the hostilities which he says that the French have carried on in the colony of Massachusetts; for, as the king my master has taken the King of England under his protection, and is about to replace him on his throne by force of arms, he might have expected that his Majesty would order me to make war on a people who have rebelled against their lawful prince.” Then, turning with a smile to the officers about him: “Even if your general offered me conditions a little more gracious, and if I had a mind to accept them, does he suppose that these brave gentlemen would give their consent, and advise me to trust a man who broke his agreement with the governor of Port Royal, or a rebel who has failed in his duty to his king, and forgotten all the favors he had received from him, to follow a prince who pretends to be the liberator of England and the defender of the faith, and yet destroys the laws and privileges of the kingdom and overthrows its religion? The divine justice which your general invokes in his letter will not fail to punish such acts severely.”

The messenger seemed astonished and startled; but he



presently asked if the governor would give him his answer in writing.

"No," returned Frontenac, "I will answer your general only by the mouths of my cannon, that he may learn that a man like me is not to be summoned after this fashion. Let him do his best, and I will do mine;" and he dismissed the Englishman abruptly. He was again blindfolded, led over the barricades, and sent back to the fleet by the boat that brought him.

Phips had often given proof of personal courage, but for the past three weeks his conduct seems that of a man conscious that he is charged with a work too large for his capacity. He had spent a good part of his time in holding councils of war; and now, when he heard the answer of Frontenac, he called another to consider what should be done. A plan of attack was at length arranged. The militia were to be landed on the shore of Beauport, which was just below Quebec, though separated from it by the St. Charles. They were then to cross this river by a ford practicable at low water, climb the heights of St. Geneviève, and gain the rear of the town. The small vessels of the fleet were to aid the movement by ascending the St. Charles as far as the ford, holding the enemy in check by their fire, and carrying provisions, ammunition, and intrenching tools, for the use of the land troops. When these had crossed and were ready to attack Quebec in the rear, Phips was to cannonade it in front, and land two hundred men under cover of his guns to effect a diversion by storming the barricades. Some of the French prisoners, from whom their captors appear to have received a great deal of correct information, told the admiral that there was a place a mile or two above the town where the heights might be scaled and the rear of the

fortifications reached from a direction opposite to that proposed. This was precisely the movement by which Wolfe afterwards gained his memorable victory; but Phips chose to abide by the original plan.

While the plan was debated, the opportunity for accomplishing it ebbed away. It was still early when the messenger returned from Quebec; but, before Phips was ready to act, the day was on the wane and the tide was against him. He lay quietly at his moorings when, in the evening a great shouting, mingled with the roll of drums and the sound of fifes, was heard from the Upper Town. The English officers asked their prisoner, Granville, what it meant. "Ma foi, Messieurs," he replied, "you have lost the game. It is the governor of Montreal with the people from the country above. There is nothing for you now but to pack and go home." In fact, Callières had arrived with seven or eight hundred men, many of them regulars. With these were bands of *coureurs de bois* and other young Canadians, all full of fight, singing and whooping with martial glee as they passed the western gate and trooped down St. Louis Street.

[An interval of a day elapsed with no important incident to record. Then on the following day, at about noon of Wednesday, a great number of boats was seen to pull out from the fleet and pull for the Beauport shore. The men, some thirteen hundred in number, were under the command of Major Walley. Frontenac, realizing the meaning of this movement, sent three hundred sharpshooters under Sainte-Hélène to hold them in check, and more troops followed in support. Throughout the afternoon a desultory running fight was kept up, and in the evening Walley drew his men together, and advanced towards the St. Charles, in order to

meet the vessels which were to aid him in passing the ford. Here he posted sentinels and encamped for the night.—ED.]

Meanwhile, Phips, whose fault hitherto had not been an excess of promptitude, grew impatient, and made a premature movement inconsistent with the preconcerted plan.

He left his moorings, anchored his largest ships before the town, and prepared to cannonade it; but the fiery veteran who watched him from the *Château St. Louis*, anticipated him, and gave him the first shot. Phips replied furiously, opening fire with every gun that he could bring to bear; while the rock paid him back in kind, and belched flame and smoke from all its batteries.<sup>1</sup>

[All day the cannonade continued, and the next day it was resumed with vigor. The precision of the New England gunners, or the quality of their ammunition was certainly defective, for their fire fell harmlessly within the town, or spent itself upon the cliff. The ships, on the other hand, suffered severely and gave over the hopeless conflict. —ED.]

Phips had thrown away nearly all his ammunition in this futile and disastrous attack, which should have been deferred till the moment when Walley, with his land force, had gained the rear of the town. The latter lay in his camp, his men wet, shivering with cold, famished, and sickening with the small-pox. Food, and all other supplies, were to have been brought him by the small vessels, which should have entered the mouth of the *St. Charles* and aided him to cross it. But he waited for them in vain. Every vessel that carried a gun had busied itself in cannonading, and the rest did not move.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV., Ch. XIII.

<sup>2</sup> From the same.

[On Friday, therefore, despairing of success, Walley went on board the admiral's ship to explain the situation. Throughout that day and the next, frequent skirmishes took place about the ford of the river, and the New England men nobly sustained their reputation for courage. But in their isolation nothing could be accomplished, so on the night of Saturday they fell back to the landing point and rejoined the fleet. — Ed.]

Quebec remained in agitation and alarm till Tuesday,<sup>1</sup> when Phips weighed anchor and disappeared, with all his fleet, behind the Island of Orleans. He did not go far, as indeed he could not, but stopped four leagues below to mend rigging, fortify wounded masts, and stop shot-holes. Subercase had gone with a detachment to watch the retiring enemy; and Phips was repeatedly seen among his men, on a scaffold at the side of his ship, exercising his old trade of carpenter. This delay was turned to good use by an exchange of prisoners.

The heretics were gone, and Quebec breathed freely again. Her escape had been a narrow one; not that three thousand men, in part regular troops, defending one of the strongest positions on the continent, and commanded by Frontenac, could not defy the attacks of two thousand raw fishermen and farmers, led by an ignorant civilian, but the numbers which were a source of strength were at the same time a source of weakness. Nearly all the adult males of Canada were gathered at Quebec, and there was imminent danger of starvation. Indeed, had Phips come a week earlier or stayed a week later, the French themselves believed that Quebec would have fallen, in the one case for want of men, and in the other for want of food.

<sup>1</sup> Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV., Ch. XIII.

THE HEROINE OF VERCHÈRES<sup>1</sup>

MANY incidents of this troubled time are preserved, but none of them are so well worth the record as the defence of the fort at Verchères by the young daughter of the seignior. Many years later, the Marquis de Beauharnais, governor of Canada, caused the story to be written down from the recital of the heroine herself. Verchères was on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, about twenty miles below Montreal. A strong blockhouse stood outside the fort, and was connected with it by a covered way. On the morning of the twenty-second of October, the inhabitants were at work in the fields, and nobody was left in the place but two soldiers, two boys, an old man of eighty, and a number of women and children. The seignior, formerly an officer of the regiment of Carignan, was on duty at Quebec; his wife was at Montreal; and their daughter Madeleine, fourteen years of age, was at the landing-place not far from the gate of the fort, with a hired man named Laviolette. Suddenly she heard firing from the direction where the settlers were at work, and an instant after Laviolette cried out, "Run, Mademoiselle, run! here come the Iroquois!" She turned and saw forty or fifty of them at the distance of a pistol-shot. "I ran for the fort, commending myself to the Holy Virgin. The Iroquois who chased after me, seeing that they could not catch me alive before I reached the gate, stopped and fired at me. The

<sup>1</sup> Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV., Ch. XIV.

bullets whistled about my ears, and made the time seem very long. As soon as I was near enough to be heard, I cried out, *To arms! to arms!* hoping that somebody would come out and help me; but it was of no use. The two soldiers in the fort were so scared that they had hidden in the blockhouse. At the gate, I found two women crying for their husbands, who had just been killed. I made them go in, and then shut the gate. I next thought what I could do to save myself and the few people with me. I went to inspect the fort, and found that several palisades had fallen down, and left openings by which the enemy could easily get in. I ordered them to be set up again, and helped to carry them myself. When the breaches were stopped, I went to the blockhouse where the ammunition is kept, and here I found the two soldiers, one hiding in a corner, and the other with a lighted match in his hand. 'What are you going to do with that match?' I asked. He answered, 'Light the powder, and blow us all up.' 'You are a miserable coward,' said I, 'go out of this place.' I spoke so resolutely that he obeyed. I then threw off my bonnet; and, after putting on a hat and taking a gun, I said to my two brothers: 'Let us fight to the death. We are fighting for our country and our religion. Remember that our father has taught you that gentlemen are born to shed their blood for the service of God and the king.'

The boys, who were twelve and ten years old, aided by the soldiers, whom her words had inspired with some little courage, began to fire from the loopholes upon the Iroquois, who, ignorant of the weakness of the garrison, showed their usual reluctance to attack a fortified place, and occupied themselves with chasing and butchering the people in the neighboring fields. Madeleine ordered a cannon to be fired,

partly to deter the enemy from an assault, and partly to warn some of the soldiers, who were hunting at a distance. The women and children in the fort cried and screamed without ceasing. She ordered them to stop, lest their terror should encourage the Indians. A canoe was presently seen approaching the landing-place. It was a settler named Fontaine, trying to reach the fort with his family. The Iroquois were still near; and Madeleine feared that the new-comers would be killed, if something were not done to aid them. She appealed to the soldiers, but their courage was not equal to the attempt; on which, as she declares, after leaving Lavolette to keep watch at the gate, she herself went alone to the landing-place. "I thought that the savages would suppose it to be a ruse to draw them towards the fort, in order to make a sortie upon them. They did suppose so, and thus I was able to save the Fontaine family. When they were all landed, I made them march before me in full sight of the enemy. We put so bold a face on it, that they thought they had more to fear than we. Strengthened by this reinforcement, I ordered that the enemy should be fired on whenever they showed themselves. After sunset, a violent northeast wind began to blow, accompanied with snow and hail, which told us that we should have a terrible night. The Iroquois were all this time lurking about us; and I judged by their movements that, instead of being deterred by the storm, they would climb into the fort under cover of the darkness. I assembled all my troops, that is to say, six persons, and spoke to them thus: 'God has saved us to-day from the hands of our enemies, but we must take care not to fall into their snares to-night. As for me, I want you to see that I am not afraid. I will take charge of the fort with an old man of eighty and another who never fired a gun; and you,

Pierre Fontaine, with La Bonté and Gachet (our two soldiers), will go to the blockhouse with the women and children, because that is the strongest place; and, if I am taken, don't surrender, even if I am cut to pieces and burned before your eyes. The enemy cannot hurt you in the blockhouse, if you make the least show of fight.' I placed my young brothers on two of the bastions, the old man on the third, and I took the fourth; and all night, in spite of wind, snow, and hail, the cries of 'All's well' were kept up from the blockhouse to the fort, and from the fort to the blockhouse. One would have thought that the place was full of soldiers. The Iroquois thought so, and were completely deceived, as they confessed afterwards to Monsieur de Callières, whom they told that they had held a council to make a plan for capturing the fort in the night but had done nothing because such a constant watch was kept.

"About one in the morning, the sentinel on the bastion by the gate called out, 'Mademoiselle, I hear something.' I went to him to find what it was; and by the help of the snow, which covered the ground, I could see through the darkness a number of cattle, the miserable remnant that the Iroquois had left us. The others wanted to open the gate and let them in, but I answered: 'God forbid. You don't know all the tricks of the savages. They are no doubt following the cattle, covered with skins of beasts, so as to get into the fort, if we are simple enough to open the gate for them.' Nevertheless, after taking every precaution, I thought that we might open it without risk. I made my two brothers stand ready with their guns cocked in case of surprise, and so we let in the cattle.

"At last, the daylight came again; and, as the darkness disappeared, our anxieties seemed to disappear with it.



Everybody took courage except Mademoiselle Marguerite, wife of the Sieur Fontaine, who being extremely timid, as all Parisian women are, asked her husband to carry her to another fort. . . . He said, 'I will never abandon this fort while Mademoiselle Madelon (*Madeleine*) is here.' I answered him that I would never abandon it; that I would rather die than give it up to the enemy; and that it was of the greatest importance that they should never get possession of any French fort, because, if they got one, they would think they could get others, and would grow more bold and presumptuous than ever. I may say with truth that I did not eat or sleep for twice twenty-four hours. I did not go once into my father's house, but kept always on the bastion, or went to the blockhouse to see how the people there were behaving. I always kept a cheerful and smiling face, and encouraged my little company with the hope of speedy succor.

"We were a week in constant alarm, with the enemy always about us. At last Monsieur de la Monnerie, a lieutenant sent by Monsieur de Callières, arrived in the night with forty men. As he did not know whether the fort was taken or not, he approached as silently as possible. One of our sentinels, hearing a slight sound, cried, 'Qui vive?' I was at the time dozing, with my head on a table and my gun lying across my arms. The sentinel told me that he heard a voice from the river. I went up at once to the bastion to see whether it was Indians or Frenchmen. I asked, 'Who are you?' One of them answered, 'We are Frenchmen: it is La Monnerie, who comes to bring you help.' I caused the gate to be opened, placed a sentinel there, and went down to the river to meet them. As soon as I saw Monsieur de la Monnerie, I saluted him, and said, 'Mon-

sieur, I surrender my arms to you.' He answered gallantly, 'Mademoiselle, they are in good hands.' 'Better than you think,' I returned. He inspected the fort, and found everything in order, and a sentinel on each bastion. 'It is time to relieve them, Monsieur,' said I: 'we have not been off our bastions for a week.'"

A band of converts from the Saut St. Louis arrived soon after, followed the trail of their heathen countrymen, overtook them on Lake Champlain, and recovered twenty or more French prisoners. Madeleine de Verchères was not the only heroine of her family. Her father's fort was the Castle Dangerous of Canada; and it was but two years before that her mother, left with three or four armed men, and beset by the Iroquois, threw herself with her followers into the blockhouse, and held the assailants two days at bay, till the Marquis de Crisasy came with troops to her relief.

FRONTENAC AND THE IROQUOIS<sup>1</sup>

FROM the moment when the Canadians found a chief whom they could trust, and the firm old hand of Frontenac grasped the reins of their destiny, a spirit of hardihood and energy grew up in all this rugged population; and they faced their stern fortunes with a stubborn daring and endurance that merit respect and admiration.

Now, as in all their former wars, a great part of their suffering was due to the Mohawks. The Jesuits had spared no pains to convert them, thus changing them from enemies to friends; and their efforts had so far succeeded that the mission colony of Saut St. Louis contained a numerous population of Mohawk Christians.<sup>2</sup> The place was well fortified; and troops were usually stationed here, partly to defend the converts and partly to ensure their fidelity. They had sometimes done excellent ser-



*Count Frontenac*

<sup>1</sup> Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV., Ch. XIV.

<sup>2</sup> This mission was also called Caughnawaga. The village still exists, at the head of the rapid of St. Louis, or La Chine.

vice for the French; but many of them still remembered their old homes on the Mohawk, and their old ties of fellowship and kindred. Their heathen countrymen were jealous of their secession, and spared no pains to reclaim them. Sometimes they tried intrigue, and sometimes force. On one occasion, joined by the Oneidas and Onondagas, they appeared before the palisades of St. Louis, to the number of more than four hundred warriors; but, finding the bastions manned and the gates shut, they withdrew discomfited. It was of great importance to the French to sunder them from their heathen relatives so completely that reconciliation would be impossible, and it was largely to this end that a grand expedition was prepared against the Mohawk towns.

All the mission Indians in the colony were invited to join it, the Iroquois of the Saut and Mountain, Abenakis from the Chaudière, Hurons from Lorette, and Algonquins from Three Rivers. A hundred picked soldiers were added, and a large band of Canadians. All told, they mustered six hundred and twenty-five men, under three tried leaders, Mantet, Courtemanche, and La Noue. They left Chambly at the end of January, and pushed southward on snow-shoes. Their way was over the ice of Lake Champlain, for more than a century the great thoroughfare of war-parties. They bivouacked in the forest by squads of twelve or more; dug away the snow in a circle, covered the bared earth with a bed of spruce boughs, made a fire in the middle, and smoked their pipes around it. Here crouched the Christian savage, muffled in his blanket, his unwashed face still smirched with soot and vermilion, relics of the war-paint he had worn a week before when he danced the war-dance in the square of the mission village; and here sat the Canadians, hooded like Capuchin monks, but irrepressible in loquacity, as the blaze of the camp-fire

glowed on their hardy visages and fell in fainter radiance on the rocks and pines behind them.

Sixteen days brought them to the two lower Mohawk towns. A young Dutchman who had been captured three years before at Schenectady, and whom the Indians of the Saut had imprudently brought with them, ran off in the night, and carried the alarm to the English. The invaders had no time to lose. The two towns were a quarter of a league apart. They surrounded them both on the night of the sixteenth of February, waited in silence till the voices within were hushed, and then captured them without resistance, as most of the inmates were absent. After burning one of them, and leaving the prisoners well guarded in the other, they marched eight leagues to the third town, reached it at evening, and hid in the neighboring woods. Through all the early night, they heard the whoops and songs of the warriors within, who were dancing the war-dance for an intended expedition. About midnight, all was still. The Mohawks had posted no sentinels; and one of the French Indians, scaling the palisade, opened the gate to his comrades. There was a short but bloody fight. Twenty or thirty Mohawks were killed, and nearly three hundred captured, chiefly women and children. The French commanders now required their allies, the mission Indians, to make good a promise which, at the instance of Frontenac, had been exacted from them by the governor of Montreal. It was that they should kill all their male captives, a proceeding which would have averted every danger of future reconciliation between the Christian and heathen Mohawks. The converts of the Saut and the Mountain had readily given the pledge, but apparently with no intention to keep it; at least, they now refused to do so. Remon-

strance was useless ; and, after burning the town, the French and their allies began their retreat, encumbered by a long train of prisoners. They marched two days, when they were hailed from a distance by Mohawk scouts, who told them that the English were on their track, but that peace had been declared in Europe, and that the pursuers did not mean to fight, but to parley. Hereupon the mission Indians insisted on waiting for them, and no exertion of the French commanders could persuade them to move. Trees were hewn down, and a fort made after the Iroquois fashion, by encircling the camp with a high and dense abatis of trunks and branches. Here they lay two days more, the French disgusted and uneasy, and their savage allies obstinate and impracticable.

Meanwhile, Major Peter Schuyler<sup>1</sup> was following their trail, with a body of armed settlers hastily mustered. A troop of Oneidas joined him ; and the united parties, between five and six hundred in all, at length appeared before the fortified camp of the French. It was at once evident that there was to be no parley. The forest rang with war-whoops ; and the English Indians, unmanageable as those of the French, set at work to entrench themselves with felled trees. The French and their allies sallied to dislodge them. The attack was fierce, and the resistance equally so. Both sides lost ground by turns. A priest of the mission of the Mountain, named Gay, was in the thick of the fight ; and, when he saw his neophytes run, he threw himself before them, crying, "What are you afraid of ? We are fighting with infidels, who have nothing human but the shape. Have you forgotten that the Holy Virgin is our leader and

<sup>1</sup> Major Peter Schuyler was the Mayor of Albany. In 1691 he had led a successful expedition into Canada. — ED.

our protector, and that you are subjects of the King of France, whose name makes all Europe tremble?" Three times the French renewed the attack in vain; then gave over the attempt, and lay quiet behind their barricade of trees. So also did their opponents. The morning was dark and stormy, and the driving snow that filled the air made the position doubly dreary. The English were starving. Their slender stock of provisions had been consumed or shared with the Indians, who, on their part, did not want food, having resources unknown to their white friends. A group of them squatted about a fire invited Schuyler to share their broth; but his appetite was spoiled when he saw a human hand ladled out of the kettle. His hosts were breakfasting on a dead Frenchman.

All night the hostile bands, ensconced behind their sylvan ramparts, watched each other in silence. In the morning, an Indian deserter told the English commander that the French were packing their baggage. Schuyler sent to reconnoitre, and found them gone. They had retreated unseen through the snow-storm. He ordered his men to follow; but, as most of them had fasted for two days, they refused to do so till an expected convoy of provisions should arrive. They waited till the next morning, when the convoy appeared: five biscuits were served out to each man, and the pursuit began. By great efforts, they nearly overtook the fugitives, who now sent them word that, if they made an attack, all the prisoners should be put to death. On this, Schuyler's Indians refused to continue the chase. The French, by this time, had reached the Hudson, where to their dismay they found the ice breaking up and drifting down the stream. Happily for them, a large sheet of it had become wedged at a turn of the river, and formed a temporary bridge, by

which they crossed, and then pushed on to Lake George. Here the soft and melting ice would not bear them; and they were forced to make their way along the shore, over rocks and mountains, through sodden snow and matted thickets. The provisions, of which they had made a *dépôt* on Lake Champlain, were all spoiled. They boiled moccasins for food, and scraped away the snow to find hickory and beech nuts. Several died of famine, and many more, unable to move, lay helpless by the lake; while a few of the strongest toiled on to Montreal to tell Callières of their plight. Men and food were sent them; and from time to time, as they were able, they journeyed on again, straggling towards their homes, singly or in small parties, feeble, emaciated, and in many instances with health irreparably broken.

"The expedition," says Frontenac, "was a glorious success." However glorious, it was dearly bought; and a few more such victories would be ruin. The governor presently achieved a success more solid and less costly. The wavering mood of the northwestern tribes, always oscillating between the French and the English, had caused him incessant anxiety; and he had lost no time in using the defeat of Phips to confirm them in alliance with Canada. Courtemanche was sent up the Ottawa to carry news of the French triumph, and stimulate the savages of Michillimackinac to lift the hatchet. It was a desperate venture; for the river was beset, as usual, by the Iroquois. With ten followers, the daring partisan ran the gauntlet of a thousand dangers, and safely reached his destination; where his gifts and his harangues, joined with the tidings of victory, kindled great excitement among the Ottawas and Hurons. The indispensable but most difficult task remained: that of opening



the Ottawa for the descent of the great accumulation of beaver skins, which had been gathering at Michillimackinac for three years, and for the want of which Canada was bankrupt. More than two hundred Frenchmen were known to be at that remote post, or roaming in the wilderness around it; and Frontenac resolved on an attempt to muster them together, and employ their united force to protect the Indians and the traders in bringing down this mass of furs to Montreal. A messenger, strongly escorted, was sent with orders to this effect, and succeeded in reaching Michillimackinac, though there was a battle on the way, in which the officer commanding the escort was killed. Frontenac anxiously waited the issue, when after a long delay the tidings reached him of complete success. He hastened to Montreal, and found it swarming with Indians and *coureurs de bois*. Two hundred canoes had arrived, filled with the coveted beaver skins. "It is impossible," says the chronicle, "to conceive the joy of the people, when they beheld these riches. Canada had awaited them for years. The merchants and the farmers were dying of hunger. Credit was gone, and everybody was afraid that the enemy would waylay and seize this last resource of the country. Therefore it was, that none could find words strong enough to praise and bless him by whose care all this wealth had arrived. *Father of the People, Preserver of the Country*, seemed terms too weak to express their gratitude."

While three years of arrested sustenance came down together from the lakes, a fleet sailed up the St. Lawrence, freighted with soldiers and supplies. The horizon of Canada was brightening.

THE FRENCH, ENGLISH, AND INDIANS<sup>1</sup>

IN the year 1696, the veteran Count Frontenac marched upon the cantons of the Iroquois with all the force of Canada. Stemming the surges of La Chine, gliding through the romantic channels of the Thousand Islands, and over the glimmering surface of Lake Ontario, and trailing in long array up the current of the Oswego, they disembarked on the margin of the Lake of Onondaga; and, startling the woodland echoes with the clangor of their trumpets, urged their march through the mazes of the forest. Never had those solitudes beheld so strange a pageantry. The Indian allies, naked to the waist and horribly painted, adorned with streaming scalp-locks and fluttering plumes, stole crouching among the thickets, or peered with lynx-eyed vision through the labyrinths of foliage. Scouts and forest-rangers scoured the woods in front and flank of the marching columns — men trained among the hardships of the fur-trade, thin, sinewy, and strong, arrayed in wild costume of beaded moccasin, scarlet leggin, and frock of buck-skin, fantastically garnished with many-colored embroidery of porcupine. Then came the levies of the colony, in gray capotes and gaudy sashes, and the trained battalions from old France in cuirass and head-piece, veterans of European wars. Plumed cavaliers were there, who had followed the standards of Condé or Turenne, and who, even in the depths of a wilderness, scorned

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. III.

to lay aside the martial foppery which bedecked the camp and court of Louis the Magnificent. The stern commander was borne along upon a litter in the midst, his locks bleached with years, but his eye kindling with the quenchless fire which, like a furnace, burned hottest when its fuel was almost spent. Thus, beneath the sepulchral arches of the forest, through tangled thickets, and over prostrate trunks, the aged nobleman advanced to wreak his vengeance upon empty wigwams and deserted maize-fields.

Even the fierce courage of the Iroquois began to quail before these repeated attacks, while the gradual growth of the colony, and the arrival of troops from France, at length convinced them that they could not destroy Canada. With the opening of the eighteenth century, their rancor showed signs of abating; and in the year 1726, by dint of skilful intrigue, the French succeeded in establishing a permanent military post at the important pass of Niagara, within the limits of the confederacy. Meanwhile, in spite of every obstacle, the power of France had rapidly extended its boundaries in the west. French influence diffused itself through a thousand channels, among distant tribes, hostile, for the most part, to the domineering Iroquois. Forts, mission-houses, and armed trading stations secured the principal passes. Traders, and *coureurs de bois* pushed their adventurous traffic into the wildest deserts; and French guns and hatchets, French beads and cloth, French tobacco and brandy, were known from where the stunted Esquimaux burrowed in their snow caves, to where the Camanches scoured the plains of the south with their banditti cavalry. Still this far-extended commerce continued to advance westward. In 1738, La Vérendrye essayed to reach those mysterious mountains which, as the Indians alleged, lay beyond the

arid deserts of the Missouri and the Saskatchewan. Indian hostility defeated his enterprise, but not before he had struck far out into these unknown wilds, and formed a line of trading-posts, one of which, Fort de la Reine, was planted on the Assiniboin, a hundred leagues beyond Lake Winnipeg. At that early period, France left her footsteps upon the dreary wastes which even now have no other tenants than the Indian buffalo-hunter or the roving trapper.

The fur-trade of the English colonists opposed but feeble rivalry to that of their hereditary foes. At an early period, favored by the friendship of the Iroquois, they attempted to open a traffic with the Algonquin tribes of the great lakes; and in the year 1687, Major Gregory ascended with a boat-load of goods to Lake Huron, where his appearance excited great commotion, and where he was seized and imprisoned by the French. From this time forward, the English fur-trade languished, until the year 1725, when Governor Burnet, of New York, established a post on Lake Ontario, at the mouth of the river Oswego; whither, lured by the cheapness and excellence of the English goods, crowds of savages soon congregated from every side, to the unspeakable annoyance of the French. Meanwhile, a considerable commerce was springing up with the Cherokees and other tribes of the south; and during the first half of the century, the people of Pennsylvania began to cross the Alleghanies, and carry on a lucrative traffic with the tribes of the Ohio. In 1749, La Jonquière, the Governor of Canada, learned, to his great indignation, that several English traders had reached Sandusky, and were exerting a bad influence upon the Indians of that quarter; and two years later, he caused four of the intruders to be seized near the Ohio, and sent prisoners to Canada.

These early efforts of the English, considerable as they were, can ill bear comparison with the vast extent of the French interior commerce. In respect also to missionary enterprise, and the political influence resulting from it, the French had every advantage over rivals whose zeal for conversion was neither kindled by fanaticism nor fostered by an ambitious government. Eliot labored within call of Boston, while the heroic Brébeuf faced the ghastly perils of the western wilderness; and the wanderings of Bainerd sink into insignificance compared with those of the devoted Rale. Yet, in judging the relative merits of the Romish and Protestant missionaries, it must not be forgotten that while the former contented themselves with sprinkling a few drops of water on the forehead of the proselyte, the latter sought to wean him from his barbarism and penetrate his savage heart with the truths of Christianity.

In respect, also, to direct political influence, the advantage was wholly on the side of France. The English colonies, broken into separate governments, were incapable of exercising a vigorous and consistent Indian policy; and the measures of one government often clashed with those of another. Even in the separate provinces, the popular nature of the constitution and the quarrels of governors and assemblies were unfavorable to efficient action; and this was more especially the case in the province of New York, where the vicinity of the Iroquois rendered strenuous yet prudent measures of the utmost importance. The powerful confederates, hating the French with bitter enmity, naturally inclined to the English alliance; and a proper treatment would have secured their firm and lasting friendship. But, at the early periods of her history, the assembly of New York was made up in great measure of narrow-minded men, more eager to con-

sult their own petty interests than to pursue any far-sighted scheme of public welfare. Other causes conspired to injure the British interest in this quarter. The annual present sent from England to the Iroquois was often embezzled by corrupt governors or their favorites. The proud chiefs were disgusted by the cold and haughty bearing of the English officials, and a pernicious custom prevailed of conducting Indian negotiations through the medium of the fur-traders, a class of men held in contempt by the Iroquois, and known among them by the significant title of "rum carriers." In short, through all the councils of the province Indian affairs were grossly and madly neglected.

With more or less emphasis, the same remark holds true of all the other English colonies. With those of France, it was far otherwise; and this difference between the rival powers was naturally incident to their different forms of government, and different conditions of development. France labored with eager diligence to conciliate the Indians and win them to espouse her cause. Her agents were busy in every village, studying the language of the inmates, complying with their usages, flattering their prejudices, caressing them, cajoling them, and whispering friendly warnings in their ears against the wicked designs of the English. When a party of Indian chiefs visited a French fort, they were greeted with the firing of cannon and rolling of drums; they were regaled at the tables of the officers, and bribed with medals and decorations, scarlet uniforms and French flags. Far wiser than their rivals, the French never ruffled the self-complacent dignity of their guests, never insulted their religious notions, nor ridiculed their ancient customs. They met the savage half way, and showed an abundant readiness to mould their own features after his likeness. Count Frontenac himself,

plumed and painted like an Indian chief, danced the wardance and yelled the war-song at the camp-fires of his delighted allies. It would have been well had the French been less exact in their imitations, for at times they copied their model with infamous fidelity, and fell into excesses scarcely credible but for the concurrent testimony of their own writers. Frontenac caused an Iroquois prisoner to be burnt alive to strike terror into his countrymen; and Louvigny, French commandant at Michillimackinae, in 1695, tortured an Iroquois ambassador to death, that he might break off a negotiation between that people and the Wyandots. Nor are these the only well-attested instances of such execrable inhumanity. But if the French were guilty of these cruelties against their Indian enemies, they were no less guilty of unworthy compliance with the demands of their Indian friends, in cases where Christianity and civilization would have dictated a prompt refusal. Even Montcalm stained his bright name by abandoning the hapless defenders of Oswego and William Henry to the tender mercies of an Indian mob.

In general, however, the Indian policy of the French cannot be charged with obsequiousness. Complaisance was tempered with dignity. At an early period, they discerned the peculiarities of the native character, and clearly saw that while on the one hand it was necessary to avoid giving offence, it was not less necessary on the other to assume a bold demeanor and a show of power; to caress with one hand, and grasp a drawn sword with the other. Every crime against a Frenchman was promptly chastised by the sharp agency of military law; while among the English, the offender could only be reached through the medium of the civil courts, whose delays, uncertainties and eva-

sions excited the wonder and provoked the contempt of the Indians.

It was by observance of the course indicated above, that the French were enabled to maintain themselves in small detached posts, far aloof from the parent colony, and environed by barbarous tribes where an English garrison would have been cut off in a twelvemonth. They professed to hold these posts, not in their own right, but purely through the grace and condescension of the surrounding savages; and by this conciliating assurance they sought to make good their position, until, with their growing strength, conciliation should no more be needed.

In its efforts to win the friendship and alliance of the Indian tribes, the French government found every advantage in the peculiar character of its subjects — that pliant and plastic temper which forms so marked a contrast to the stubborn spirit of the Englishman. From the beginning, the French showed a tendency to amalgamate with the forest tribes. "The manners of the savages," writes the Baron La Hontan, "are perfectly agreeable to my palate;" and many a restless adventurer of high or low degree might have echoed the words of the erratic soldier. At first, great hopes were entertained that, by the mingling of French and Indians, the latter would be won over to civilization and the church; but the effect was precisely the reverse; for, as Charlevoix observes, the savages did not become French, but the French became savages. Hundreds betook themselves to the forest, never more to return. These outflowings of French civilization were merged in the waste of barbarism, as a river is lost in the sands of the desert. The wandering Frenchman chose a wife or a concubine among his Indian friends; and, in a few generations, scarcely a tribe of



the West was free from an infusion of Celtic blood. The French empire in America could exhibit among its subjects every shade of color from white to red, every gradation of culture from the highest civilization of Paris to the rudest barbarism of the wigwam.

The fur-trade engendered a peculiar class of men, known by the appropriate name of bush-rangers, or *coureurs de bois*,<sup>1</sup> half-civilized vagrants, whose chief vocation was conducting the canoes of the traders along the lakes and rivers of the interior; many of them, however, shaking loose every tie of blood and kindred, identified themselves with the Indians, and sank into utter barbarism. In many a squalid camp among the plains and forests of the West, the traveller would have encountered men owning the blood and speaking the language of France, yet, in their swarthy visages and barbarous costume, seeming more akin to those with whom they had cast their lot. The renegade of civilization caught the habits and imbibed the prejudices of his chosen associates. He loved to decorate his long hair with eagle feathers, to make his face hideous with vermilion, ochre, and soot, and to adorn his greasy hunting frock with horsehair fringes. His dwelling, if he had one, was a wigwam. He lounged on a bear-skin while his squaw boiled his venison and lighted his pipe. In hunting, in dancing, in singing, in taking a scalp, he rivalled the genuine Indian. His mind was tinctured with the superstitions of the forest. He had faith in the magic drum of the conjurer; he was not sure that a thunder cloud could not be frightened away by whistling at it through the wing bone of an eagle; he carried the tail of a rattlesnake in his bullet pouch by way of amulet; and he placed implicit trust in his dreams. This class of

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 116-121. — Ed.

men is not yet extinct. In the cheerless wilds beyond the northern lakes, or among the mountain solitudes of the distant West, they may still be found, unchanged in life and character since the day when Louis the Great claimed sovereignty over this desert empire.

The borders of the English colonies displayed no such phenomena of mingling races; for here a thorny and impracticable barrier divided the white man from the red. The English fur-traders, and the rude men in their employ, showed, it is true, an ample alacrity to fling off the restraints of civilization; but though they became barbarians, they did not become Indians; and scorn on the one side and hatred on the other still marked the intercourse of the hostile races. With the settlers of the frontier it was much the same. Rude, fierce, and contemptuous, they daily encroached upon the hunting-grounds of the Indians, and then paid them for the injury with curses and threats. Thus the native population shrank back from before the English, as from before an advancing pestilence; while, on the other hand, in the very heart of Canada, Indian communities sprang up, cherished by the government, and favored by the easy-tempered people. At Lorette, at Caughnawaga, at St. Francis, and elsewhere within the province, large bands were gathered together, consisting in part of fugitives from the borders of the hated English, and aiding in time of war to swell the forces of the French in repeated forays against the settlements of New York and New England.

THE CHAIN OF POSTS<sup>1</sup>

THE establishment by the English of a trading-post at Oswego greatly alarmed and incensed the French, and a council of war at Quebec resolved to send two thousand men against it; but Vaudreuil's successor, the Marquis de Beauharnois, learning that the court was not prepared to provoke a war, contented himself with sending a summons to the commanding officer to abandon and demolish the place within a fortnight. To this no attention was given; and as Burnet had foreseen, Oswego became the great centre of Indian trade, while Niagara, in spite of its more favorable position, was comparatively slighted by the western tribes. The chief danger rose from the obstinate prejudice of the Assembly, which, in its disputes with the royal governor, would give him neither men nor money to defend the new post.

The Canadian authorities, who saw in Oswego an intrusion on their domain and a constant injury and menace, could not attack it without bringing on a war, and therefore tried to persuade the Five Nations to destroy it,—an attempt which completely failed. They then established a trading-post at Toronto, in the vain hope of stopping the Northern tribes on their way to the more profitable English market, and they built two armed vessels at Fort Frontenac to control the navigation of Lake Ontario.

Meanwhile, in another quarter the French made an ad-

<sup>1</sup> A Half Century of Conflict, Vol. II., Ch. XVII.

vance far more threatening to the English colonies than Oswego was to their own. They had already built a stone fort at Chambly, which covered Montreal from any English attack by way of Lake Champlain. As that lake was the great highway between the rival colonies, the importance of gaining full mastery of it was evident. It was rumored in Canada that the English meant to seize and fortify the place called Scalp Point (*Pointe à la Chevelure*) by the French, and Crown Point by the English, where the lake suddenly contracts to the proportions of a river, so that a few cannon would stop the passage.

As early as 1726 the French made an attempt to establish themselves on the east side of the lake opposite Crown Point, but were deterred by the opposition of Massachusetts. This eastern shore was, however, claimed not only by Massachusetts, but by her neighbor, New Hampshire, with whom she presently fell into a dispute about the ownership, and, as a writer of the time observes, "while they were quarrelling for the bone, the French ran away with it."

At length, in 1731, the French took post on the western side of the lake, and began to intrench themselves at Crown Point, which was within the bounds claimed by New York; but that province, being then engrossed, not only by her chronic dispute with her governor, but by a quarrel with her next neighbor, New Jersey, slighted the danger from the common enemy, and left the French to work their will. It was Saint-Luc de la Corne, Lieutenant du Roy at Montreal, who pointed out the necessity of fortifying this place, in order to anticipate the English, who, as he imagined, were about to do so,—a danger which was probably not imminent, since the English colonies, as a whole, could not and would not unite for such a purpose, while the individual provinces

were too much absorbed in their own internal affairs and their own jealousies and disputes to make the attempt. La Corne's suggestion found favor at court, and the Governor of Canada was ordered to occupy Crown Point. The Sieur de la Fresnière was sent thither with troops and workmen, and a fort was built, and named Fort Frédéric. It contained a massive stone tower, mounted with cannon to command the lake, which is here but a musket-shot wide. Thus was established an advanced post of France, — a constant menace to New York and New England, both of which denounced it as an outrageous encroachment on British territory, but could not unite to rid themselves of it.

While making this bold push against their neighbors of the South, the French did not forget the West; and towards the middle of the century they had occupied points controlling all the chief waterways between Canada and Louisiana. Niagara held the passage from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie. Detroit closed the entrance to Lake Huron, and Michillimackinac guarded the point where Lake Huron is joined by Lakes Michigan and Superior; while the fort called La Baye, at the head of Green Bay, stopped the way to the Mississippi by Marquette's old route at Fox River and the Wisconsin. Another route to the Mississippi was controlled by a post on the Maumee to watch the carrying-place between that river and the Wabash, and by another on the Wabash where Vincennes now stands. La Salle's route, by way of the Kankakee and the Illinois, was barred by a fort on the St. Joseph; and even if, in spite of these obstructions, an enemy should reach the Mississippi by any of its northern affluents, the cannon of Fort Chartres would prevent him from descending it.

These various Western forts, except Fort Chartres and

Fort Niagara, which were afterwards rebuilt, the one in stone and the other in earth, were stockades of no strength against cannon. Slight as they were, their establishment was costly; and as the king, to whom Canada was a yearly loss, grudged every franc spent upon it, means were contrived to make them self-supporting. Each of them was a station of the fur-trade, and the position of most of them had been determined more or less with a view to that traffic. Hence they had no slight commercial value. In some of them the Crown itself carried on trade through agents who usually secured a lion's share of the profits. Others were farmed out to merchants at a fixed sum. In others, again, the commanding-officer was permitted to trade on condition of maintaining the post, paying the soldiers, and supporting a missionary; while in one case, at least, he was subjected to similar obligations, though not permitted to trade himself, but only to sell trading licenses to merchants. These methods of keeping up forts and garrisons were of course open to prodigious abuses, and roused endless jealousies and rivalries.

France had now occupied the valley of the Mississippi and joined with loose and uncertain links her two colonies of Canada and Louisiana. But the strength of her hold on these regions of unkempt savagery bore no proportion to the vastness of her claims or the growing power of the rivals who were soon to contest them.

AMERICA AND THE SEVEN YEARS WAR<sup>1</sup>

It is the nature of great events to obscure the great events that came before them. The Seven Years War in Europe is seen but dimly through revolutionary convulsions and Napoleonic tempests; and the same contest in America is half lost to sight behind the storm-cloud of the War of Independence. Few at this day see the momentous issues involved in it, or the greatness of the danger that it averted. The strife that armed all the civilized world began here. "Such was the complication of political interests," says Voltaire, "that a cannon-shot fired in America could give the signal that set Europe in a blaze." Not quite. It was not a cannon-shot, but a volley from the hunting-pieces of a few backwoodsmen, commanded by a Virginian youth, George Washington.

