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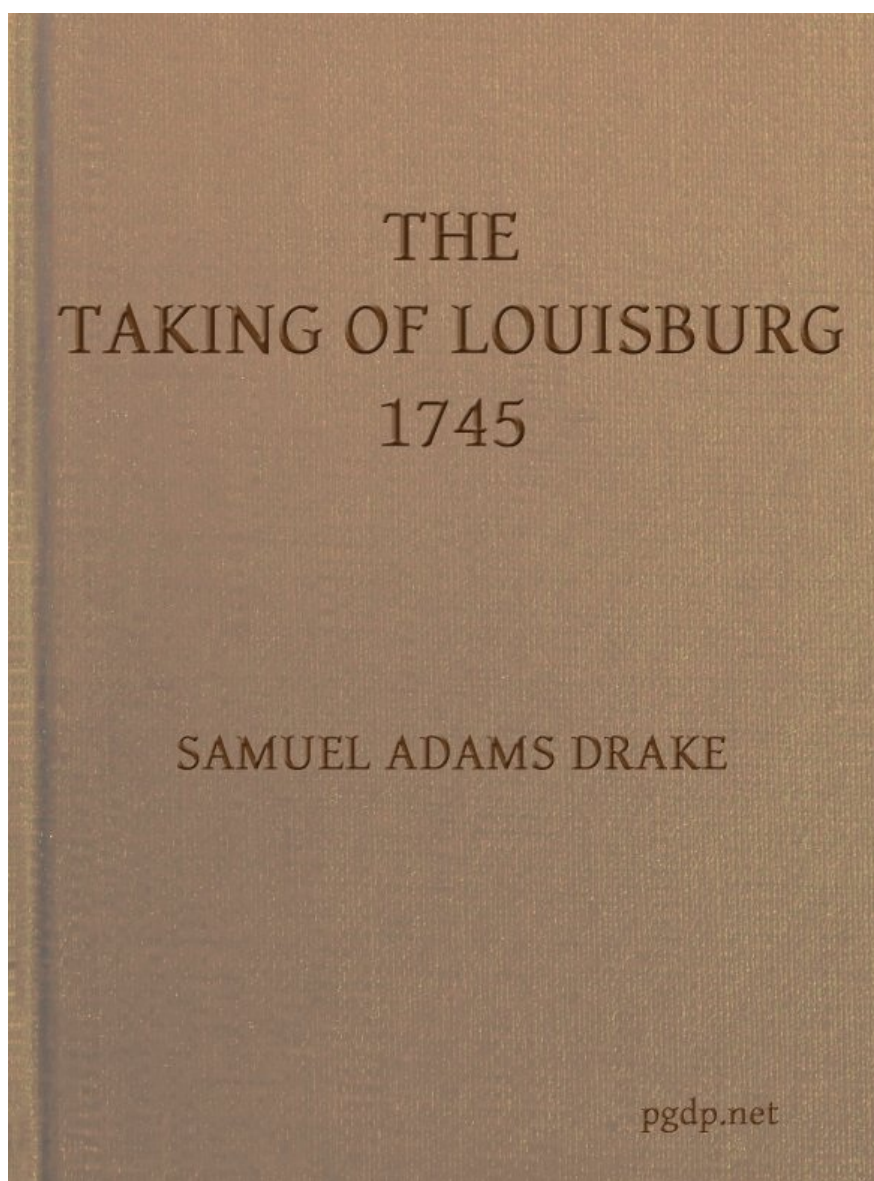
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE TAKING OF LOUISBURG, 1745 ***





A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Wm Pepperrell". The signature is written in dark ink on a light background.

W^m Pepperrell

Decisive Events in American History

**THE
TAKING OF LOUISBURG
1745**

BY
SAMUEL ADAMS DRAKE
AUTHOR OF "BURGOYNE'S INVASION OF 1777" ETC.

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ISLAND BATTERY, WITH LOUISBURG IN THE DISTANCE.

THE TAKING OF LOUISBURG 1745

I COLONIAL SEACOAST DEFENCES

The creation of great maritime fortresses, primarily designed to hold with iron hand important highways of commerce, like Gibraltar, or simply to guard great naval arsenals, like Kronstadt, or, again, placed where some great river has cleft a broad path into the heart of a country, thus laying it open to invasion, has long formed part of the military policy of all maritime nations.

In the New World the Spaniards were the first to emphasize their adhesion to these essential principles by the erection of strongholds at Havana, Carthagená, Porto Bello, and Vera Cruz, not more to guarantee the integrity of their colonial possessions, than to protect themselves against the rapacity of the titled freebooters of Europe, to whom the treasure fleets of Mexico and the East offered a most alluring prey. When Spain carried the purse, all the crowned heads of Europe seem to have turned highwaymen. 10

With this single exception the seaboard defences of the Atlantic coast, even as late as the middle of the eighteenth century, were of the most trivial character, nor was it owing to any provision for defence that the chief ports of the English colonies enjoyed the long immunity they did. England left her colonies to stand or fall upon their own resources. Fortunate beyond expectation, they simply thrived by neglect. France, with a widely different colonial policy, did a little better, but with a niggardly hand, while her system was squeezing the life-blood out of her colonists, drop by drop. Had there been a Drake or a Hawkins in the Spanish service, Spain might easily have avenged all past affronts by laying desolate every creek and harbor of the unprotected North Atlantic coast. She had the armed ports, as we have just shown. She had the ships and sailors. What, then, was to have prevented her from destroying the undefended villages of Charleston, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston? 11

Though she set about it so tardily, France was at length compelled to adopt a system of defence for Canada, or see Canada wrested from her control. In a most sweeping sense the St. Lawrence was the open gateway of Canada. There was absolutely no other means of access to all its vast territory except through the long, little known, and scarce-travelled course of the Mississippi—a route which, for many reasons besides its isolation, removed it from consideration as an avenue of attack.

Quebec was as truly the heart of Canada as the St. Lawrence was its great invigorating, life-giving artery. It is true that Quebec began to assume at a very early day something of its later character as half city, half fortress, but the views of its founders were unquestionably controlled as much by the fact of remoteness from the sea, as by Quebec's remarkable natural capabilities for blocking the path to an enemy.

Yet even before the memorable and decisive battle on the Plains of Abraham, by which Canada was lost to France forever, the St. Lawrence had been thrice ascended by hostile fleets, and Quebec itself once taken by them. Mere remoteness was thus demonstrated to be no secure safeguard against an enterprising enemy. But what if that enemy should seize and fortify the mouth of the St. Lawrence itself? He would have put a tourniquet upon the great artery, to be tightened at his pleasure, and the heart of the colony, despite its invulnerable shield, would beat only at his dictation. 12

We will now pass on to the gradual development of this idea in the minds of those who held the destiny of Canada in their keeping.

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II LOUISBURG REVISITED

The annals of a celebrated fortress are sure to present some very curious and instructive phases of national policy and character. Of none of the fortresses of colonial America can this be said with greater truth than of Louisburg, once the key and stronghold of French power in Canada.

No historic survey can be called complete which does not include the scene itself. Nowhere does the reality of history come home to us with such force, or leave such deep, abiding impressions, as when we stand upon ground where some great action has been performed, or reach a spot hallowed by the golden memories of the past. It gives tone, color, consistency to the story as nothing else can, and, for the time being, we almost persuade ourselves that we, too, are actors in the great drama itself.

The Cape Breton Coast.

14

It is doubtless quite true that the first impressions one gets when coming into Louisburg from sea must be altogether disappointing. Indeed, speaking for myself, I had formed a vague notion, I know not how, that I was going to see another Quebec, or, at least, something quite like that antique stronghold, looming large in the distance, just as the history of the fortress itself looms up out of its epoch. On the contrary, we saw a low, tame coast, without either prominent landmark or seamark to denote the harbor, except to those who know every rock and tree upon it, lifting nowhere the castellated ruins that one's eyes are strained to seek, and chiefly formidable now on account of the outlying shoals, sunken reefs, and intricate passages that render the navigation both difficult and dangerous to seamen.

Lighthouse Point.

On drawing in toward the harbor, we pass between a cluster of three small, rocky islets at the left hand, one of which is joined to that shore by a sunken reef; and a rocky point, of very moderate elevation, at the right, on which the harbor lighthouse stands, the ship channel being thus compressed to a width of half a mile between the innermost island and point. 15

The harbor is so spacious as to seem deserted, and so still as to seem oppressive.

Island Battery.

The island just indicated was, in the days of the Anglo-French struggles here, the key to this harbor, but the opposite point proved the master-key. Neither of the great war fleets that took part in the two sieges of Louisburg ventured to pass the formidable batteries of that island, commanding as they did the entrance at short range, and masking the city behind them, until their fire had first been silenced from the lighthouse point yonder. When that was done, Louisburg fell like the ripe pear in autumn.

Old Louisburg.

The old French city and fortress, the approach to which this Island Battery thus securely covered, rose at the southwest point of the harbor, or on the opposite to the present town of Louisburg, which is a fishing and coaling station for six months in the year, and for the other six counts for little or nothing. In summer it is land-locked; in winter, ice-locked. Pack ice frequently blockades the shores of the whole island until May, and snow sometimes lies in the woods until June. Yet in Cape Breton they call Louisburg an open harbor, and its choice as the site for a fortress finally turned upon the belief that it was accessible at all seasons of the year. As to that, we shall see later. 16

Face of the Country.