To us of this day, the result of the American part of the war seems a foregone conclusion. It was far from being so; and very far from being so regarded by our forefathers. The numerical superiority of the British colonies was offset by organic weaknesses fatal to vigorous and united action. Nor at the outset did they, or the mother-country, aim at conquering Canada, but only at pushing back her boundaries. Canada — using the name in its restricted sense — was a position of great strength; and even when her dependencies were overcome, she could hold her own against forces far superior. Armies could reach her only by three routes, —

<sup>1</sup> Montcalm and Wolfe, Introduction.

the Lower St. Lawrence on the east, the Upper St. Lawrence on the west, and Lake Champlain on the south. The first access was guarded by a fortress almost impregnable by nature, and the second by a long chain of dangerous rapids; while the third offered a series of points easy to defend. During this same war, Frederic of Prussia held his ground triumphantly against greater odds, though his kingdom was open on all sides to attack.

It was the fatuity of Louis XV. and his Pompadour that made the conquest of Canada possible. Had they not broken the traditionary policy of France, allied themselves to Austria, her ancient enemy, and plunged needlessly into the European war, the whole force of the kingdom would have been turned, from the first, to the humbling of England and the defence of the French colonies. The French soldiers left dead on inglorious Continental battle-fields could have saved Canada, and perhaps made good her claim to the vast territories of the West.

But there were other contingencies. The possession of Canada was a question of diplomacy as well as of war. If England conquered her, she might restore her, as she had lately restored Cape Breton. She had an interest in keeping France alive on the American continent. More than one clear eye saw, at the middle of the last century, that the subjection of Canada would lead to a revolt of the British colonies. So long as an active and enterprising enemy threatened their borders, they could not break with the mother-country, because they needed her help. And if the arms of France had prospered in the other hemisphere; if she had gained in Europe or Asia territories with which to buy back what she had lost in America, then, in all likelihood, Canada would have passed again into her hands.

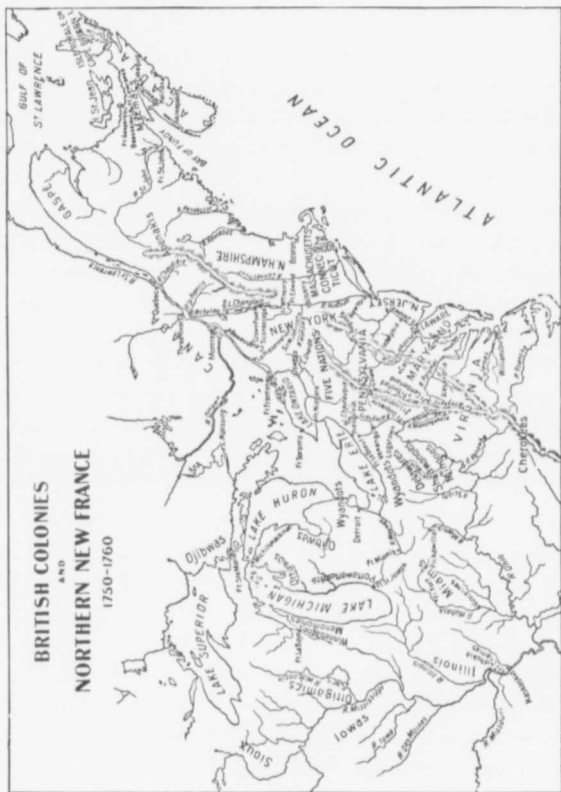


The most momentous and far-reaching question ever brought to issue on this continent was: Shall France remain here, or shall she not? If, by diplomacy or war, she had preserved but the half, or less than the half, of her American possessions, then a barrier would have been set to the spread of the English-speaking races; there would have been no Revolutionary War; and for a long time, at least, no independence. It was not a question of scanty populations strung along the banks of the St. Lawrence; it was — or under a government of any worth it would have been — a question of the armies and generals of France. America owes much to the imbecility of Louis XV. and the ambitious vanity and personal dislikes of his mistress.

The Seven Years War made England what she is. It crippled the commerce of her rival, ruined France in two continents, and blighted her as a colonial power. It gave England the control of the seas and the mastery of North America and India, made her the first of commercial nations, and prepared that vast colonial system that has planted new Englands in every quarter of the globe. And while it made England what she is, it supplied to the United States the indispensable condition of their greatness, if not of their national existence.

Before entering on the story of the great contest, we will look at the parties to it on both sides of the Atlantic.

**The Combatants.** — The latter half of the reign of George II. was one of the most prosaic periods in English history. The civil wars and the Restoration had had their enthusiasms, religion and liberty on one side, and loyalty on the other; but the old fires declined when William III. came to the throne, and died to ashes under the House of Hanover. Loyalty lost half its inspiration when it lost the tenet



of the divine right of kings; and nobody could now hold that tenet with any consistency except the defeated and despairing Jacobites. Nor had anybody as yet proclaimed the rival dogma of the divine right of the people. The reigning monarch held his crown neither of God nor of the nation, but of a parliament controlled by a ruling class. The Whig aristocracy had done a priceless service to English liberty. It was full of political capacity, and by no means void of patriotism; but it was only a part of the national life. Nor was it at present moved by political emotions in any high sense. It had done its great work when it expelled the Stuarts and placed William of Orange on the throne; its ascendancy was now complete. The Stuarts had received their death-blow at Culloden; and nothing was left to the dominant party but to dispute on subordinate questions, and contend for office among themselves. The Tory squires sulked in their country-houses, hunted foxes, and grumbled against the reigning dynasty; yet hardly wished to see the nation convulsed by a counter-revolution and another return of the Stuarts.

If politics had run to commonplace, so had morals; and so too had religion. Despondent writers of the day even complained that British courage had died out. There was little sign to the common eye that under a dull and languid surface, forces were at work preparing a new life, material, moral, and intellectual. As yet, Whitefield and Wesley had not wakened the drowsy conscience of the nation, nor the voice of William Pitt roused it like a trumpet-peal.

It was the unwashed and unsavory England of Hogarth, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne; of Tom Jones, Squire Western, Lady Bellaston, and Parson Adams; of the "Rake's Progress" and "Mariage à la Mode;" of the lords and

ladies who yet live in the undying gossip of Horace Walpole, be-powdered, be-patched, and be-rouged, flirting at masked balls, playing cards till daylight, retailing scandal, and exchanging double meanings. Beau Nash reigned king over the gaming-tables of Bath; and young lords in velvet suits and embroidered ruffles played away their patrimony at White's Chocolate-House or Arthur's Club. Vice was bolder than to-day, and manners more courtly, perhaps, but far more coarse.

The humbler clergy were thought — sometimes with reason — to be no fit company for gentlemen, and country parsons drank their ale in the squire's kitchen. The passenger-wagon spent the better part of a fortnight in creeping from London to York. Travellers carried pistols against footpads and mounted highwaymen. Dick Turpin and Jack Sheppard were popular heroes. Tyburn counted its victims by scores; and as yet no Howard had appeared to reform the inhuman abominations of the prisons.

The middle class, though fast rising in importance, was feebly and imperfectly represented in parliament. The boroughs were controlled by the nobility and gentry, or by corporations open to influence or bribery. Parliamentary corruption had been reduced to a system; and offices, sinecures, pensions, and gifts of money were freely used to keep ministers in power. The great offices of state were held by men sometimes of high ability, but of whom not a few divided their lives among politics, cards, wine, horse-racing, and women, till time and the gout sent them to the waters of Bath. The dull, pompous, and irascible old king had two ruling passions,—money, and his Continental dominions of Hanover. His elder son, the Prince of Wales, was a centre of opposition to him. His younger son, the Duke of

Cumberland, a character far more pronounced and vigorous, had won the day at Culloden and lost it at Fontenoy; but whether victor or vanquished, had shown the same vehement bull-headed courage, of late a little subdued by fast-growing corpulency. The Duke of Newcastle, the head of the government, had gained power and kept it by his rank and connections, his wealth, his county influence, his control of boroughs, and the extraordinary assiduity and devotion with which he practised the arts of corruption. Henry Fox, grasping, unscrupulous, with powerful talents, a warm friend after his fashion, and a most indulgent father; Carteret, with his strong, versatile intellect and jovial intrepidity; the two Townshends, Mansfield, Halifax, and Chesterfield, — were conspicuous figures in the politics of the time. One man towered above them all. Pitt had many enemies and many critics. They called him ambitious, audacious, arrogant, theatrical, pompous, domineering; but what he has left for posterity is a loftiness of soul, undaunted courage, fiery and passionate eloquence, proud incorruptibility, domestic virtues rare in his day, unbounded faith in the cause for which he stood, and abilities which without wealth or strong connections were destined to place him on the height of power. The middle class, as yet almost voiceless, looked to him as its champion; but he was not the champion of a class. His patriotism was as comprehensive as it was haughty and unbending. He lived for England, loved her with intense devotion, knew her, believed in her, and made her greatness his own; or rather, he was himself England incarnate.

The nation was not then in fighting equipment. After the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the army within the three kingdoms had been reduced to about eighteen thousand

men. Added to these were the garrisons of Minorca and Gibraltar, and six or seven independent companies in the American colonies. Of sailors, less than seventeen thousand were left in the Royal Navy. Such was the condition of England on the eve of one of the most formidable wars in which she was ever engaged.

Her rival across the Channel was drifting slowly and unconsciously towards the cataclysm of the Revolution; yet the old monarchy, full of the germs of decay, was still imposing and formidable. The House of Bourbon held the three thrones of France, Spain, and Naples; and their threatened union in a family compact was the terror of European diplomacy. At home France was the foremost of the Continental nations; and she boasted herself second only to Spain as a colonial power. She disputed with England the mastery of India, owned the islands of Bourbon and Mauritius, held important possessions in the West Indies, and claimed all North America except Mexico and a strip of sea-coast. Her navy was powerful, her army numerous, and well appointed; but she lacked the great commanders of the last reign. Soubise, Maillebois, Contades, Broglie, and Clermont were but weak successors of Condé, Turenne, Vendôme, and Villars.

The triumph of the Bourbon monarchy was complete. The government had become one great machine of centralized administration, with a king for its head; though a king who neither could nor would direct it. All strife was over between the Crown and the nobles; feudalism was robbed of its vitality, and left the mere image of its former self, with nothing alive but its abuses, its cast privileges, its exactions, its pride and vanity, its power to vex and oppress. In Eng-

land, the nobility were a living part of the nation, and if they had privileges, they paid for them by constant service to the state; in France, they had no political life, and were separated from the people by sharp lines of demarcation. From warrior chiefs, they had changed to courtiers. Those of them who could afford it, and many who could not, left their estates to the mercy of stewards, and gathered at Versailles to revolve about the throne as glittering satellites, paid in pomp, empty distinctions, or rich sinecures, for the power they had lost. They ruined their vassals to support the extravagance by which they ruined themselves. Such as stayed at home were objects of pity and scorn. "Out of your Majesty's presence," said one of them, "we are not only wretched, but ridiculous."

Versailles was like a vast and gorgeous theatre, where all were actors and spectators at once; and all played their parts to perfection. Here swarmed by thousands this silken nobility, whose ancestors rode cased in iron. Pageant followed pageant. A picture of the time preserves for us an evening in the great hall of the Château, where the king, with piles of louis d'or before him, sits at a large oval green table, throwing the dice, among princes and princesses, dukes and duchesses, ambassadors, marshals of France, and a vast throng of courtiers, like an animated bed of tulips; for men and women alike wear bright and varied colors. Above are the frescos of Le Brun; around are walls of sculptured and inlaid marbles, with mirrors that reflect the restless splendors of the scene and the blaze of chandeliers, sparkling with crystal pendants. Pomp, magnificence, profusion, were a business and a duty at the Court. Versailles was a gulf into which the labor of France poured its earnings; and it was never full.

Here the graces and charms were a political power. Women had prodigious influence, and the two sexes were never more alike. Men not only dressed in colors, but they wore patches and carried muffs. The robust qualities of the old nobility still lingered among the exiles of the provinces, while at Court they had melted into refinements tainted with corruption. Yet if the butterflies of Versailles had lost virility, they had not lost courage. They fought as gayly as they danced. In the halls which they haunted of yore, turned now into a historical picture-gallery, one sees them still, on the canvas of Lenfant, Lepaon, or Vernet, facing death with careless gallantry, in their small three-cornered hats, powdered perukes, embroidered coats, and lace ruffles. Their valets served them with ices in the trenches, under the cannon of besieged towns. A troop of actors formed part of the army-train of Marshal Saxe. At night there was a comedy, a ballet, or a ball, and in the morning a battle. Saxe, however, himself a sturdy German, while he recognized their fighting value, and knew well how to make the best of it, sometimes complained that they were volatile, excitable, and difficult to manage.

The weight of the Court, with its pomps, luxuries, and wars, bore on the classes least able to support it. The poorest were taxed most; the richest not at all. The nobles, in the main, were free from imposts. The clergy, who had vast possessions, were wholly free, though they consented to make voluntary gifts to the Crown; and when, in a time of emergency, the minister Machault required them, in common with all others hitherto exempt, to contribute a twentieth of their revenues to the charges of government, they passionately refused, declaring that they would obey God rather than the king. The cultivators of the soil were ground to



the earth by a threefold extortion,—the seigniorial dues, the tithes of the Church, and the multiplied exactions of the Crown, enforced with merciless rigor by the farmers of the revenue, who enriched themselves by wringing the peasant on the one hand, and cheating the king on the other. A few great cities shone with all that is most brilliant in society, intellect, and concentrated wealth; while the country that paid the costs lay in ignorance and penury, crushed and despairing. On the inhabitants of towns, too, the demands of the tax-gatherer were extreme; but here the immense vitality of the French people bore up the burden. While agriculture languished, and intolerable oppression turned peasants into beggars or desperadoes; while the clergy were sapped by corruption, and the nobles enervated by luxury and ruined by extravagance, the middle class was growing in thrift and strength. Arts and commerce prospered, and the seaports were alive with foreign trade. Wealth tended from all sides towards the centre. The king did not love his capital; but he and his favorites amused themselves with adorning it. Some of the chief embellishments that make Paris what it is to-day—the Place de la Concorde, the Champs Élysées, and many of the palaces of the Faubourg St. Germain—date from this reign.

One of the vicious conditions of the time was the separation in sympathies and interests of the four great classes of the nation,—clergy, nobles, burghers, and peasants; and each of these, again, divided itself into incoherent fragments. France was an aggregate of disjointed parts, held together by a meshwork of arbitrary power, itself touched with decay. A disastrous blow was struck at the national welfare when the government of Louis XV. revived the odious persecution of the Huguenots. The attempt to scour heresy out of

France cost her the most industrious and virtuous part of her population, and robbed her of those most fit to resist the mocking scepticism and turbid passions that burst out like a deluge with the Revolution.

Her manifold ills were summed up in the king. Since the Valois, she had had no monarch so worthless. He did not want understanding, still less the graces of person. In his youth the people called him the "Well-beloved;" but by the middle of the century they so detested him that he dared not pass through Paris, lest the mob should execrate him. He had not the vigor of the true tyrant; but his languor, his hatred of all effort, his profound selfishness, his listless disregard of public duty, and his effeminate libertinism, mixed with superstitious devotion, made him no less a national curse. Louis XIII. was equally unfit to govern; but he gave the reins to the Great Cardinal. Louis XV. abandoned them to a frivolous mistress, content that she should rule on condition of amusing him. It was a hard task; yet Madame de Pompadour accomplished it by methods infamous to him and to her. She gained and long kept the power that she coveted: filled the Bastille with her enemies; made and unmade ministers; appointed and removed generals. Great questions of policy were at the mercy of her caprices. Through her frivolous vanity, her personal likes and dislikes, all the great departments of government — army, navy, war, foreign affairs, justice, finance — changed from hand to hand incessantly, and this at a time of crisis when the kingdom needed the steadiest and surest guidance. Few of the officers of state, except, perhaps, D'Argenson, could venture to disregard her. She turned out Orry, the comptroller-general, put her favorite, Machault, into his place, then made him keeper of the seals, and at last minister of marine. The

Marquis de Puyseux, in the ministry of foreign affairs, and the Comte de St.-Florentin, charged with the affairs of the clergy, took their cue from her. The king stinted her in nothing. First and last, she is reckoned to have cost him thirty-six million francs, — answering now to more than as many dollars.

The prestige of the monarchy was declining with the ideas that had given it life and strength. A growing disrespect for king, ministry, and clergy was beginning to prepare the catastrophe that was still some forty years in the future. While the valleys and low places of the kingdom were dark with misery and squalor, its heights were bright with a gay society, — elegant, fastidious, witty, — craving the pleasures of the mind as well as of the senses, criticising everything, analyzing everything, believing nothing. Voltaire was in the midst of it, hating, with all his vehement soul, the abuses that swarmed about him, and assailing them with the inexhaustible shafts of his restless and piercing intellect. Montesquieu was showing to a despot-ridden age the principles of political freedom. Diderot and D'Alembert were beginning their revolutionary Encyclopædia. Rousseau was sounding the first notes of his mad eloquence, — the wild revolt of a passionate and diseased genius against a world of falsities and wrongs. The *salons* of Paris, cloyed with other pleasures, alive to all that was racy and new, welcomed the pungent doctrines, and played with them as children play with fire, thinking no danger; as time went on, even embraced them in a genuine spirit of hope and good-will for humanity. The Revolution began at the top, — in the world of fashion, birth, and intellect, — and propagated itself downwards. "We walked on a carpet of flowers," Count Ségur afterwards said, "unconscious that it covered an abyss;" till the gulf yawned at last, and swallowed them.

THE AMERICAN COMBATANTS<sup>1</sup>

THE French claimed all America, from the Alleghanies to the Rocky Mountains, and from Mexico and Florida to the North Pole, except only the ill-defined possessions of the English on the borders of Hudson Bay; and to these vast regions, with adjacent islands, they gave the general name of New France. They controlled the highways of the continent, for they held its two great rivers. First, they had seized the St. Lawrence, and then planted themselves at the mouth of the Mississippi. Canada at the north, and Louisiana at the south, were the keys of a boundless interior, rich with incalculable possibilities. The English colonies, ranged along the Atlantic coast, had no royal road to the great inland, and were, in a manner, shut between the mountains and the sea. At the middle of the century they numbered in all, from Georgia to Maine, about eleven hundred and sixty thousand white inhabitants. By the census of 1754 Canada had but fifty-five thousand. Add those of Louisiana and Acadia, and the whole white population under the French flag might be something more than eighty thousand. Here is an enormous disparity; and hence it has been argued that the success of the English colonies and the failure of the French was not due to difference of religious and political systems, but simply to numerical preponderance. But this preponderance itself grew out of a difference of systems. We have said

<sup>1</sup> Montcalm and Wolfe, Vol. I, Ch. I.

before, and it cannot be said too often, that in making Canada a citadel of the state religion, — a holy of holies of exclusive Roman Catholic orthodoxy, — the clerical monitors of the Crown robbed their country of a trans-Atlantic empire. New France could not grow with a priest on guard at the gate to let in none but such as pleased him. One of the ablest of Canadian governors, La Galissonière, seeing the feebleness of the colony compared with the vastness of its claims, advised the king to send ten thousand peasants to occupy the valley of the Ohio, and hold back the British swarm that was just then pushing its advance-guard over the Alleghanies. It needed no effort of the king to people his waste domain, not with ten thousand peasants, but with twenty times ten thousand Frenchmen of every station, — the most industrious, most instructed, most disciplined by adversity and capable of self-rule, that the country could boast. While La Galissonière was asking for colonists, the agents of the Crown, set on by priestly fanaticism, or designing selfishness masked with fanaticism, were pouring volleys of musketry into Huguenot congregations, imprisoning for life those innocent of all but their faith, — the men in the galleys, the women in the pestiferous dungeons of Aigues Mortes, — hanging their ministers, kidnapping their children, and reviving, in short, the dragonnades. Now, as in the past century, many of the victims escaped to the British colonies, and became a part of them. The Huguenots would have hailed as a boon the permission to emigrate under the fleur-de-lis, and build up a Protestant France in the valleys of the West. It would have been a bane of absolutism, but a national glory; would have set bounds to English colonization, and changed the face of the continent. The opportunity was spurned. The dominant Church clung

to its policy of rule and ruin. France built its best colony on a principle of exclusion, and failed; England reversed the system, and succeeded.

I have shown elsewhere the aspects of Canada, where a rigid scion of the old European tree was set to grow in the wilderness. The military governor, holding his miniature court on the rock of Quebec; the feudal proprietors, whose domains lined the shores of the St. Lawrence; the peasant; the roving bushranger; the half-tamed savage, with crucifix and scalping-knife; priests; friars; nuns; and soldiers,—mingled to form a society the most picturesque on the continent. What distinguished it from the France that produced it was a total absence of revolt against the laws of its being,—an absolute conservatism, an unquestioning acceptance of Church and king. The Canadian, ignorant of everything but what the priest saw fit to teach him, had never heard of Voltaire; and if he had known him, would have thought him a devil. He had, it is true, a spirit of insubordination born of the freedom of the forest; but if his instincts rebelled, his mind and soul were passively submissive. The unchecked control of a hierarchy robbed him of the independence of intellect and character, without which, under the conditions of modern life, a people must resign itself to a position of inferiority. Yet Canada had a vigor of her own. It was not in spiritual deference only that she differed from the country of her birth. Whatever she had caught of its corruptions, she had caught nothing of its effeminacy. The mass of her people lived in a rude poverty,—not abject, like the peasant of old France, nor ground down by the tax-gatherer; while those of the higher ranks—all more or less engaged in pursuits of war or adventure, and inured to rough journeyings and forest exposures—

were rugged as their climate. Even the French regular troops, sent out to defend the colony, caught its hardy spirit, and set an example of stubborn fighting which their comrades at home did not always emulate.

Canada lay ensconced behind rocks and forests. All along her southern boundaries, between her and her English foes, lay a broad tract of wilderness, shaggy with primeval woods. Innumerable streams gurgled beneath their shadows; innumerable lakes gleamed in the fiery sunsets; innumerable mountains bared their rocky foreheads to the wind. These wastes were ranged by her savage allies, Micmacs, Etechémins, Abenakis, Caughnawagas; and no enemy could steal upon her unawares. Through the midst of them stretched Lake Champlain, pointing straight to the heart of the British settlements,—a watery thoroughfare of mutual attack, and the only approach by which, without a long *détour* by wilderness or sea, a hostile army could come within striking distance of the colony. The French advanced post of Fort Frédéric, called Crown Point by the English, barred the narrows of the lake, which thence spread northward to the portals of Canada guarded by Fort St. Jean. Southwestward, some fourteen hundred miles as a bird flies, and twice as far by the practicable routes of travel, was Louisiana, the second of the two heads of New France; while between lay the realms of solitude where the Mississippi rolled its sullen tide, and the Ohio wound its belt of silver through the verdant woodlands.

To whom belonged this world of prairies and forests? France claimed it by right of discovery and occupation. It was her explorers who, after De Soto, first set foot on it. The question of right, it is true, mattered little; for, right or wrong, neither claimant would yield her pretensions so long

as she had strength to uphold them; yet one point is worth a moment's notice. The French had established an excellent system in the distribution of their American lands. Whoever received a grant from the Crown was required to improve it, and this within reasonable time. If he did not, the land ceased to be his, and was given to another more able or industrious. An international extension of her own principle would have destroyed the pretensions of France to all the countries of the West. She had called them hers for three-fourths of a century, and they were still a howling waste, yielding nothing to civilization but beaver-skins, with here and there a fort, trading-post, or mission, and three or four puny hamlets by the Mississippi and the Detroit. We have seen how she might have made for herself an indisputable title, and peopled the solitudes with a host to maintain it. She would not; others were at hand who both would and could; and the late claimant, disinherited and forlorn, would soon be left to count the cost of her bigotry.



THE THIRTEEN BRITISH COLONIES<sup>1</sup>

THE thirteen British colonies were alike, insomuch as they all had representative governments, and a basis of English law. But the differences among them were great. Some were purely English; others were made up of various races, though the Anglo-Saxon was always predominant. Some had one prevailing religious creed; others had many creeds. Some had charters, and some had not. In most cases the governor was appointed by the Crown; in Pennsylvania and Maryland he was appointed by a feudal proprietor, and in Connecticut and Rhode Island he was chosen by the people. The differences of disposition and character were still greater than those of form.

The four northern colonies, known collectively as New England, were an exception to the general rule of diversity. The smallest, Rhode Island, had features all its own; but the rest were substantially one in nature and origin. The principal among them, Massachusetts, may serve as the type of all. It was a mosaic of little village republics, firmly cemented together, and formed into a single body politic through representatives sent to the "General Court" at Boston. Its government, originally theocratic, now tended to democracy, ballasted as yet by strong traditions of respect for established worth and ability, as well as by the influence of certain families prominent in affairs for generations. Yet

<sup>1</sup> Montcalm and Wolfe, Vol. I., Ch. I.

there were no distinct class-lines, and popular power, like popular education, was widely diffused. Practically Massachusetts was almost independent of the mother-country. Its people were purely English, of sound yeoman stock, with an abundant leaven drawn from the best of the Puritan gentry; but their original character had been somewhat modified by changed conditions of life. A harsh and exacting creed, with its stiff formalism and its prohibition of wholesome recreation; excess in the pursuit of gain,—the only resource left to energies robbed of their natural play; the struggle for existence on a hard and barren soil; and the isolation of a narrow village life,—joined to produce, in the meaner sort, qualities which were unpleasant, and sometimes repulsive. Puritanism was not an unmixed blessing. Its view of human nature was dark, and its attitude towards it one of repression. It strove to crush out not only what is evil, but much that is innocent and salutary. Human nature so treated will take its revenge, and for every vice that it loses find another instead. Nevertheless, while New England Puritanism bore its peculiar crop of faults, it produced also many good and sound fruits. An uncommon vigor, joined to the hardy virtues of a masculine race, marked the New England type. The sinews, it is true, were hardened at the expense of blood and flesh,—and this literally as well as figuratively; but the staple of character was a sturdy conscientiousness, an undespairing courage, patriotism, public spirit, sagacity, and a strong good sense. A great change, both for better and for worse, has since come over it, due largely to reaction against the unnatural rigors of the past. That mixture, which is now too common, of cool emotions with excitable brains, was then rarely seen. The New England colonies abounded in high examples of public and

private virtue, though not always under the most prepossessing forms. They were conspicuous, moreover, for intellectual activity, and were by no means without intellectual eminence. Massachusetts had produced at least two men whose fame had crossed the sea, — Edwards, who out of the grim theology of Calvin mounted to sublime heights of mystical speculation; and Franklin, famous already by his discoveries in electricity. On the other hand, there were few genuine New Englanders who, however personally modest, could divest themselves of the notion that they belonged to a people in an especial manner the object of divine approval; and this self-righteousness, along with certain other traits, failed to commend the Puritan colonies to the favor of their fellows. Then, as now, New England was best known to her neighbors by her worst side.

In one point, however, she found general applause. She was regarded as the most military among the British colonies. This reputation was well founded, and is easily explained. More than all the rest, she lay open to attack. The long waving line of the New England border, with its lonely hamlets and scattered farms, extended from the Kennebec to beyond the Connecticut, and was everywhere vulnerable to the guns and tomahawks of the neighboring French and their savage allies. The colonies towards the south had thus far been safe from danger. New York alone was within striking distance of the Canadian war-parties. That province then consisted of a line of settlements up the Hudson and the Mohawk, and was little exposed to attack except at its northern end, which was guarded by the fortified town of Albany, with its outlying posts, and by the friendly and warlike Mohawks, whose "castles" were close at hand. Thus New England had borne the heaviest brunt

of the preceding wars, not only by the forest, but also by the sea; for the French of Acadia and Cape Breton confronted her coast, and she was often at blows with them. Fighting had been a necessity with her, and she had met the emergency after a method extremely defective, but the best that circumstances would permit. Having no trained officers and no disciplined soldiers, and being too poor to maintain either, she borrowed her warriors from the workshop and the plough, and officered them with lawyers, merchants, mechanics, or farmers. To compare them with good regular troops would be folly; but they did, on the whole, better than could have been expected, and in the last war achieved the brilliant success of the capture of Louisbourg. This exploit, due partly to native hardihood and partly to good luck, greatly enhanced the military repute of New England, or rather was one of the chief sources of it.

The great colony of Virginia stood in strong contrast to New England. In both the population was English; but the one was Puritan with Roundhead traditions, and the other, so far as concerned its governing class, Anglican with Cavalier traditions. In the one, every man, woman, and child could read and write; in the other, Sir William Berkeley once thanked God that there were no free schools, and no prospect of any for a century. The hope had found fruition. The lower classes of Virginia were as untaught as the warmest friend of popular ignorance could wish. New England had a native literature more than respectable under the circumstances, while Virginia had none; numerous industries, while Virginia was all agriculture, with but a single crop; a homogeneous society and a democratic spirit, while her rival was an aristocracy. Virginian society was distinctly stratified. On the lowest level were the negro slaves, nearly

as numerous as all the rest together; next, the indented servants and the poor whites, of low origin, good-humored, but boisterous, and sometimes vicious; next, the small and despised class of tradesmen and mechanics; next, the farmers and lesser planters, who were mainly of good English stock, and who merged insensibly into the ruling class of the great landowners. It was these last who represented the colony and made the laws. They may be described as English country squires transplanted to a warm climate and turned slave-masters. They sustained their position by entails, and constantly undermined it by the reckless profusion which ruined them at last. Many of them were well born, with an immense pride of descent, increased by the habit of domination. Indolent and energetic by turns; rich in natural gifts and often poor in book-learning, though some, in the lack of good teaching at home, had been bred in the English universities; high-spirited, generous to a fault; keeping open house in their capacious mansions, among vast tobacco-fields and toiling negroes, and living in a rude pomp where the fashions of St. James were somewhat oddly grafted on the roughness of the plantation,—what they wanted in schooling was supplied by an education which books alone would have been impotent to give, the education which came with the possession and exercise of political power, and the sense of a position to maintain, joined to a bold spirit of independence and a patriotic attachment to the Old Dominion. They were few in number; they raced, gambled, drank, and swore; they did everything that in Puritan eyes was most reprehensible; and in the day of need they gave the United Colonies a body of statesmen and orators which had no equal on the continent. A vigorous aristocracy favors the growth of personal eminence, even in those who are not of it, but only near it.

The essential antagonism of Virginia and New England was afterwards to become, and to remain for a century, an element of the first influence in American history. Each might have learned much from the other; but neither did so till, at last, the strife of their contending principles shook the continent. Pennsylvania differed widely from both. She was a conglomerate of creeds and races,—English, Irish, Germans, Dutch, and Swedes; Quakers, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Romanists, Moravians, and a variety of non-descript sects. The Quakers prevailed in the eastern districts; quiet, industrious, virtuous, and serenely obstinate. The Germans were strongest towards the centre of the colony, and were chiefly peasants; successful farmers, but dull, ignorant, and superstitious. Towards the west were the Irish, of whom some were Celts, always quarrelling with their German neighbors, who detested them; but the greater part were Protestants of Scotch descent, from Ulster; a vigorous border population. Virginia and New England had each a strong distinctive character. Pennsylvania, with her heterogeneous population, had none but that which she owed to the sober neutral tints of Quaker existence. A more thriving colony there was not on the continent. Life, if monotonous, was smooth and contented. Trade and the arts grew. Philadelphia, next to Boston, was the largest town in British America; and was, moreover, the intellectual centre of the middle and southern colonies. Unfortunately, for her credit in the approaching war, the Quaker influence made Pennsylvania non-combatant. Politically, too, she was an anomaly; for, though utterly unfeudal in disposition and character, she was under feudal superiors in the persons of the representatives of William Penn, the original grantee.

New York had not as yet reached the relative prominence which her geographical position and inherent strength afterwards gave her. The English, joined to the Dutch, the original settlers, were the dominant population; but a half-score of other languages were spoken in the province, the chief among them being that of the Huguenot French in the southern parts, and that of the Germans on the Mohawk. In religion, the province was divided between the Anglican Church, with government support and popular dislike, and numerous dissenting sects, chiefly Lutherans, Independents, Presbyterians, and members of the Dutch Reformed Church. The little city of New York, like its great successor, was the most cosmopolitan place on the continent, and probably the gayest. It had, in abundance, balls, concerts, theatricals, and evening clubs, with plentiful dances and other amusements for the poorer classes. Thither in the winter months came the great hereditary proprietors on the Hudson; for the old Dutch feudality still held its own. Pennsylvania was feudal in form, and not in spirit; Virginia in spirit, and not in form; New England in neither; and New York largely in both. This social crystallization had, it is true, many opponents. In politics, as in religion, there were sharp antagonisms and frequent quarrels. They centred in the city; for in the well-stocked dwellings of the Dutch farmers along the Hudson there reigned a tranquil and prosperous routine; and the Dutch border town of Albany had not its like in America for unruffled conservatism and quaint picturesqueness.

Of the other colonies, the briefest mention will suffice: New Jersey, with its wholesome population of farmers; tobacco-growing Maryland, which, but for its proprietary government and numerous Roman Catholics, might pass for

another Virginia, inferior in growth, and less decisive in features; Delaware, a modest appendage of Pennsylvania; wild and rude North Carolina; and, farther on, South Carolina and Georgia, too remote from the seat of war to take a noteworthy part in it. The attitude of these various colonies towards each other is hardly conceivable to an American of the present time. They had no political tie except a common allegiance to the British Crown. Communication between them was difficult and slow, by rough roads traced often through primeval forests. Between some of them there was less of sympathy than of jealousy kindled by conflicting interests or perpetual disputes concerning boundaries. The patriotism of the colonist was bounded by the lines of his government, except in the compact and kindred colonies of New England, which were socially united, though politically distinct. The country of the New Yorker was New York, and the country of the Virginian was Virginia. The New England colonies had once confederated; but, kindred as they were, they had long ago dropped apart. William Penn proposed a plan of colonial union wholly fruitless. James II. tried to unite all the northern colonies under one government; but the attempt came to naught. Each stood aloof, jealously independent. At rare intervals, under the pressure of an emergency, some of them would try to act in concert; and, except in New England, the results had been most discouraging. Nor was it this segregation only that unfitted them for war. They were all subject to popular legislatures, through whom alone money and men could be raised; and these elective bodies were sometimes factious and selfish, and not always either far-sighted or reasonable. Moreover, they were in a state of ceaseless friction with their governors, who represented the king, or, what was worse, the feudal



proprietary. These disputes, though varying in intensity, were found everywhere except in the two small colonies which chose their own governors; and they were premonitions of the movement towards independence which ended in the war of Revolution. The occasion of difference mattered little. Active or latent, the quarrel was always present. It was sure to arise whenever some public crisis gave the representatives of the people an opportunity of extorting concessions from the representative of the Crown, or gave the representative of the Crown an opportunity to gain a point for prerogative. That is to say, the time when action was most needed was the time chosen for obstructing it.

In Canada there was no popular legislature to embarrass the central power. The people, like an army, obeyed the word of command, — a military advantage beyond all price.

Divided in government; divided in origin, feelings, and principles; jealous of each other, jealous of the Crown; the people at war with the executive, and, by the fermentation of internal politics, blinded to an outward danger that seemed remote and vague, — such were the conditions under which the British colonies drifted into a war that was to decide the fate of the continent.

This war was the strife of a united and concentrated few against a divided and discordant many. It was the strife, too, of the past against the future; of the old against the new; of moral and intellectual torpor against moral and intellectual life; of barren absolutism against a liberty, crude, incoherent, and chaotic, yet full of prolific vitality.

[The French in their advance by way of the Ohio Valley had been careful to conciliate the western tribes. They now began assiduously to cultivate the friendship of the Iroquois.

In the war of 1745 "The Five Nations" yielded but cold and doubtful aid to their English allies, and fears were entertained of their final estrangement. — Ed.]

This result<sup>1</sup> became still more imminent, when, in the year 1749, the French priest Piquet established his mission of La Présentation on the St. Lawrence, at the site of Ogdensburg. This pious father, like the martial churchmen of an earlier day, deemed it no scandal to gird on earthly armor against the enemies of the faith. He built a fort and founded a settlement; he mustered the Indians about him from far and near, organized their governments, and marshalled their war-parties. From the crenelled walls of his mission-house the warlike apostle could look forth upon a military colony of his own creating, upon farms and clearings, white Canadian cabins, and the bark lodges of Indian hordes which he had gathered under his protecting wing. A chief object of the settlement was to form a barrier against the English; but the purpose dearest to the missionary's heart was to gain over the Iroquois to the side of France; and in this he succeeded so well, that, as a writer of good authority declares, the number of their warriors within the circle of his influence surpassed the whole remaining force of the confederacy.

Thoughtful men in the English colonies saw with anxiety the growing defection of the Iroquois, and dreaded lest, in the event of a war with France, her ancient foes might now be found her friends. But in this ominous conjuncture, one strong influence was at work to bind the confederates to their old alliance; and this influence was wielded by a man so remarkable in his character, and so conspicuous an actor in the scenes of the ensuing history, as to demand at least some passing notice.

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. III.

SIR WILLIAM JOHNSON <sup>1</sup>

ABOUT the year 1734, in consequence it is said of the hapless issue of a love affair, William Johnson, a young Irishman, came over to America at the age of nineteen, where he assumed the charge of an extensive tract of wild land in the province of New York, belonging to his uncle, Admiral Sir Peter Warren. Settling in the valley of the Mohawk, he carried on a prosperous traffic with the Indians; and while he rapidly rose to wealth, he gained, at the same time, an extraordinary influence over the neighboring Iroquois. As his resources increased, he built two mansions in the valley, known respectively by the names of Johnson Castle and Johnson Hall, the latter of which, a well-constructed building of wood and stone, is still standing in the village of Johnstown. Johnson Castle was situated at some distance

*Sir William Johnson*

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. III.

higher up the river. Both were fortified against attack, and the latter was surrounded with cabins built for the reception of the Indians, who often came in crowds to visit the proprietor, invading his dwelling at all unseasonable hours, loitering in the doorways, spreading their blankets in the passages, and infecting the air with the fumes of stale tobacco.

Johnson's importance became so conspicuous, that when the French war broke out in 1755, he was made a major-general; and, soon after, the colonial troops under his command gained the battle of Lake George against the French forces of Baron Dieskau. For this success, for which however he was entitled to little credit, he was raised to the rank of baronet, and rewarded with a gift of five thousand pounds from the king. About this time, he was appointed superintendent of Indian affairs for the northern tribes, a station in which he did signal service to the country. In 1759, when General Prideaux was killed by the bursting of a cohorn in the trenches before Niagara, Johnson succeeded to his command, routed the French in another pitched battle, and soon raised the red cross of England on the ramparts of the fort. After the peace of 1763, he lived for many years at Johnson Hall, constantly enriched by the increasing value of his vast estate, and surrounded by a hardy Highland tenantry, devoted to his interests; but when the tempest which had long been brewing seemed at length about to break, and signs of a speedy rupture with the mother country thickened with every day, he stood wavering in an agony of indecision, divided between his loyalty to the sovereign who was the source of all his honors, and his reluctance to become the agent of a murderous Indian warfare against his countrymen and friends. His final resolution was never taken. In the

summer of 1774, he was attacked with a sudden illness, and died within a few hours, in the sixtieth year of his age, hurried to his grave by mental distress, or, as many believed, by the act of his own hand.

Nature had well fitted him for the position in which his propitious stars had cast his lot. His person was tall, erect, and strong; his features grave and manly. His direct and upright dealings, his courage, eloquence, and address, were sure passports to favor in Indian eyes. He had a singular facility of adaptation. In the camp, or at the council-board, in spite of his defective education, he bore himself as became his station; but at home he was seen drinking flip and smoking tobacco with the Dutch boors, his neighbors, and talking of improvements or the price of beaver-skins; while in the Indian villages he would feast on dog's flesh, dance with the warriors, and harangue his attentive auditors with all the dignity of an Iroquois sachem. His temper was genial; he encouraged rustic sports, and was respected and beloved alike by whites and Indians.

His good qualities, however, were alloyed with serious defects. His mind was as coarse as it was vigorous; he was vain of his rank and influence, and being quite free from any scruple of delicacy, he lost no opportunity of proclaiming them. His nature was eager and ambitious; and in pushing his own way, he was never distinguished by an anxious solicitude for the rights of others.

At the time of which we speak, his fortunes had not reached their zenith; yet his influence was great; and during the war of 1745, when he held the chief control of Indian affairs in New York, it was exercised in a manner most beneficial to the province. After the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748, finding his measures ill supported, he threw up his office in disgust. Still his mere personal in-

fluence sufficed to embarrass the intrigues of the busy priest at La Présentation ; and a few years later, when the public exigency demanded his utmost efforts, he resumed, under better auspices, the official management of Indian affairs.

And now, when the blindest could see that between the rival claimants to the soil of America nothing was left but the arbitration of the sword, no man friendly to the cause of England could observe without alarm how France had

strengthened herself in Indian alliances. The Iroquois, it is true, had not quite gone over to her side ; nor had the Delawares wholly forgotten their ancient league with William Penn. The Miamis, too, in the valley of the Ohio, had lately taken umbrage at the conduct of the French, and betrayed a leaning to the side of England, while several tribes of the south showed a simi-



*William Penn*

lar disposition. But, with few and slight exceptions, the numerous tribes of the great lakes and the Mississippi, besides a host of domiciliated savages in Canada itself, stood ready at the bidding of France to grind their tomahawks and turn loose their ravenous war-parties ; while the British colonists had too much reason to fear that even those tribes which seemed most friendly to their cause and which formed the sole barrier of their unprotected borders, might, at the first sound of the war-whoop, be found in arms against them.

COLLISION OF THE RIVAL COLONIES,<sup>1</sup> 1700-1755

THE people of the northern English colonies had learned to regard their Canadian neighbors with the bitterest enmity. With them, the very name of Canada called up horrible recollections and ghastly images: the midnight massacre of Schenectady, and the desolation of many a New England hamlet; blazing dwellings and reeking scalps; and children snatched from their mothers' arms, to be immured in convents and trained up in the abominations of Popery. To the sons of the Puritans, their enemy was doubly odious. They hated him as a Frenchman, and they hated him as a Papist. Hitherto he had waged his murderous warfare from a distance, wasting their settlements with rapid onsets, fierce and transient as a summer storm; but now, with enterprising audacity, he was intrenching himself on their very borders. The English hunter, in the lonely wilderness of Vermont, as by the warm glow of sunset he piled the spruce boughs for his woodland bed, started as a deep, low sound struck faintly on his ear, the evening gun of Fort Frédéric, booming over lake and forest. The erection of this fort, better known among the English as Crown Point, was a piece of daring encroachment which justly kindled resentment in the northern colonies. But it was not here that the immediate occasion of a final rupture was to arise. By an article of the treaty of Utrecht, confirmed by that of Aix-la-Chapelle,

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. IV.

Acadia had been ceded to England; but scarcely was the latter treaty signed, when debates sprang up touching the limits of the ceded province. Commissioners were named on either side to adjust the disputed boundary; but the claims of the rival powers proved utterly irreconcilable, and all negotiation was fruitless. Meantime, the French and English forces in Acadia began to assume a belligerent attitude, and indulge their ill blood in mutual aggression and reprisal. But while this game was played on the coasts of the Atlantic, interests of far greater moment were at stake in the West.

The people of the middle colonies, placed by their local position beyond reach of the French, had heard with great composure of the sufferings of their New England brethren, and felt little concern at a danger so doubtful and remote. There were those among them, however, who with greater foresight had been quick to perceive the ambitious projects of the rival nation; and, as early as 1716, Spotswood, governor of Virginia, had urged the expediency of securing the valley of the Ohio by a series of forts and settlements. His proposal was coldly received, and his plan fell to the ground. The time at length was come when the danger was approaching too near to be slighted longer. In 1748, an association, called the Ohio Company, was formed with the view of making settlements in the region beyond the Alleghanies; and two years later, Gist, the company's surveyor, to the great disgust of the Indians, carried chain and compass down the Ohio as far as the falls at Louisville. But so dilatory were the English, that before any effectual steps were taken, their agile enemies appeared upon the scene.



## MISSION OF WASHINGTON

IN the spring of 1753, the middle provinces were startled at the tidings that French troops had crossed Lake Erie, fortified themselves at the point of Presqu'Isle, and pushed forward to the northern branches of the Ohio. Upon this, Governor Dinwiddie, of Virginia, resolved to despatch a message requiring their removal from territories which he claimed as belonging to the British Crown; and looking about him for the person best qualified to act as messenger, he made choice of George Washington, a young man twenty-one years of age, adjutant-general of the Virginian militia.

*George Washington*

Washington departed on his mission, crossed the mountains, descended to the bleak and leafless valley of the Ohio, and thence continued his journey up the banks of the Alleghany until the fourth of December. On that day he reached Venango, an Indian town on the Alleghany, at the mouth of French Creek. Here was the advanced post of the French; and here, among the Indian log-cabins and huts of bark, he saw their flag flying above the house of an English

trader, whom the military intruders had unceremoniously ejected. They gave the young envoy a hospitable reception, and referred him to the commanding officer, whose headquarters were at Le Bœuf, a fort which they had just built on French Creek, some distance above Venango. Thither Washington repaired, and on his arrival was received with stately courtesy by the officer, *Legardeur de St. Pierre*, whom he describes as an elderly gentleman of very soldier-like appearance. To the message of *Dinwiddie*, *St. Pierre* replied that he would forward it to the governor-general of Canada; but that, in the mean time, his orders were to hold possession of the country, and this he should do to the best of his ability. With this answer Washington, through all the rigors of the midwinter forest, retraced his steps, with one attendant, to the English borders.

With the first opening of spring, a newly raised company of Virginian backwoodsmen, under Captain *Trent*, hastened across the mountains, and began to build a fort at the confluence of the *Monongahela* and *Alleghany*, where *Pittsburg* now stands; when suddenly they found themselves invested by a host of French and Indians, who, with sixty bateaux and three hundred canoes, had descended from *Le Bœuf* and *Venango*. The English were ordered to evacuate the spot; and, being quite unable to resist, they obeyed the summons, and withdrew in great discomfiture towards *Virginia*. Meanwhile *Washington*, with another party of backwoodsmen, was advancing from the borders; and, hearing of *Trent's* disaster, he resolved to fortify himself on the *Monongahela*, and hold his ground, if possible, until fresh troops could arrive to support him. The French sent out a scouting party under *M. Jumonville*, with the design, probably, of watching his movements; but, on a dark and stormy night, *Washing-*

ton surprised them, as they lay lurking in a rocky glen not far from his camp, killed the officer, and captured the whole detachment. Learning that the French, enraged by this reverse, were about to attack him in great force, he thought it prudent to fall back, and retired accordingly to a spot called the Great Meadows, where he had before thrown up a slight intrenchment. Here he found himself assailed by nine hundred French and Indians, commanded by a brother of the slain Jumonville. From eleven in the morning till eight at night, the backwoodsmen, who were half famished from the failure of their stores, maintained a stubborn defence, some fighting within the intrenchment, and some on the plain without. In the evening, the French sounded a parley, and offered terms. They were accepted, and on the following day Washington and his men retired across the mountains, leaving the disputed territory in the hands of the French.

ALARM OF THE INDIANS<sup>1</sup>

WHILE the rival nations were beginning to quarrel for a prize which belonged to neither of them, the unhappy Indians saw, with alarm and amazement, their lands becoming a bone of contention between rapacious strangers. The first appearance of the French on the Ohio excited the wildest fears in the tribes of that quarter, among whom were those who, disgusted by the encroachments of the Pennsylvanians, had fled to these remote retreats to escape the intrusions of the white men. Scarcely was their fancied asylum gained, when they saw themselves invaded by a host of armed men from Canada. Thus placed between two fires, they knew not which way to turn. There was no union in their counsels, and they seemed like a mob of bewildered children. Their native jealousy was roused to its utmost pitch. Many of them thought that the two white nations had conspired to destroy them, and then divide their lands. "You and the French," said one of them, a few years afterwards, to an English emissary, "are like the two edges of a pair of shears, and we are the cloth which is cut to pieces between them."

The French labored hard to conciliate them, plying them with gifts and flatteries, and proclaiming themselves their champions against the English. At first, these arts seemed in vain, but their effect soon began to declare itself; and this effect was greatly increased by a singular piece of infat-

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. IV.

uation on the part of the proprietors of Pennsylvania. During the summer of 1754, delegates of the several provinces met at Albany, to concert measures of defence in the war which now seemed inevitable. It was at this meeting that the memorable plan of a union of the colonies was brought forward; a plan, the fate of which was curious and significant, for the Crown rejected it as giving too much power to the people, and the people as giving too much power to the Crown. A council was also held with the Iroquois, and though they were found but lukewarm in their attachment to the English, a treaty of friendship and alliance was concluded with their deputies. It would have been well if the matter had ended here; but, with ill-timed rapacity, the proprietary agents of Pennsylvania took advantage of this great assemblage of sachems to procure from them the grant of extensive tracts, including the lands inhabited by the very tribes whom the French were at that moment striving to seduce. When they heard that, without their consent, their conquerors and tyrants, the Iroquois, had sold the soil from beneath their feet, their indignation was extreme; and, convinced that there was no limit to English encroachment, many of them from that hour became fast allies of the French.

THE FIRST SHOT FIRED<sup>1</sup>

THE courts of London and Versailles still maintained a diplomatic intercourse, both protesting their earnest wish that their conflicting claims might be adjusted by friendly negotiation; but while each disclaimed the intention of hostility, both were hastening to prepare for war. Early in 1755, an English fleet sailed from Cork, having on board two regiments destined for Virginia, and commanded by General Braddock; and soon after, a French fleet put to sea from the port of Brest, freighted with munitions of war and a strong body of troops under Baron Dieskau, an officer who had distinguished himself in the campaigns of Marshal Saxe. The English fleet gained its destination, and landed its troops in safety. The French were less fortunate. Two of their ships, the "Lys" and the "Alcide," became involved in the fogs of the banks of Newfoundland; and when the weather cleared, they found themselves under the guns of a superior British force, belonging to the squadron of Admiral Boscawen, sent out for the express purpose of intercepting them. "Are we at peace or war?" demanded the French commander. A broadside from the Englishman soon solved his doubts, and after a stout resistance the French struck their colors. News of the capture caused great excitement in England, but the conduct of the aggressors was generally approved; and under

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. IV.

pretence that the French had begun the war by their alleged encroachments in America, orders were issued for a general attack upon their marine. So successful were the British cruisers, that, before the end of the year, three hundred French vessels and nearly eight thousand sailors were captured and brought into port. The French, unable to retort in kind, raised an outcry of indignation, and Mirepoix, their ambassador, withdrew from the court of London.

Thus began that memorable war, which, kindling among the forests of America, scattered its fires over the kingdoms of Europe, and the sultry empire of the Great Mogul; the war made glorious by the heroic death of Wolfe, the victories of Frederic, and the exploits of Clive; the war which controlled the destinies of America, and was first in the chain of events



*Lord Clive*

which led on to her Revolution with all its vast and undeveloped consequences. On the old battle-ground of Europe, the contest bore the same familiar features of violence and horror which had marked the strife of former generations — fields ploughed by the cannon ball, and walls shattered by the exploding mine, sacked towns and blazing suburbs, the lamentations of women, and the license of a maddened soldiery. But in America, war assumed a new

and striking aspect. A wilderness was its sublime arena. Army met army under the shadows of primeval woods; their cannon resounded over wastes unknown to civilized man. And before the hostile powers could join in battle, endless forests must be traversed, and morasses passed, and everywhere the axe of the pioneer must hew a path for the bayonet of the soldier.



BRADDOCK'S MARCH AND DEFEAT<sup>1</sup>

BEFORE the declaration of war, and before the breaking off of negotiations between the courts of France and England, the English ministry formed the plan of assailing the French in America on all sides at once, and repelling them, by one bold push, from all their encroachments. A provincial army was to advance upon Acadia, a second was to attack Crown Point, and a third Niagara; while the two regiments which had lately arrived in Virginia under General Braddock, aided by a strong body of provincials, were to dislodge the French from their newly built fort of Du Quesne. To Braddock was assigned the chief command of all the British forces in America; and a person worse fitted for the office could scarcely have been found. His experience had been ample, and none could doubt his courage; but he was profligate, arrogant, perverse, and a bigot to military rules. On his first arrival in Virginia, he called together the governors of the several provinces, in order to explain his instructions and adjust the details of the projected operations. These arrangements complete, Braddock advanced to the borders of Virginia, and formed his camp at Fort Cumberland, where he spent several weeks in training the raw backwoodsmen, who joined him, into such discipline as they seemed capable of; in collecting horse and wagons, which could only be had with the utmost difficulty; in railing at the contractors, who

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. IV.

scandalously cheated him; and in venting his spleen by copious abuse of the country and the people. All at length was ready, and early in June, 1755, the army left civilization behind, and struck into the broad wilderness as a squadron puts out to sea.

It was no easy task to force their way over that rugged ground, covered with an unbroken growth of forest; and the difficulty was increased by the needless load of baggage which encumbered their march. The crash of falling trees resounded in the front, where a hundred axemen labored with ceaseless toil to hew a passage for the army. The horses strained their utmost strength to drag the ponderous wagons over roots and stumps, through gullies and quagmires; and the regular troops were daunted by the depth and gloom of the forest which hedged them in on either hand, and closed its leafy arches above their heads. So tedious was their progress, that, by the advice of Washington, twelve hundred chosen men moved on in advance with the lighter baggage and artillery, leaving the rest of the army to follow, by slower stages, with the heavy wagons. On the eighth of July, the advanced body reached the Monongahela, at a point not far distant from Fort du Quesne. The rocky and impracticable ground on the eastern side debarred their passage, and the general resolved to cross the river in search of a smoother path, and recross it a few miles lower down, in order to gain the fort. The first passage was easily made, and the troops moved, in glittering array, down the western margin of the water, rejoicing that their goal was well-nigh reached, and the hour of their expected triumph close at hand.

Scouts and Indian runners had brought the tidings of Braddock's approach to the French at Fort du Quesne.

Their dismay was great, and Contrecoeur, the commander, thought only of retreat, when Beaujeu, a captain in the garrison, made the bold proposal of leading out a party of French and Indians to waylay the English in the woods, and harass or interrupt their march. The offer was accepted, and Beaujeu hastened to the Indian camps.

Around the fort and beneath the adjacent forest were the bark lodges of savage hordes, whom the French had mustered from far and near; Ojibwas and Ottawas, Hurons and Caughnawagas, Abenakis and Delawares. Beaujeu called the warriors together, flung a hatchet on the ground before them, and invited them to follow him out to battle; but the boldest stood aghast at the peril, and none would accept the challenge. A second interview took place with no better success; but the Frenchman was resolved to carry his point.



*Beaujeu*

"I am determined to go," he exclaimed. "What, will you suffer your father to go alone?" His daring proved contagious. The warriors hesitated no longer; and when, on the morning of the ninth of July, a scout ran in with the news that the English army was but a few miles distant, the Indian camps were at once astir with the turmoil of preparation. Chiefs harangued their yelling followers, braves bedaubed themselves with war-paint, smeared themselves with grease, hung feathers in their scalp-locks, and whooped

and stamped till they had wrought themselves into a delirium of valor.

That morning, James Smith, an English prisoner recently captured on the frontier of Pennsylvania, stood on the rampart, and saw the half-frenzied multitude thronging about the gateway, where kegs of bullets and gunpowder were broken open, that each might help himself at will. Then band after band hastened away towards the forest, followed and supported by nearly two hundred and fifty French and Canadians, commanded by Beaujeu. There were the Ottawas, led on, it is said, by the remarkable man whose name stands on the title-page of this history;<sup>1</sup> there were the Hurons of Lorette under their chief, whom the French called Athanase, and many more, all keen as hounds on the scent of blood. At about nine miles from the fort, they reached a spot where the narrow road descended to the river through deep and gloomy woods, and where two ravines, concealed by trees and bushes, seemed formed by nature for an ambushade. Beaujeu well knew the ground; and it was here that he had resolved to fight; but he and his followers were well-nigh too late; for as they neared the ravines, the woods were resounding with the roll of the British drums.

It was past noon of a day brightened with the clear sunlight of an American midsummer, when the forces of Braddock began, for a second time, to cross the Monongahela, at the fording-place, which to this day bears the name of their ill-fated leader. The scarlet columns of the British regulars, complete in martial appointment, the rude backwoodsmen with shouldered rifles, the trains of artillery and the white-topped wagons, moved on in long procession through the shallow current, and slowly mounted the opposing bank.

<sup>1</sup> Pontiac.

Men were there whose names have become historic. Gage, who, twenty years later, saw his routed battalions recoil in disorder from before the breastwork on Bunker Hill; Gates, the future conqueror of Burgoyne; and one destined to a higher fame, — George Washington, a boy in years, a man in calm thought and self-ruling wisdom.

With steady and well-ordered march, the troops advanced into the great labyrinth of woods which shadowed the eastern borders of the river. Rank after rank vanished from sight. The forest swallowed them up, and the silence of the wilderness sank down once more on the shores and waters of the Monongahela.

Several engineers and guides and six light horsemen led the way; a body of grenadiers under Gage was close behind, and the army followed in such order as the rough ground would permit, along a narrow road, twelve feet wide, tunneled through the dense and matted foliage. There were flanking parties on either side, but no scouts to scour the woods in front, and with an insane confidence Braddock pressed on to meet his fate. The van had passed the low grounds that bordered the river, and were now ascending a gently rising ground, where, on either hand, hidden by thick trees, by tangled undergrowth and rank grasses, lay the two fatal ravines. Suddenly, Gordon, an engineer in advance, saw the French and Indians bounding forward through the forest and along the narrow track, Beaujeu leading them on, dressed in a fringed hunting-shirt, and wearing a silver gorget on his breast. He stopped, turned, and waved his hat, and his French followers, crowding across the road, opened a murderous fire upon the head of the British column, while, screeching their war-cries, the Indians thronged into the ravines, or crouched behind rocks and trees on both flanks of

the advancing troops. The astonished grenadiers returned the fire, and returned it with good effect; for a random shot struck down the brave Beaujeu, and the courage of the assailants was staggered by his fall. Dumas, second in command, rallied them to the attack; and while he, with the French and Canadians, made good the pass in front, the Indians from their lurking places opened a deadly fire on the right and left. In a few moments, all was confusion. The advance guard fell back on the main body, and every trace of subordination vanished. The fire soon extended along the whole length of the army, from front to rear. Scarce an enemy could be seen, though the forest resounded with their yells; though every bush and tree was alive with incessant flashes; though the lead flew like a hailstorm, and the men went down by scores. The regular troops seemed bereft of their senses. They huddled together in the road like flocks of sheep; and happy did he think himself who could wedge his way into the midst of the crowd, and place a barrier of human flesh between his life and the shot of the ambushed marksmen. Many were seen eagerly loading their muskets, and then firing them into the air, or shooting their own comrades in the insanity of their terror. The officers, for the most part, displayed a conspicuous gallantry; but threats and commands were wasted alike on the panic-stricken multitude. It is said that at the outset Braddock showed signs of fear; but he soon recovered his wonted intrepidity. Five horses were shot under him, and five times he mounted afresh. He stormed and shouted, and, while the Virginians were fighting to good purpose, each man behind a tree, like the Indians themselves, he ordered them with furious menace to form in platoons, where the fire of the enemy mowed them down like grass. At length, a

mortal shot silenced him, and two provincials bore him off the field. Washington rode through the tumult calm and undaunted. Two horses were killed under him, and four bullets pierced his clothes; but his hour was not come, and he escaped without a wound. Gates was shot through the body, and Gage also was severely wounded. Of eighty-six officers, only twenty-three remained unhurt; and of twelve hundred soldiers who crossed the Monongahela, more than seven hundred were killed and wounded. None suffered more severely than the Virginians, who had displayed throughout a degree of courage and steadiness which put the cowardice of the regulars to shame. The havoc among them was terrible, for of their whole number scarcely one-fifth left the field alive.

The slaughter lasted three hours; when, at length, the survivors, as if impelled by a general impulse, rushed tumultuously from the place of carnage, and with dastardly precipitation fled across the Monongahela. The enemy did not pursue beyond the river, flocking back to the field to collect the plunder, and gather a rich harvest of scalps. The routed troops pursued their flight until they met the rear



*Death of Braddock*

division of the army, under Colonel Dunbar; and even then their senseless terrors did not abate. Dunbar's soldiers caught the infection. Cannon, baggage, provisions, and wagons were destroyed, and all fled together, eager to escape from the shadows of those awful woods, whose horrors haunted their imagination. They passed the defenceless settlements of the border, and hurried on to Philadelphia, leaving the unhappy people to defend themselves as they might against the tomahawk and scalping-knife.

The calamities of this disgraceful rout did not cease with the loss of a few hundred soldiers on the field of battle; for it brought upon the provinces all the miseries of an Indian war. Those among the tribes who had thus far stood neutral wavering between the French and English, now hesitated no longer. Many of them had been disgusted by the contemptuous behavior of Braddock. All had learned to despise the courage of the English, and to regard their own prowess with unbounded complacency. It is not in Indian nature to stand quiet in the midst of war; and the defeat of Braddock was a signal for the western savages to snatch their tomahawks and assail the English settlements with one accord, murdering and pillaging with ruthless fury, and turning the frontier of Pennsylvania and Virginia into one wide scene of havoc and desolation.



ACADIA, NIAGARA, AND CROWN POINT—THE  
BATTLE OF LAKE GEORGE<sup>1</sup>

THE three remaining expeditions which the British ministry had planned for that year's campaign were attended with various results. Acadia was quickly reduced by the forces of Colonel Monckton; but the glories of this easy victory were tarnished by an act of cruelty. Seven thousand of the unfortunate people, refusing to take the prescribed oath of allegiance, were seized by the conquerors, torn from their homes, placed on shipboard like cargoes of negro slaves, and transported to the British provinces. The expedition against Niagara was a total failure, for the troops did not even reach their destination.



*Col. Robert Monckton*

The movement against Crown Point met with no better success, as regards the main object of the enterprise. Owing

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. IV.

to the lateness of the season, and other causes, the troops proceeded no farther than Lake George; but the attempt was marked by a feat of arms, which, in that day of failure, was greeted, both in England and America, as a signal victory.

General Johnson, afterwards Sir William Johnson, had been charged with the conduct of the Crown Point expedition; and his little army, a rude assemblage of hunters and farmers from New York and New England, officers and men alike ignorant of war, lay encamped at the southern extremity of Lake George. Here, while they languidly pursued their preparations, their active enemy anticipated them. Baron Dieskau, who, with a body of troops, had reached Quebec in the squadron which sailed from Brest in the spring, had intended to take forcible possession of the English fort of Oswego, erected upon ground claimed by the French as a part of Canada. Learning Johnson's movements, he changed his plan, crossed Lake Champlain, made a circuit by way of Wood Creek, and gained the rear of the English army, with a force of about two thousand French and Indians. At midnight, on the seventh of September, the tidings reached Johnson that the army of the French baron was but a few miles distant from his camp. A council of war was called, and the resolution formed of detaching a thousand men to reconnoitre. "If they are to be killed," said Hendrick, the Mohawk chief, "they are too many; if they are to fight, they are too few." His remonstrance was unheeded; and the brave old savage, unable from age and corpulence to fight on foot, mounted his horse, and joined the English detachment with two hundred of his warriors. At sunrise, the party defiled from the camp, and entering the forest disappeared from the eyes of their comrades.

Those who remained behind labored with all the energy of alarm to fortify their unprotected camp. An hour elapsed, when from the distance was heard a sudden explosion of musketry. The excited soldiers suspended their work to listen. A rattling fire succeeded, deadened among the woods, but growing louder and nearer, till none could doubt that their comrades had met the French, and were defeated.

This was indeed the case. Marching through thick woods, by the narrow and newly cut road which led along the valley southward from Lake George, Williams, the English commander, had led his men full into an ambuscade, where all Dieskau's army lay in wait to receive them. From the woods on both sides rose an appalling shout, followed by a storm of bullets. Williams was soon shot down; Hendrick shared his fate; many officers fell, and the road was strewn with dead and wounded soldiers. The English gave way at once. Had they been regular troops, the result would have been worse; but every man was a woodsman and a hunter. Some retired in bodies along the road; while the greater part spread themselves through the forest, opposing a wide front to the enemy, fighting stubbornly as they retreated, and shooting back at the French from behind every tree or bush that could afford a cover. The Canadians and Indians pressed them closely, darting, with shrill cries, from tree to tree, while Dieskau's regulars, with steadier advance, bore all before them. Far and wide through the forest rang shout and shriek and Indian whoop, mingled with the deadly rattle of guns. Retreating and pursuing, the combatants passed northward towards the English camp, leaving the ground behind them strewn with dead and dying.

A fresh detachment from the camp came in aid of the English, and the pursuit was checked. Yet the retreating

men were not the less rejoiced when they could discern, between the brown columns of the woods, the mountains and waters of Lake George, with the white tents of their encampments on its shore. The French followed no farther. The blast of their trumpets was heard recalling their scattered men for a final attack.

During the absence of Williams's detachment, the main body of the army had covered the front of their camp with a breastwork, — if that name can be applied to a row of logs, — behind which the marksmen lay flat on their faces. This preparation was not yet complete, when the defeated troops appeared issuing from the woods. Breathless and perturbed, they entered the camp, and lay down with the rest; and the army waited the attack in a frame of mind which boded ill for the result. Soon, at the edge of the woods which bordered the open space in front, painted Indians were seen, and bayonets glittered among the foliage, shining, in the homely comparison of a New England soldier, like a row of icicles on a January morning. The French regulars marched in column to the edge of the clearing, and formed in line, confronting the English at the distance of a hundred and fifty yards. Their complete order, their white uniforms and bristling bayonets, were a new and startling sight to the eyes of Johnson's rustic soldiers, who raised but a feeble cheer in answer to the shouts of their enemies. Happily, Dieskau made no assault. The regulars opened a distant fire of musketry, throwing volley after volley against the English, while the Canadians and Indians, dispersing through the morasses on each flank of the camp, fired sharply, under cover of the trees and bushes. In the rear, the English were protected by the lake; but on the three remaining sides, they were hedged in by the flash and smoke of musketry.

The fire of the French had little effect. The English recovered from their first surprise, and every moment their confidence rose higher and their shouts grew louder. Leveling their long hunting guns with cool precision, they returned a fire which thinned the ranks of the French, and galled them beyond endurance. Two cannon were soon brought to bear upon the morasses which sheltered the Canadians and Indians; and though the pieces were served with little skill, the assailants were so terrified by the crashing of the balls among the trunks and branches, that they gave way at once. Dieskau still persisted in the attack. From noon until past four o'clock the firing was scarcely abated, when at length the French, who had suffered extremely, showed signs of wavering. At this, with a general shout, the English broke from their camp, and rushed upon their enemies, striking them down with the butts of their guns, and driving them through the woods like deer. Dieskau was taken prisoner, dangerously wounded, and leaned for support against the stump of a tree. The slaughter would have been great, had not the English general recalled the pursuers, and suffered the French to continue their flight unmolested. Fresh disasters still awaited the fugitives; for, as they approached the scene of that morning's ambuscade, they were greeted by a volley of musketry. Two companies of New York and New Hampshire rangers, who had come out from Fort Edward as a scouting party, had lain in wait to receive them. Favored by the darkness of the woods, — for night was now approaching, — they made so sudden and vigorous an attack, that the French, though far superior in number, were totally routed and dispersed.

This memorable conflict has cast its dark associations over one of the most beautiful spots in America. Near the scene

of the evening fight, a pool, half overgrown by weeds and water lilies, and darkened by the surrounding forest, is pointed out to the tourist, and he is told that beneath its stagnant waters lie the bones of three hundred Frenchmen, deep buried in mud and slime.

The war thus begun was prosecuted for five succeeding years with the full energy of both nations. The period was one of suffering and anxiety to the colonists, who, knowing the full extent of their danger, spared no exertion to avert it. In the year 1758, Lord Abercrombie, who then commanded in America, had at his disposal a force amounting to fifty thousand men, of whom the greater part were provincials. The operations of the war embraced a wide extent of country, from Cape Breton and Nova Scotia to the sources of the Ohio; but nowhere was the contest so actively carried on as in the neighborhood of Lake George, the waters of which, joined with those of Lake Champlain, formed the main avenue of communication between Canada and the British provinces. Lake George is more than thirty miles long, but of width so slight that it seems like some broad and placid river, enclosed between ranges of lofty mountains; now contracting into narrows, dotted with islands and shadowed by cliffs and crags, now spreading into a clear and open expanse. It had long been known to the French. The Jesuit Isaac Jogues, bound on a fatal mission to the ferocious Mohawks, had reached its banks on the eve of Corpus Christi Day, and named it Lac St. Sacrement. Its solitude was now rudely invaded. Armies passed and repassed upon its tranquil bosom. At its northern point the French planted their stronghold of Ticonderoga; at its southern stood the English fort William Henry, while the mountains and waters between were a scene of ceaseless ambuscades, surprises, and

forest skirmishing. Through summer and winter, the crack of rifles and the cries of men gave no rest to their echoes; and at this day, on the field of many a forgotten fight, are dug up rusty tomahawks, corroded bullets, and human bones, to attest the struggles of the past.

CAMPAIGN OF 1756. — LOSS OF OSWEGO<sup>1</sup>

THROUGH the spring and early summer Shirley<sup>2</sup> was gathering recruits, often of the meanest quality, and sending them to Oswego to fill out the two emaciated regiments. The place must be defended at any cost. Its fall would ruin not only the enterprise against Niagara and Frontenac, but also that against Ticonderoga and Crown Point; since, having nothing more to fear on Lake Ontario, the French could unite their whole force on Lake Champlain, whether for defence or attack.

[The dreaded blow fell in August, 1756. Oswego was in no condition to withstand a siege, and Montcalm attacked it with a combined force of three thousand Canadians and Indians. — Ed.]

The principal work, called Old Oswego, or Fort Pepperell, stood at the mouth of the river on the west side, nearly opposite Fort Ontario, and less than five hundred yards distant from it. The trading-house, which formed the centre of the place, was built of rough stone laid in clay, and the wall which enclosed it was of the same materials; both would crumble in an instant at the touch of a twelve-pound shot. Towards the west and south they had been protected

<sup>1</sup> Montcalm and Wolfe, Vol. I., Ch. XII.

<sup>2</sup> Shirley was Governor of Massachusetts, and was for a brief period Commander-in-chief of the forces in America.



by an outer line of earthworks, mounted with cannon, and forming an entrenched camp; while the side towards Fort Ontario was left wholly exposed, in the rash confidence that this work, standing on the opposite heights, would guard against attack from that quarter. On a hill, a fourth of a mile beyond Old Oswego, stood the unfinished stockade called New Oswego, Fort George, or, by reason of its worthlessness, Fort Rascal. It had served as a cattle pen before the French appeared, but was now occupied by a hundred and fifty Jersey provincials. Old Oswego with its outwork was held by Shirley's regiment, chiefly invalids and raw recruits, to whom were now joined the garrison of Fort Ontario and a number of sailors, boatmen, and laborers.

Montcalm lost no time. As soon as darkness set in he began a battery at the brink of the height on which stood the captured fort. His whole force toiled all night, digging, setting gabions, and dragging up cannon, some of which had been taken from Braddock. Before daybreak twenty heavy pieces had been brought to the spot, and nine were already in position. The work had been so rapid that the English imagined their enemies to number six thousand at least. The battery soon opened fire. Grape and round shot swept the intrenchment and crashed through the rotten masonry. The English, says a French officer, "were exposed to their shoe-buckles." Their artillery was pointed the wrong way, in expectation of an attack, not from the east, but from the west. They now made a shelter of pork-barrels, three high and three deep, planted cannon behind them, and returned the French fire with some effect.

Early in the morning Montcalm had ordered Rigaud to cross the river with the Canadians and Indians. There was a ford three quarters of a league above the forts; and here

they passed over unopposed, the English not having discovered the movement. The only danger was from the river. Some of the men were forced to swim, others waded to the waist, and others to the neck; but they all crossed safely, and presently showed themselves at the edge of the woods, yelling and firing their guns, too far for much execution, but not too far to discourage the garrison.

The garrison were already disheartened. Colonel Mercer,



*Comte de Bougainville*

the soul of the defence, had just been cut in two by a cannon-shot while directing the gunners. Up to this time the defenders had behaved with spirit; but despair now seized them, increased by the screams and entreaties of the women, of whom there were more than a hundred in the place. There was a council of officers, and then the white flag was raised. Bougainville went to propose terms of capitulation.

"The cries, threats, and hideous howlings of our Canadians and Indians," says Vaudreuil, "made them quickly decide." "This," observes the Reverend Father Claude Godefroy Cocquard, "reminds me of the fall of Jericho before the shouts of the Israelites." The English surrendered prisoners of war, to the number, according to the governor, of sixteen hundred, which included the sailors,

laborers, and women. The Canadians and Indians broke through all restraint, and fell to plundering. There was an opening of rum-barrels and a scene of drunkenness, in which some of the prisoners had their share; while others tried to escape in the confusion, and were tomahawked by the excited savages. Many more would have been butchered, but for the efforts of Montcalm, who by unstinted promises succeeded in appeasing his ferocious allies, whom he dared not offend. "It will cost the king," he says, "eight or ten thousand livres in presents."

The loss on both sides is variously given. By the most trustworthy accounts, that of the English did not reach fifty killed, and that of the French was still less. In the forts and vessels were found above a hundred pieces of artillery, most of them swivels and other light guns, with a large quantity of powder, shot, and shell. The victors burned the forts and the vessels on the stocks, destroyed such provisions and stores as they could not carry away, and made the place a desert. The priest Piquet, who had joined the expedition, planted amid the ruin a tall cross, graven with the words, *In hoc signo vincunt*; and near it was set a pole bearing the arms of France, with the inscription, *Manibus date lilia plenis*. Then the army decamped, loaded with prisoners and spoil, descended to Montreal, hung the captured flags in the churches, and sang *Te Deum* in honor of their triumph.

It was the greatest that the French arms had yet achieved in America. The defeat of Braddock was an Indian victory; this last exploit was the result of bold enterprise and skilful tactics. With its laurels came its fruits. Hated Oswego had been laid in ashes, and the would-be assailants forced to a vain and hopeless defence. France had conquered the undisputed command of Lake Ontario, and her communica-

tions with the West were safe. A small garrison at Niagara and another at Frontenac would now hold those posts against any effort that the English could make this year; and the whole French force could concentrate at Ticonderoga, repel the threatened attack, and perhaps retort it by seizing Albany. If the English, on the other side, had lost a great material advantage, they had lost no less in honor. The news of the surrender was received with indignation in England and in the colonies. Yet the behavior of the garrison was not so discreditable as it seemed. The position was indefensible, and they could have held out at best but a few days more. They yielded too soon; but unless Webb had come to their aid, which was not to be expected, they must have yielded at last.

The French had scarcely gone, when two English scouts, Thomas Harris and James Conner, came with a party of Indians to the scene of desolation. The ground was strewn with broken casks and bread sodden with rain. The remains of burnt bateaux and whaleboats were scattered along the shore. The great stone trading-house in the old fort was a smoking ruin; Fort Rascal was still burning on the neighboring hill; Fort Ontario was a mass of ashes and charred logs, and by it stood two poles on which were written words which the visitors did not understand. They went back to Fort Johnson with their story; and Oswego reverted for a time to the bears, foxes, and wolves.

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1757 TO 1759 <sup>1</sup>

IN August, 1757, Montcalm struck a heavier blow. Passing Lake George with a force of eight thousand men, including about two thousand Indians, gathered from the farthest parts of Canada, he laid siege to Fort William Henry, close to the spot where Dieskau had been defeated two years before. Planting his batteries against it, he beat down its ramparts and dismounted its guns, until the garrison, after a brave defence, were forced to capitulate. They marched out with the honors of war; but scarcely had they done so, when Montcalm's Indians assailed them, cutting down and scalping them without mercy. Those who escaped came in to Fort Edward with exaggerated accounts of the horrors from which they had fled, and a general terror was spread through the country. The inhabitants were mustered from all parts to repel the advance of Montcalm; but the French general, satisfied with what he had done, repassed Lake George, and retired behind the walls of Ticonderoga.

In the year 1758, the war began to assume a different aspect, for Pitt was at the head of the government. Sir Jeffrey Amherst laid siege to the strong fortress of Louisbourg,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. IV.

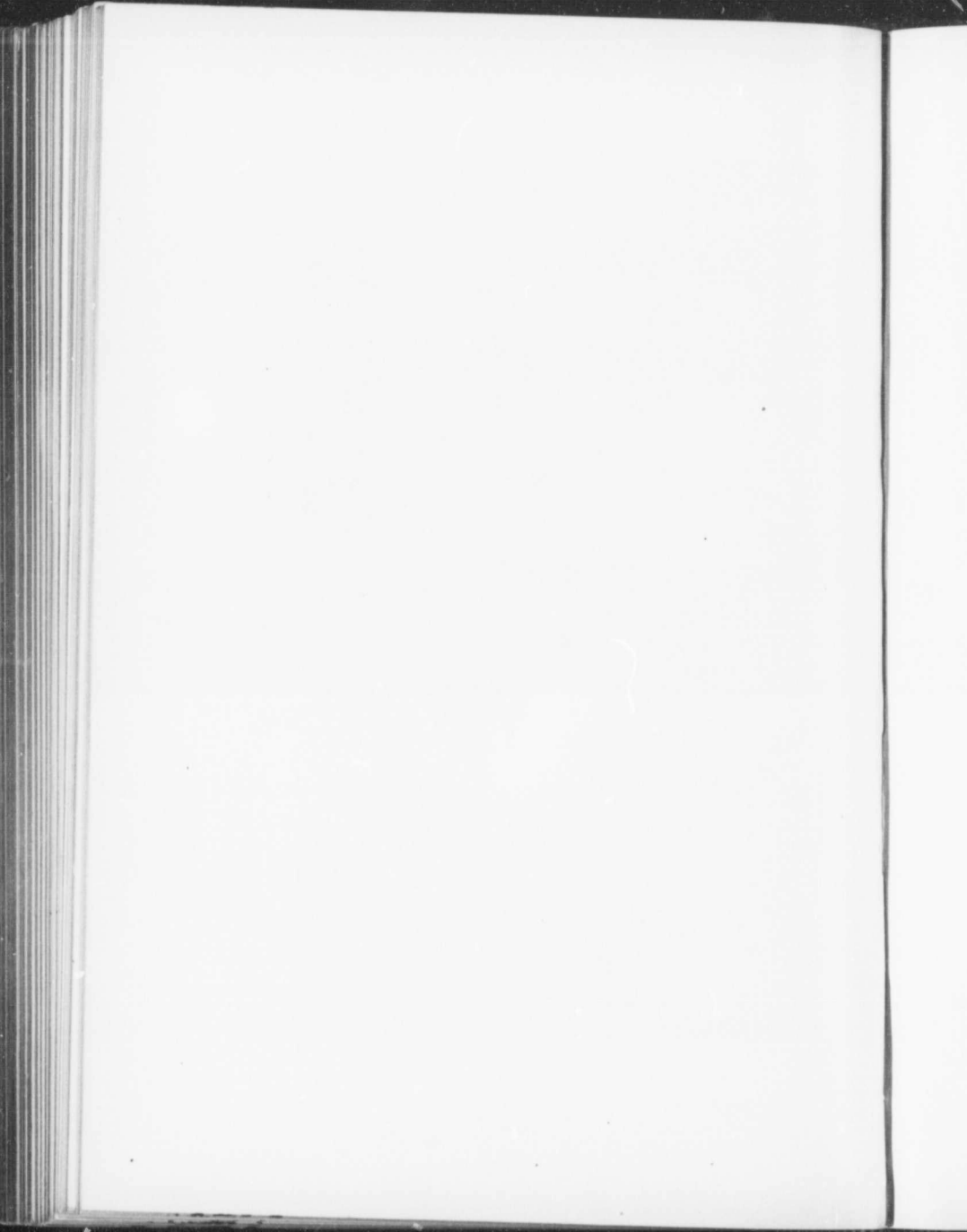
<sup>2</sup> The fall of the French stronghold was hailed in England with noisy rapture. Addresses of congratulation to the King poured in from all the cities of the kingdom, and the captured flags were hung in St. Paul's amid the roar of cannon and the shouts of the populace. The provinces shared these rejoicings. Sermons of thanksgiving resounded from countless New England pulpits. — Montcalm and Wolfe, Vol. II., Ch. XIX.

and at length reduced it; while in the south, General Forbes marched against Fort du Quesne,<sup>1</sup> and, more fortunate than his predecessor, Braddock, drove the French from that important point. Another successful stroke was the destruction of Fort Frontenac, which was taken by a provincial army under Colonel Bradstreet. These achievements were counterbalanced by a great disaster. Lord Abercrombie, with an army of sixteen thousand men, advanced to the head of Lake George, the place made memorable by Dieskau's defeat and the loss of Fort William Henry. On a brilliant July morning, he embarked his whole force for an attack on Ticonderoga. Many of those present have recorded with admiration the beauty of the spectacle, the lines of boats filled with troops stretching far down the lake, the flashing of oars, the glitter of weapons, and the music ringing back from crags and rocks, or dying in mellowed strains among the distant mountains. At night, the army landed, and, driving in the French outposts, marched through the woods towards Ticonderoga. One of their columns, losing its way in the forest, fell in with a body of the retreating French; and in the conflict that ensued, Lord Howe, the favorite of the army, was shot dead. On the eighth of July, they prepared to storm the lines which Montcalm had drawn across the peninsula in front of the fortress. Advancing to the attack, they saw before them a breastwork of uncommon height and thickness. The French army were drawn up be-

<sup>1</sup> If his achievement was not brilliant, its solid value was above price. It opened the Great West to English enterprise, took from France half her savage allies, and relieved the western borders from the scourge of Indian war. From Southern New York to North Carolina, the frontier populations had cause to bless the memory of the steadfast and all-enduring soldier. — Montcalm and Wolfe, Vol. II., Ch. XXII.