As for the country lying between Sydney and Louisburg, all travellers agree in pronouncing it wholly without interesting features. And the few inhabitants are scarcely more interesting than the country. In a word, it is roughly heaved about in a series of shaggy ridges, sometimes rising to a considerable height, through which the Mira, an arm of the sea, forces its way at flood-tide. There is a settlement or two upon this stream, as there was far back in the

time of the French occupation, but everything about the country wears a forlorn and unprosperous look; the farms being few and far between, the houses poor, the land thin and cold, and the people—I mean them no disparagement—much like the land, from which they get just enough to live upon, and no more. Fortunately their wants are few, and their habits simple.

Remains of the Fortress.

17

Louisburg is certainly well worth going nine hundred miles to see, but when, at last, one stands on the grass-grown ramparts, and gets his first serious idea of their amazing strength and extent, curiosity is lost in wonder, wonder gives way to reflection, and reflection leads straight to the question, "What do all these miles of earthworks mean?" And I venture to make the assertion that no one who has ever been to Louisburg will rest satisfied till he has found his answer. The story is long, but one rises from its perusal with a clearer conception of the nature of the struggle for the mastery of a continent.

Perhaps the one striking thought about this place is its utter futility. Man having no further use for it, nature quietly reclaims it for her own again. Sheep now walk the ramparts instead of sentinels.

Dominating Hills.

Upon looking about him, one sees the marked feature of all this region in the chain of low hills rising behind Louisburg. But a little back from the coast the hills rise higher, are drawn more compactly together, and assume the semi-mountainous character common to the whole island.

Green Hill.

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As this chain of hills undulates along the coast here, sometimes bending a little back from it, or again inclining out toward it, one of its zigzags approaches within a mile of Louisburg. At this point, several low, lumpy ridges push off for the seashore, through long reaches of boggy moorland, now and then disappearing beneath a shallow pond or stagnant pool, which lies glistening among the hollows between. Where it is uneven the land is stony and unfertile; where level, it is a bog. This rendered the land side as unfavorable to a besieging force as the nest of outlying rocks and reefs did the sea approaches. A continued rainfall must have made it wholly untenable for troops.

The Fortified Line.

It is one of these ridges just noticed as breaking away from the main range toward the seashore, and so naturally bent, also, as to touch the sea at one end and the harbor at the other, that the French engineers converted into a regular fortification; while within the space thus firmly enclosed by both nature and art, the old city of the lilies stretched down a gentle, grassy slope to the harbor shore.

Demolition of the City.

19

Not one stone of this city remains upon another to-day. After the second siege (1758) the English engineers were ordered to demolish it, and so far as present appearances go, never was an order more effectually carried out. All that one sees to-day, in room of it, is a poor fishing hamlet, straggling along the edge of the harbor, the dwellings being on one side, and the fish-houses and stages on the other side of the Sydney road, which suddenly contracts into a lane, and then comes to an end, along with the village itself, in a fisherman's back-yard.

Not so, however, with the still massive earthworks, for the British engineers were only able, after many months' labor, and with a liberal use of powder, to partly execute the work of demolition assigned them.

I spent several hours, at odd times, in wandering about these old ruins, and could not help being thankful that for once, at least, the destroying hand of man had been compelled to abandon its work to the rains and frosts of heaven.

Citadel or King's Bastion.

20

Beginning with the citadel, in which the formalities of the surrender took place, I found it still quite well defined, although nothing now remains above ground except some old foundation walls to show where long ranges of stone buildings once stood. Here were the different military offices, the officers' quarters and the chapel. The shattered bomb-proofs, however, were still distinguishable, though much choked up with débris, and their well-turned arches remain to show how firmly the solid masonry resisted the assaults of the engineers. In these damp holes the women, children, and non-combatants passed most of the forty-seven days of the siege. From this starting-point one may continue the walk along the ramparts, without once quitting them, for fully a mile, to the point where they touch the seashore among the inaccessible rocks and heaving surf of the ocean itself.

The Casemates.

These ramparts nowhere rise more than fifty feet above the sea-level, but are everywhere of amazing thickness and solidity. The moat was originally eighty feet across, and the walls stood thirty feet above it, but these dimensions have been much reduced by the work of time and weather. A considerable part of the line was further defended by a marsh, through which a storming column would have found it impossible to advance, and hardly less difficult to make a retreat. The besiegers were therefore obliged to concentrate their attack upon one or two points, and these had been rendered the most formidable of the whole line in consequence of the knowledge that the other parts were comparatively unassailable. In other words, the besieged were able to control, in a measure, where the besiegers should attack them.