A VIEW OF LOUISBOURG IN NORTH AMERICA.





hind it, their heads alone visible, as they levelled their muskets against the assailants, while, for a hundred yards in front of the work, the ground was covered with felled trees, with sharpened branches pointing outward. The signal of assault was given. In vain the Highlanders, screaming with rage, hewed with their broadswords among the branches, struggling to get at the enemy. In vain the English, with their deep-toned shout, rushed on in heavy columns. A tempest of musket balls met them, and Montcalm's cannon swept the whole ground with terrible carnage. A few officers and men forced their way through the branches, passed the ditch, climbed the breastwork, and, leaping among the enemy, were instantly bayoneted. The English fought four hours with determined valor, but the position of the French was impregnable; and at length, having lost two thousand of their number, the army drew off, leaving many of their dead scattered upon the field. A sudden panic seized the defeated troops. They rushed in haste to their boats, and, though no pursuit was attempted, they did not regain their composure until Lake George was between them and the enemy. The fatal lines of Ticonderoga were not soon forgotten in the provinces; and marbles in Westminster Abbey preserve the memory of those who fell on that disastrous day.

LORD HOWE<sup>1</sup>

PITT meant that the actual command of the army should be in the hands of Brigadier Lord Howe, and he was in fact its real chief; "the noblest Englishman that has appeared in



*Major Robert Rogers*

my time, and the best soldier in the British army," says Wolfe. And he elsewhere speaks of him as "that great man." Abercrombie testifies to the universal respect and love with which officers and men regarded him, and Pitt calls him "a character of ancient times; a complete model of military virtue." High as this praise is, it seems to have been deserved. The young nobleman, who was then in his thirty-fourth year, had the qualities of a leader of men. The army felt him, from general to drummer-boy. He was its soul; and while breathing into it his own energy and ardor, and bracing it by stringent discipline, he broke

<sup>1</sup> Montcalm and Wolfe, Vol. II., Ch. XX.

through the traditions of the service and gave it new shapes to suit the time and place. During the past year he had studied the art of forest warfare, and joined Rogers and his rangers in their scouting-parties, sharing all their hardships and making himself one of them. Perhaps the reforms that he introduced were fruits of this rough self-imposed schooling. He made officers and men throw off all useless incumbrances, cut their hair close, wear leggins to protect them from briars, brown the barrels of their muskets, and carry in their knapsacks thirty pounds of meal, which they cooked for themselves; so that, according to an admiring Frenchman, they could live a month without their supply-trains. "You would laugh to see the droll figure we all make," writes an officer. "Regulars as well as provincials have cut their coats so as scarcely to reach their waists. No officer or private is allowed to carry more than one blanket and a bearskin. A small portmanteau is allowed each officer. No women follow the camp to wash our linen. Lord Howe has already shown an example by going to the brook and washing his own."

Here, as in all things, he shared the lot of the soldier, and required his officers to share it. A story is told of him that before the army embarked he invited some of them to dinner in his tent, where they found no seats but logs, and no carpet but bearskins. A servant presently placed on the ground a large dish of pork and peas, on which his lordship took from his pocket a sheath containing a knife and fork and began to cut the meat. The guests looked on in some embarrassment; upon which he said: "Is it possible, gentlemen, that you have come on this campaign without providing yourselves with what is necessary?" And he gave each of them a sheath, with a knife and fork, like his own.

Yet this Lycurgus of the camp, as a contemporary calls

him, is described as a man of social accomplishments rare even in his rank. He made himself greatly beloved by the provincial officers, with many of whom he was on terms of intimacy, and he did what he could to break down the barriers between the colonial soldiers and the British regulars. When he was at Albany, sharing with other high officers the kindly hospitalities of Mrs. Schuyler, he so won the heart of that excellent matron that she loved him like a son; and, though not given to such effusion, embraced him with tears on the morning when he left her to lead his division to the lake. In Westminster Abbey may be seen the tablet on which Massachusetts pays grateful tribute to his virtues, and commemorates "the affection her officers and soldiers bore to his command."

This repulse,<sup>1</sup> far from depressing the energies of the British commanders, seemed to stimulate them to new exertion; and the campaign of the next year, 1759, had for its object the immediate and total reduction of Canada. This unhappy country was full of misery and disorder. Peculation and every kind of corruption prevailed among its civil and military chiefs, a reckless licentiousness was increasing among the people, and a general famine seemed impending, for the population had of late years been drained away for military service, and the fields were left untilled. In spite of their sufferings, the Canadians, strong in rooted antipathy to the English, and highly excited by their priests, resolved on fighting to the last. Prayers were offered up in the churches, masses said, and penances enjoined, to avert the wrath of God from the colony, while everything was done for its defence which the energies of a great and patriotic leader could effect.

<sup>1</sup> Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. IV.

THE ADVENT OF WOLFE<sup>1</sup>

CAPTAIN JOHN KNOX, of the forty-third regiment, had spent the winter of 1758-1759 in garrison at Fort Cumberland on the hill of Beauséjour.<sup>2</sup>

About the middle of April a schooner came up the bay, bringing letters that filled men and officers with delight. The regiment was ordered to hold itself ready to embark for Louisbourg<sup>3</sup> and join an expedition to the St. Lawrence, under command of Major-General Wolfe. All that afternoon the soldiers were shouting and cheering in their barracks; and when they mustered for the evening roll-call, there was another burst of huzzas. They waited in expectancy nearly three weeks, and then the transports which were to carry them arrived, bringing the provincials who had been hastily raised in New England to take their place. These Knox describes as a mean-looking set of fellows, of all ages and sizes, and without any kind of discipline; adding that their officers are sober, modest men, who, though of confined ideas,

<sup>1</sup> Montcalm and Wolfe, Vol. II., Ch. XXIV.

<sup>2</sup> At the head of Chignecto Bay, an arm of the present Bay of Fundy. — Ed.

<sup>3</sup> Louisbourg was a formidable French stronghold upon the south shore of Isle Royale, or Cape Breton Island, and was established to offset the loss of Acadia which had been ceded to England by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. It was captured by William Pepperrell and his Massachusetts militia in 1745. At the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in October, 1749, Louisbourg was once more restored to France, to the great distress and indignation of the colonies. In 1758, a British fleet under Admiral Boscawen and an army under Amherst reduced the fortress. Wolfe took a conspicuous part in the expedition. — Ed.

talk very clearly and sensibly, and make a decent appearance in blue, faced with scarlet, though the privates have no uniform at all.

At last the forty-third set sail, the cannon of the fort saluting them, and the soldiers cheering lustily, overjoyed to escape from their long imprisonment. A gale soon began; the transports became separated; Knox's vessel sheltered herself for a time in Passamaquoddy Bay; then passed the Grand Menan, and steered southward and eastward along the coast of Nova Scotia. A calm followed the gale; and they moved so slowly that Knox beguiled the time by fishing over the stern, and caught a halibut so large that he was forced to call for help to pull it in. Then they steered northeastward, now lost in fogs, and now tossed mercilessly on those boisterous waves; till, on the twenty-fourth of May, they saw a rocky and surf-lashed shore, with a forest of masts rising to all appearance out of it. It was the British fleet in the land-locked harbor of Louisbourg.

On the left, as they sailed through the narrow passage, lay the town, scarred with shot and shell, the red cross floating over its battered ramparts; and around in a wide semicircle rose the bristling backs of rugged hills, set thick with dismal evergreens. They passed the great ships of the fleet, and anchored among the other transports towards the head of the harbor. It was not yet free from ice; and the floating masses lay so thick in some parts that the reckless sailors, returning from leave on shore, jumped from one to another to regain their ships. There was a review of troops, and Knox went to see it; but it was over before he reached the place, where he was presently told of a characteristic reply just made by Wolfe to some officers who had apologized for not having taught their men the new exercise. "Poh, poh!

— new exercise — new fiddlestick. If they are otherwise well disciplined, and will fight, that's all I shall require of them."

Knox does not record his impressions of his new commander, which must have been disappointing. He called him afterwards a British Achilles; but in person at least Wolfe bore no likeness to the son of Peleus, for never was the soul of a hero cased in a frame so incongruous. His face, when seen in profile, was singular as that of the Great Condé. The forehead and chin receded; the nose, slightly upturned, formed with the other features the point of an obtuse triangle; the mouth was by no means shaped to express resolution; and nothing but the clear, bright, and piercing eye bespoke the spirit within. On his head he wore a black three-cornered hat; his red hair was tied in a queue behind; his narrow shoulders, slender body, and long, thin limbs were cased in a scarlet frock, with broad cuffs and ample skirts that reached the knee; while on his left arm he wore a band of crape in mourning for his father, of whose death he had heard a few days before.

James Wolfe was in his thirty-third year. His father was an officer of distinction, Major-General Edward Wolfe, and he himself, a delicate and sensitive child, but an impetuous and somewhat headstrong youth, had served the king since the age of fifteen. From childhood he had dreamed of the army and the wars. At sixteen he was in Flanders, adjutant of his regiment, discharging the duties of the post in a way that gained him early promotion and, along with a painstaking assiduity, showing a precocious faculty for commanding men. He passed with credit through several campaigns, took part in the victory of Dettingen, and then went to Scotland to fight at Culloden. Next we find him at

Stirling, Perth, and Glasgow, always ardent and always diligent, constant in military duty, and giving his spare hours to mathematics and Latin. He presently fell in love; and being disappointed, plunged into a variety of dissipations, contrary to his usual habits, which were far above the standard of that profligate time.

At twenty-three he was a lieutenant-colonel, commanding his regiment in the then dirty and barbarous town of



*Major-General James Wolfe*

Inverness, amid a disaffected and turbulent population whom it was his duty to keep in order: a difficult task, which he accomplished so well as to gain the special commendation of the king, and even the good-will of the Highlanders themselves. He was five years among these northern hills, battling with ill-health, and restless under the intellectual barrenness of his surroundings. He felt his position to be in no way salutary, and wrote to his mother: "The fear of

becoming a mere ruffian and of imbibing the tyrannical principles of an absolute commander, or giving way insensibly to the temptations of power till I became proud, insolent, and intolerable,—these considerations will make me wish to leave the regiment before next winter; that by frequenting men above myself I may know my true condition, and by discoursing with the other sex may learn some civility and mildness of carriage." He got leave of absence, and



spent six months in Paris, where he was presented at Court and saw much of the best society. This did not prevent him from working hard to perfect himself in French, as well as in horsemanship, fencing, dancing, and other accomplishments, and from earnestly seeking an opportunity to study the various armies of Europe. In this he was thwarted by the stupidity and prejudice of the commander-in-chief; and he made what amends he could by extensive reading in all that bore on military matters.

His martial instincts were balanced by strong domestic inclinations. He was a most dutiful son, and wrote continually to both his parents. His nature was a compound of tenderness and fire, which last sometimes showed itself in sharp and unpleasant flashes. His excitable temper was capable almost of fierceness, and he could now and then be needlessly stern; but towards his father, mother, and friends he was a model of steady affection. He made friends readily, and kept them, and was usually a pleasant companion, though subject to sallies of imperious irritability which occasionally broke through his strong sense of good breeding. For this his susceptible constitution was largely answerable, for he was a living barometer, and his spirits rose and fell with every change of weather. In spite of his impatient outbursts, the officers whom he had commanded remained attached to him for life; and, in spite of his rigorous discipline, he was beloved by his soldiers, to whose comfort he was always attentive. Frankness, directness, essential good feeling, and a high integrity atoned for all his faults.

In his own view, as expressed to his mother, he was a person of very moderate abilities, aided by more than usual diligence; but this modest judgment of himself by no means deprived him of self-confidence, nor, in time of need, of self-

assertion. He delighted in every kind of hardihood; and, in his contempt for effeminacy, once said to his mother: "Better be a savage of some use than a gentle, amorous puppy, obnoxious to all the world." He was far from despising fame; but the controlling principles of his life were duty to his country and his profession, loyalty to the king, and fidelity to his own ideal of the perfect soldier. To the parent who was the confidant of his most intimate thoughts he said: "All that I wish for myself is that I may at all times be ready and firm to meet that fate we cannot shun, and to die gracefully and properly when the hour comes." Never was wish more signally fulfilled. Again he tells her: "My utmost desire and ambition is to look steadily upon danger;" and his desire was accomplished. His intrepidity was complete. No form of death had power to daunt him. Once and again, when bound on some deadly enterprise of war, he calmly counts the chances whether or not he can compel his feeble body to bear him on till the work is done. A frame so delicately strung could not have been insensible to danger; but forgetfulness of self, and the absorption of every faculty in the object before him, shut out the sense of fear. He seems always to have been at his best in the thick of battle; most complete in his mastery over himself and over others.

But it is in the intimacies of domestic life that one sees him most closely, and especially in his letters to his mother, from whom he inherited his frail constitution, without the beauty that distinguished her. "The greatest happiness that I wish for here is to see you happy." "If you stay much at home I will come and shut myself up with you for three weeks or a month, and play at piquet from morning till night; and you shall laugh at my short red hair as

much as you please." The playing at piquet was a sacrifice to filial attachment; for the mother loved cards, and the son did not. "Don't trouble yourself about my room or my bedclothes; too much care and delicacy at this time would enervate me and complete the destruction of a tottering constitution. Such as it is, it must serve me now, and I'll make the best of it while it holds." At the beginning of the war his father tried to dissuade him from offering his services on board the fleet; and he replies in a letter to Mrs. Wolfe: "It is no time to think of what is convenient or agreeable; that service is certainly the best in which we are the most useful. For my part, I am determined never to give myself a moment's concern about the nature of the duty which His Majesty is pleased to order us upon. It will be a sufficient comfort to you two, as far as my person is concerned,—at least it will be a reasonable consolation,—to reflect that the Power which has hitherto preserved me may, if it be his pleasure, continue to do so; if not, that it is but a few days or a few years more or less, and that those who perish in their duty and in the service of their country die honorably." Then he proceeds to give particular directions about his numerous dogs, for the welfare of which in his absence he provides with anxious solicitude, especially for "my friend Caesar, who has great merit and much good-humor."

When about to sail on the expedition against Louisbourg, he was anxious for his parents, and wrote to his uncle, Major Wolfe, at Dublin: "I trust you will give the best advice to my mother, and such assistance, if it should be wanted, as the distance between you will permit. I mention this because the General seems to decline apace, and narrowly escaped being carried off in the spring. She, poor woman, is

in a bad state of health, and needs the care of some friendly hand. She has long and painful fits of illness, which by succession and inheritance are likely to devolve on me, since I feel the early symptoms of them." Of his friends Guy Carleton, afterwards Lord Dorchester, and George Warde, the companion of his boyhood, he also asks help for his mother in his absence.

His part in the taking of Louisbourg greatly increased his reputation. After his return he went to Bath to recruit his health; and it seems to have been here that he wooed and won Miss Katherine Lowther, daughter of an ex-Governor of Barbadoes, and sister of the future Lord Lonsdale. A betrothal took place, and Wolfe wore her portrait till the night before his death. It was a little before this engagement that he wrote to his friend Lieutenant-Colonel Rickson: "I have this day signified to Mr. Pitt that he may dispose of my slight carcass as he pleases, and that I am ready for any undertaking within the compass of my skill and cunning. I am in a very bad condition both with the gravel and rheumatism; but I had much rather die than decline any kind of service that offers. If I followed my own taste it would lead me into Germany. However, it is not our part to choose, but to obey. My opinion is that I shall join the army in America."

Pitt chose him to command the expedition then fitting out against Quebec; made him a major-general, though, to avoid giving offence to older officers, he was to hold that rank in America alone; and permitted him to choose his own staff. Appointments made for merit, and not through routine and patronage, shocked the Duke of Newcastle, to whom a man like Wolfe was a hopeless enigma; and he told George II. that Pitt's new general was mad. "Mad is

he?" returned the old king; "then I hope he will bite some others of my generals."

At the end of January the fleet was almost ready, and Wolfe wrote to his uncle Walter: "I am to act a greater part in this business than I wished. The backwardness of some of the older officers has in some measure forced the government to come down so low. I shall do my best, and leave the rest to fortune, as perforce we must when there are not the most commanding abilities. We expect to sail in about three weeks. A London life and little exercise disagrees entirely with me, but the sea still more. If I have health and constitution enough for the campaign, I shall think myself a lucky man; what happens afterwards is of no great consequence." He



*Duke of Newcastle*

sent to his mother an affectionate letter of farewell, went to Spithead, embarked with Admiral Saunders in the ship "Neptune," and set sail on the seventeenth of February. In a few hours the whole squadron was at sea, the transports, the frigates, and the great line-of-battle ships, with their ponderous armament and their freight of rude humanity armed and trained for destruction; while on the heaving deck of the "Neptune," wretched with sea-sickness and racked with pain, stood the gallant invalid who was master of it all.

The fleet consisted of twenty-two ships of the line, with frigates, sloops-of-war, and a great number of transports. When Admiral Saunders arrived with his squadron off Louisbourg, he found the entrance blocked by ice, and was forced to seek harborage at Halifax. The squadron of Admiral Holmes, which had sailed a few days earlier, proceeded to New York to take on board troops destined for the expedition,



*Sir Charles Saunders*

while the squadron of Admiral Durell steered for the St. Lawrence to intercept the expected ships from France.

In May the whole fleet, except the ten ships with Durell, was united in the harbor of Louisbourg. Twelve thousand troops were to have been employed for the expedition; but several regiments expected from the West Indies were for some reason countermanded, while the accessions from New

York and the Nova Scotia garrisons fell far short of the looked-for numbers. Three weeks before leaving Louisbourg, Wolfe writes to his uncle Walter that he has an army of nine thousand men. The actual number seems to have been somewhat less. "Our troops are good," he informs Pitt; "and if valor can make amends for the want of numbers, we shall probably succeed."

Three brigadiers, all in the early prime of life, held com-

mand under him: Monckton, Townshend, and Murray. They were all his superiors in birth, and one of them, Townshend, never forgot that he was so. "George Townshend," says Walpole, "has thrust himself again into the service; and, as far as wrongheadedness will go, is very proper for a hero." The same caustic writer says further that he was of "a proud, sullen, and contemptuous temper," and that he "saw everything in an ill-natured and ridiculous light." Though his perverse and envious disposition made him a difficult colleague, Townshend had both talents and energy; as also had Monckton, the same officer who commanded at the capture of Beauséjour in 1755. Murray, too, was well matched to the work in hand, in spite of some lingering remains of youthful rashness.

On the sixth of June the last ship of the fleet sailed out of Louisbourg harbor, the troops cheering and the officers drinking to the toast, "British colors on every French fort, port, and garrison in America." The ships that had gone before lay to till the whole fleet was reunited, and then all steered together for the St. Lawrence. From the headland of Cape Egmont, the Micmac hunter, gazing far out over the shimmering sea, saw the horizon flecked with their canvas wings, as they bore northward on their errand of havoc.

PLAN OF INVASION<sup>1</sup>

By the plan of this summer's campaign, Canada was to be assailed on three sides at once. Upon the west, General Prideaux was to attack Niagara; upon the south, General Amherst was to advance upon Ticonderoga and Crown



*Sir Jeffrey Amherst*

Point; while upon the east, General Wolfe was to besiege Quebec; and each of these armies, having accomplished its particular object, was directed to push forward, if possible, until all three had united in the heart of Canada. In pursuance of the plan, General Prideaux moved up Lake Ontario and invested Niagara. This post was one of the greatest importance. Its capture would cut off the French from the whole interior country, and they there-

fore made every effort to raise the siege. An army of seventeen hundred French and Indians, collected at the distant garrisons of Detroit, Presqu' Isle, Le Boeuf, and Venango, suddenly appeared before Niagara. Sir William Johnson

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I, Ch. IV.



was now in command of the English, Prideaux having been killed by the bursting of a cohorn. Advancing in order of battle, he met the French, charged, routed, and pursued them for five miles through the woods. This success was soon followed by the surrender of the fort.

In the mean time, Sir Jeffrey Amherst had crossed Lake George, and appeared before Ticonderoga; upon which the French blew up their works, and retired down Lake Champlain to Crown Point. Retreating from this position also, on the approach of the English army, they collected all their forces, amounting to little more than three thousand men, at Isle-aux-Noix, where they intrenched themselves, and prepared to resist the farther progress of the invaders. The lateness of the season prevented Amherst from carrying out the plan of advancing into Canada, and compelled him to go into winter-quarters at Crown Point. The same cause had withheld Prideaux's army from descending the St. Lawrence.

WOLFE AT QUEBEC<sup>1</sup>

IN early spring the chiefs of Canada met at Montreal to settle a plan of defence. What at first they most dreaded was an advance of the enemy by way of Lake Champlain. Bourlamaque, with three battalions, was ordered to take post

at Ticonderoga, hold it if he could, or, if overborne by numbers, fall back to Isle-aux-Noix, at the outlet of the lake. La Corne was sent with a strong detachment to intrench himself at the head of the rapids of the St. Lawrence, and oppose any hostile movement from Lake Ontario. Every able-bodied man in the colony, and every boy who could fire a gun, was to be called to the field. Vaudreuil sent a circular



*Marquis de Vaudreuil*

letter to the militia captains of all the parishes, with orders to read it to the parishioners. It exhorted them to defend their religion, their wives, their children, and their goods from the fury of the heretics; declared that he, the

<sup>1</sup> Montcalm and Wolfe, Vol. II, Ch. XXV.

governor, would never yield up Canada on any terms whatever; and ordered them to join the army at once, leaving none behind but the old, the sick, the women, and the children. The bishop issued a pastoral mandate: "On every side, dearest brethren, the enemy is making immense preparations. His forces, at least six times more numerous than ours, are already in motion. Never was Canada in a state so critical and full of peril. Never were we so destitute, or threatened with an attack so fierce, so general, and so obstinate. Now, in truth, we may say, more than ever before, that our only resource is in the powerful succor of our Lord. Then, dearest brethren, make every effort to deserve it. 'Seek first the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.'" And he reproveth their sins, exhorts them to repentance, and ordains processions, masses, and prayers.

Vaudreuil bustled and boasted. In May he wrote to the minister: "The zeal with which I am animated for the service of the king will always make me surmount the greatest obstacles. I am taking the most proper measures to give the enemy a good reception whenever he may attack us. I keep in view the defence of Quebec. I have given orders in the parishes below to muster the inhabitants who are able to bear arms, and place women, children, cattle, and even hay and grain, in places of safety. Permit me, Monseigneur, to beg you to have the goodness to assure His Majesty that, to whatever hard extremity I may be reduced, my zeal will be equally ardent and indefatigable, and that I shall do the impossible to prevent our enemies from making progress in any direction, or, at least, to make them pay extremely dear for it." Then he writes again to say that Amherst with a great army will, as he learns, attack Ticonderoga; that Brad-

street, with six thousand men, will advance to Lake Ontario; and that six thousand more will march to the Ohio. "Whatever progress they may make," he adds, "I am resolved to yield them nothing, but hold my ground even to annihilation." He promises to do his best to keep on good terms with Montcalm, and ends with a warm eulogy of Bigot.

It was in the midst of all these preparations that Bougainville arrived from France with news that a great fleet was on its way to attack Quebec. The town was filled with consternation mixed with surprise, for the Canadians had believed that the dangerous navigation of the St. Lawrence would deter their enemies from the attempt. "Everybody," writes one of them, "was stupefied at an enterprise that seemed so bold." In a few days a crowd of sails was seen approaching. They were not enemies, but friends. It was the fleet of the contractor Cadet, commanded by an officer named Kanon, and loaded with supplies for the colony. They anchored in the harbor, eighteen sail in all, and their arrival spread universal joy. Admiral Durell had come too late to intercept them, catching but three stragglers that had lagged behind the rest. Still others succeeded in eluding him, and before the first of June five more ships had come safely into port.

When the news brought by Bougainville reached Montreal, nearly the whole force of the colony, except the detachments of Bourlamaque and La Corne, was ordered to Quebec. Montcalm hastened thither, and Vaudreuil followed. The governor-general wrote to the minister in his usual strain, as if all the hope of Canada rested in him. Such, he says, was his activity, that, though very busy, he reached Quebec only a day and a half after Montcalm; and, on arriving, learned from his scouts that English ships-of-war had

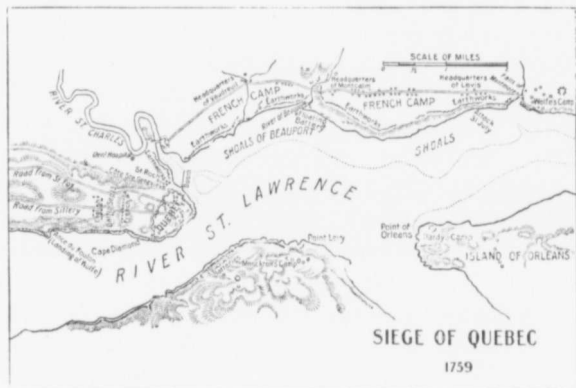
already appeared at Isle-aux-Coudres. These were the squadron of Durell. "I expect," Vaudreuil goes on, "to be sharply attacked, and that our enemies will make their most powerful efforts to conquer this colony; but there is no ruse, no resource, no means which my zeal does not suggest to lay snares for them, and finally, when the exigency demands it, to fight them with an ardor, and even a fury, which exceeds the range of their ambitious designs. The troops, the Canadians, and the Indians are not ignorant of the resolution I have taken, and from which I shall not recoil under any circumstance whatever. The burghers of this city have already put their goods and furniture in places of safety. The old men, women, and children hold themselves ready to leave town. My firmness is generally applauded. It has penetrated every heart; and each man says aloud: 'Canada, our native land, shall bury us under its ruins before we surrender to the English!' This is decidedly my own determination, and I shall hold to it inviolably." He launches into high praise of the contractor Cadet, whose zeal for the service of the king and the defence of the colony he declares to be triumphant over every difficulty. It is necessary, he adds, that ample supplies of all kinds should be sent out in the autumn, with the distribution of which Cadet offers to charge himself, and to account for them at their first cost; but he does not say what prices his disinterested friend will compel the destitute Canadians to pay for them.

Five battalions from France, nearly all the colony troops, and the militia from every part of Canada poured into Quebec, along with a thousand or more Indians, who, at the call of Vaudreuil, came to lend their scalping-knives to the defence. Such was the ardor of the people that boys of fifteen and men of eighty were to be seen in the camp.

Isle-aux-Coudres and Isle d'Orléans were ordered to be evacuated, and an excited crowd on the rock of Quebec watched hourly for the approaching fleet. Days passed and weeks passed, yet it did not appear. Meanwhile Vaudreuil held council after council to settle a plan of defence. They were strange scenes: a crowd of officers of every rank, mixed pell-mell in a small room, pushing, shouting, elbowing each other, interrupting each other; till Montcalm, in despair, took each aside after the meeting was over, and made him give his opinion in writing.

He himself had at first proposed to encamp the army on the plains of Abraham and the meadows of the St. Charles, making that river his line of defence; but he changed his plan, and, with the concurrence of Vaudreuil, resolved to post his whole force on the St. Lawrence below the city, with his right resting on the St. Charles, and his left on the Montmorenci. Here, accordingly, the troops and militia were stationed as they arrived. Early in June, standing at the northeastern brink of the rock of Quebec, one could have seen the whole position at a glance. On the curving shore from the St. Charles to the rocky gorge of the Montmorenci, a distance of seven or eight miles, the whitewashed dwellings of the parish of Beauport stretched down the road in a double chain, and the fields on both sides were studded with tents, huts, and Indian wigwams. Along the borders of the St. Lawrence, as far as the eye could distinguish them, gangs of men were throwing up redoubts, batteries, and lines of intrenchment. About midway between the two extremities of the encampment ran the little river of Beauport; and on the rising ground just beyond it stood a large stone house, round which the tents were thickly clustered; for here Montcalm had made his headquarters.

A boom of logs chained together was drawn across the mouth of the St. Charles, which was further guarded by two hulks mounted with cannon. The bridge of boats that crossed the stream nearly a mile above, formed the chief communication between the city and the camp. Its head towards Beauport was protected by a strong and extensive earthwork; and the banks of the stream on the Quebec side



were also entrenched, to form a second line of defence in case the position at Beauport should be forced.

In the city itself every gate, except the Palace Gate, which gave access to the bridge, was closed and barricaded. A hundred and six cannon were mounted on the walls. A floating battery of twelve heavy pieces, a number of gun-boats, eight fireships, and several firerafts formed the river defences. The largest merchantmen of Kanon's fleet were sacrificed to make the fireships; and the rest, along with the frigates that came with them, were sent for safety up the St. Lawrence beyond the River Richelieu, whence about

a thousand of their sailors returned to man the batteries and gunboats.

In the camps along the Beauport shore were about fourteen thousand men, besides Indians. The regulars held the centre; the militia of Quebec and Three Rivers were on the right, and those of Montreal on the left. In Quebec itself there was a garrison of between one and two thousand men under the Chevalier de Ramesay. Thus the whole number, including Indians, amounted to more than sixteen thousand; and though the Canadians who formed the greater part of it were of little use in the open field, they could be trusted to fight well behind intrenchments. Against this force, posted behind defensive works, on positions almost impregnable by nature, Wolfe brought less than nine thousand men available for operations on land. The steep and lofty heights that lined the river made the cannon of the ships for the most part useless, while the exigencies of the naval service forbade employing the sailors on shore. In two or three instances only, throughout the siege, small squads of them landed to aid in moving and working cannon; and the actual fighting fell to the troops alone.

Vaudreuil and Bigot took up their quarters with the army. The governor-general had delegated the command of the land-forces to Montcalm, whom, in his own words, he authorized "to give orders everywhere, provisionally." His relations with him were more than ever anomalous and critical; for while Vaudreuil, in virtue of his office, had a right to supreme command, Montcalm, now a lieutenant-general, held a military grade far above him; and the governor, while always writing himself down in his despatches as the head and front of every movement, had too little self-confidence not to leave the actual command in the hands of his rival.



Days and weeks wore on, and the first excitement gave way to restless impatience. Why did not the English come? Many of the Canadians thought that Heaven would interpose and wreck the English fleet, as it had wrecked that of Admiral Walker half a century before. There were processions, prayers, and vows towards this happy consummation. Food was scarce. Bigot and Cadet lived in luxury; fowls by thousands were fattened with wheat for their tables, while the people were put on rations of two ounces of bread a day. Durell and his ships were reported to be still at Isle-aux-Coudres. Vaudreuil sent thither a party of Canadians, and they captured three midshipmen, who, says Montcalm, had gone ashore *pour polissonner*, that is, on a lark. These youths were brought to Quebec, where they increased the general anxiety by grossly exaggerating the English force.

At length it became known that eight English vessels were anchored in the north channel of Orleans, and on the twenty-first of June the masts of three of them could plainly be seen. One of the fireships was consumed in a vain attempt to burn them, and several firerafts and a sort of infernal machine were tried with no better success; the unwelcome visitors still held their posts.

Meanwhile the whole English fleet had slowly advanced, piloted by Denis de Vitré, a Canadian of good birth, captured at sea some time before, and now compelled to serve, under a threat of being hanged if he refused. Nor was he alone; for when Durell reached the place where the river pilots were usually taken on board, he raised a French flag to his mast-head, causing great rejoicings among the Canadians on shore, who thought that a fleet was come to their rescue, and that their country was saved. The pilots launched their canoes and came out to the ships, where they

were all made prisoners; then the French flag was lowered, and the red cross displayed in its stead. The spectators on shore turned from joy to despair; and a priest who stood watching the squadron with a telescope is said to have dropped dead with the revulsion of feeling.

Towards the end of June the main fleet was near the mountain of Cape Tourmente. The passage called the Traverse, between the Cape and the lower end of the Island of Orleans, was reputed one of the most dangerous parts of the St. Lawrence; and as the ships successively came up, the captive pilots were put on board to carry them safely through, on pain of death. One of these men was assigned to the transport "Goodwill," in which was Captain Knox, who spoke French, and who reports thus in his Diary: "He gasconaded at a most extravagant rate, and gave us to understand that it was much against his will that he was become an English pilot. The poor fellow assumed great latitude in his conversation, and said 'he made no doubt that some of the fleet would return to England, but they should have a dismal tale to carry with them; for Canada should be the grave of the whole army, and he expected in a short time to see the walls of Quebec ornamented with English scalps.' Had it not been in obedience to the admiral, who gave orders that he should not be ill-used, he would certainly have been thrown overboard." The master of the transport was an old sailor named Killick, who despised the whole Gallic race, and had no mind to see his ship in charge of a Frenchman. "He would not let the pilot speak," continues Knox, "but fixed his mate at the helm, charged him not to take orders from any person but himself, and going forward with his trumpet to the fore-castle, gave the necessary instructions. All that could be said by the commanding officer and the

other gentlemen on board was to no purpose; the pilot declared we should be lost, for that no French ship ever presumed to pass there without a pilot. 'Ay, ay, my dear,' replied our son of Neptune, 'but, damn me, I'll convince you that an Englishman shall go where a Frenchman dare not show his nose.' The 'Richmond' frigate being close astern of us, the commanding officer called out to the captain and told him our case; he inquired who the master was, and was answered from the fore-castle by the man himself, who told him 'he was old Killick, and that was enough.' I went forward with this experienced mariner, who pointed out the channel to me as we passed; showing me by the ripple and color of the water where there was any danger, and distinguishing the places where there were ledges of rocks (to me invisible) from banks of sand, mud, or gravel. He gave his orders with great unconcern, joked with the sounding-boats which lay off on each side with different colored flags for our guidance; and when any of them called to him and pointed to the deepest water, he answered: 'Ay, ay, my dear, chalk it down, a damned dangerous navigation, eh! If you don't make a sputter about it you'll get no credit in England.' After we had cleared this remarkable place, where the channel forms a complete zig-zag, the master called to his mate to give the helm to somebody else, saying, 'Damn me if there are not a thousand places in the Thames fifty times more hazardous than this; I am ashamed that Englishmen should make such a rout about it.' The Frenchman asked me if the captain had not been there before. I assured him in the negative; upon which he viewed him with great attention, lifting at the same time his hands and eyes to heaven with astonishment and fervency."

Vaudreuil was blamed for not planting cannon at a cer-

tain plateau on the side of the mountain of Cape Tourmente, where the gunners would have been inaccessible, and whence they could have battered every passing ship with a plunging fire. As it was, the whole fleet sailed safely through. On the twenty-sixth they were all anchored off the south shore of the Island of Orleans, a few miles from Quebec; and, writes Knox, "here we are entertained with a most agreeable prospect of a delightful country on every side; wind-mills, watermills, churches, chapels, and compact farmhouses, all built with stone, and covered, some with wood, and others with straw. The lands appear to be everywhere well cultivated; and with the help of my glass I can discern that they are sowed with flax, wheat, barley, peas, etc., and the grounds are enclosed with wooden pales. The weather to-day is agreeably warm. A light fog sometimes hangs over the highlands, but in the river we have a fine clear air. In the curve of the river, while we were under sail, we had a transient view of a stupendous natural curiosity called the waterfall of Montmorenci."

That night Lieutenant Meech, with forty New England rangers, landed on the Island of Orleans, and found a body of armed inhabitants, who tried to surround him. He beat them off, and took possession of a neighboring farmhouse, where he remained till daylight; then pursued the enemy, and found that they had crossed to the north shore. The whole army now landed, and were drawn up on the beach. As they were kept there for some time, Knox and several brother officers went to visit the neighboring church of St. Laurent, where they found a letter from the parish priest, directed to "The Worthy Officers of the British Army," praying that they would protect the sacred edifice, and also his own adjoining house, and adding, with somewhat needless

civility, that he wished they had come sooner, that they might have enjoyed the asparagus and radishes of his garden, now unhappily going to seed. The letter concluded with many compliments and good wishes, in which the Britons to whom they were addressed saw only "the frothy politeness so peculiar to the French." The army marched westward and encamped. Wolfe, with his chief engineer, Major Mackel-



*Ursuline Convent, Quebec*

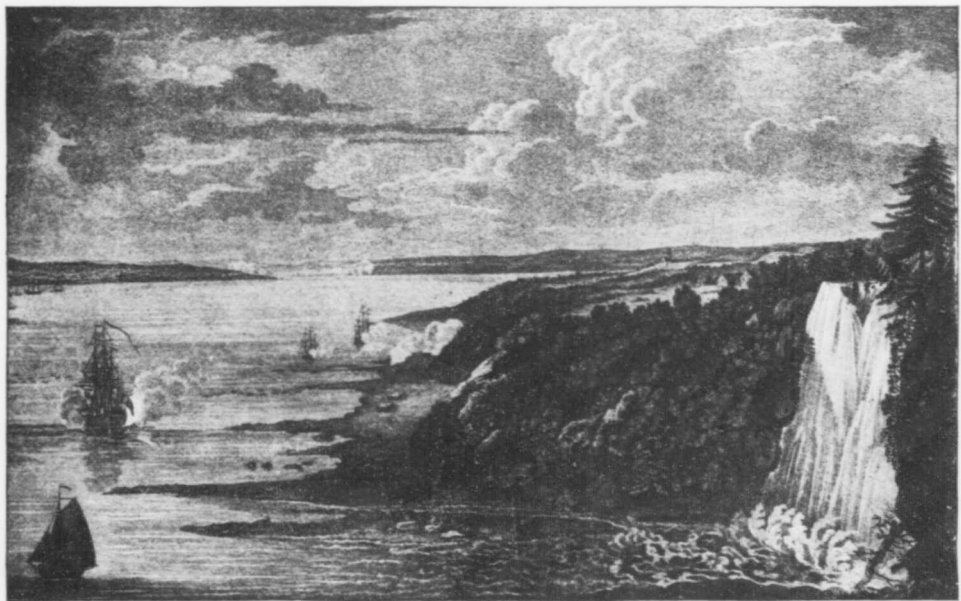
lar, and an escort of light infantry, advanced to the extreme point of the island.

Here he could see, in part, the desperate nature of the task he had undertaken. Before him, three or four miles away, Quebec sat perched upon her rock, a congregation of stone houses, churches, palaces, convents, and hospitals; the green trees of the Seminary garden and the spires of the Cathedral, the Ursulines, the Récollets, and the Jesuits. Beyond rose the loftier height of Cape Diamond, edged

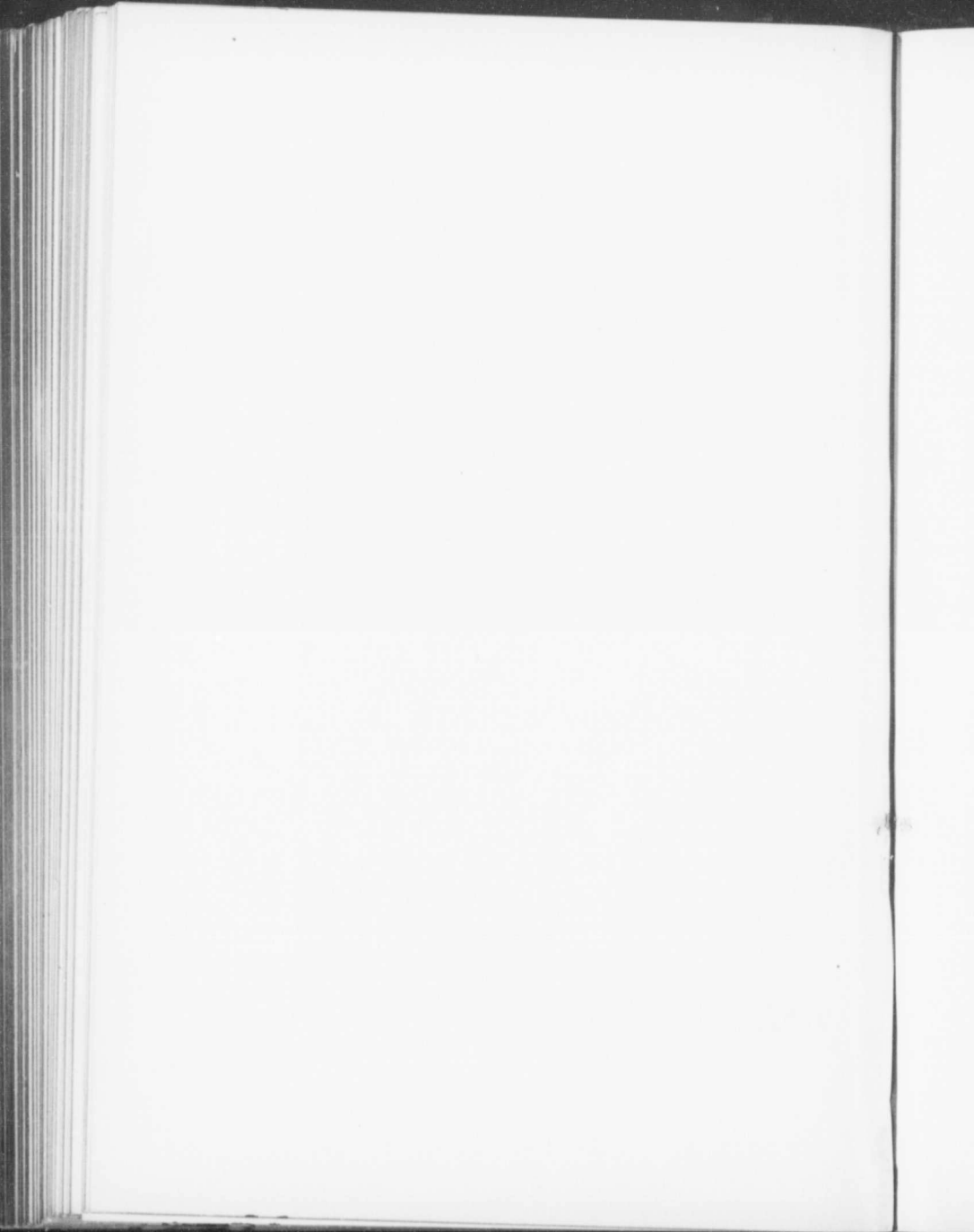
with palisades and capped with redoubt and parapet. Batteries frowned everywhere; the Château battery, the Clergy battery, the Hospital battery, on the rock above, and the Royal, Dauphin's, and Queen's batteries on the strand, where the dwellings and warehouses of the lower town clustered beneath the cliff.

Full in sight lay the far-extended camp of Montcalm, stretching from the St. Charles, beneath the city walls, to the chasm and cataract of the Montmorenci. From the cataract to the river of Beauport, its front was covered by earthworks along the brink of abrupt and lofty heights; and from the river of Beauport to the St. Charles, by broad flats of mud swept by the fire of redoubts, intrenchments, a floating battery, and the city itself. Above the city, Cape Diamond hid the view; but could Wolfe have looked beyond it, he would have beheld a prospect still more disheartening. Here, mile after mile, the St. Lawrence was walled by a range of steeps, often inaccessible, and always so difficult that a few men at the top could hold an army in check; while at Cap-Rouge, about eight miles distant, the high plateau was cleft by the channel of a stream which formed a line of defence as strong as that of the Montmorenci. Quebec was a natural fortress. Bougainville had long before examined the position, and reported that "by the help of intrenchments, easily and quickly made, and defended by three or four thousand men, I think the city would be safe. I do not believe that the English will make any attempt against it; but they may have the madness to do so, and it is well to be prepared against surprise."

Not four thousand men, but four times four thousand, now stood in its defence; and their chiefs wisely resolved not to throw away the advantages of their position. Nothing more



THE FALLS OF MONTMORENCI.





was heard of Vaudreuil's bold plan of attacking the invaders at their landing; and Montcalm had declared that he would play the part, not of Hannibal, but of Fabius. His plan was to avoid a general battle, run no risks, and protract the defence till the resources of the enemy were exhausted, or till approaching winter forced them to withdraw. Success was almost certain but for one contingency. Amherst, with a force larger than that of Wolfe, was moving against Ticonderoga. If he should capture it, and advance into the colony, Montcalm would be forced to weaken his army by sending strong detachments to oppose him. Here was Wolfe's best hope. This failing, his only chance was in audacity. The game was desperate; but, intrepid gamester as he was in war, he was a man, in the last resort, to stake everything on the cast of the dice.

The elements declared for France. On the afternoon of the day when Wolfe's army landed, a violent squall swept over the St. Lawrence, dashed the ships together, drove several ashore, and destroyed many of the flat-boats from which the troops had just disembarked. "I never saw so much distress among shipping in my whole life," writes an officer to a friend in Boston. Fortunately the storm subsided as quickly as it rose. Vaudreuil saw that the hoped-for deliverance had failed; and as the tempest had not destroyed the British fleet, he resolved to try the virtue of his fire-ships. "I am afraid," says Montcalm, "that they have cost us a million, and will be good for nothing after all." This remained to be seen. Vaudreuil gave the chief command of them to a naval officer named Delouche; and on the evening of the twenty-eighth, after long consultation and much debate among their respective captains, they set sail together at ten o'clock. The night was moonless and dark.

In less than an hour they were at the entrance of the north channel. Delouche had been all enthusiasm; but as he neared the danger his nerves failed, and he set fire to his ship half an hour too soon, the rest following his example.

There was an English outpost at the Point of Orleans; and, about eleven o'clock, the sentries descried through the gloom the ghostly outlines of the approaching ships. As they gazed, these mysterious strangers began to dart tongues of flame; fire ran like lightning up their masts and sails, and then they burst out like volcanoes. Filled as they were with pitch, tar, and every manner of combustible, mixed with fireworks, bombs, grenades, and old cannon, swivels, and muskets loaded to the throat, the effect was terrific. The troops at the Point, amazed at the sudden eruption, the din of the explosions, and the showers of grapeshot that rattled among the trees, lost their wits and fled. The blazing dragons hissed and roared, spouted sheets of fire, vomited smoke in black, pitchy volumes and vast illumined clouds, and shed their infernal glare on the distant city, the tents of Montcalm, and the long red lines of the British army, drawn up in array of battle, lest the French should cross from their encampments to attack them in the confusion. Knox calls the display "the grandest fireworks that can possibly be conceived." Yet the fireships did no other harm than burning alive one of their own captains and six or seven of his sailors who failed to escape in their boats. Some of them ran ashore before reaching the fleet; the others were seized by the intrepid English sailors, who, approaching in their boats, threw grappling-irons upon them and towed them towards land, till they swung round and stranded. Here, after venting their fury for a while, they subsided into quiet conflagration, which lasted till morning.

Vaudreuil watched the result of his experiment from the steeple of the church at Beauport; then returned, dejected, to Quebec.

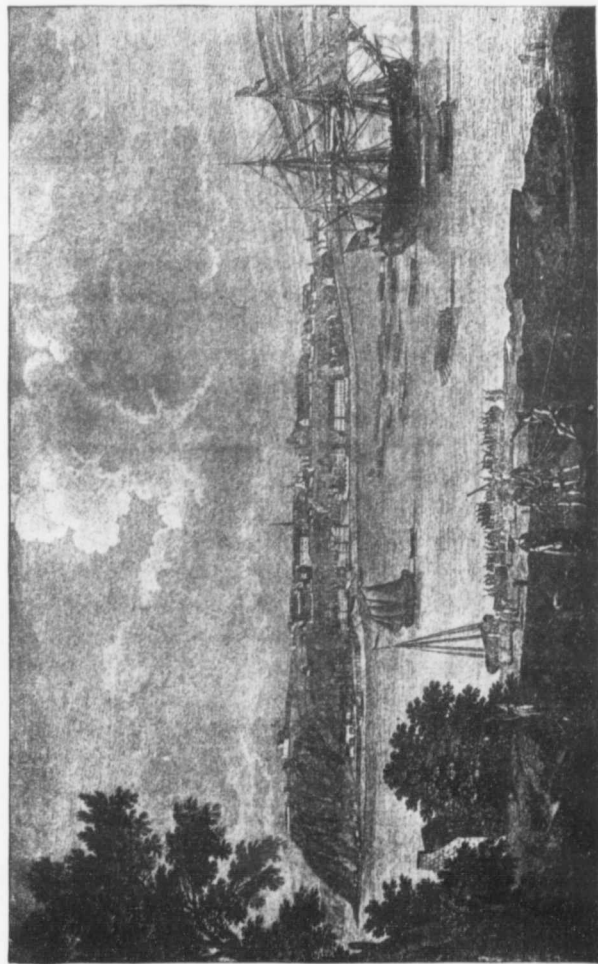
Wolfe longed to fight his enemy; but his sagacious enemy would not gratify him. From the heights of Beauport, the rock of Quebec, or the summit of Cape Diamond, Montcalm could look down on the river and its shores as on a map, and watch each movement of the invaders. He was hopeful, perhaps confident; and for a month or more he wrote almost daily to Bourlamaque at Ticonderoga, in a cheerful, and often a jocosive vein, mingling orders and instructions with pleasantries and bits of news. Yet his vigilance was unceasing. "We pass every night in bivouac, or else sleep in our clothes. Perhaps you are doing as much, my dear Bourlamaque."

Of the two commanders, Vaudreuil was the more sanguine, and professed full faith that all would go well. He too corresponded with Bourlamaque, to whom he gave his opinion, founded on the reports of deserters, that Wolfe had no chance of success unless Amherst should come to his aid. This he pronounced impossible; and he expressed a strong desire that the English would attack him, "so that we may rid ourselves of them at once." He was courageous, except in the immediate presence of danger, and failed only when the crisis came.

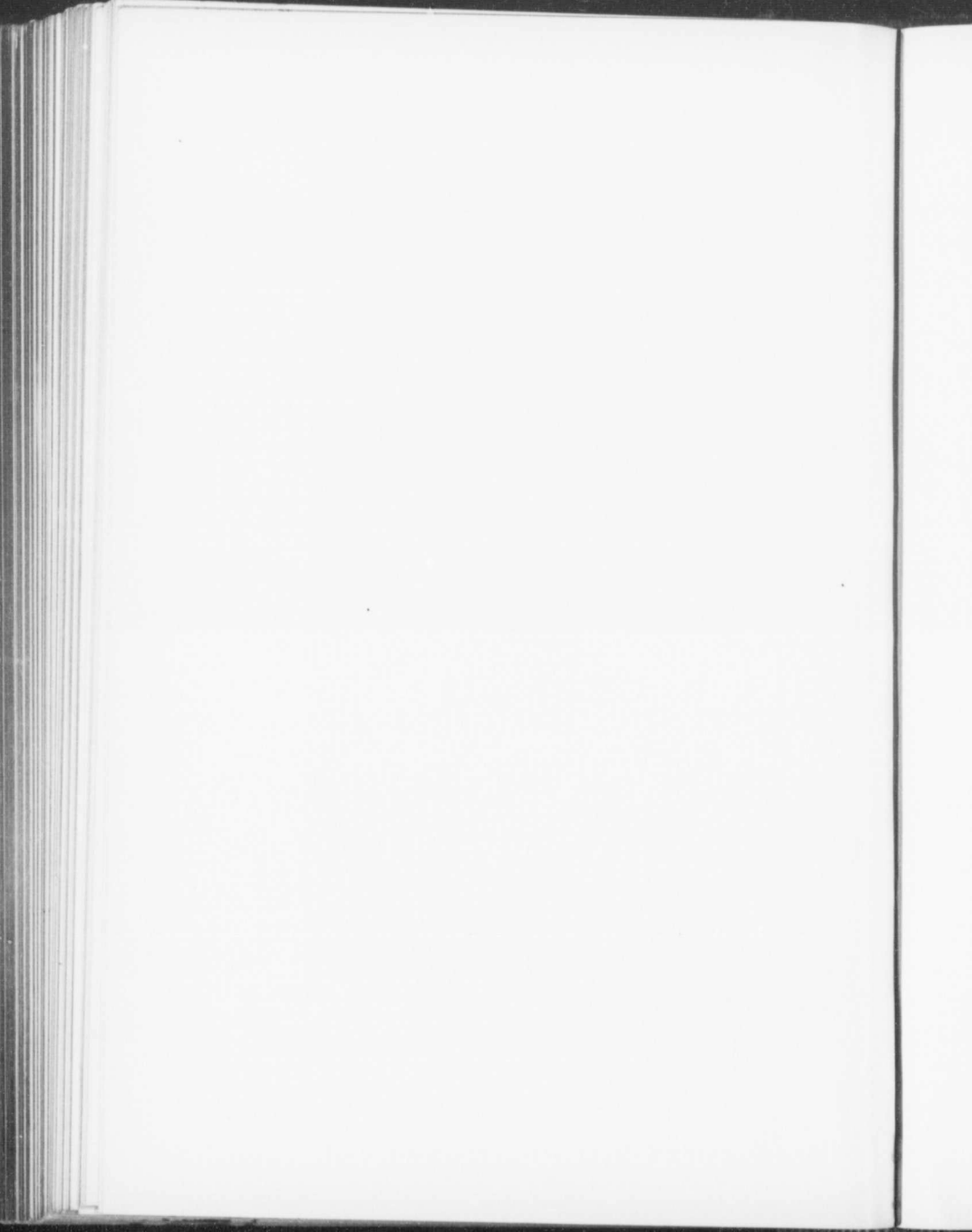
Wolfe, held in check at every other point, had one movement in his power. He could seize the heights of Point Levi, opposite the city; and this, along with his occupation of the Island of Orleans, would give him command of the Basin of Quebec. Thence also he could fire on the place across the St. Lawrence, which is here less than a mile wide. The movement was begun on the afternoon of the twenty-ninth, when, shivering in a north wind and a sharp frost, a

part of Monckton's brigade was ferried over to Beaumont, on the south shore, and the rest followed in the morning. The rangers had a brush with a party of Canadians, whom they drove off, and the regulars then landed unopposed. Monckton ordered a proclamation, signed by Wolfe, to be posted on the door of the parish church. It called on the Canadians, in peremptory terms, to stand neutral in the contest, promised them, if they did so, full protection in property and religion, and threatened that, if they presumed to resist the invaders, their houses, goods, and harvests should be destroyed, and their churches despoiled. As soon as the troops were out of sight the inhabitants took down the placard and carried it to Vaudreuil.

The brigade marched along the river road to Point Levi, drove off a body of French and Indians posted in the church, and took possession of the houses and the surrounding heights. In the morning they were intrenching themselves, when they were greeted by a brisk fire from the edge of the woods. It came from a party of Indians, whom the rangers presently put to flight, and, imitating their own ferocity, scalped nine of them. Wolfe came over to the camp on the next day, went with an escort to the heights opposite Quebec, examined it with a spy-glass, and chose a position from which to bombard it. Cannon and mortars were brought ashore, fascines and gabions made, intrenchments thrown up, and batteries planted. Knox came over from the main camp, and says that he had "a most agreeable view of the city of Quebec. It is a very fair object for our artillery, particularly the lower town." But why did Wolfe wish to bombard it? Its fortifications were but little exposed to his fire, and to knock its houses, convents, and churches to pieces would bring him no nearer to his object. His guns at Point Levi



A VIEW OF QUEBEC FROM POINT LEVÉ.



could destroy the city, but could not capture it; yet doubtless they would have good moral effect, discourage the French, and cheer his own soldiers with the flattering belief that they were achieving something.

The guns of Quebec showered balls and bombs upon his workmen; but they still toiled on, and the French saw the fatal batteries fast growing to completion. The citizens, alarmed at the threatened destruction, begged the governor for leave to cross the river and dislodge their assailants. At length he consented. A party of twelve or fifteen hundred was made up of armed burghers, Canadians from the camp, a few Indians, some pupils of the Seminary, and about a hundred volunteers from the regulars. Dumas, an experienced officer, took command of them; and, going up to Sillery, they crossed the river on the night of the twelfth of July. They had hardly climbed the heights of the south shore when they grew exceedingly nervous, though the enemy was still three miles off. The Seminary scholars fired on some of their own party, whom they mistook for English; and the same mishap was repeated a second and a third time. A panic seized the whole body, and Dumas could not control them. They turned and made for their canoes, rolling over each other as they rushed down the heights, and reappeared at Quebec at six in the morning, overwhelmed with despair and shame.

The presentiment of the unhappy burghers proved too true. The English batteries fell to their work, and the families of the town fled to the country for safety. In a single day eighteen houses and the cathedral were burned by exploding shells; and fiercer and fiercer the storm of fire and iron hailed upon Quebec.

Wolfe did not rest content with distressing his enemy.

With an ardor and a daring that no difficulties could cool, he sought means to strike an effective blow. It was nothing to lay Quebec in ruins if he could not defeat the army that protected it. To land from boats and attack Montcalm in front, through the mud of the Beauport flats or up the heights along the neighboring shore, was an enterprise too rash even for his temerity. It might, however, be possible to land below the cataract of Montmorenci, cross that stream higher up, and strike the French army in flank or rear; and he had no sooner secured his positions at the points of Levi and Orleans, than he addressed himself to this attempt.

On the eighth several frigates and a bomb-ketch took their stations before the camp of the Chevalier de Lévis, who, with his division of Canadian militia, occupied the heights along the St. Lawrence just above the cataract. Here they shelled and cannonaded him all day; though, from his elevated position, with very little effect. Towards evening the troops on the Point of Orleans broke up their camp. Major Hardy, with a detachment of marines, was left to hold that post while the rest embarked at night in the boats of the fleet. They were the brigades of Townshend and Murray, consisting of five battalions, with a body of grenadiers, light infantry, and rangers,—in all three thousand men. They landed before daybreak in front of the parish of L'Ange Gardien, a little below the cataract. The only opposition was from a troop of Canadians and Indians, whom they routed, after some loss, climbed the heights, gained the plateau above, and began to intrench themselves. A company of rangers, supported by detachments of regulars, was sent into the neighboring forest to protect the parties who were cutting fascines, and apparently, also, to look for a fording-place.

Lévis, with his Scotch-Jacobite aide-de-camp, Johnstone,



had watched the movements of Wolfe from the heights across the cataract. Johnstone says that he asked his commander if he was sure there was no ford higher up on the Montmorenci, by which the English could cross. Lévis averred that there was none, and that he himself had examined the stream to its source; on which a Canadian who stood by whispered to the aide-de-camp: "The general is mistaken; there is a ford." Johnstone told this to Lévis, who would not believe it, and so browbeat the Canadian that he dared not repeat what he had said. Johnstone, taking him aside, told him to go and find somebody who had lately crossed the ford, and bring him at once to the general's quarters; whereupon he soon reappeared with a man who affirmed that he had crossed it the night before with a sack of wheat on his back. A detachment was immediately



*Chevalier de Lévis*

sent to the place, with orders to intrench itself, and Repentigny, lieutenant of Lévis, was posted not far off with eleven hundred Canadians.

Four hundred Indians passed the ford under the partisan Langlade, discovered Wolfe's detachment, hid themselves, and sent their commander to tell Repentigny that there was a body of English in the forest, who might all be destroyed if he would come over at once with his Canadians. Repentigny sent for orders to Lévis, and Lévis sent for orders to Vaudreuil, whose quarters were three or four miles distant.

Vaudreuil answered that no risk should be run, and that he would come and see to the matter himself. It was about two hours before he arrived; and meanwhile the Indians grew impatient, rose from their hiding-place, fired on the rangers, and drove them back with heavy loss upon the regulars, who stood their ground, and at last repulsed the assailants. The Indians recrossed the ford with thirty-six scalps. If Repentigny had advanced, and Lévis had followed with his main body, the consequences to the English might have been serious; for, as Johnstone remarks, "a Canadian in the woods is worth three disciplined soldiers, as a soldier in a plain is worth three Canadians." Vaudreuil called a council of war. The question was whether an effort should be made to dislodge Wolfe's main force. Montcalm and the governor were this time of one mind, and both thought it inexpedient to attack, with militia, a body of regular troops whose numbers and position were imperfectly known. Bigot gave his voice for the attack. He was overruled, and Wolfe was left to fortify himself in peace.

His occupation of the heights of Montmorenci exposed him to great risks. The left wing of his army at Point Lévi was six miles from its right wing at the cataract, and Major Hardy's detachment on the Point of Orleans was between them, separated from each by a wide arm of the St. Lawrence. Any one of the three camps might be overpowered before the others could support it; and Hardy with his small force was above all in danger of being cut to pieces. But the French kept persistently on the defensive; and after the failure of Dumas to dislodge the English from Point Lévi, Vaudreuil would not hear of another such attempt. Wolfe was soon well intrenched; but it was easier to defend himself than to strike at his enemy. Montcalm,

when urged to attack him, is said to have answered: "Let him amuse himself where he is. If we drive him off he may go to some place where he can do us harm." His late movement, however, had a discouraging effect on the Canadians, who now for the first time began to desert. His batteries, too, played across the chasm of Montmorenci upon the left wing of the French army with an effect extremely annoying.

The position of the hostile forces was a remarkable one. They were separated by the vast gorge that opens upon the St. Lawrence; an amphitheatre of lofty precipices, their brows crested with forests, and their steep brown sides scantily feathered with stunted birch and fir. Into this abyss leaps the Montmorenci with one headlong plunge of nearly two hundred and fifty feet, a living column of snowy white, with its spray, its foam, its mists, and its rainbows; then spreads itself in broad thin sheets over a floor of rock and gravel, and creeps tamely to the St. Lawrence. It was but a gunshot across the gulf, and the sentinels on each side watched each other over the roar and turmoil of the cataract. Captain Knox, coming one day from Point Levi to receive orders from Wolfe, improved a spare hour to visit this marvel of nature. "I had very nigh paid dear for my inquisitiveness; for while I stood on the eminence I was hastily called to by one of our sentinels, when, throwing my eyes about, I saw a Frenchman creeping under the eastern extremity of their breastwork to fire at me. This obliged me to retire as fast as I could out of his reach, and, making up to the sentry to thank him for his attention, he told me the fellow had snapped his piece twice, and the second time it flashed in the pan at the instant I turned away from the Fall." Another officer, less fortunate, had a leg broken by a shot from the opposite cliffs.

Day after day went by, and the invaders made no progress. Flags of truce passed often between the hostile camps. "You will demolish the town, no doubt," said the bearer of one of them, "but you shall never get inside of it." To which Wolfe replied: "I will have Quebec if I stay here till the end of November." Sometimes the heat was intense, and sometimes there were floods of summer rain that inundated the tents. Along the river, from the Montmorenci to Point Levi, there were ceaseless artillery fights between gunboats, frigates, and batteries on shore. Bands of Indians infested the outskirts of the camps, killing sentries and patrols. The rangers chased them through the woods; there were brisk skirmishes, and scalps lost and won. Sometimes the regulars took part in these forest battles; and once it was announced, in orders of the day, that "the general has ordered two sheep and some rum to Captain Cosnan's company of grenadiers for the spirit they showed this morning in pushing those scoundrels of Indians." The Indians complained that the British soldiers were learning how to fight, and no longer stood still in a mass to be shot at, as in Braddock's time. The Canadian *coureurs de bois* mixed with their red allies and wore their livery. One of them was caught on the eighteenth. He was naked, daubed red and blue, and adorned with a bunch of painted feathers dangling from the top of his head. He and his companions used the scalping-knife as freely as the Indians themselves; nor were the New England rangers much behind them in this respect, till an order came from Wolfe forbidding "the inhuman practice of scalping, except when the enemy are Indians, or Canadians dressed like Indians."

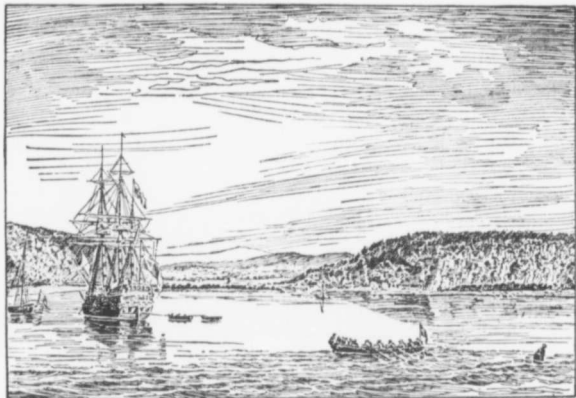
A part of the fleet worked up into the Basin, beyond the Point of Orleans; and here, on the warm summer nights,

officers and men watched the cannon flashing and thundering from the heights of Montmorenci on one side, and those of Point Levi on the other, and the bombs sailing through the air in fiery semicircles. Often the gloom was lighted up by the blaze of the burning houses of Quebec, kindled by incendiary shells. Both the lower and the upper town were nearly deserted by the inhabitants, some retreating into the country, and some into the suburb of St. Roch; while the Ursulines and Hospital nuns abandoned their convents to seek harbor-age beyond the range of shot. The city was a prey to robbers, who pillaged the empty houses, till an order came from headquarters promising the gallows to all who should be caught. News reached the French that Niagara was attacked, and that the army of Amherst was moving against Ticonderoga. The Canadians deserted more and more. They were disheartened by the defensive attitude in which both Vaudreuil and Montcalm steadily persisted; and accustomed as they were to rapid raids, sudden strokes, and a quick return to their homes, they tired of long weeks of inaction. The English patrols caught one of them as he was passing the time in fishing. "He seemed to be a subtle old rogue," says Knox, "of seventy years of age, as he told us. We plied him well with port wine, and then his heart was more open; and seeing that we laughed at the exaggerated accounts he had given us, he said he 'wished the affair was well over, one way or the other; that his countrymen were all discontented, and would either surrender, or disperse and act a neutral part, if it were not for the persuasions of their priests and the fear of being maltreated by the savages, with whom they are threatened on all occasions.'" A deserter reported on the nineteenth of July that nothing but dread of the Indians kept the Canadians in the camp.

Wolfe's proclamation, at first unavailing, was now taking effect. A large number of Canadian prisoners, brought in on the twenty-fifth, declared that their countrymen would gladly accept his offers but for the threats of their commanders that if they did so the Indians should be set upon them. The prisoners said further that "they had been under apprehension for several days past of having a body of four hundred barbarians sent to rifle their parish and habitations." Such threats were not wholly effectual. A French chronicler of the time says: "The Canadians showed their disgust every day, and deserted at every opportunity, in spite of the means taken to prevent them." "The people were intimidated, seeing all our army kept in one body and solely on the defensive; while the English, though far less numerous, divided their forces, and undertook various bold enterprises without meeting resistance."

On the eighteenth the English accomplished a feat which promised important results. The French commanders had thought it impossible for any hostile ship to pass the batteries of Quebec; but about eleven o'clock at night, favored by the wind, and covered by a furious cannonade from Point Levi, the ship "Sutherland," with a frigate and several small vessels, sailed safely by and reached the river above the town. Here they at once attacked and destroyed a fireship and some small craft that they found there. Now, for the first time, it became necessary for Montcalm to weaken his army at Beauport by sending six hundred men, under Dumas, to defend the accessible points in the line of precipices between Quebec and Cap-Rouge. Several hundred more were sent on the next day, when it became known that the English had dragged a fleet of boats over Point Levi, launched them above the town, and despatched troops to

embark in them. Thus a new feature was introduced into the siege operations, and danger had risen on a side where the French thought themselves safe. On the other hand, Wolfe had become more vulnerable than ever. His army was now divided, not into three parts, but into four, each so far from the rest that, in case of sudden attack, it must defend



*View of Cap-Rouge*

itself alone. That Montcalm did not improve his opportunity was apparently due to want of confidence in his militia.

The force above the town did not lie idle. On the night of the twentieth, Colonel Carleton, with six hundred men, rowed eighteen miles up the river, and landed at Pointe-aux-Trembles, on the north shore. Here some of the families of Quebec had sought asylum; and Wolfe had been told by prisoners that not only were stores in great quantity to be found here, but also letters and papers throwing light on the French plans. Carleton and his men drove off a band of Indians who fired on them, and spent a quiet day around the

parish church; but found few papers, and still fewer stores. They withdrew towards evening, carrying with them nearly a hundred women, children, and old men; and they were no sooner gone than the Indians returned to plunder the empty houses of their unfortunate allies. The prisoners were treated with great kindness. The ladies among them were entertained at supper by Wolfe, who jested with them on the caution of the French generals, saying: "I have given good chances to attack me, and am surprised that they have not profited by them." On the next day the prisoners were all sent to Quebec under a flag of truce.

Thus far Wolfe had refrained from executing the threats he had affixed the month before to the church of Beaumont. But now he issued another proclamation. It declared that the Canadians had shown themselves unworthy of the offers he had made them, and that he had therefore ordered his light troops to ravage their country and bring them prisoners to his camp. Such of the Canadian militia as belonged to the parishes near Quebec were now in a sad dilemma; for Montcalm threatened them on one side, and Wolfe on the other. They might desert to their homes, or they might stand by their colors; in the one case their houses were to be burned by French savages, and in the other by British light infantry.

Wolfe at once gave orders in accord with his late proclamation; but he commanded that no church should be profaned, and no woman or child injured. The first effects of his stern policy are thus recorded by Knox: "Major Dal-ling's light infantry brought in this afternoon to our camp two hundred and fifty male and female prisoners. Among this number was a very respectable-looking priest, and about forty men fit to bear arms. There was almost an equal number of black cattle, with about seventy sheep and lambs, and



a few horses. Brigadier Monckton entertained the reverend father and some other fashionable personages in his tent, and most humanely ordered refreshments to all the rest of the captives; which noble example was followed by the soldiery, who generously crowded about those unhappy people, sharing their provisions, rum, and tobacco with them. They were sent in the evening on board of transports in the river." Again, two days later: "Colonel Fraser's detachment returned this morning, and presented us with more scenes of distress and the dismal consequences of war, by a great number of wretched families, whom they brought in prisoners, with some of their effects, and near three hundred black cattle, sheep, hogs, and horses."

On the next night the attention of the excellent journalist was otherwise engaged. Vaudreuil tried again to burn the English fleet. "Late last night," writes Knox, under date of the twenty-eighth, "the enemy sent down a most formidable fireraft, which consisted of a parcel of schooners, shallops, and stages chained together. It could not be less than a hundred fathoms in length, and was covered with grenades, old swivels, gun and pistol barrels loaded up to their muzzles, and various other inventions and combustible matters. This seemed to be their last attempt against our fleet, which happily miscarried, as before; for our gallant seamen, with their usual expertness, grappled them before they got down above a third part of the Basin, towed them safe to shore, and left them at anchor, continually repeating, *All's well*. A remarkable expression from some of these intrepid souls to their comrades on this occasion I must not omit, on account of its singular uncouthness; namely: 'Damme, Jack, didst thee ever take hell in tow before?'"

According to a French account, this aquatic infernal ma-

chine consisted of seventy rafts, boats, and schooners. Its failure was due to no shortcoming on the part of its conductors; who, under a brave Canadian named Courval, acted with coolness and resolution. Nothing saved the fleet but the courage of the sailors, swarming out in their boats to fight the approaching conflagration.

It was now the end of July. More than half the summer was gone, and Quebec seemed as far as ever beyond the grasp of Wolfe. Its buildings were in ruins, and the neighboring parishes were burned and ravaged; but its living rampart, the army of Montcalm, still lay in patient defiance along the shores of Beauport, while above the city every point where a wild cat could climb the precipices was watched and guarded, and Dumas with a thousand men held the impregnable heights of Cap-Rouge. Montcalm persisted in doing nothing that his enemy wished him to do. He would not fight on Wolfe's terms, and Wolfe resolved at last to fight him on his own; that is, to attack his camp in front.

The plan was desperate; for, after leaving troops enough to hold Point Levi and the heights of Montmorenci, less than five thousand men would be left to attack a position of commanding strength, where Montcalm at an hour's notice could collect twice as many to oppose them. But Wolfe had a boundless trust in the disciplined valor of his soldiers, and an utter scorn of the militia who made the greater part of his enemy's force.

Towards the Montmorenci the borders of the St. Lawrence are, as we have seen, extremely high and steep. At a mile from the gorge of the cataract there is, at high tide, a strand, about the eighth of a mile wide, between the foot of these heights and the river; and beyond this strand the receding tide lays bare a tract of mud nearly half a mile wide. At

the edge of the dry ground the French had built a redoubt mounted with cannon, and there were other similar works on the strand a quarter of a mile nearer the cataract. Wolfe could not see from the river that these redoubts were commanded by the musketry of the intrenchments along the brink of the heights above. These intrenchments were so constructed that they swept with cross-fires the whole face of the declivity, which was covered with grass, and was very steep. Wolfe hoped that, if he attacked one of the redoubts, the French would come down to defend it, and so bring on a general engagement; or, if they did not, that he should gain an opportunity of reconnoitring the heights to find some point where they could be stormed with a chance of success.

In front of the gorge of the Montmorenci there was a ford during several hours of low tide, so that troops from the adjoining English camp might cross to co-operate with their comrades landing in boats from Point Levi and the Island of Orleans. On the morning of the thirty-first of July, the tide then being at the flood, the French saw the ship "Centurion," of sixty-four guns, anchor near the Montmorenci and open fire on the redoubts. Then two armed transports, each of fourteen guns, stood in as close as possible to the first redoubt and fired upon it, stranding as the tide went out, till in the afternoon they lay bare upon the mud. At the same time a battery of more than forty heavy pieces, planted on the lofty promontory beyond the Montmorenci, began a furious cannonade upon the flank of the French intrenchments. It did no great harm, however, for the works were protected by a great number of traverses, which stopped the shot; and the Canadians, who manned this part of the lines, held their ground with excellent steadiness.

About eleven o'clock a fleet of boats filled with troops,

chiefly from Point Lévi, appeared in the river and hovered off the shore west of the parish church of Beauport, as if meaning to land there. Montcalm was perplexed, doubting whether the real attack was to be made here, or toward the Montmorenci. Hour after hour the boats moved to and fro, to increase his doubts and hide the real design; but he soon became convinced that the camp of Lévis at the Montmorenci was the true object of his enemy; and about two o'clock he went thither, greeted as he rode along the lines by shouts of *Vive notre Général!* Lévis had already made preparations for defence with his usual skill. His Canadians were reinforced by the battalions of Béarn, Guienne, and Royal Roussillon; and, as the intentions of Wolfe became certain, the right of the camp was nearly abandoned, the main strength of the army being gathered between the river of Beauport and the Montmorenci, where, according to a French writer, there were, towards the end of the afternoon, about twelve thousand men.

At half-past five o'clock the tide was out, and the crisis came. The batteries across the Montmorenci, the distant batteries of Point Lévi, the cannon of the "Centurion," and those of the two stranded ships, all opened together with redoubled fury. The French batteries replied; and, amid this deafening roar of artillery, the English boats set their troops ashore at the edge of the broad tract of sedgy mud that the receding river had left bare. At the same time a column of two thousand men was seen, a mile away, moving in perfect order across the Montmorenci ford. The first troops that landed from the boats were thirteen companies of grenadiers and a detachment of Royal Americans. They dashed swiftly forward; while at some distance behind came Monckton's brigade, composed of the fifteenth, or Amherst's regiment.

and the seventy-eighth, or Fraser's Highlanders. The day had been fair and warm; but the sky was now thick with clouds, and large rain-drops began to fall, the precursors of a summer storm.

With the utmost precipitation, without orders, and without waiting for Monckton's brigade to come up, the grenadiers in front made a rush for the redoubt near the foot of the hill. The French abandoned it; but the assailants had no sooner gained their prize than the thronged heights above blazed with musketry, and a tempest of bullets fell among them. Nothing daunted, they dashed forward again, reserving their fire, and struggling to climb the steep ascent; while, with yells and shouts of *Vive le Roi!* the troops and Canadians at the top poured upon them a hailstorm of musket-balls and buckshot, and dead and wounded in numbers rolled together down the slope. At that instant the clouds burst, and the rain fell in torrents. "We could not see half way down the hill," says the Chevalier Johnstone, who was at this part of the line. Ammunition was wet on both sides, and the grassy steeps became so slippery that it was impossible to climb them. The English say that the storm saved the French; the French, with as much reason, that it saved the English.

The baffled grenadiers drew back into the redoubt. Wolfe saw the madness of persisting, and ordered a retreat. The rain ceased, and troops of Indians came down the heights to scalp the fallen. Some of them ran towards Lieutenant Peyton of the Royal Americans, as he lay disabled by a musket-shot. With his double-barrelled gun he brought down two of his assailants, when a Highland sergeant snatched him in his arms, dragged him half a mile over the mud-flats, and placed him in one of the boats. A friend of

Peyton, Captain Ochterlony, had received a mortal wound, and an Indian would have scalped him but for the generous intrepidity of a soldier of the battalion of Guienne; who, seizing the enraged savage, held him back till several French officers interposed, and had the dying man carried to a place of safety.

The English retreated in good order, after setting fire to the two stranded vessels. Those of the grenadiers and Royal Americans who were left alive rowed for the Point of Orleans; the fifteenth regiment rowed for Point Levi; and the Highlanders, led by Wolfe himself, joined the column from beyond the Montmorenci, placing themselves in its rear as it slowly retired along the flats and across the ford, the Indians yelling and the French shouting from the heights, while the British waved their hats, daring them to come down and fight.

The grenadiers and the Royal Americans, who had borne the brunt of the fray, bore also nearly all the loss; which, in proportion to their numbers, was enormous. Knox reports it at four hundred and forty-three, killed, wounded, and missing, including one colonel, eight captains, twenty-one lieutenants, and three ensigns.

Vaudreuil, delighted, wrote to Bourlamaque an account of the affair. "I have no more anxiety about Quebec. M. Wolfe, I can assure you, will make no progress. Luckily for him, his prudence saved him from the consequences of his mad enterprise, and he contented himself with losing about five hundred of his best soldiers. Deserters say that he will try us again in a few days. That is what we want; he'll find somebody to talk to (*il trouvera à qui parler*)."

THE HEIGHTS OF ABRAHAM<sup>1</sup>

WOLFE was deeply moved by the disaster at the heights of Montmorenci, and in a General Order on the next day he rebuked the grenadiers for their precipitation. "Such impetuous, irregular, and unsoldierlike proceedings destroy all order, make it impossible for the commanders to form any disposition for an attack, and put it out of the general's power to execute his plans. The grenadiers could not suppose that they could beat the French alone."

The French were elated by their success. "Everybody," says the commissary Berniers, "thought that the campaign was as good as ended, gloriously for us." They had been sufficiently confident even before their victory; and the bearer of a flag of truce told the English officers that he had never imagined they were such fools as to attack Quebec with so small a force. Wolfe, on the other hand, had every reason to despond. At the outset, before he had seen Quebec and learned the nature of the ground, he had meant to begin the campaign by taking post on the Plains of Abraham, and thence laying siege to the town; but he soon discovered that the Plains of Abraham were hardly more within his reach than was Quebec itself. Such hope as was left him lay in the composition of Montcalm's army. He respected the French commander, and thought his disciplined soldiers not unworthy of the

<sup>1</sup> Montcalm and Wolfe, Vol II., Ch. XXVII.

British steel; but he held his militia in high scorn, and could he but face them in the open field, he never doubted the result. But Montcalm also distrusted them, and persisted in refusing the coveted battle.

Wolfe, therefore, was forced to the conviction that his chances were of the smallest. It is said that, despairing of any decisive stroke, he conceived the idea of fortifying Isle-aux-Coudres, and leaving a part of his troops there when



*Marquis de Montcalm.*

he sailed for home, against another attempt in the spring. The more to weaken the enemy and prepare his future conquest, he began at the same time a course of action which for his credit one would gladly wipe from the record; for, though far from inhuman, he threw himself with extraordinary intensity into whatever work he had in hand, and, to accomplish it, spared others scarcely more than he

spared himself. About the middle of August he issued a third proclamation to the Canadians, declaring that as they had refused his offers of protection and "had made such ungrateful returns in practising the most unchristian barbarities against his troops on all occasions, he could no longer refrain in justice to himself and his army from chastising them as they deserved." The barbarities in question consisted in the frequent scalping and mutilating of sentinels and men on outpost duty, perpetrated no less by Canadians than by Indians. Wolfe's object was twofold: first, to cause



the militia to desert, and, secondly, to exhaust the colony. Rangers, light infantry, and Highlanders were sent to waste the settlements far and wide. Wherever resistance was offered, farmhouses and villages were laid in ashes, though churches were generally spared. St. Paul, far below Quebec, was sacked and burned, and the settlements of the opposite shore were partially destroyed. The parishes of L'Ange Gardien, Château Richer, and St. Joachim were wasted with fire and sword. Night after night the garrison of Quebec could see the light of burning houses as far down as the mountain of Cape Tourmente. Near St. Joachim there was a severe skirmish, followed by atrocious cruelties. Captain Alexander Montgomery, of the forty-third regiment, who commanded the detachment, and who has been most unjustly confounded with the revolutionary general Richard Montgomery, ordered the prisoners to be shot in cold blood, to the indignation of his own officers. Robineau de Portneuf, curé of St. Joachim, placed himself at the head of thirty parishioners and took possession of a large stone house in the adjacent parish of Château Richer, where for a time he held the English at bay. At length he and his followers were drawn out into an ambush, where they were surrounded and killed; and, being disguised as Indians, the rangers scalped them all.

Most of the French writers of the time mention these barbarities without much comment, while Vaudreuil loudly denounces them. Yet he himself was answerable for atrocities incomparably worse, and on a far larger scale. He had turned loose his savages, red and white, along a frontier of six hundred miles, to waste, burn, and murder at will. "Women and children," such were the orders of Wolfe, "are to be treated with humanity; if any violence is of-

ferred to a woman, the offender shall be punished with death." These orders were generally obeyed. The English, with the single exception of Montgomery, killed none but armed men in the act of resistance or attack; Vaudreuil's war-parties spared neither age nor sex.

Montcalm let the parishes burn, and still lay fast entrenched in his lines of Beauport. He would not imperil all Canada to save a few hundred farmhouses; and Wolfe was as far as ever from the battle that he coveted. Hitherto, his attacks had been made chiefly below the town; but, these having failed, he now changed his plan and renewed on a larger scale the movements begun above it in July. With every fair wind, ships and transports passed the batteries of Quebec, favored by a hot fire from Point Levi, and generally succeeded, with more or less damage, in gaining the upper river. A fleet of flatboats was also sent thither, and twelve hundred troops marched overland to embark in them, under Brigadier Murray. Admiral Holmes took command of the little fleet now gathered above the town, and operations in that quarter were systematically resumed.

To oppose them, Bougainville was sent from the camp at Beauport with fifteen hundred men. His was a most arduous and exhausting duty. He must watch the shores for fifteen or twenty miles, divide his force into detachments, and subject himself and his followers to the strain of incessant vigilance and incessant marching. Murray made a descent at Pointe-aux-Trembles, and was repulsed with loss. He tried a second time at another place, was met before landing by a body of ambushed Canadians, and was again driven back, his foremost boats full of dead and wounded. A third time he succeeded, landed at Deschambault, and burned a large building filled with stores and all the spare bag-

gage of the French regular officers. The blow was so alarming that Montcalm hastened from Beauport to take command in person; but when he arrived the English were gone.

Vaudreuil now saw his mistake in sending the French frigates up the river out of harm's way, and withdrawing their crews to serve the batteries of Quebec. Had these ships been there, they might have overpowered those of the English in detail as they passed the town. An attempt was made to retrieve the blunder. The sailors were sent to man the frigates anew and attack the squadron of Holmes. It was too late. Holmes was already too strong for them, and they were recalled. Yet the difficulties of the English still seemed insurmountable. Dysentery and fever broke out in their camps, the number of their effective men was greatly reduced, and the advancing season told them that their work must be done quickly, or not done at all.

On the other side, the distress of the French grew greater every day. Their army was on short rations. The operations of the English above the town filled the camp of Beauport with dismay, for troops and Canadians alike dreaded the cutting off of their supplies. These were all drawn from the districts of Three Rivers and Montreal; and, at best, they were in great danger, since when brought down in boats at night they were apt to be intercepted, while the difficulty of bringing them by land was extreme, through the scarcity of cattle and horses. Discipline was relaxed, disorder and pillage were rife, and the Canadians deserted so fast, that towards the end of August two hundred of them, it is said, would sometimes go off in one night. Early in the month the disheartening news came of the loss of Ticonderoga and Crown Point, the retreat of Bourlamaque, the fall of Niagara,

and the expected advance of Amherst on Montreal. It was then that Lévis was despatched to the scene of danger; and Quebec was deplorably weakened by his absence. About this time the Lower Town was again set on fire by the English batteries, and a hundred and sixty-seven houses were burned in a night. In the front of the Upper Town nearly every building was a ruin. At the General Hospital, which was remote enough to be safe from the bombardment, every barn, shed, and garret, and even the chapel itself, were crowded with sick and wounded, with women and children from the town, and the nuns of the Ursulines and the Hôtel-Dieu, driven thither for refuge. Bishop Pontbriand, though suffering from a mortal disease, came almost daily to visit and console them from his lodging in the house of the curé at Charlesbourg.

Towards the end of August the sky brightened again. It became known that Amherst was not moving on Montreal, and Broulmaque wrote that his position at Isle-aux-Noix was impregnable. On the twenty-seventh a deserter from Wolfe's army brought the welcome assurance that the invaders despaired of success, and would soon sail for home; while there were movements in the English camps and fleet that seemed to confirm what he said. Vaudreuil breathed more freely, and renewed hope and confidence visited the army of Beauport.

Meanwhile a deep cloud fell on the English. Since the siege began, Wolfe had passed with ceaseless energy from camp to camp, animating the troops, observing everything, and directing everything; but now the pale face and tall lean form were seen no more, and the rumor spread that the general was dangerously ill. He had in fact been seized by an access of the disease that had tortured him for some

time past; and fever had followed. His quarters were at a French farmhouse in the camp at Montmorenci; and here, as he lay in an upper chamber, helpless in bed, his singular and most unmilitary features haggard with disease and drawn with pain, no man could less have looked the hero. But as the needle, though quivering, points always to the pole, so, through torment and languor and the heats of fever, the mind of Wolfe dwelt on the capture of Quebec. His illness, which began before the twentieth of August, had so far subsided on the twenty-fifth that Knox wrote in his Diary of that day: "His Excellency General Wolfe is on the recovery, to the inconceivable joy of the whole army." On the twenty-ninth he was able to write or dictate a letter to the three brigadiers, Monckton, Townshend, and Murray: "That the public service may not suffer by the general's indisposition, he begs the brigadiers will meet and consult together for the public utility and advantage, and consider of the best method to attack the enemy." The letter then proposes three plans, all bold to audacity. The first was to send a part of the army to ford the Montmorenci eight or nine miles above its mouth, march through the forest, and fall on the rear of the French at Beauport, while the rest landed and attacked them in front. The second was to cross the ford at the mouth of the Montmorenci and march along the strand, under the French intrenchments, till a place could be found where the troops might climb the heights. The third was to make a general attack from boats at the Beauport flats. Wolfe had before entertained two other plans, one of which was to scale the heights at St. Michel, about a league above Quebec; but this he had abandoned on learning that the French were there in force to receive him. The other was to storm the Lower Town; but this also he

had abandoned, because the Upper Town, which commanded it, would still remain inaccessible.

The brigadiers met in consultation, rejected the three plans proposed in the letter, and advised that an attempt should be made to gain a footing on the north shore above the town, place the army between Montcalm and his base of supply, and so force him to fight or surrender. The scheme was similar to that of the heights of St. Michel. It seemed desperate, but so did all the rest; and if by chance it should succeed, the gain was far greater than could follow any success below the town. Wolfe embraced it at once.

Not that he saw much hope in it. He knew that every chance was against him. Disappointment in the past and gloom in the future, the pain and exhaustion of disease, toils, and anxieties "too great," in the words of Burke, "to be supported by a delicate constitution, and a body unequal to the vigorous and enterprising soul that it lodged," threw him at times into deep dejection. By those intimate with him he was heard to say that he would not go back defeated, "to be exposed to the censure and reproach of an ignorant populace." In other moods he felt that he ought not to sacrifice what was left of his diminished army in vain conflict with hopeless obstacles. But his final resolve once taken, he would not swerve from it. His fear was that he might not be able to lead his troops in person. "I know perfectly well you cannot cure me," he said to his physician; "but pray make me up so that I may be without pain for a few days, and able to do my duty: that is all I want."

In a despatch which Wolfe had written to Pitt, Admiral Saunders conceived that he had ascribed to the fleet more than its just share in the disaster at Montmorenci; and he sent him a letter on the subject. Major Barré kept it from

the invalid till the fever had abated. Wolfe then wrote a long answer, which reveals his mixed dejection and resolve. He affirms the justice of what Saunders had said, but adds: "I shall leave out that part of my letter to Mr. Pitt which you object to. I am sensible of my own errors in the course of the campaign, see clearly wherein I have been deficient, and think a little more or less blame to a man that must necessarily be ruined, of little or no consequence. I take the blame of that unlucky day entirely upon my own shoulders, and I expect to suffer for it." Then, speaking of the new project of an attack above Quebec, he says despondingly: "My ill state of health prevents me from executing my own plan; it is of too desperate a nature to order others to execute." He proceeds, however, to give directions for it. "It will be necessary to run as many small craft as possible above the town, with provisions for six weeks, for about five thousand, which is all I intend to take. My letters, I hope, will be ready to-morrow, and I hope I shall have strength to lead these men to wherever we can find the enemy."

On the next day, the last of August, he was able for the first time to leave the house. It was on this same day that he wrote his last letter to his mother: "My writing to you will convince you that no personal evils worse than defeats and disappointments have fallen upon me. The enemy puts nothing to risk, and I can't in conscience put the whole army to risk. My antagonist has wisely shut himself up in inaccessible intrenchments, so that I can't get at him without spilling a torrent of blood, and that perhaps to little purpose. The Marquis de Montcalm is at the head of a great number of bad soldiers, and I am at the head of a small number of good ones, that wish for nothing so much as to fight him; but the wary old fellow avoids an action, doubtful of the

behavior of his army. People must be of the profession to understand the disadvantages and difficulties we labor under, arising from the uncommon natural strength of the country."

On the second of September a vessel was sent to England with his last despatch to Pitt. It begins thus: "The obstacles we have met with in the operations of the campaign are much greater than we had reason to expect or could foresee; not so much from the number of the enemy (though superior to us) as from the natural strength of the country, which the Marquis of Montcalm seems wisely to depend upon. When I learned that succors of all kinds had been thrown into Quebec; that five battalions of regular troops, completed from the best inhabitants of the country, some of the troops of the colony, and every Canadian that was able to bear arms, besides several nations of savages, had taken the field in a very advantageous situation,—I could not flatter myself that I should be able to reduce the place. I sought, however, an occasion to attack their army, knowing well that with these troops I was able to fight, and hoping that a victory might disperse them." Then, after recounting the events of the campaign with admirable clearness, he continues: "I found myself so ill, and am still so weak, that I begged the general officers to consult together for the general utility. They are all of opinion that, as more ships and provisions are now got above the town, they should try, by conveying up a corps of four or five thousand men (which is nearly the whole strength of the army after the Points of Levi and Orleans are left in a proper state of defence) to draw the enemy from their present situation and bring them to an action. I have acquiesced in the proposal, and we are preparing to put it into execution." The letter ends thus: "By the list of disabled officers, many of whom are of



rank, you may perceive that the army is much weakened. By the nature of the river, the most formidable part of this armament is deprived of the power of acting; yet we have almost the whole force of Canada to oppose. In this situation there is such a choice of difficulties that I own myself at a loss how to determine. The affairs of Great Britain, I know, require the most vigorous measures; but the courage of a handful of brave troops should be exerted only when there is some hope of a favorable event; however, you may be assured that the small part of the campaign which remains shall be employed, as far as I am able, for the honor of His Majesty and the interest of the nation, in which I am sure of being well seconded by the admiral and by the generals; happy if our efforts here can contribute to the success of His Majesty's arms in any other parts of America."

Some days later, he wrote to the Earl of Holderness: "The Marquis of Montcalm has a numerous body of armed men (I cannot call it an army), and the strongest country perhaps in the world. Our fleet blocks up the river above and below the town, but can give no manner of aid in an attack upon the Canadian army. We are now here [*off Cap-Rouge*] with about thirty-six hundred men, waiting to attack them when and wherever they can best be got at. I am so far recovered as to do business; but my constitution is entirely ruined, without the consolation of doing any considerable service to the state, and without any prospect of it." He had just learned, through the letter brought from Amherst by Ensign Hutchins, that he could expect no help from that quarter.

Perhaps he was as near despair as his undaunted nature was capable of being. In his present state of body and mind he was a hero without the light and cheer of heroism. He

flattered himself with no illusions, but saw the worst and faced it all. He seems to have been entirely without excitement. The languor of disease, the desperation of the chances, and the greatness of the stake may have wrought to tranquillize him. His energy was doubly tasked: to bear up his own sinking frame, and to achieve an almost hopeless feat of arms.

Audacious as it was, his plan cannot be called rash if we may accept the statement of two well-informed writers on the French side. They say that on the tenth of September the English naval commanders held a council on board the flagship, in which it was resolved that the lateness of the season required the fleet to leave Quebec without delay. They say further that Wolfe then went to the admiral, told him that he had found a place where the heights could be scaled, that he would send up a hundred and fifty picked men to feel the way, and that if they gained a lodgment at the top, the other troops should follow; if, on the other hand, the French were there in force to oppose them, he would not sacrifice the army in a hopeless attempt, but embark them for home, consoled by the thought that all had been done that man could do. On this, concludes the story, the admiral and his officers consented to wait the result.

As Wolfe had informed Pitt, his army was greatly weakened. Since the end of June his loss in killed and wounded was more than eight hundred and fifty, including two colonels, two majors, nineteen captains, and thirty-four subalterns; and to these were to be added a greater number disabled by disease.

The squadron of Admiral Holmes above Quebec had now increased to twenty-two vessels, great and small. One of the last that went up was a diminutive schooner, armed with

a few swivels, and jocosely named the "Terror of France." She sailed by the town in broad daylight, the French, incensed at her impudence, blazing at her from all their batteries; but she passed unharmed, anchored by the admiral's ship, and saluted him triumphantly with her swivels.

Wolfe's first move towards executing his plan was the critical one of evacuating the camp at Montmorenci. This was accomplished on the third of September. Montcalm sent a strong force to fall on the rear of the retiring English. Monckton saw the movement from Point Levi, embarked two battalions in the boats of the fleet, and made a feint of landing at Beauport. Montcalm recalled his troops to repulse the threatened attack; and the English withdrew from Montmorenci unmolested, some to the Point of Orleans, others to Point Levi. On the night of the fourth a fleet of flatboats passed above the town with the baggage and stores. On the fifth, Murray, with four battalions, marched up to the River Etechemin, and forded it under a hot fire from the French batteries at Sillery. Monckton and Townshend followed with three more battalions, and the united force, of about thirty-six hundred men, was embarked on board the ships of Holmes, where Wolfe joined them on the same evening.

These movements of the English filled the French commanders with mingled perplexity, anxiety, and hope. A deserter told them that Admiral Saunders was impatient to be gone. Vaudreuil grew confident. "The breaking up of the camp at Montmorenci," he says, "and the abandonment of the intrenchments there, the reimbarcation on board the vessels above Quebec of the troops who had encamped on the south bank, the movements of these vessels, the removal of the heaviest pieces of artillery from the batteries of Point

Levi, — these and the lateness of the season all combined to announce the speedy departure of the fleet, several vessels of which had even sailed down the river already. The prisoners and the deserters who daily came in told us that this was the common report in their army." He wrote to Bourlamaque on the first of September: "Everything proves that the grand design of the English has failed."

Yet he was ceaselessly watchful. So was Montcalm; and he, too, on the night of the second, snatched a moment to write to Bourlamaque from his headquarters in the stone house, by the river of Beauport: "The night is dark; it rains; our troops are in their tents, with clothes on, ready for an alarm; I in my boots; my horses saddled. In fact, this is my usual way. I wish you were here; for I cannot be everywhere, though I multiply myself, and have not taken off my clothes since the twenty-third of June." On the eleventh of September he wrote his last letter to Bourlamaque, and probably the last that his pen ever traced. "I am overwhelmed with work, and should often lose temper, like you, if I did not remember that I am paid by Europe for not losing it. Nothing new since my last. I give the enemy another month, or something less, to stay here." The more sanguine Vaudreuil would hardly give them a week.

Meanwhile, no precaution was spared. The force under Bougainville above Quebec was raised to three thousand men. He was ordered to watch the shore as far as Jacques-Cartier, and follow with his main body every movement of Holmes's squadron. There was little fear for the heights near the town; they were thought inaccessible. Even Montcalm believed them safe, and had expressed himself to that effect some time before. "We need not suppose," he wrote to Vaudreuil, "that the enemy have wings;" and again,

speaking of the very place where Wolfe afterwards landed, "I swear to you that a hundred men posted there would stop their whole army." He was right. A hundred watchful and determined men could have held the position long enough for reinforcements to come up.

The hundred men were there. Captain de Vergor, of the colony troops, commanded them, and reinforcements were within his call; for the battalion of Guienne had been ordered to encamp close at hand on the Plains of Abraham. Vergor's post, called Anse du Foulon, was a mile and a half from Quebec. A little beyond it, by the brink of the cliffs, was another post, called Samos, held by seventy men with four cannon; and, beyond this again, the heights of Sillery were guarded by a hundred and thirty men, also with cannon. These were outposts of Bougainville, whose headquarters were at Cap-Rouge, six miles above Sillery, and whose troops were in continual movement along the intervening shore. Thus all was vigilance; for while the French were strong in the hope of speedy delivery, they felt that there was no safety till the tents of the invader had vanished from their shores and his ships from their river. "What we knew," says one of them, "of the character of M. Wolfe, that impetuous, bold, and intrepid warrior, prepared us for a last attack before he left us."

Wolfe had been very ill on the evening of the fourth. The troops knew it, and their spirits sank; but, after a night of torment, he grew better, and was soon among them again, rekindling their ardor, and imparting a cheer that he could not share. For himself he had no pity; but when he heard of the illness of two officers in one of the ships, he sent them a message of warm sympathy, advised them to return to Point Levi, and offered them his own barge and an

escort. They thanked him, but replied that, come what might, they would see the enterprise to an end. Another officer remarked in his hearing that one of the invalids had a very delicate constitution. "Don't tell me of constitution," said Wolfe; "he has good spirit, and good spirit will carry a man through everything." An immense moral force bore up his own frail body and forced it to its work.

Major Robert Stobo, who, five years before, had been given as a hostage to the French at the capture of Fort Necessity, arrived about this time in a vessel from Halifax. He had long been a prisoner at Quebec, not always in close custody, and had used his opportunities to acquaint himself with the neighborhood. In the spring of this year he and an officer of rangers named Stevens had made their escape with extraordinary skill and daring; and he now returned to give his countrymen the benefit of his local knowledge. His biographer says that it was he who directed Wolfe in the choice of a landing-place. Be this as it may, Wolfe in person examined the river and the shores as far as Pointe-aux-Trembles; till at length, landing on the south side a little above Quebec, and looking across the water with a telescope, he descried a path that ran with a long slope up the face of the woody precipice, and saw at the top a cluster of tents. They were those of Vergor's guard at the Anse du Foulon, now called Wolfe's Cove. As he could see but ten or twelve of them, he thought that the guard could not be numerous, and might be overpowered. His hope would have been stronger if he had known that Vergor had once been tried for misconduct and cowardice in the surrender of Beauséjour, and saved from merited disgrace by the friendship of Bigot and the protection of Vaudreuil.

The morning of the seventh was fair and warm, and the

vessels of Holmes, their crowded decks gay with scarlet uniforms, sailed up the river to Cap-Rouge. A lively scene awaited them; for here were the headquarters of Bougainville, and here lay his principal force, while the rest watched the banks above and below. The cove into which the little river runs was guarded by floating batteries; the surrounding shore was defended by breastworks; and a large body of regulars, militia, and mounted Canadians in blue uniforms moved to and fro, with restless activity, on the hills behind. When the vessels came to anchor, the horsemen dismounted and formed in line with the infantry; then, with loud shouts, the whole rushed down the heights to man their works at the shore. That true Briton, Captain Knox, looked on with a critical eye from the gangway of his ship, and wrote that night in his Diary that they had made a ridiculous noise. "How different!" he exclaims, "how nobly awful and expressive of true valor is the customary silence of the British troops!"

In the afternoon the ships opened fire, while the troops entered the boats and rowed up and down as if looking for a landing-place. It was but a feint of Wolfe to deceive Bougainville as to his real design. A heavy easterly rain set in on the next morning, and lasted two days without respite. All operations were suspended, and the men suffered greatly in the crowded transports. Half of them were therefore landed on the south shore, where they made their quarters in the village of St. Nicolas, refreshed themselves, and dried their wet clothing, knapsacks, and blankets.

For several successive days the squadron of Holmes was allowed to drift up the river with the flood tide and down with the ebb, thus passing and repassing incessantly be-

tween the neighborhood of Quebec on one hand, and a point high above Cap-Rouge on the other; while Bougainville, perplexed, and always expecting an attack, followed the ships to and fro along the shore, by day and by night, till his men were exhausted with ceaseless forced marches.

At last the time for action came. On Wednesday, the twelfth, the troops at St. Nicolas were embarked again, and all were told to hold themselves in readiness. Wolfe, from the flagship "Sutherland," issued his last general orders. "The enemy's force is now divided, great scarcity of provisions in their camp, and universal discontent among the Canadians. Our troops below are in readiness to join us; all the light artillery and tools are embarked at the Point of Levi; and the troops will land where the French seem least to expect it. The first body that gets on shore is to march directly to the enemy and drive them from any little post they may occupy; the officers must be careful that the succeeding bodies do not by any mistake fire on those who go before them. The battalions must form on the upper ground with expedition, and be ready to charge whatever presents itself. When the artillery and troops are landed, a corps will be left to secure the landing-place, while the rest march on and endeavor to bring the Canadians and French to a battle. The officers and men will remember what their country expects from them, and what a determined body of soldiers inured to war is capable of doing against five weak French battalions mingled with a disorderly peasantry."

The spirit of the army answered to that of its chief. The troops loved and admired their general, trusted their officers, and were ready for any attempt. "Nay, how could it be otherwise," quaintly asks honest Sergeant John Johnson,



of the fifty-eighth regiment, "being at the heels of gentlemen whose whole thirst, equal with their general, was for glory? We had seen them tried, and always found them sterling. We knew that they would stand by us to the last extremity."

Wolfe had thirty-six hundred men and officers with him on board the vessels of Holmes; and he now sent orders to Colonel Burton at Point Levi to bring to his aid all who could be spared from that place and the Point of Orleans. They were to march along the south bank, after nightfall, and wait further orders at a designated spot convenient for embarkation. Their number was about twelve hundred, so that the entire force destined for the enterprise was at the utmost forty-eight hundred. With these, Wolfe meant to climb the heights of Abraham in the teeth of an enemy who, though much reduced, were still twice as numerous as their assailants.

Admiral Saunders lay with the main fleet in the Basin of Quebec. This excellent officer, whatever may have been his views as to the necessity of a speedy departure, aided Wolfe to the last with unflinching energy and zeal. It was agreed between them that while the general made the real attack, the admiral should engage Montcalm's attention by a pretended one. As night approached, the fleet ranged itself along the Beauport shore; the boats were lowered and filled with sailors, marines, and the few troops that had been left behind; while ship signalled to ship, cannon flashed and thundered, and shot ploughed the beach, as if to clear a way for assailants to land. In the gloom of the evening the effect was imposing. Montcalm, who thought that the movements of the English above the town were only a feint, that their main force was still below it, and that their real

attack would be made there, was completely deceived, and massed his troops in front of Beauport to repel the expected landing. But while in the fleet of Saunders all was uproar and ostentatious menace, the danger was ten miles away, where the squadron of Holmes lay tranquil and silent at its anchorage off Cap-Rouge.

It was less tranquil than it seemed. All on board knew that a blow would be struck that night, though only a few high officers knew where. Colonel Howe, of the light infantry, called for volunteers to lead the unknown and desperate venture, promising, in the words of one of them, "that if any of us survived we might depend on being recommended to the general." As many as were wanted — twenty-four in all — soon came forward. Thirty large bateaux and some boats belonging to the squadron lay moored alongside the vessels; and late in the evening the troops were ordered into them, the twenty-four volunteers taking their place in the foremost. They held in all about seventeen hundred men. The rest remained on board.

Bougainville could discern the movement, and misjudged it, thinking that he himself was to be attacked. The tide was still flowing; and, the better to deceive him, the vessels and boats were allowed to drift upward with it for a little distance, as if to land above Cap-Rouge.

The day had been fortunate for Wolfe. Two deserters came from the camp of Bougainville with intelligence that, at ebb tide on the next night, he was to send down a convoy of provisions to Montcalm. The necessities of the camp at Beauport, and the difficulties of transportation by land, had before compelled the French to resort to this perilous means of conveying supplies; and their boats, drifting in darkness under the shadows of the northern shore, had commonly

passed in safety. Wolfe saw at once that, if his own boats went down in advance of the convoy, he could turn the intelligence of the deserters to good account.

He was still on board the "Sutherland." Every preparation was made, and every order given; it only remained to wait the turning of the tide. Seated with him in the cabin was the commander of the sloop-of-war "Porcupine," his former school-fellow, John Jervis, afterwards Earl St. Vincent. Wolfe told him that he expected to die in the battle of the next day; and taking from his bosom a miniature of Miss Lowther, his betrothed, he gave it to him with a request that he would return it to her if the presentiment should prove true.

Towards two o'clock the tide began to ebb, and a fresh wind blew down the river. Two lanterns were raised into the maintop shrouds of the "Sutherland." It was the appointed signal; the boats cast off and fell down with the current, those of the light infantry leading the way. The vessels with the rest of the troops had orders to follow a little later.

To look for a moment at the chances on which this bold adventure hung. First, the deserters told Wolfe that provision-boats were ordered to go down to Quebec that night; secondly, Bougainville countermanded them; thirdly, the sentries posted along the heights were told of the order, but not of the countermand; fourthly, Vergor at the Anse du Foulon had permitted most of his men, chiefly Canadians from Lorette, to go home for a time and work at their harvesting, on condition, it is said, that they should afterwards work in a neighboring field of his own; fifthly, he kept careless watch, and went quietly to bed; sixthly, the battalion of Guienne, ordered to take post on the Plains of Abraham,

had, for reasons unexplained, remained encamped by the St. Charles; and lastly, when Bougainville saw Holmes's vessels drift down the stream, he did not tax his weary troops to follow them, thinking that they would return as usual with the flood tide. But for these conspiring circumstances New France might have lived a little longer, and the fruitless heroism of Wolfe would have passed, with countless other heroisms, into oblivion.

For full two hours the procession of boats, borne on the current, steered silently down the St. Lawrence. The stars were visible, but the night was moonless and sufficiently dark. The general was in one of the foremost boats, and near him was a young midshipman, John Robison, afterwards professor of natural philosophy in the University of Edinburgh. He used to tell in his later life how Wolfe, with a low voice, repeated Gray's *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* to the officers about him. Probably it was to relieve the intense strain of his thoughts. Among the rest was the verse which his own fate was soon to illustrate, —

“The paths of glory lead but to the grave.”

“Gentlemen,” he said, as his recital ended, “I would rather have written those lines than take Quebec.” None were there to tell him that the hero is greater than the poet.

As they neared their destination, the tide bore them in towards the shore, and the mighty wall of rock and forest towered in darkness on their left. The dead stillness was suddenly broken by the sharp *Qui vive!* of a French sentry, invisible in the thick gloom. *France!* answered a Highland officer of Fraser's regiment from one of the boats of the light infantry. He had served in Holland, and spoke French fluently.

*À quel régiment ?*

*De la Reine*, replied the Highlander. He knew that a part of that corps was with Bougainville. The sentry, expecting the convoy of provisions, was satisfied, and did not ask for the password.

Soon after, the foremost boats were passing the heights of Samos, when another sentry challenged them, and they could see him through the darkness running down to the edge of the water, within range of a pistol-shot. In answer to his questions, the same officer replied, in French: "Provision-boats. Don't make a noise; the English will hear us." In fact, the sloop-of-war "Hunter" was anchored in the stream not far off. This time, again, the sentry let them pass. In a few moments they rounded the headland above the Anse du Foulon. There was no sentry there. The strong current swept the boats of the light infantry a little below the intended landing-place. They disembarked on a narrow strand at the foot of heights as steep as a hill covered with trees can be. The twenty-four volunteers led the way, climbing with what silence they might, closely followed by a much larger body. When they reached the top they saw in the dim light a cluster of tents at a short distance, and immediately made a dash at them. Vergor leaped from bed and tried to run off, but was shot in the heel and captured. His men, taken by surprise, made little resistance. One or two were caught, and the rest fled.

The main body of troops waited in their boats by the edge of the strand. The heights near by were cleft by a great ravine choked with forest trees; and in its depths ran a little brook called Ruisseau St. Denis, which, swollen by the late rains, fell plashing in the stillness over a rock. Other than this no sound could reach the strained ear of Wolfe but

the gurgle of the tide and the cautious climbing of his advance-parties as they mounted the steeps at some little distance from where he sat listening. At length from the top came a sound of musket-shots, followed by loud huzzas, and he knew that his men were masters of the position. The word was given; the troops leaped from the boats and scaled the heights, some here, some there, clutching at trees and bushes, their muskets slung at their backs. Tradition still points out the place, near the mouth of the ravine, where the foremost reached the top. Wolfe said to an officer near him: "You can try it, but I don't think you'll get up." He himself, however, found strength to drag himself up with the rest. The narrow slanting path on the face of the heights had been made impassable by trenches and abatts; but all obstructions were soon cleared away, and then the ascent was easy. In the gray of the morning the long file of red-coated soldiers moved quickly upward, and formed in order on the plateau above.

Before many of them had reached the top, cannon were heard close on the left. It was the battery at Samos firing on the boats in the rear and the vessels descending from Cap-Rouge. A party was sent to silence it; this was soon effected, and the more distant battery at Sillery was next attacked and taken. As fast as the boats were emptied they returned for the troops left on board the vessels and for those waiting on the southern shore under Colonel Burton.

The day broke in clouds and threatening rain. Wolfe's battalions were drawn up along the crest of the heights. No enemy was in sight, though a body of Canadians had sallied from the town and moved along the strand towards the landing-place, whence they were quickly driven back. He had achieved the most critical part of his enterprise:

yet the success that he coveted placed him in imminent danger. On one side was the garrison of Quebec and the army of Beauport, and Bougainville was on the other. Wolfe's alternative was victory or ruin; for if he should be overwhelmed by a combined attack, retreat would be hopeless. His feelings no man can know; but it would be safe to say that hesitation or doubt had no part in them.

He went to reconnoitre the ground, and soon came to the Plains of Abraham, so called from Abraham Martin, a pilot known as Maître Abraham, who had owned a piece of land here in the early times of the colony. The Plains were a tract of grass, tolerably level in most parts, patched here and there with cornfields, studded with clumps of bushes, and forming a part of the high plateau at the eastern end of which Quebec stood. On the south it was bounded by the declivities along the St. Lawrence; on the north, by those along the St. Charles, or rather along the meadows through which that lazy stream crawled like a writhing snake. At the place that Wolfe chose for his battle-field the plateau was less than a mile wide.

Thither the troops advanced, marched by files till they reached the ground, and then wheeled to form their line of battle, which stretched across the plateau and faced the city. It consisted of six battalions and the detached grenadiers from Louisbourg, all drawn up in ranks three deep. Its right wing was near the brink of the heights along the St. Lawrence; but the left could not reach those along the St. Charles. On this side a wide space was perforce left open, and there was danger of being outflanked. To prevent this, Brigadier Townshend was stationed here with two battalions, drawn up at right angles with the rest, and fronting the St. Charles. The battalion of Webb's regiment, under Colonel

Burton, formed the reserve; the third battalion of Royal Americans was left to guard the landing; and Howe's light infantry occupied a wood far in the rear. Wolfe, with Monckton and Murray, commanded the front line, on which the heavy fighting was to fall, and which, when all the troops had arrived, numbered less than thirty-five hundred men.

Quebec was not a mile distant, but they could not see it; for a ridge of broken ground intervened, called *Buttes-à-Neveu*, about six hundred paces off. The first division of troops had scarcely come up when, about six o'clock, this ridge was suddenly thronged with white uniforms. It was the battalion of *Guienne*, arrived at the eleventh hour from its camp by the *St. Charles*. Some time after there was hot firing in the rear. It came from a detachment of *Bougainville's* command attacking a house where some of the light infantry were posted. The assailants were repulsed, and the firing ceased. Light showers fell at intervals, besprinkling the troops as they stood patiently waiting the event.

*Montcalm* had passed a troubled night. Through all the evening the cannon bellowed from the ships of *Saunders*, and the boats of the fleet hovered in the dusk off the *Beaufort* shore, threatening every moment to land. Troops lined the intrenchments till day, while the general walked the field that adjoined his headquarters till one in the morning, accompanied by the *Chevalier Johnstone* and *Colonel Poulariez*. *Johnstone* says that he was in great agitation, and took no rest all night. At daybreak he heard the sound of cannon above the town. It was the battery at *Samos* firing on the English ships. He had sent an officer to the quarters of *Vaudreuil*, which were much nearer Quebec, with orders to bring him word at once should anything unusual happen.



But no word came, and about six o'clock he mounted and rode thither with Johnstone. As they advanced, the country behind the town opened more and more upon their sight; till at length, when opposite Vaudreuil's house, they saw across the St. Charles, some two miles away, the red ranks of British soldiers on the heights beyond.

"This is a serious business," Montcalm said; and sent off Johnstone at full gallop to bring up the troops from the centre and left of the camp. Those of the right were in motion already, doubtless by the governor's order. Vaudreuil came out of the house. Montcalm stopped for a few words with him; then set spurs to his horse, and rode over the bridge of the St. Charles to the scene of danger. He rode with a fixed look, uttering not a word.

The army followed in such order as it might, crossed the bridge in hot haste, passed under the northern rampart of Quebec, entered at the Palace Gate, and pressed on in headlong march along the quaint narrow streets of the warlike town: troops of Indians in scalp-locks and war-paint, a savage glitter in their deep-set eyes; bands of Canadians whose all was at stake, — faith, country, and home; the colony regulars; the battalions of Old France, a torrent of white uniforms and gleaming bayonets, La Sarre, Languedoc, Roussillon, Béarn, — victors of Oswego, William Henry, and Ticonderoga. So they swept on, poured out upon the plain, some by the gate of St. Louis, and some by that of St. John, and hurried, breathless, to where the banners of Guienne still fluttered on the ridge.

Montcalm was amazed at what he saw. He had expected a detachment, and he found an army. Full in sight before him stretched the lines of Wolfe: the close ranks of the English infantry, a silent wall of red, and the wild array of

the Highlanders, with their waving tartans, and bagpipes screaming defiance. Vaudreuil had not come; but not the less was felt the evil of a divided authority and the jealousy of the rival chiefs. Montcalm waited long for the forces he had ordered to join him from the left wing of the army. He waited in vain. It is said that the governor had detained them, lest the English should attack the Beauport shore. Even if they did so, and succeeded, the French might defy them, could they but put Wolfe to rout on the Plains of Abraham. Neither did the garrison of Quebec come to the aid of Montcalm. He sent to Ramesay, its commander, for twenty-five field-pieces which were on the Palace battery. Ramesay would give him only three, saying that he wanted them for his own defence. There were orders and counter-orders; misunderstanding, haste, delay, perplexity.

Montcalm and his chief officers held a council of war. It is said that he and they alike were for immediate attack. His enemies declare that he was afraid lest Vaudreuil should arrive and take command; but the governor was not a man to assume responsibility at such a crisis. Others say that his impetuosity overcame his better judgment; and of this charge it is hard to acquit him. Bougainville was but a few miles distant, and some of his troops were much nearer; a messenger sent by way of Old Lorette could have reached him in an hour and a half at most, and a combined attack in front and rear might have been concerted with him. If, moreover, Montcalm could have come to an understanding with Vaudreuil, his own force might have been strengthened by two or three thousand additional men from the town and the camp of Beauport; but he felt that there was no time to lose, for he imagined that Wolfe would soon be reinforced, which was impossible, and he believed that the English

were fortifying themselves, which was no less an error. He has been blamed not only for fighting too soon, but for fighting at all. In this he could not choose. Fight he must, for Wolfe was now in a position to cut off all his supplies. His men were full of ardor, and he resolved to attack before their ardor cooled. He spoke a few words to them in his keen, vehement way. "I remember very well how he looked," one of the Canadians, then a boy of eighteen, used to say in his old age; "he rode a black or dark bay horse along the front of our lines, brandishing his sword, as if to excite us to do our duty. He wore a coat with wide sleeves, which fell back as he raised his arm, and showed the white linen of the wristband."

The English waited the result with a composure which, if not quite real, was at least well feigned. The three field-pieces sent by Ramesay plied them with canister-shot, and fifteen hundred Canadians and Indians fusilladed them in front and flank. Over all the plain, from behind bushes and knolls and the edge of cornfields, puffs of smoke sprang incessantly from the guns of these hidden marksmen. Skirmishers were thrown out before the lines to hold them in check, and the soldiers were ordered to lie on the grass to avoid the shot. The firing was liveliest on the English left, where bands of sharpshooters got under the edge of the declivity, among thickets, and behind scattered houses, whence they killed and wounded a considerable number of Townshend's men. The light infantry were called up from the rear. The houses were taken and retaken, and one or more of them was burned.

Wolfe was everywhere. How cool he was, and why his followers loved him, is shown by an incident that happened in the course of the morning. One of his captains was shot

through the lungs; and on recovering consciousness he saw the general standing at his side. Wolfe pressed his hand, told him not to despair, praised his services, promised him early promotion, and sent an aide-de-camp to Monckton to beg that officer to keep the promise if he himself should fall.

It was towards ten o'clock when, from the high ground on the right of the line, Wolfe saw that the crisis was near. The French on the ridge had formed themselves into three bodies, regulars in the centre, regulars and Canadians on right and left. Two field-pieces, which had been dragged up the heights at Anse du Foulon, fired on them with grape-shot, and the troops, rising from the ground, prepared to receive them. In a few moments more they were in motion. They came on rapidly, uttering loud shouts, and firing as soon as they were within range. Their ranks, ill ordered at the best, were further confused by a number of Canadians who had been mixed among the regulars, and who, after hastily firing, threw themselves on the ground to reload. The British advanced a few rods; then halted and stood still. When the French were within forty paces the word of command rang out, and a crash of musketry answered all along the line. The volley was delivered with remarkable precision. In the battalions of the centre, which had suffered least from the enemy's bullets, the simultaneous explosion was afterwards said by French officers to have sounded like a cannon-shot. Another volley followed, and then a furious clattering fire that lasted but a minute or two. When the smoke rose, a miserable sight was revealed: the ground cumbered with dead and wounded, the advancing masses stopped short and turned into a frantic mob, shouting, cursing, gesticulating. The order was given to charge. Then over the field rose the British cheer, mixed with the

fierce yell of the Highland slogan. Some of the corps pushed forward with the bayonet; some advanced firing. The clansmen drew their broadswords and dashed on, keen and swift as bloodhounds. At the English right, though the attacking column was broken to pieces, a fire was still kept up, chiefly, it seems, by sharpshooters from the bushes and cornfields, where they had lain for an hour or more. Here Wolfe himself led the charge, at the head of the Louisbourg grenadiers. A shot shattered his wrist. He wrapp'd his handkerchief about it and kept on.

Another shot struck him, and he still advanced, when a third lodged in his breast. He staggered and sat on the ground. Lieutenant Brown, of the grenadiers, one Henderson, a volunteer in the same company, and a private soldier, aided by an officer of artillery who ran to join them, carried



*Death of Wolfe*

him in their arms to the rear. He begged them to lay him down. They did so, and asked if he would have a surgeon. "There's no need," he answered; "it's all over with me." A moment after, one of them cried out: "They run; see how they run!" "Who run?" Wolfe demanded, like a man roused from sleep. "The enemy, sir. Egad, they give way everywhere!" "Go, one of you, to Colonel Burton," returned the dying man; "tell him to march Webb's regiment down to Charles River, to cut off their retreat from the bridge." Then, turning on his side, he mur-

mured, "Now, God be praised, I will die in peace!" and in a few moments his gallant soul had fled.<sup>1</sup>

Montcalm, still on horseback, was borne with the tide of fugitives towards the town. As he approached the walls a shot passed through his body. He kept his seat; two soldiers supported him, one on each side, and led his horse through the St. Louis Gate. On the open space within, among the excited crowd, were several women, drawn, no doubt, by eagerness to know the result of the fight. One of them recognized him, saw the streaming blood, and shrieked, "*O mon Dieu! mon Dieu! le Marquis est tué!*" "It's nothing, it's nothing," replied the death-stricken man; "don't be troubled for me, my good friends." ("*Ce n'est rien, ce n'est rien: ne vous affligez pas pour moi, mes bonnes amies.*")

[After the Fall of Quebec. — Vaudreuil might have retrieved the disaster and made it impossible for the British to occupy Quebec. But a panic seized the French and a disorderly retreat occurred to Jacques Cartier, thirty miles from danger. Lévis was summoned from Montreal and his arrival at once restored order if not hope among the broken ranks. He insisted on marching to the relief of the beleaguered garrison, but scarcely had they begun their march when the chilling news reached them that Quebec had capitulated.

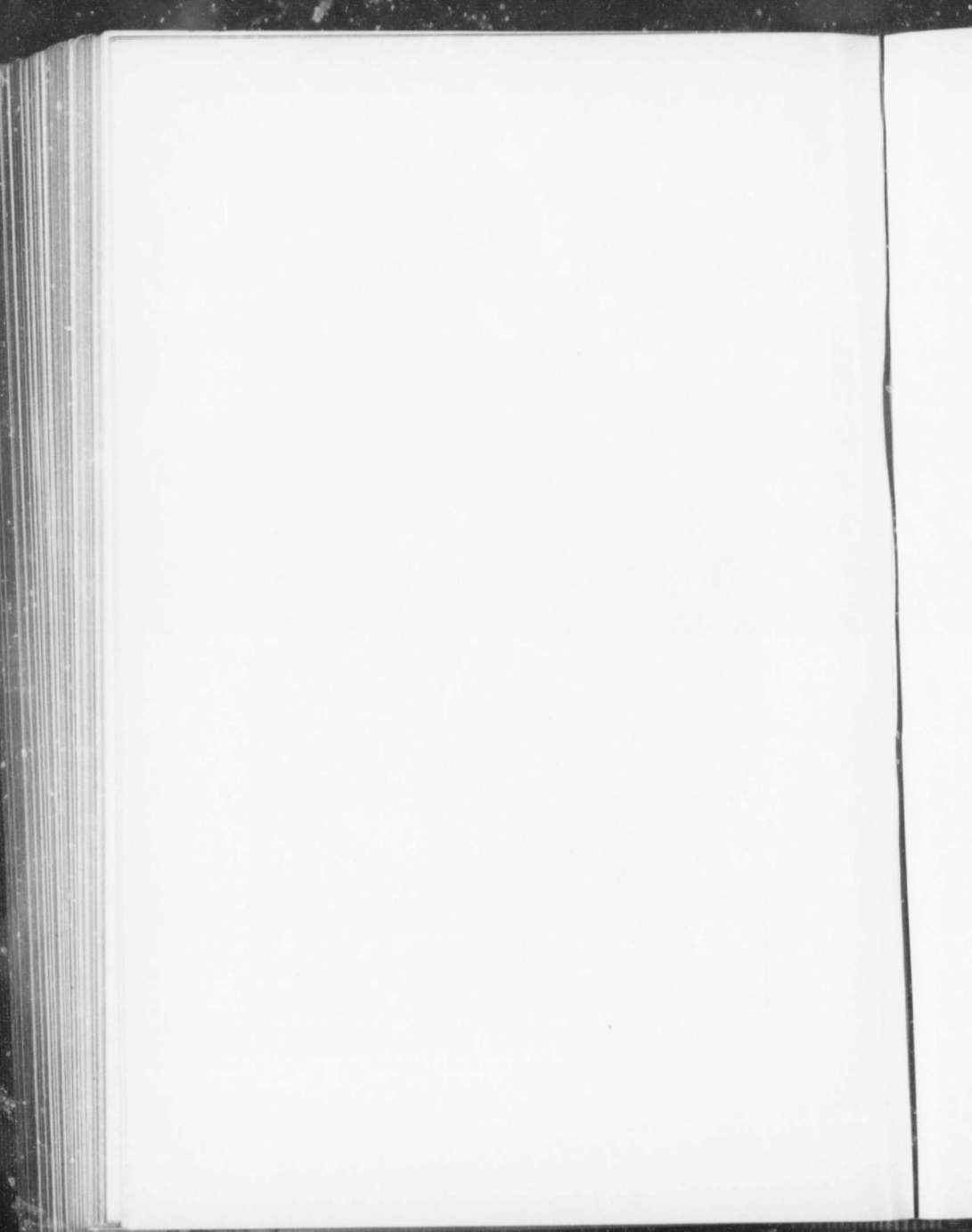
In the following spring Lévis gathered himself for a last

<sup>1</sup> There are several contemporary versions of the dying words of Wolfe. The report of Knox, given above, is by far the best attested. Knox says that he took particular pains at the time to learn them accurately from those who were with Wolfe when they were uttered.

The anecdote of Montcalm is due to the late Hon. Malcolm Fraser, of Quebec. He often heard it in his youth from an old woman, who, when a girl, was one of the group who saw the wounded general led by, and to whom the words were addressed.



THE FALL OF MONTCALM.





mighty effort. Murray who had succeeded to the command of the British troops was ill prepared for the emergency. Three courses were open to him, to defend himself within Quebec, to fortify himself outside the walls on the Buttes-à-Neveu, or to fight Lévis at all risks. His impetuosity and inexperience prompted him to give battle with three thousand men, many of whom had left the hospitals of their own accord in their eagerness to take part in the fray. The battle which followed at Sainte-Foy was disastrous to the British, and the fate of Quebec again trembled in the balance. — Ed.]

Lévis followed up his success, and made elaborate preparations for an extensive siege by digging<sup>1</sup> trenches along the stony back of the Buttes-à-Neveu. Every day the English fire grew hotter; till at last nearly a hundred and fifty cannon vomited iron upon them from the walls of Quebec, and May was well advanced before they could plant a single gun to reply. Their vessels had landed artillery at the Anse du Foulon; but their best hope lay in the succors they daily expected from the river below. In the autumn Lévis, with a view to his intended enterprise, had sent a request to Versailles that a ship laden with munitions and heavy siege-guns should be sent from France in time to meet him at Quebec in April; while he looked also for another ship, which had wintered at Gaspé, and which therefore might reach him as soon as navigation opened. The arrival of these vessels would have made the position of the English doubly critical; and, on the other hand, should an English squadron appear first, Lévis would be forced to raise the siege. Thus each side watched the river with an anxiety that grew constantly more intense; and the English presently descried signals along the shore which seemed to say

<sup>1</sup> Montcalm and Wolfe, Vol. II., Ch. XXIX.

that French ships were moving up the St. Lawrence. Meantime, while doing their best to compass each other's destruction, neither side forgot the courtesies of war. Lévis heard that Murray liked spruce-beer for his table, and sent him a flag of truce with a quantity of spruce-boughs and a message of compliment; Murray responded with a Cheshire cheese, and Lévis rejoined with a present of partridges.

Bad and scanty fare, excessive toil, and broken sleep were telling ominously on the strength of the garrison when, on the ninth of May, Murray, as he sat pondering over the fire at his quarters in St. Louis Street, was interrupted by an officer who came to tell him that there was a ship-of-war in the Basin beating up towards the town. Murray started from his revery, and directed that British colors should be raised immediately on Cape Diamond. The halyards being out of order, a sailor climbed the staff and drew up the flag to its place. The news had spread; men and officers, divided between hope and fear, crowded to the rampart by the Château, where Durham Terrace now overlooks the St. Lawrence, and every eye was strained on the approaching ship, eager to see whether she would show the red flag of England or the white one of France. Slowly her colors rose to the masthead and unfurled to the wind the red cross of St. George. It was the British frigate "Lowestoffe." She anchored before the Lower Town, and saluted the garrison with twenty-one guns. "The gladness of the troops," says Knox, "is not to be expressed. Both officers and soldiers mounted the parapet in the face of the enemy and huzzaed with their hats in the air for almost an hour. The garrison, the enemy's camp, the bay, and circumjacent country resounded with our shouts and the thunder of our artillery; for the gunners were so elated that they did nothing but

load and fire for a considerable time. In short, the general satisfaction is not to be conceived, except by a person who had suffered the extremities of a siege, and been destined, with his brave friends and countrymen, to the scalping-knives of a faithless conqueror and his barbarous allies." The "Lowestoffe" brought news that a British squadron was at the mouth of the St. Lawrence, and would reach Quebec in a few days.

Lévis, in ignorance of this, still clung to the hope that French ships would arrive strong enough to overpower the unwelcome stranger. His guns, being at last in position, presently opened fire upon a wall that was not built to bear the brunt of heavy shot; but an artillery better and more numerous than his own almost silenced them, and his gunners were harassed by repeated sallies. The besiegers had now no real chance of success unless they could carry the place by storm, to which end they had provided abundant scaling-ladders as well as petards to burst in the gates. They made, however, no attempt to use them. A week passed, when, on the evening of the fifteenth, the ship of the line "Vanguard" and the frigate "Diana" sailed into the harbor; and on the next morning the "Diana" and the "Lowestoffe" passed the town to attack the French vessels in the river above. These were six in all, — two frigates, two smaller armed ships, and two schooners; the whole under command of the gallant Vauquelin. He did not belie his reputation; fought his ship with persistent bravery till his ammunition was spent, refused even then to strike his flag, and being made prisoner, was treated by his captors with distinguished honor. The other vessels made little or no resistance. One of them threw her guns overboard and escaped; the rest ran ashore and were burned.

The destruction of his vessels was a death-blow to the hopes of Lévis, for they contained his stores of food and ammunition. He had passed the preceding night in great agitation; and when the cannonade on the river ceased, he hastened to raise the siege. In the evening deserters from his camp told Murray that the French were in full retreat; on which all the English batteries opened, firing at random through the darkness, and sending cannon-balls *en ricochet*, bowling by scores together, over the Plains of Abraham on the heels of the retiring enemy. Murray marched out at dawn of day to fall upon their rear; but, with a hundred and fifty cannon bellowing behind them, they had made such speed that, though he pushed over the marsh to Old Lorette, he could not overtake them; they had already crossed the river of Cap-Rouge. Why, with numbers still superior, they went off in such haste, it is hard to say. They left behind them thirty-four cannon and six mortars, with petards, scaling-ladders, tents, ammunition, baggage, intrenching tools, many of their muskets, and all their sick and wounded.

The effort to recover Quebec did great honor to the enterprise of the French; but it availed them nothing, served only to waste resources that seemed already at the lowest ebb, and gave fresh opportunity of plunder to Cadet and his crew, who failed not to make use of it.

BRITISH SUPREMACY<sup>1</sup>

ON the American continent the war was ended, and the British colonies breathed for a space, as they drifted unwittingly towards a deadlier strife. They had learned hard and useful lessons. Their mutual jealousies and disputes, the quarrels of their governors and assemblies, the want of any general military organization, and the absence, in most of them, of military habits, joined to narrow views of their own interest, had unfitted them to the last degree for carrying on offensive war. Nor were the British troops sent for their support remarkable in the beginning for good discipline or efficient command. When hostilities broke out, the army of Great Britain was so small as to be hardly worth the name. A new one had to be created; and thus the inexperienced Shirley and the incompetent Loudon, with the futile Newcastle behind them, had, besides their own incapacity, the disadvantage of raw troops and half-formed officers; while against them stood an enemy who, though weak in numbers, was strong in a centralized military organization, skilful leaders armed with untrammelled and absolute authority, practised soldiers, and a population not only brave, but in good part inured to war.

The nature of the country was another cause that helped to protract the contest. "Geography," says Von Moltke, "is three fourths of military science;" and never was the truth

<sup>1</sup> Montcalm and Wolfe, Vol. II., Ch. XXX.

of his words more fully exemplified. Canada was fortified with vast outworks of defence in the savage forests, marshes, and mountains that encompassed her, where the thoroughfares were streams choked with fallen trees and obstructed by cataracts. Never was the problem of moving troops, encumbered with baggage and artillery, a more difficult one. The question was less how to fight the enemy than how to get at him. If a few practicable roads had crossed this broad tract of wilderness, the war would have been shortened and its character changed.

From these and other reasons, the numerical superiority of the English was to some extent made unavailing. This superiority, though exaggerated by French writers, was nevertheless immense if estimated by the number of men called to arms; but only a part of these could be employed in offensive operations. The rest garrisoned forts and block-houses and guarded the far reach of frontier from Nova Scotia to South Carolina, where a wily enemy, silent and secret as fate, choosing their own time and place of attack, and striking unawares at every unguarded spot, compelled thousands of men, scattered at countless points of defence, to keep unceasing watch against a few hundred savage marauders. Full half the levies of the colonies, and many of the regulars, were used in service of this kind.

In actual encounters the advantage of numbers was often with the French, through the comparative ease with which they could concentrate their forces at a given point. Of the ten considerable sieges or battles of the war, five, besides the great bushfight in which the Indians defeated Braddock, were victories for France; and in four of these — Oswego, Fort William Henry, Montmorenci, and Ste. Foy — the odds were greatly on her side.

Yet in this the most picturesque and dramatic of American wars, there is nothing more noteworthy than the skill with which the French and Canadian leaders used their advantages; the indomitable spirit with which, slighted and abandoned as they were, they grappled with prodigious difficulties, and the courage with which they were seconded by regulars and militia alike. In spite of occasional lapses, the defence of Canada deserves a tribute of admiration.

PRELIMINARIES OF PEACE<sup>1</sup>

IF Pitt had been in office he would have demanded terms that must ruin past redemption the maritime and colonial power of France; but Bute was less exacting. In November the plenipotentiaries of England, France, and Spain agreed on preliminaries of peace, in which the following were the essential points. France ceded to Great Britain Canada and all her possessions on the North American continent east of the River Mississippi, except the city of New Orleans and a small adjacent district. She renounced her claims to Acadia, and gave up to the conqueror the Island of Cape Breton, with all other islands in the Gulf and River of St. Lawrence. Spain received back Havana, and paid for it by the cession of Florida, with all her other possessions east of the Mississippi. France, subject to certain restrictions, was left free to fish in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and off a part of the coast of Newfoundland; and the two little islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon were given her as fishing stations on condition that she should not fortify or garrison them. In the West Indies, England restored the captured islands of Guadeloupe, Marigalante, Désirade, and Martinique, and France ceded Grenada and the Grenadines; while it was agreed that of the so-called neutral islands, St. Vincent, Dominica, and Tobago should belong to England, and St. Lucia to France. In Europe, each side promised to give no

<sup>1</sup> Montcalm and Wolfe, Vol. II., Ch. XXXI.



more help to its allies in the German war. France restored Minorca, and England restored Belleisle; France gave up such parts of Hanoverian territory as she had occupied, and evacuated certain fortresses belonging to Prussia, pledging herself at the same time to demolish, under the inspection of English engineers, her own maritime fortress of Dunkirk. In Africa France ceded Senegal, and received back the small Island of Gorée. In India she lost everything she had gained since the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle; recovered certain trading stations, but renounced the right of building forts or maintaining troops in Bengal.

On the day when the preliminaries were signed, France made a secret agreement with Spain, by which she divested herself of the last shred of her possessions on the North American continent. As compensation for Florida, which her luckless ally had lost in her quarrel, she made over to the Spanish Crown the city of New Orleans, and under the name of Louisiana gave her the vast region spreading westward from the Mississippi towards the Pacific.

On the ninth of December the question of approving the preliminaries came up before both Houses of Parliament. There was a long debate in the Commons. Pitt was not present, confined, it was said, by gout; till late in the day the House was startled by repeated cheers from the outside. The doors opened, and the fallen minister entered, carried in the arms of his servants, and followed by an applauding crowd. His bearers set him down within the bar, and by the help of a crutch he made his way with difficulty to his seat. "There was a mixture of the very solemn and the theatric in this apparition," says Walpole, who was present. "The moment was so well timed, the importance of the man and his services, the languor of his emaciated countenance,

and the study bestowed on his dress were circumstances that struck solemnity into a patriot mind, and did a little furnish ridicule to the hardened and insensible. He was dressed in black velvet, his legs and thighs wrapped in flannel, his feet covered with buskins of black cloth, and his hands with thick gloves." Not for the first time, he was utilizing his maladies for purposes of stage effect. He spoke for about three hours, sometimes standing, and sometimes seated; sometimes with a brief burst of power, more often with the accents of pain and exhaustion. He highly commended the retention of Canada, but denounced the leaving to France a share in the fisheries, as well as other advantages tending to a possible revival of her maritime power. But the Commons listened coldly, and by a great majority approved the preliminaries of peace.

These preliminaries were embodied in the definitive treaty concluded at Paris on the tenth of February, 1763. Peace between France and England brought peace between the warring nations of the Continent. Austria, bereft of her allies, and exhausted by vain efforts to crush Frederic, gave up the attempt in despair, and signed the treaty of Hubertsburg. The Seven Years War was ended.

THE RESULTS OF VICTORY<sup>1</sup>

ALL, and more than all, that France had lost England had won. Now, for the first time, she was beyond dispute the greatest of maritime and colonial powers. Portugal and Holland, her precursors in ocean enterprise, had long ago fallen hopelessly behind. Two great rivals remained, and she had humbled the one and swept the other from her path. Spain, with vast American possessions, was sinking into the decay which is one of the phenomena of modern history; while France had abandoned the contest in despair. England was mistress of the seas, and the world was thrown open to her merchants, explorers, and colonists. A few years after the Peace the navigator Cook began his memorable series of voyages, and surveyed the strange and barbarous lands which after times were to transform into other Englands, vigorous children of this great mother of nations. It is true that a heavy blow was soon to fall upon her; her own folly was to alienate the eldest and greatest of her offspring. But nothing could rob her of the glory of giving birth to the United States; and, though politically severed, this gigantic progeny were to be not the less a source of growth and prosperity to the parent that bore them, joined with her in a triple kinship of laws, language, and blood. The war or series of wars that ended with the Peace of Paris secured the opportunities and set in action the forces that

<sup>1</sup> Montcalm and Wolfe, Vol. II., Ch. XXXII.

have planted English homes in every clime, and dotted the earth with English garrisons and posts of trade.

With the Peace of Paris ended the checkered story of New France; a story which would have been a history if faults of constitution and the bigotry and folly of rulers had not dwarfed it to an episode. Yet it is a noteworthy one in both its lights and its shadows: in the disinterested zeal of the founder of Quebec, the self-devotion of the early missionary martyrs, and the daring enterprise of explorers; in the spiritual and temporal vassalage from which the only escape was to the savagery of the wilderness; and in the swarming corruptions which were the natural result of an attempt to rule, by the absolute hand of a master beyond the Atlantic, a people bereft of every vestige of civil liberty. Civil liberty was given them by the British sword; but the conqueror left their religious system untouched, and through it they have imposed upon themselves a weight of ecclesiastical tutelage that finds few equals in the most Catholic countries of Europe.

Scarcely were they free from the incubus of France when the British provinces showed symptoms of revolt. The measures on the part of the mother-country which roused their resentment, far from being oppressive, were less burdensome than the navigation laws to which they had long submitted; and they resisted taxation by Parliament simply because it was in principle opposed to their rights as freemen. They did not, like the American provinces of Spain at a later day, sunder themselves from a parent fallen into decrepitude; but with astonishing audacity they affronted the wrath of England in the hour of her triumph, forgot their jealousies and quarrels, joined hands in the common cause, fought, endured, and won. The disunited colonies

became the United States. The string of discordant communities along the Atlantic coast has grown to a mighty people, joined in a union which the earthquake of civil war served only to compact and consolidate. Those who in the weakness of their dissensions needed help from England against the savage on their borders have become a nation that may defy every foe but that most dangerous of all foes, herself, destined to a majestic future if she will shun the excess and perversion of the principles that made her great, prate less about the enemies of the past and strive more against the enemies of the present, resist the mob and the demagogue as she resisted Parliament and king, rally her powers from the race for gold and the delirium of prosperity to make firm the foundations on which that prosperity rests, and turn some fair proportion of her vast mental forces to other objects than material progress and the game of party politics. She has tamed the savage continent, peopled the solitude, gathered wealth untold, waxed potent, imposing, redoubtable; and now it remains for her to prove, if she can, that the rule of the masses is consistent with the highest growth of the individual; that democracy can give the world a civilization as mature and pregnant, ideas as energetic and vitalizing, and types of manhood as lofty and strong, as any of the systems which it boasts to supplant.

[The tragic conflict for supremacy between the rival nations was now at an end. In the lull which followed, a sense of false security was engendered that was to receive its rude awakening from an unexpected quarter. The Indian race was doomed, but they did not yield their prerogatives with tame submissiveness. Their great concerted effort for freedom under the leadership of Pontiac is not the least picturesque or noble episode in our early history. — Ed.]

THE CHARACTER AND CUSTOMS OF THE  
INDIANS.<sup>1</sup>

THE Indian is a true child of the forest and the desert. The wastes and solitudes of nature are his congenial home. His haughty mind is imbued with the spirit of the wilderness, and the light of civilization falls on him with a blighting power. His unruly pride and untamed freedom are in harmony with the lonely mountains, cataracts, and rivers among which he dwells; and primitive America, with her savage scenery and savage men, opens to the imagination a boundless world, unmatched in wild sublimity.

The Indians east of the Mississippi may be divided into several great families, each distinguished by a radical peculiarity of language. In their moral and intellectual, their social and political state, these various families exhibit strong shades of distinction; but, before pointing them out, I shall indicate a few prominent characteristics, which, faintly or distinctly, mark the whole in common.

All are alike a race of hunters, sustaining life wholly, or in part, by the fruits of the chase. Each family is split into tribes; and these tribes, by the exigencies of the hunter life, are again divided into sub-tribes, bands, or villages, often scattered far asunder, over a wide extent of wilderness. Unhappily for the strength and harmony of the Indian race, each tribe is prone to regard itself, not as the member of a

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. I.

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great whole, but as a sovereign and independent nation, often arrogating to itself an importance superior to all the rest of mankind;<sup>1</sup> and the warrior whose petty hoard might muster a few scores of half-starved fighting men, strikes his hand upon his heart, and exclaims, in all the pride of patriotism, "I am a *Menomone*."

In an Indian community, each man is his own master. He abhors restraint, and owns no other authority than his own capricious will; and yet this wild notion of liberty is not inconsistent with certain gradations of rank and influence. Each tribe has its sachem, or civil chief, whose office is in a manner hereditary, and, among many, though by no means among all tribes, descends in the female line; so that the brother of the incumbent, or the son of his sister, and not his own son, is the rightful successor to his dignities. If, however, in the opinion of the old men and subordinate chiefs, the heir should be disqualified for the exercise of the office by cowardice, incapacity, or any defect of character, they do not scruple to discard him, and elect another in his place, usually fixing their choice on one of his relatives. The office of the sachem is no enviable one. He has neither laws to administer nor power to enforce his commands. His counsellors are the inferior chiefs and principal men of the tribe; and he never sets himself in opposition to the popular will, which is the sovereign power of these savage democracies. His province is to advise, and not to dictate; but, should he be a man of energy, talent, and address, and especially should he be supported by numerous relatives

<sup>1</sup> Many Indian tribes bear names which in their dialect signify *men*, indicating that the character belongs, *par excellence*, to them. Sometimes the word was used by itself, and sometimes an adjective was joined with it, as *original men*, *men surpassing all others*.

and friends, he may often acquire no small measure of respect and power. A clear distinction is drawn between the civil and military authority, though both are often united in the same person. The functions of war-chief may, for the most part, be exercised by any one whose prowess and reputation are sufficient to induce the young men to follow him to battle; and he may, whenever he thinks proper, raise a band of volunteers, and go out against the common enemy.

We might imagine that a society so loosely framed would soon resolve itself into anarchy; yet this is not the case, and an Indian village is singularly free from wranglings and petty strife. Several causes conspire to this result. The necessities of the hunter life, preventing the accumulation of large communities, make more stringent organization needless; while a species of self-control, inculcated from childhood upon every individual, enforced by a sentiment of dignity and manhood, and greatly aided by the peculiar temperament of the race, tends strongly to the promotion of harmony. Though he owns no law, the Indian is inflexible in his adherence to ancient usages and customs; and the principle of hero-worship, which belongs to his nature, inspires him with deep respect for the sages and captains of his tribe. The very rudeness of his condition, and the absence of the passions which wealth, luxury, and the other incidents of civilization engender, are favorable to internal harmony; and to the same cause must likewise be ascribed too many of his virtues, which would quickly vanish, were he elevated from his savage state.

A peculiar social institution exists among the Indians, very curious in its character; and though I am not prepared to say that it may be traced through all the tribes east of



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the Mississippi, yet its prevalence is so general, and its influence on political relations so important, as to claim especial attention. Indian communities, independently of their local distribution into tribes, bands, and villages, are composed of several distinct clans. Each clan has its emblem, consisting of the figure of some bird, beast, or reptile; and each is distinguished by the name of the animal which it thus bears as its device; as, for example, the clan of the Wolf, the Deer, the Otter, or the Hawk. In the language of the Algonquins, these emblems are known by the name of *Totems*.<sup>1</sup> The members of the same clan, being connected, or supposed to be so, by ties of kindred, more or less remote, are prohibited from intermarriage. Thus Wolf cannot marry Wolf; but he may, if he chooses, take a wife from the clan of Hawks, or any other clan but his own. It follows that when this prohibition is rigidly observed, no single clan can live apart from the rest; but the whole must be mingled together, and in every family the husband and wife must be of different clans.

To different totems attach different degrees of rank and dignity; and those of the Bear, the Tortoise, and the Wolf are among the first in honor. Each man is proud of his badge, jealously asserting its claims to respect; and the members of the same clan, though they may, perhaps, speak different dialects, and dwell far asunder, are yet bound together by the closest ties of fraternity. If a man is killed, every member of the clan feels called upon to avenge him;

<sup>1</sup> Schoolcraft, *Oncota*, 172.

The extraordinary figures intended to represent tortoises, deer, snakes, and other animals, which are often seen appended to Indian treaties, are the totems of the chiefs, who employ these devices of their respective clans as their sign manual. The device of his clan is also sometimes tattooed on the body of the warrior.

and the wayfarer, the hunter, or the warrior is sure of a cordial welcome in the distant lodge of the clansman whose face perhaps he has never seen. It may be added that certain privileges, highly prized as hereditary rights, sometimes reside in particular clans; such as that of furnishing a sachem to the tribe, or of performing certain religious ceremonies or magic rites.

The Indians east of the Mississippi may be divided into three great families: the Iroquois, the Algonquin, and the Mobilian, each speaking a language of its own, varied by numerous dialectic forms. To these families must be added a few stragglers from the great western race of the Dahcotah, besides several distinct tribes of the south, each of which has been regarded as speaking a tongue peculiar to itself. The Mobilian group embraces the motley confederacy of the Creeks, the crafty Choctaws, and the stanch and warlike Chickasaws. Of these, and of the distinct tribes dwelling in their vicinity, or within their limits, I shall only observe that they offer, with many modifications, and under different aspects, the same essential features which mark the Iroquois and the Algonquins, the two great families of the north. The latter, who were the conspicuous actors in the events of the ensuing narrative, demand a closer attention.

**Iroquois Life.**<sup>1</sup> — In the long evenings of midwinter, when in the wilderness without the trees cracked with biting cold, and the forest paths were clogged with snow, then, around the lodge-fires of the Iroquois, warriors, squaws, and restless naked children were clustered in social groups, each dark face brightening in the fickle firelight, while, with jest and laugh, the pipe passed round from hand to hand. Perhaps some shrivelled

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. I.

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old warrior, the story-teller of the tribe, recounted to attentive ears the deeds of ancient heroism, legends of spirits and monsters, or tales of witches and vampires — superstitions not less rife among this all-believing race than among the nations of the transatlantic world.

The life of the Iroquois, though void of those multiplying phases which vary the routine of civilized existence, was one of sharp excitement and sudden contrast. The chase, the war-path, the dance, the festival, the game of hazard, the race of political ambition, all had their votaries. When the assembled sachems had resolved on war against some foreign tribe, and when, from their great council-house of bark, in the Valley of Onondaga, their messengers had gone forth to invite the warriors to arms, then from east to west, through the farthest bounds of the confederacy, a thousand warlike hearts caught up the summons. With fasting and praying, and consulting dreams and omens; with invoking the war god, and dancing the war-dance, the warriors sought to insure the triumph of their arms; and then, their rites concluded, they began their stealthy progress through the devious pathways of the forest. For days and weeks, in anxious expectation, the villagers awaited the result. And now, as evening closed, a shrill, wild cry, pealing from afar, over the darkening forest, proclaimed the return of the victorious warriors. The village was alive with sudden commotion; and snatching sticks and stones, knives and hatchets, men, women, and children, yelling like fiends let loose, swarmed out of the narrow portal, to visit upon the captives a foretaste of the deadlier torments in store for them. The black arches of the forest glowed with the fires of death; and with brandished torch and firebrand the frenzied multitude closed around their victim. The pen shrinks

to write, the heart sickens to conceive, the fierceness of his agony; yet still, amid the din of his tormentors, rose his clear voice of scorn and defiance. The work was done; the blackened trunk was flung to the dogs, and, with clamorous shouts and hootings, the murderers sought to drive away the spirit of their victim.

The Iroquois reckoned these barbarities among their most exquisite enjoyments; and yet they had other sources of pleasure, which made up in frequency and in innocence what they lacked in intensity. Each passing season had its feasts and dances, often mingling religion with social pastime. The young had their frolics and merry-makings; and the old had their no less frequent councils, where conversation and laughter alternated with grave deliberations for the public weal. There were also stated periods marked by the recurrence of momentous ceremonies, in which the whole community took part — the mystic sacrifice of the dogs, the orgies of the dream feast, and the loathsome festival of the exhumation of the dead. Yet in the intervals of war and hunting, these resources would often fail; and, while the women were toiling in the cornfields, the lazy warriors beguiled the hours with smoking or sleeping, with gambling or gallantry.

If we seek for a single trait preëminently characteristic of the Iroquois, we shall find it in that boundless pride which impelled them to style themselves, not inaptly as regards their own race, "the men surpassing all others." "Must I," exclaimed one of their great warriors, as he fell wounded among a crowd of Algonquins, — "must I, who have made the whole earth tremble, now die by the hands of children?" Their power kept pace with their pride. Their war-parties roamed over half America, and their name was a terror from

the Atlantic to the Mississippi; but, when we ask the numerical strength of the dreaded confederacy, when we discover that, in the days of their greatest triumphs, their united cantons could not have mustered four thousand warriors, we stand amazed at the folly and dissension which left so vast a region the prey of a handful of bold marauders. Of the cities and villages now so thickly scattered over the lost domain of the Iroquois, a single one might boast a more numerous population than all the five united tribes.

**Indian Religion and Character.** — The religious belief of the Algonquins — and the remark holds good, not of the Algonquins only, but of all the hunting tribes of America — is a cloudy bewilderment, where we seek in vain for system or coherency. Among a primitive and savage people, there were no poets to vivify its images, and no priests to give distinctness and harmony to its rites and symbols. To the Indian mind, all nature was instinct with deity. A spirit was embodied in every mountain, lake, and cataract; every bird, beast, or reptile, every tree, shrub, or grass-blade, was endued with mystic influence; yet this untutored pantheism did not exclude the conception of certain divinities, of incongruous and ever-shifting attributes. The sun, too, was a god, and the moon was a goddess. Conflicting powers of good and evil divided the universe: but if, before the arrival of Europeans, the Indian recognized the existence of one, almighty, self-existent Being, the Great Spirit, the Lord of Heaven and Earth, the belief was so vague and dubious as scarcely to deserve the name. His perceptions of moral good and evil were perplexed and shadowy; and the belief in a state of future reward and punishment was by no means universal.

Of the Indian character, much has been written foolishly,

and credulously believed. By the rhapsodies of poets, the cant of sentimentalists, and the extravagance of some who should have known better, a counterfeit image has been tricked out, which might seek in vain for its likeness through every corner of the habitable earth; an image bearing no more resemblance to its original, than the monarch of the tragedy and the hero of the epic poem bear to their living prototypes in the palace and the camp. The shadows of his wilderness home, and the darker mantle of his own inscrutable reserve, have made the Indian warrior a wonder and a mystery. Yet to the eye of rational observation there is nothing unintelligible in him. He is full, it is true, of contradiction. He deems himself the centre of greatness and renown; his pride is proof against the fiercest torments of fire and steel; and yet the same man would beg for a dram of whiskey, or pick up a crust of bread thrown to him like a dog, from the tent door of the traveller. At one moment, he is wary and cautious to the verge of cowardice; at the next, he abandons himself to a very insanity of recklessness; and the habitual self-restraint which throws an impenetrable veil over emotion is joined to the unbridled passions of a madman or a beast.

Such inconsistencies, strange as they seem in our eyes, when viewed under a novel aspect, are but the ordinary incidents of humanity. The qualities of the mind are not uniform in their action through all the relations of life. With different men, and different races of men, pride, valor, prudence, have different forms of manifestation, and where in one instance they lie dormant, in another they are keenly awake. The conjunction of greatness and littleness, meanness and pride, is older than the days of the patriarchs; and such antiquated phenomena, displayed under a new form in

the unreflecting, undisciplined mind of a savage, call for no special wonder, but should rather be classed with the other enigmas of the fathomless human heart. The dissecting knife of a Rochefoucauld might lay bare matters of no less curious observation in the breast of every man.

Nature has stamped the Indian with a hard and stern physiognomy. Ambition, revenge, envy, jealousy, are his ruling passions; and his cold temperament is little exposed to those effeminate vices which are the bane of milder races. With him revenge is an overpowering instinct; nay, more, it is a point of honor and a duty. His pride sets all language at defiance. He loathes the thought of coercion; and few of his race have ever stooped to discharge a menial office. A wild love of liberty, an utter intolerance of control, lie at the basis of his character, and fire his whole existence. Yet, in spite of this haughty independence, he is a devout hero-worshipper; and high achievement in war or policy touches a chord to which his nature never fails to respond. He looks up with admiring reverence to the sages and heroes of his tribe; and it is this principle, joined to the respect for age springing from the patriarchal element in his social system, which, beyond all others, contributes union and harmony to the erratic members of an Indian community. With him the love of glory kindles into a burning passion; and to allay its cravings, he will dare cold and famine, fire, tempest, torture, and death itself.

These generous traits are overcast by much that is dark, cold, and sinister, by sleepless distrust, and rankling jealousy. Treacherous himself, he is always suspicious of treachery in others. Brave as he is, — and few of mankind are braver, — he will vent his passion by a secret stab rather than an open blow. His warfare is full of ambuscade and strata-

gem; and he never rushes into battle with that joyous self-abandonment, with which the warriors of the Gothic races flung themselves into the ranks of their enemies. In his feasts and his drinking bouts we find none of that robust and full-toried mirth which reigned at the rude carousals of our barbaric ancestry. He is never jovial in his cups, and maudlin sorrow or maniacal rage is the sole result of his potations.

Over all emotion he throws the veil of an iron self-control, originating in a peculiar form of pride, and fostered by rigorous discipline from childhood upward. He is trained to conceal passion, and not to subdue it. The inscrutable warrior is aptly imaged by the hackneyed figure of a volcano covered with snow; and no man can say when or where the wild-fire will burst forth. This shallow self-mastery serves to give dignity to public deliberation, and harmony to social life. Wrangling and quarrel are strangers to an Indian dwelling; and while an assembly of the ancient Gauls was garrulous as a convocation of magpies, a Roman senate might have taken a lesson from the grave solemnity of an Indian council. In the midst of his family and friends, he hides affections, by nature none of the most tender, under a mask of icy coldness; and in the torturing fires of his enemy, the haughty sufferer maintains to the last his look of grim defiance.

His intellect is as peculiar as his moral organization. Among all savages, the powers of perception preponderate over those of reason and analysis; but this is more especially the case with the Indian. An acute judge of character, at least of such parts of it as his experience enables him to comprehend; keen to a proverb in all exercises of war and the chase, he seldom traces effects to their causes, or follows



out actions to their remote results. Though a close observer of external nature, he no sooner attempts to account for her phenomena than he involves himself in the most ridiculous absurdities; and quite content with these puerilities, he has not the least desire to push his inquiries further. His curiosity, abundantly active within its own narrow circle, is dead to all things else; and to attempt rousing it from its torpor is but a bootless task. He seldom takes cognizance of general or abstract ideas; and his language has scarcely the power to express them, except through the medium of figures drawn from the external world, and often highly picturesque and forcible. The absence of reflection makes him grossly improvident, and unfits him for pursuing any complicated scheme of war or policy.

Some races of men seem moulded in wax, soft and melting, at once plastic and feeble. Some races, like some metals, combine the greatest flexibility with the greatest strength. But the Indian is hewn out of a rock. You can rarely change the form without destruction of the substance. Races of inferior energy have possessed a power of expansion and assimilation to which he is a stranger; and it is this fixed and rigid quality which has proved his ruin. He will not learn the arts of civilization, and he and his forest must perish together. The stern, unchanging features of his mind excite our admiration from their very immutability; and we look with deep interest on the fate of this irreclaimable son of the wilderness, the child who will not be weaned from the breast of his rugged mother. And our interest increases when we discern in the unhappy wanderer the germs of heroic virtues mingled among his vices, — a hand bountiful to bestow as it is rapacious to seize, and even in extremest famine, imparting its last morsel to a fellow-sufferer; a heart

which, strong in friendship as in hate, thinks it not too much to lay down life for its chosen comrade; a soul true to its own idea of honor, and burning with an unquenchable thirst for greatness and renown.

The imprisoned lion in the showman's cage differs not more widely from the lord of the desert than the beggarly frequenter of frontier garrisons and dramshops differs from the proud denizen of the woods. It is in his native wilds alone that the Indian must be seen and studied. Thus to depict him is the aim of the ensuing History; and if, from the shades of rock and forest, the savage features should look too grimly forth, it is because the clouds of a tempestuous war have cast upon the picture their murky shadows and lurid fires.

## PONTIAC'S CONSPIRACY

[THE episode known to history as the Conspiracy of Pontiac is memorable not alone for the graphic horrors which marked its progress, but also because it represents Indian character under a new and alarming aspect. The pale-faced conquerors of the western world had learned to their cost that their savage foes could slake their resentment in murderous forays on the unprotected frontiers. They never suspected that this fickle and child-like race could be welded by a master-mind into a coalition which was to carry menace into the very strongholds of civilization. — Ed.]

On the twelfth of September, 1760, Rogers,<sup>1</sup> then at the height of his reputation, received orders from Sir Jeffrey Amherst to ascend the lakes with a detachment of rangers, and take possession, in the name of his Britannic Majesty, of Detroit, Michillimackinac, and other western posts included in the late capitulation.<sup>2</sup> He left Montreal, on the following day, with two hundred rangers, in fifteen whale boats. Stemming the surges of La Chine and the Cedars, they left behind them the straggling hamlet which bore the latter name, and formed at that day the western limit of Canadian settlement. They gained Lake Ontario, skirted its northern shore, amid rough and boisterous weather, and

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. VI.

<sup>2</sup> Rogers was the celebrated leader of a company called "Rogers's Rangers," which had made itself famous in the previous campaign.

crossing at its western extremity, reached Fort Niagara on the first of October. Carrying their boats over the portage, they launched them once more above the cataract, and slowly pursued their voyage; while Rogers, with a few attendants, hastened on in advance to Fort Pitt, to deliver despatches, with which he was charged, to General Monckton. This errand accomplished, he rejoined his command at Presqu' Isle, about the end of the month, and the whole proceeded together along the southern margin of Lake Erie. The season was far advanced. The wind was chill, the lake was stormy, and the woods on shore were tinged with the fading hues of autumn. On the seventh of November, they reached the mouth of a river called by Rogers the Chogage. No body of troops under the British flag had ever before penetrated so far. The day was dull and rainy, and, resolving to rest until the weather should improve, Rogers ordered his men to prepare their encampment in the neighboring forest.

Soon after the arrival of the rangers, a party of Indian chiefs and warriors entered the camp. They proclaimed themselves an embassy from Pontiac, ruler of all that country, and directed, in his name, that the English should advance no farther until they had had an interview with the great chief, who was already close at hand. In truth, before the day closed, Pontiac himself appeared; and it is here, for the first time, that this remarkable man stands forth distinctly on the page of history. He greeted Rogers with the haughty demand, what was his business in that country, and how he dared enter it without his permission. Rogers informed him that the French were defeated, that Canada had surrendered, and that he was on his way to take possession of Detroit, and restore a general peace to white men and Indians alike. Pontiac listened with attention but only re-

plied that he should stand in the path of the English until morning. Having inquired if the strangers were in need of anything which his country could afford, he withdrew with his chiefs at nightfall, to his own encampment; while the English, ill at ease, and suspecting treachery, stood well on their guard throughout the night.

In the morning, Pontiac returned to the camp with his attendant chiefs, and made his reply to Rogers's speech of the previous day. He was willing, he said, to live at peace with the English, and suffer them to remain in his country as long as they treated him with due respect and deference. The Indian chiefs and provincial officers smoked the calumet together, and perfect harmony seemed established between them.

Up to this time, Pontiac had been, in word and deed, the fast ally of the French; but it is easy to discern the motives that impelled him to renounce his old adherence. The American forest never produced a man more shrewd, politic, and ambitious. Ignorant as he was of what was passing in the world, he could clearly see that the French power was on the wane, and he knew his own interest too well to prop a falling cause. By making friends of the English, he hoped to gain powerful allies, who would aid his ambitious projects, and give him an increased influence over the tribes; and he flattered himself that the new-comers would treat him with the same respect which the French had always observed. In this, and all his other expectations of advantage from the English, he was doomed to disappointment.

**Character of Pontiac.**<sup>1</sup> — Pontiac, as already mentioned, was principal chief of the Ottawas. The Ottawas, Ojibwas, and Pottawattamies, had long been united in a loose kind of con-

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. VII.

federacy, of which he was the virtual head. Over those around him his authority was almost despotic, and his power extended far beyond the limits of the three united tribes. His influence was great among all the nations of the Illinois country; while, from the sources of the Ohio to those of the Mississippi, and, indeed, to the farthest boundaries of the widespread Algonquin race, his name was known and respected.

The fact that Pontiac was born the son of a chief would in no degree account for the extent of his power; for, among Indians, many a chief's son sinks back into insignificance, while the offspring of a common warrior may succeed to his place. Among all the wild tribes of the continent, personal merit is indispensable to gaining or preserving dignity. Courage, resolution, address, and eloquence are sure passports to distinction. With all these Pontiac was pre-eminently endowed, and it was chiefly to them, urged to their highest activity by a vehement ambition, that he owed his greatness. He possessed a commanding energy and force of mind, and in subtlety and craft could match the best of his wily race. But, though capable of acts of magnanimity, he was a thorough savage, with a wider range of intellect than those around him, but sharing all their passions and prejudices, their fierceness and treachery. His faults were the faults of his race; and they cannot eclipse his nobler qualities. His memory is still cherished among the remnants of many Algonquin tribes, and the celebrated Tecumseh adopted him for his model, proving himself no unworthy imitator.

**Pontiac's Plans.**<sup>1</sup>— Pontiac was now (1760) about fifty years old. Until Major Rogers came into the country, he had been from motives probably both of interest and inclina-

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. VII.

tion, a firm friend of the French. Not long before the French war broke out, he had saved the garrison of Detroit from the imminent peril of an attack from some of the discontented tribes of the north. During the war, he had fought on the side of France. It is said that he commanded the Ottawas at the memorable defeat of Braddock; and it is certain that he was treated with much honor by the French officers, and received especial marks of esteem from the Marquis of Montcalm.

We have seen how, when the tide of affairs changed, the subtle and ambitious chief trimmed his bark to the current, and gave the hand of friendship to the English. That he was disappointed in their treatment of him, and in all the hopes that he had formed from their alliance, is sufficiently evident from one of his speeches. A new light soon began to dawn upon his untaught but powerful mind, and he saw the altered posture of affairs under its true aspect.

It was a momentous and gloomy crisis for the Indian race, for never before had they been exposed to such imminent and pressing danger. With the downfall of Canada, the tribes had sunk at once from their position of importance. Hitherto the two rival European nations had kept each other in check upon the American continent, and the Indians had, in some measure, held the balance of power between them. To conciliate their good-will and gain their alliance, to avoid offending them by injustice and encroachment, was the policy both of the French and English. But now the face of affairs was changed. The English had gained an undisputed ascendancy, and the Indians, no longer important as allies, were treated as mere barbarians, who might be trampled upon with impunity. Abandoned to their own feeble resources and divided strength, they must fast recede,

and dwindle away before the steady progress of the colonial power. Already their best hunting-grounds were invaded, and from the eastern ridges of the Alleghanies they might see, from far and near, the smoke of the settlers' clearings, rising in tall columns from the dark-green bosom of the forest. The doom of the race was sealed, and no human power could avert it; but they, in their ignorance, believed otherwise, and vainly thought that, by a desperate effort, they might yet uproot and overthrow the growing strength of their destroyers.

It would be idle to suppose that the great mass of the Indians understood, in its full extent, the danger which threatened their race. With them, the war was a mere outbreak of fury, and they turned against their enemies with as little reason or forecast as a panther when he leaps at the throat of the hunter. Goaded by wrongs and indignities, they struck for revenge, and for relief from the evil of the moment. But the mind of Pontiac could embrace a wider and deeper view. The peril of the times was unfolded in its full extent before him, and he resolved to unite the tribes in one grand effort to avert it. He did not, like many of his people, entertain the absurd idea that the Indians, by their unaided strength, could drive the English into the sea. He adopted the only plan consistent with reason, that of restoring the French ascendancy in the West, and once more opposing a check to British encroachment. With views like these, he lent a greedy ear to the plausible falsehoods of the Canadians, who assured him that the armies of King Louis were already advancing to recover Canada, and that the French and their red brethren, fighting side by side, would drive the English dogs back within their own narrow limits.



INDIAN PREPARATION<sup>1</sup>

I INTERRUPT the progress of the narrative to glance for a moment at the Indians in their military capacity, and observe how far they were qualified to prosecute the formidable war into which they were about to plunge.

A people living chiefly by the chase, and therefore, of necessity, thinly and widely scattered; divided into numerous tribes, held together by no strong principle of cohesion, and with no central government to combine their strength, could act with little efficiency against such an enemy as was now opposed to them. Loose and disjointed as a whole, the government even of individual tribes, and of their smallest separate communities, was too feeble to deserve the name. There were, it is true, chiefs whose office was in a manner hereditary; but their authority was wholly of a moral nature, and enforced by no compulsory law. Their province was to advise, and not to command. Their influence, such as it was, is chiefly to be ascribed to the principle of hero-worship, natural to the Indian character, and to the reverence for age, which belongs to a state of society where a patriarchal element largely prevails. It was their office to declare war and make peace; but when war was declared, they had no power to carry the declaration into effect. The warriors fought if they chose to do so; but if, on the contrary, they preferred to remain quiet, no man could force

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I, Ch. VIII.

them to raise the hatchet. The war-chief, whose part it was to lead them to battle, was a mere partisan, whom his bravery and exploits had led to distinction. If he thought proper, he sang his war-song and danced his war-dance; and as many of the young men as were disposed to follow him, gathered around and enlisted themselves under him. Over these volunteers he had no legal authority, and they could desert him at any moment, with no other penalty than disgrace. When several war-parties, of different bands or tribes, were united in a common enterprise, their chiefs elected a leader, who was nominally to command the whole; but unless this leader was a man of uncommon reputation and ability, his commands were disregarded, and his authority was a cipher. Among his followers, every latent element of discord, pride, jealousy, and ancient half-smothered feuds, were ready at any moment to break out, and tear the whole asunder. His warriors would often desert in bodies; and many an Indian army, before reaching the enemy's country, has been known to dwindle away until it was reduced to a mere scalping-party.

To twist a rope of sand would be as easy a task as to form a permanent and effective army of such materials. The wild love of freedom, and impatience of all control, which mark the Indian race, render them utterly intolerant of military discipline. Partly from their individual character, and partly from this absence of subordination, spring results highly unfavorable to continued and extended military operations. Indian warriors, when acting in large masses, are to the last degree wayward, capricious, and unstable; infirm of purpose as a mob of children, and devoid of providence and foresight. To provide supplies for a campaign forms no part of their system. Hence the blow must be struck at once, or

not struck at all ; and to postpone victory is to insure defeat. It is when acting in small, detached parties, that the Indian warrior puts forth his energies, and displays his admirable address, endurance, and intrepidity. It is then that he becomes a truly formidable enemy. Fired with the hope of winning scalps, he is stanch as a bloodhound. No hardship can divert him from his purpose, and no danger subdue his patient and cautious courage.

From their inveterate passion for war, the Indians are always prompt enough to engage in it ; and on the present occasion, the prevailing irritation gave ample assurance that they would not remain idle. While there was little risk that they would capture any strong and well-defended fort, or carry any important position, there was, on the other hand, every reason to apprehend wide-spread havoc, and a destructive war of detail. That the war might be carried on with effect, it was the part of the Indian leaders to work upon the passions of their people, and keep alive their irritation ; to whet their native appetite for blood and glory, and cheer them on to the attack ; to guard against all that might quench their ardor, or cool their fierceness ; to avoid pitched battles ; never to fight except under advantage ; and to avail themselves of all the aid which craft and treachery could afford. The very circumstances which unfitted the Indians for continued and concentrated attack were, in another view, highly advantageous, by preventing the enemy from assailing them with vital effect. It was no easy task to penetrate tangled woods in search of a foe, alert and active as a lynx, who would seldom stand and fight, whose deadly shot and triumphant whoop were the first and often the last tokens of his presence, and who, at the approach of a hostile force, would vanish into the black recesses of forests and pine

swamps, only to renew his attacks with unabated ardor. There were no forts to capture, no magazines to destroy, and little property to seize upon. No warfare could be more perilous and harassing in its prosecution, or less satisfactory in its results.

The English colonies at this time were but ill-fitted to bear the brunt of the impending war. The army which had conquered Canada was broken up and dissolved; the provincials were disbanded, and most of the regulars sent home. A few fragments of regiments, miserably wasted by war and sickness, had just arrived from the West Indies; and of these, several were already ordered to England, to be disbanded. There remained barely troops enough to furnish feeble garrisons for the various forts on the frontier and in the Indian country. At the head of this dilapidated army was Sir Jeffrey Amherst, who had achieved the reduction of Canada, and clinched the nail which Wolfe had driven. In some respects he was well fitted for the emergency; but, on the other hand, he held the Indians in supreme contempt, and his arbitrary treatment of them and total want of every quality of conciliation where they were concerned, had had no little share in exciting them to war.

While the war was on the eve of breaking out, an event occurred which had afterwards an important effect upon its progress, — the signing of the treaty of peace at Paris, on the tenth of February, 1763. By this treaty France resigned her claims to the territories east of the Mississippi, and that great river now became the western boundary of the British colonial possessions. In portioning out her new acquisitions into separate governments, England left the valley of the Ohio and the adjacent regions as an Indian domain, and by the proclamation of the seventh of October following, the

intrusion of settlers upon these lands was strictly prohibited. Could these just and necessary measures have been sooner adopted, it is probable that the Indian war might have been prevented, or, at all events, rendered less general and violent, for the treaty would have made it apparent that the French could never repossess themselves of Canada, and would have proved the futility of every hope which the Indians entertained of assistance from that quarter, while, at the same time, the royal proclamation would have tended to tranquillize their minds, by removing the chief cause of irritation. But the remedy came too late, and served only to inflame the evil. While the sovereigns of France, England, and Spain, were signing the treaty at Paris, countless Indian warriors in the American forests were singing the war-song, and whetting their scalping-knives.

Throughout the western wilderness, in a hundred camps and villages, were celebrated the savage rites of war. Warriors, women, and children were alike eager and excited; magicians consulted their oracles, and prepared charms to insure success; while the war-chief, his body painted black from head to foot, concealed himself in the solitude of rocks and caverns, or the dark recesses of the forest. Here, fasting and praying, he calls day and night upon the Great Spirit, consulting his dreams, to draw from them auguries of good or evil; and if, perchance, a vision of the great war-eagle seems to hover over him with expanded wings, he exults in the full conviction of triumph. When a few days have elapsed, he emerges from his retreat, and the people discover him descending from the woods, and approaching their camp, black as a demon of war, and shrunken with fasting and vigil. They flock around and listen to his wild harangue. He calls on them to avenge the blood of their slaughtered

relatives; he assures them that the Great Spirit is on their side, and that victory is certain. With exulting cries they disperse to their wigwams, to array themselves in the savage decorations of the war-dress. An old man now passes through the camp, and invites the warriors to a feast in the name of the chief. They gather from all quarters to his wigwam, where they find him seated, no longer covered with black, but adorned with the startling and fantastic blazonry of the war-paint. Those who join in the feast pledge themselves, by so doing, to follow him against the enemy. The guests seat themselves on the ground, in a circle around the wigwam, and the flesh of dogs is placed in wooden dishes before them, while the chief, though goaded by the pangs of his long, unbroken fast, sits smoking his pipe with unmoved countenance, and takes no part in the feast.

Night has now closed in; and the rough clearing is illumined by the blaze of fires and burning pine-knots, casting their deep red glare upon the dusky boughs of the surrounding forest, and upon the wild multitude who, fluttering with feathers and bedaubed with paint, have gathered for the celebration of the war-dance. A painted post is driven into the ground, and the crowd form a wide circle around it. The chief leaps into the vacant space, brandishing his hatchet as if rushing upon an enemy, and, in a loud, vehement tone, chants his own exploits and those of his ancestors, enacting the deeds which he describes, yelling the war-whoop, throwing himself into all the postures of actual fight, striking the post as if it were an enemy, and tearing the scalp from the head of the imaginary victim. Warrior after warrior follows his example, until the whole assembly, as if fired with sudden frenzy, rush together into the ring, leaping, stamping, and whooping, brandishing knives and hatchets in

the fire-light, hacking and stabbing the air, and breaking at intervals into a burst of ferocious yells, which sounds for miles away over the lonely, midnight forest.

In the morning, the warriors prepare to depart. They leave the camp in single file, still decorated with all their finery of paint, feathers, and scalp-locks; and, as they enter the woods, the chief fires his gun, the warrior behind follows his example, and the discharges pass in slow succession from front to rear, the salute concluding with a general whoop. They encamp at no great distance from the village, and divest themselves of their much-prized ornaments, which are carried back by the women, who have followed them for this purpose. The warriors pursue their journey, clad in the rough attire of hard service, and move silently and stealthily through the forest towards the hapless garrison, or defenceless settlement, which they have marked as their prey.

The woods were now filled with war-parties such as this, and soon the first tokens of the approaching tempest began to alarm the unhappy settlers of the frontier. At first, some trader or hunter, weak and emaciated, would come in from the forest, and relate that his companions had been butchered in the Indian villages, and that he alone had escaped. Next succeeded vague and uncertain rumors of forts attacked and garrisons slaughtered; and soon after, a report gained ground that every post throughout the Indian country had been taken, and every soldier killed. Close upon these tidings came the enemy himself. The Indian war-parties broke out of the woods like gangs of wolves, murdering, burning, and laying waste; while hundreds of terror-stricken families, abandoning their homes, fled for refuge towards the older settlements, and all was misery and ruin.

THE THREATENED ATTACK AGAINST DETROIT<sup>1</sup>

IN the Pottawattamie village, if there be truth in tradition, lived an Ojibwa girl, who could boast a larger share of beauty than is common in the wigwam. She had attracted the eye of Gladwyn. He had formed a connection with her, and she had become much attached to him. On the afternoon of the sixth, Catharine — for so the officers called her — came to the fort, and repaired to Gladwyn's quarters, bringing with her a pair of elk-skin moccasins, ornamented with porcupine work, which he had requested her to make. There was something unusual in her look and manner. Her face was sad and downcast. She said little, and soon left the room; but the sentinel at the door saw her still lingering at the street corner, though the hour for closing the gates was nearly come. At length she attracted the notice of Gladwyn himself; and calling her to him, he pressed her to declare what was weighing upon her mind. Still she remained for a long time silent, and it was only after much urgency and many promises not to betray her, that she revealed her momentous secret.

To-morrow, she said, Pontiac will come to the fort with sixty of his chiefs. Each will be armed with a gun, cut short, and hidden under his blanket. Pontiac will demand to hold a council; and after he has delivered his speech, he will offer a peace-belt of wampum, holding it in a reversed

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. X.



position. This will be the signal of attack. The chiefs will spring up and fire upon the officers, and the Indians in the street will fall upon the garrison. Every Englishman will be killed, but not the scalp of a single Frenchman will be touched.

Such is the story told in 1768 to the traveller Carver at Detroit, and preserved in local tradition, but not sustained by contemporary letters or diaries. What is certain is, that Gladwyn received secret information, on the night of the sixth of May, that an attempt would be made on the morrow to capture the fort by treachery. He called some of his officers, and told them what he had heard. The defences of the place were feeble and extensive, and the garrison by far too weak to repel a general assault. The force of the Indians at this time is variously estimated at from six hundred to two thousand; and the commandant greatly feared that some wild impulse might precipitate their plan, and that they would storm the fort before the morning. Every preparation was made to meet the sudden emergency. Half the garrison were ordered under arms, and all the officers prepared to spend the night upon the ramparts.

The day closed, and the hues of sunset faded. Only a dusky redness lingered in the west, and the darkening earth seemed her dull self again. Then night descended, heavy and black, on the fierce Indians and the sleepless English. From sunset till dawn, an anxious watch was kept from the slender palisades of Detroit. The soldiers were still ignorant of the danger; and the sentinels did not know why their numbers were doubled, or why, with such unwonted vigilance, their officers repeatedly visited their posts. Again and again Gladwyn mounted his wooden ramparts, and looked forth into the gloom. There seemed nothing but

repose and peace in the soft, moist air of the warm spring evening, with the piping of frogs along the river bank, just roused from their torpor by the genial influence of May. But, at intervals, as the night wind swept across the bastion, it bore sounds of fearful portent to the ear, the sullen booming of the Indian drum and the wild chorus of quavering yells, as the warriors, around their distant camp-fires, danced the war-dance, in preparation for the morrow's work.

**The Treachery of Pontiac.**<sup>1</sup> — The night passed without alarm. The sun rose upon fresh fields and newly budding woods, and scarcely had the morning mists dissolved, when the garrison could see a fleet of birch canoes crossing the river from the eastern shore, within range of cannon shot above the fort. Only two or three warriors appeared in each, but all moved slowly, and seemed deeply laden. In truth, they were full of savages, lying flat on their faces, that their numbers might not excite the suspicion of the English.

At an early hour the open common behind the fort was thronged with squaws, children, and warriors, some naked, and others fantastically arrayed in their barbarous finery. All seemed restless and uneasy, moving hither and thither, in apparent preparation for a general game of ball. Many tall warriors, wrapped in their blankets, were seen stalking towards the fort, and casting malignant furtive glances upward at the palisades. Then with an air of assumed indifference, they would move towards the gate. They were all admitted; for Gladwyn, who, in this instance at least, showed some knowledge of Indian character, chose to convince his crafty foe that, though their plot was detected, their hostility was despised.

The whole garrison was ordered under arms. Sterling,

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. XI.

and the other English fur-traders, closed their storehouses and armed their men, and all in cool confidence stood waiting the result.

Meanwhile, Pontiac, who had crossed with the canoes from the eastern shore, was approaching along the river road, at the head of his sixty chiefs, all gravely marching in Indian file. A Canadian settler, named Beaufait, had been that morning to the fort. He was now returning homewards, and as he reached the bridge which led over the stream then called Parent's Creek, he saw the chiefs in the act of crossing from the farther bank. He stood aside to give them room. As the last Indian passed, Beaufait recognized him as an old friend and associate. The savage greeted him with the usual ejaculation, opened for an instant the folds of his blanket, disclosed the hidden gun, and, with an emphatic gesture towards the fort, indicated the purpose to which he meant to apply it.

At ten o'clock, the great war-chief, with his treacherous followers, reached the fort, and the gateway was thronged with their savage faces. All were wrapped to the throat in colored blankets. Some were crested with hawk, eagle, or raven plumes; others had shaved their heads, leaving only the fluttering scalp-lock on the crown; while others, again, wore their long, black hair flowing loosely at their backs, or wildly hanging about their brows like a lion's mane. Their bold yet crafty features, their cheeks besmeared with ochre and vermilion, white lead and soot, their keen, deep-set eyes gleaming in their sockets, like those of rattlesnakes, gave them an aspect grim, uncouth, and horrible. For the most part, they were tall, strong men, and all had a gait and bearing of peculiar stateliness.

As Pontiac entered, it is said that he started, and that a

deep ejaculation half escaped from his breast. Well might his stoicism fail, for at a glance he read the ruin of his plot. On either hand, within the gateway, stood ranks of soldiers and hedges of glittering steel. The swarthy *engagés* of the fur-traders, armed to the teeth, stood in groups at the street corners, and the measured tap of a drum fell ominously on the ear. Soon regaining his composure, Pontiac strode forward into the narrow street; and his chiefs filed after him in silence, while the scared faces of women and children looked out from the windows as they passed. Their rigid muscles betrayed no sign of emotion; yet, looking closely, one might have seen their small eyes glance from side to side with restless scrutiny.

Traversing the entire width of the little town they reached the door of the council-house, a large building standing near the margin of the river. On entering, they saw Gladwyn, with several of his officers, seated in readiness to receive them, and the observant chiefs did not fail to remark that every Englishman wore a sword at his side, and a pair of pistols in his belt. The conspirators eyed each other with uneasy glances. "Why," demanded Pontiac, "do I see so many of my father's young men standing in the street with their guns?" Gladwyn replied through his interpreter, La Butte, that he had ordered the soldiers under arms for the sake of exercise and discipline. With much delay and many signs of distrust, the chiefs at length sat down on the mats prepared for them, and, after the customary pause, Pontiac rose to speak. Holding in his hand the wampum belt which was to have given the fatal signal, he addressed the commandant, professing strong attachment to the English, and declaring, in Indian phrase, that he had come to smoke the pipe of peace, and brighten the chain of friendship. The

officers watched him keenly as he uttered these hollow words, fearing lest, though conscious that his designs were suspected, he might still attempt to accomplish them. And once, it is said, he raised the wampum belt as if about to give the signal of attack. But at that instant Gladwyn signed slightly with his hand. The sudden clash of arms sounded from the passage without, and a drum rolling the charge filled the council-room with its stunning din. At this, Pontiac stood like one confounded. Some writers will have it, that Gladwyn, rising from his seat, drew the chief's blanket aside, exposed the hidden gun, and sternly rebuked him for his treachery. But the commandant wished only to prevent the consummation of the plot, without bringing on an open rupture. His own letters affirm that he and his officers remained seated as before. Pontiac, seeing his unruffled brow and his calm eye fixed steadfastly upon him, knew not what to think, and soon sat down in amazement and perplexity. Another pause ensued, and Gladwyn commenced a brief reply. He assured the chiefs that friendship and protection should be extended towards them as long as they continued to deserve it, but threatened ample vengeance for the first act of aggression. The council then broke up; but, before leaving the room, Pontiac told the officers that he would return in a few days, with his squaws and children, for he wished that they should all shake hands with their fathers the English. To this new piece of treachery Gladwyn deigned no reply. The gates of the fort, which had been closed during the conference, were again flung open, and the baffled savages were suffered to depart, rejoiced, no doubt, to breathe once more the free air of the open fields.

THE CLOSING EVENTS OF THE INDIAN  
WAR. 1763-1764.

[PONTIAC directed in person the siege of Detroit.<sup>1</sup> Having failed in his treacherous attempt to capture the fort by surprise, the Indian chief withdrew to his village, enraged and mortified yet still resolved to persevere. Such was his prestige among his followers that he was able to hold the fortress closely besieged from May until October, when the rumor of reinforcements from the East induced the majority to sue for peace.

“If one is disposed to think slightly of the warriors whose numbers could avail so little against a handful of half-starved English and provincials,” says Parkman,<sup>2</sup> “he has only to recollect that where barbarism has been arrayed against civilization, disorder against discipline, and ungoverned fury against considerate valor, such has seldom failed to be the result.

“At the siege of Detroit, the Indians displayed a high degree of comparative steadiness and perseverance; and their history cannot furnish another instance of so large a force persisting so long in the attack of a fortified place. Their good conduct may be ascribed to their deep rage against the English, to their hope of speedy aid from the French, and

<sup>1</sup> Detroit was not entirely relieved until the arrival of Colonel Bradstreet in September, 1764.

<sup>2</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. I., Ch. XIV.

to the controlling spirit of Pontiac, which held them to their work. The Indian is but ill qualified for such attempts, having too much caution for an assault by storm, and too little patience for a blockade."

Pontiac's energies were not, however, confined to Detroit. His plans embraced a larger field of conquest, and the siege of Detroit was only an incident in the simultaneous surprise of all the British forts in the Western and Ohio country. Within six weeks all these forts had been attacked and destroyed by the Indians, save Fort Pitt, the fort at Green Bay, which was abandoned, and the fort at Ligonier. The hapless garrisons suffered all the horrors of torture, massacre, and cannibalism, and devastation raged along the defenceless frontier. By August, 1763, the situation was so serious that Colonel Bouquet was despatched by Sir Jeffrey Amherst to the relief of Fort Pitt, which was threatened with the disaster that had befallen the remoter posts. Their advance was painful and fraught with peril. When still about twenty-five miles from their goal, they fell into an ambuscade of Indians. — Ed.]



*Col. Henry Bouquet*

**The Battle of Bushy Run.**<sup>1</sup> — The condition of Bouquet's unhappy men might well awaken sympathy. About sixty soldiers, besides several officers, had been killed or dis-

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. II., Ch. XX.

abled. A space in the centre of the camp was prepared for the reception of the wounded, and surrounded by a wall of flour-bags from the convoy, affording some protection against the bullets which flew from all sides during the fight. Here they lay upon the ground, enduring agonies of thirst, and waiting, passive and helpless, the issue of the battle. Deprived of the animating thought that their lives and safety depended on their own exertions; surrounded by a wilderness, and by scenes to the horror of which no degree of familiarity could render the imagination callous, they must have endured mental sufferings, compared to which the pain of their wounds was slight. In the probable event of defeat, a fate inexpressibly horrible awaited them; while even victory would not ensure their safety, since any great increase in their numbers would render it impossible for their comrades to transport them. Nor was the condition of those who had hitherto escaped an enviable one. Though they were about equal in number to their assailants, yet the dexterity and alertness of the Indians, joined to the nature of the country, gave all the advantages of a greatly superior force. The enemy were, moreover, exulting in the fullest confidence of success; for it was in these very forests that, eight years before, they had nearly destroyed twice their number of the best British troops. Throughout the earlier part of the night, they kept up a dropping fire upon the camp; while, at short intervals, a wild whoop from the thick surrounding gloom told with what fierce eagerness they waited to glut their vengeance on the morrow. The camp remained in darkness, for it would have been dangerous to build fires within its precincts, to direct the aim of the lurking marksmen. Surrounded by such terrors, the men snatched a disturbed and broken sleep,



recruiting their exhausted strength for the renewed struggle of the morning.

With the earliest dawn of day, and while the damp, cool forest was still involved in twilight, there rose around the camp a general burst of those horrible cries which form the ordinary prelude of an Indian battle. Instantly, from every side at once, the enemy opened their fire, approaching under cover of the trees and bushes, and levelling with a close and deadly aim. Often, as on the previous day, they would rush up with furious impetuosity, striving to break into the ring of troops. They were repulsed at every point; but the British, though constantly victorious, were beset with undiminished perils, while the violence of the enemy seemed every moment on the increase. True to their favorite tactics, they would never stand their ground when attacked, but vanish at the first gleam of the levelled bayonet, only to appear again the moment the danger was past. The troops, fatigued by the long march and equally long battle of the previous day, were maddened by the torments of thirst, "more intolerable," says their commander, "than the enemy's fire." They were fully conscious of the peril in which they stood, of wasting away by slow degrees beneath the shot of assailants at once so daring, so cautious, and so active, and upon whom it was impossible to inflict any decisive injury. The Indians saw their distress, and pressed them closer and closer, redoubling their yells and howlings; while some of them, sheltered behind trees, assailed the troops, in bad English, with abuse and derision.

Meanwhile the interior of the camp was a scene of confusion. The horses, secured in a crowd near the wall of flour-bags which covered the wounded, were often struck by the bullets, and wrought to the height of terror by the

mingled din of whoops, shrieks, and firing. They would break away by half scores at a time, burst through the ring of troops and the outer circle of assailants, and scour madly up and down the hill-sides; while many of the drivers, overcome by the terrors of a scene in which they could bear no active part, hid themselves among the bushes, and could neither hear nor obey orders.

It was now about ten o'clock. Oppressed with heat, fatigue, and thirst, the distressed troops still maintained a weary and wavering defence, encircling the convoy in a yet unbroken ring. They were fast falling in their ranks, and the strength and spirits of the survivors had begun to flag. If the fortunes of the day were to be retrieved, the effort must be made at once; and happily the mind of the commander was equal to the emergency. In the midst of the confusion he conceived a masterly stratagem. Could the Indians be brought together in a body, and made to stand their ground when attacked, there could be little doubt of the result; and, to effect this object, Bouquet determined to increase their confidence, which had already mounted to an audacious pitch. Two companies of infantry, forming a part of the ring which had been exposed to the hottest fire, were ordered to fall back into the interior of the camp; while the troops on either hand joined their files across the vacant space, as if to cover the retreat of their comrades. These orders, given at a favorable moment, were executed with great promptness. The thin line of troops who took possession of the deserted part of the circle were, from their small numbers, brought closer in towards the centre. The Indians mistook these movements for a retreat. Confident that their time was come, they leaped up on all sides, from behind the trees and bushes, and with infernal screeches, rushed head-

long towards the spot, pouring in a heavy and galling fire. The shock was too violent to be long endured. The men struggled to maintain their posts; but the Indians seemed on the point of breaking into the heart of the camp, when the aspect of affairs was suddenly reversed. The two companies, who had apparently abandoned their position, were in fact destined to begin the attack; and they now sallied out from the circle at a point where a depression in the ground, joined to the thick growth of trees, concealed them from the eyes of the Indians. Making a short *détour* through the woods, they came round upon the flank of the furious assailants, and fired a close volley into the midst of the crowd. Numbers were seen to fall; yet though completely surprised, and utterly at a loss to understand the nature of the attack, the Indians faced about with the greatest intrepidity, and returned the fire. But the Highlanders, with yells as wild as their own, fell on them with the bayonet. The shock was irresistible, and they fled before the charging ranks in a tumultuous throng. Orders had been given to two other companies, occupying a contiguous part of the circle, to support the attack whenever a favorable moment should occur; and they had therefore advanced a little from their position, and lay close crouched in ambush. The fugitives, pressed by the Highland bayonets, passed directly across their front; upon which they rose, and poured among them a second volley, no less destructive than the first. This completed the rout. The four companies, uniting, drove the flying savages through the woods, giving them no time to rally or reload their empty rifles, killing many, and scattering the rest in hopeless confusion.

While this took place at one part of the circle, the troops and the savages had still maintained their respective posi-

tions at the other; but when the latter perceived the total rout of their comrades, and saw the troops advancing to assail them, they also lost heart, and fled. The discordant outcries which had so long deafened the ears of the English soon ceased altogether, and not a living Indian remained near the spot. About sixty corpses lay scattered over the ground. Among them were found those of several prominent chiefs, while the blood which stained the leaves of the bushes showed that numbers had fled wounded from the field. The soldiers took but one prisoner, whom they shot to death like a captive wolf. The loss of the British in the two battles surpassed that of the enemy, amounting to eight officers and one hundred and fifteen men.

Having been for some time detained by the necessity of making litters for the wounded, and destroying the stores which the flight of most of the horses made it impossible to transport, the army moved on, in the afternoon, to Bushy Run. Here they had scarcely formed their camp, when they were again fired upon by a body of Indians, who, however, were soon repulsed. On the next day they resumed their progress towards Fort Pitt, distant about twenty-five miles; and, though frequently annoyed on the march by petty attacks, they reached their destination, on the tenth, without serious loss. It was a joyful moment both to the troops and to the garrison. The latter, it will be remembered, were left surrounded and hotly pressed by the Indians, who had beleaguered the place from the twenty-eighth of July to the first of August, when, hearing of Bouquet's approach, they had abandoned the siege, and marched to attack him. From this time, the garrison had seen nothing of them until the morning of the tenth, when, shortly before the army appeared, they had passed the fort in a body, raising the scalp-

yell, and displaying their disgusting trophies to the view of the English.

The battle of Bushy Run was one of the best contested actions ever fought between white men and Indians. If there was any disparity of numbers, the advantage was on the side of the troops; and the Indians had displayed throughout a fierceness and intrepidity matched only by the steady valor with which they were met. In the provinces, the victory excited equal joy and admiration, especially among those who knew the incalculable difficulties of an Indian campaign. The Assembly of Pennsylvania passed a vote expressing their sense of the merits of Bouquet, and of the service he had rendered to the province. He soon after received the additional honor of the formal thanks of the king.

In many an Indian village, the women cut away their hair, gashed their limbs with knives, and uttered their dismal howlings of lamentation for the fallen. Yet, though surprised and dispirited, the rage of the Indians was too deep to be quenched, even by so signal a reverse; and their outrages upon the frontier were resumed with unabated ferocity. Fort Pitt, however, was effectually relieved; while the moral effect of the victory enabled the frontier settlers to encounter the enemy with a spirit which would have been wanting, had Bouquet sustained a defeat.

INCIDENTS OF THE FRONTIER<sup>1</sup>

SOME time after the butchery at Glendenning's house, an outrage was perpetrated, unmatched, in its fiend-like atrocity, through all the annals of the war. In a solitary place, deep within the settled limits of Pennsylvania, stood a small school-house, one of those rude structures of logs which, to this day, may be seen in some of the remote northern districts of New England. A man chancing to pass by was struck by the unwonted silence; and, pushing open the door, he looked in. In the centre lay the master, scalped and lifeless, with a Bible clasped in his hand; while around the room were strewn the bodies of his pupils, nine in number, miserably mangled, though one of them still retained a spark of life. It was afterwards known that the deed was committed by three or four warriors from a village near the Ohio; and it is but just to observe that, when they returned home, their conduct was disapproved by some of the tribe.

Page after page might be filled with records like these, for the letters and journals of the day are replete with narratives no less tragical. Districts were depopulated, and the progress of the country put back for years. Those small and scattered settlements which formed the feeble van of advancing civilization were involved in general destruction, and the fate of one may stand for the fate of all. In many a woody valley of the Alleghanies, the axe and fire-brand of the settlers had laid a wide space open to the sun. Here and there, about the clearing, stood rough dwellings of logs, surrounded

<sup>1</sup> The Conspiracy of Pontiac, Vol. II., Ch. XXII.

by enclosures and cornfields; while, farther out towards the verge of the woods, the fallen trees still cumbered the ground. From the clay-built chimneys the smoke rose in steady columns against the dark verge of the forest; and the afternoon sun, which brightened the tops of the mountains, had already left the valley in shadow. Before many hours elapsed, the night was lighted up with the glare of blazing dwellings, and the forest rang with the shrieks of the murdered inmates.

Among the records of that day's sufferings and disasters, none are more striking than the narratives of those whose lives were spared that they might be borne captive to the Indian villages. Exposed to the extremity of hardship, they were urged forward with the assurance of being tomahawked or burnt in case their strength should fail them. Some made their escape from the clutches of their tormentors; but of these not a few found reason to repent their success, lost in a trackless wilderness, and perishing miserably from hunger and exposure. Such attempts could seldom be made in the neighborhood of the settlements. It was only when the party had penetrated deep into the forest that their vigilance began to relax, and their captives were bound and guarded with less rigorous severity. Then, perhaps, when encamped by the side of some mountain brook, and when the warriors lay lost in sleep around their fire, the prisoner would cut or burn asunder the cords that bound his wrists and ankles, and glide stealthily into the woods. With noiseless celerity he pursues his flight over the fallen trunks, through the dense undergrowth, and the thousand pitfalls and impediments of the forest; now striking the rough, hard trunk of a tree, now tripping among the insidious network of vines and brambles. All is darkness around him, and through the black masses of

foliage above he can catch but dubious and uncertain glimpses of the dull sky. At length, he can hear the gurgle of a neighboring brook; and, turning towards it, he wades along its pebbly channel, fearing lest the soft mould and rotten wood of the forest might retain traces enough to direct the bloodhound instinct of his pursuers. With the dawn of the misty and cloudy morning, he is still pushing on his way, when his attention is caught by the spectral figure of an ancient birch-tree, which, with its white bark hanging about it in tatters, seems wofully familiar to his eye. Among the neighboring bushes, a blue smoke curls faintly upward; and, to his horror and amazement, he recognizes the very fire from which he had fled a few hours before, and the piles of spruce boughs upon which the warriors had slept. They have gone, however, and are ranging the forest, in keen pursuit of the fugitive, who, in his blind flight amid the darkness, had circled round to the very point whence he set out; a mistake not uncommon with careless or inexperienced travellers in the woods. Almost in despair, he leaves the ill-omened spot, and directs his course eastward with greater care; the bark of the trees, rougher and thicker on the northern side, furnishing a precarious clew for his guidance. Around and above him nothing can be seen but the same endless monotony of brown trunks and green leaves, closing him in with an impervious screen. He reaches the foot of a mountain, and toils upwards against the rugged declivity; but when he stands on the summit, the view is still shut out by impenetrable thickets. High above them all shoots up the tall, gaunt stem of a blasted pine-tree; and, in his eager longing for a view of the surrounding objects, he strains every muscle to ascend. Dark, wild, and lonely, the wilderness stretches around him, half hidden in



clouds, half open to the sight, mountain and valley, crag and glistening stream ; but nowhere can he discern the trace of human hand or any hope of rest and harborage. Before he can look for relief, league upon league must be passed, without food to sustain or weapon to defend him. He descends the mountain, forcing his way through the undergrowth of laurel-bushes ; while the clouds sink lower, and a storm of sleet and rain descends upon the waste. Through such scenes, and under such exposures, he presses onward, sustaining life with the aid of roots and berries or the flesh of reptiles. Perhaps, in the last extremity, some party of Rangers find him, and bring him to a place of refuge ; perhaps, by his own efforts, he reaches some frontier post, where rough lodging and rough fare seem to him unheard-of luxury ; or perhaps, spent with fatigue and famine, he perishes in despair, a meagre banquet for the wolves.

[**The Defeat of Pontiac.** — In the following summer, 1764, Bouquet followed up his success by penetrating into the heart of the Indian country, thus forcing the Delawares and the Shawanese to sue for peace. Bradstreet had meanwhile quelled the insurrection of the northern tribes. Pontiac made desperate efforts to retrieve his losses, but the backbone of Indian resistance was broken. His allies were falling off, and his followers were deserting him. In the following year, 1765, he sued for peace, and the British were undisputed masters of the Northern continent. Four years later Pontiac was slain by an Illinois Indian, after a drunken carousal in the village of Cahokia upon the shores of the Mississippi. — ED.]



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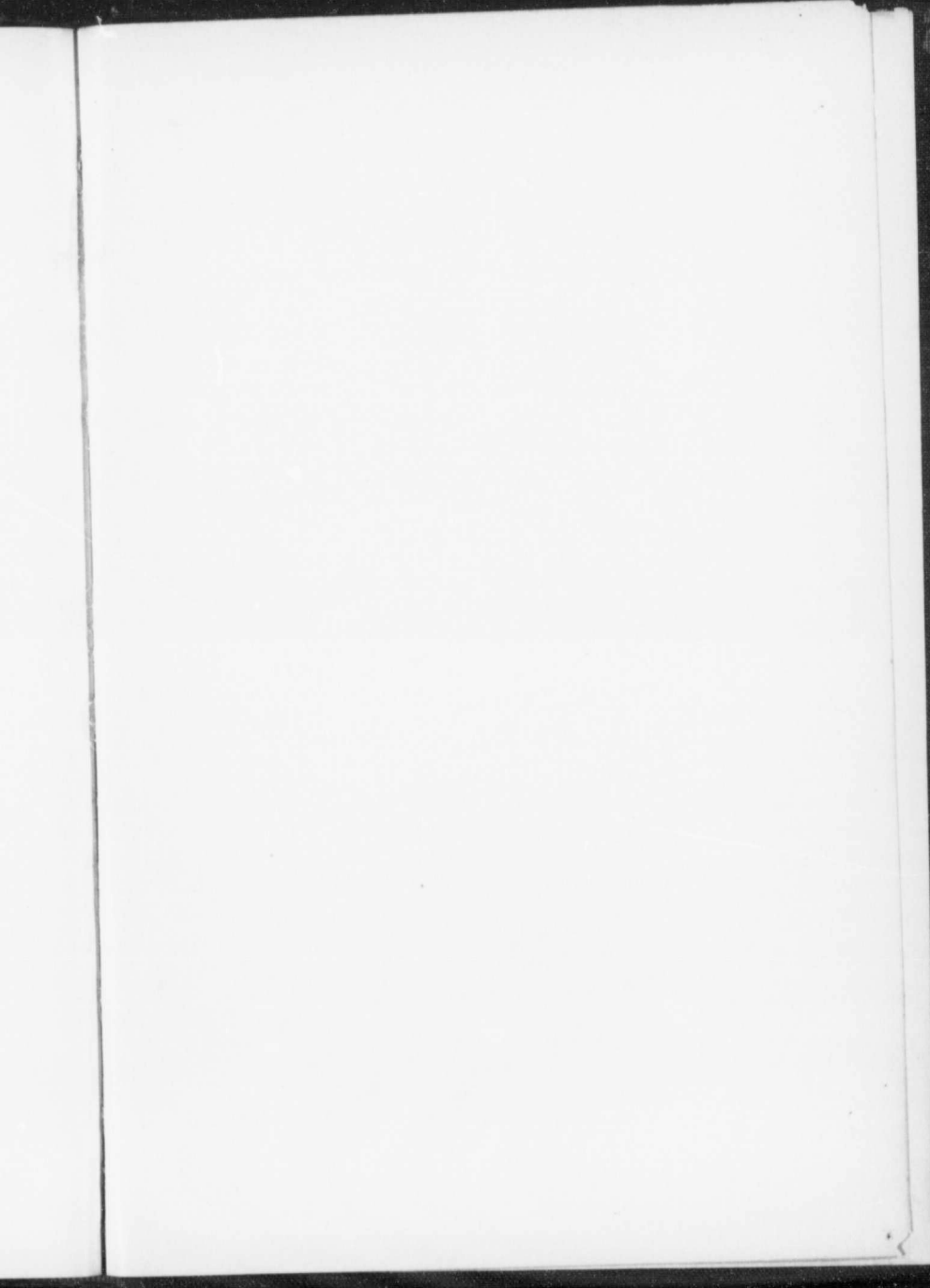
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