21

Natural Obstacles made use of.

Although the partly ruined bomb-proofs are the only specimens of masonry now to be seen in making this tour, the broad and deep excavation of the moat and covered-way, and the clean, well-grassed slopes of the glacis, promise to hold together for another century at least. Brambles and fallen earth choke up the embrasures. It is necessary to use care in order to avoid treading upon a toad or a snake while you are groping among the mouldy casemates or when

crossing the parade. Those magical words "In the King's name," so often proclaimed here with salvos of artillery, have now no echo except in the sullen dash of the sea against the rocky shores outside the perishing fortress, and 22

"What care these roarers for the name of King?"

Graveyard, Point Rochefort.

Still following the sheep-paths that zigzag about so as nearly to double the distance, I next turned back toward the harbor, leaving on my right the bleak and wind-swept field in which, to the lasting reproach of New England, five hundred of her bravest sons lie without stone or monument to mark their last resting-place. It is true that most of these men died of disease, and not in battle; yet to see the place as I saw it, in all its pitiful nakedness, isolation, and neglect, is the one thing at Louisburg that a New Englander would gladly have missed; and he will be very apt to walk on with a slower and less confident step, and with something less of admiration for the glory which consigns men to such oblivion as this.

Royal Battery.

To give anything like an adequate idea of how skilfully all the peculiarities of the ground were in some cases made use of in forming the defences, or in others, with equal art, overcome, would require a long chapter to itself. In order to render the main fortress more secure, the French engineer officers selected a spot three-fourths of a mile above it, on the harbor shore, on which they erected a battery that raked the open roadstead with its fire. It was a very strong factor in the system of defences as against a sea attack. This isolated work was called the Royal Battery, or in the English accounts, the Grand Battery. Yet, so far from contributing to the successful defence of the fortress, it became, in the hands of the besiegers, a powerful auxiliary to its capture. But the whole system of defence here shows that the marshes extending on the side of Gabarus Bay, where a landing was practicable only in calm weather, were considered an insuperable obstacle to the movements of artillery; and without artillery Louisburg could never have been seriously attacked from the land side. Against a sea attack it was virtually impregnable. 23

III LOUISBURG TO SOLVE IMPORTANT POLITICAL AND MILITARY PROBLEMS 24

Having glanced at the purely military exigencies, which had at length forced themselves upon the attention of French statesmen, and having gone over the ground with the view of impressing its topographical features more firmly in our minds, we may now look at the underlying political and economic causes, out of which the French court finally matured a scheme for the maintenance of their colonial possessions in Canada in the broadest sense.

French Colonial System.

Its Unsatisfactory Workings.

In creating Louisburg the court of Versailles had far more extended views than the building of a strong fortress to guard the gateway into Canada would of itself imply. Unquestionably that was a powerful inducement to the undertaking; but, in the beginning, it certainly appears to have been only a secondary consideration. For a long time the condition of affairs in the colony had been far from satisfactory, while the future promised little that was encouraging. Compared with the English colonies, its progress was slow, irregular, and unstable. Agriculture was greatly neglected. So were manufactures. The home government had exercised, from the first, a guardianship that in the long run proved fatal to the growth of an independent spirit. There were swarms of governmental and ecclesiastical dependents who laid hold of the fattest perquisites, or else, through munificent and inconsiderate grants obtained from the crown, enjoyed monopolies of trade to the exclusion of legitimate competition. These leeches were sucking the life-blood out of Canada. So far, then, from being a self-sustaining colony, the annual disbursements of the crown were looked to as a means to make good the deficiency arising between what the country produced and what it consumed. Without protection the English colonies steadily advanced in wealth and population; with protection, Canada, settled at about the same time, scarcely held her own. 25

Two very able and sagacious men, the intendants Raudot, were the first who had the courage to lay before the court of Versailles the true condition of affairs, and the ability to suggest a remedy for it. 26

The Fur Trade Monopoly.

These intendants represented that the fur trade had always engrossed the attention of the Canadians, to the exclusion of everything else. Not only had the beaver skin become the recognized standard for all exchanges of values, but the estimated annual product of the country was based upon it, very much as we should reckon the worth of the grain crop to the United States to-day. It was also received in payment for revenues. Now, after a long experience, what was the result of an exclusive attention to this traffic? It was shown that the fur trade enriched no one except a few merchants, who left the country as soon as they had acquired the means of living at their ease in Old France. It had, therefore, no element whatever of permanent advantage to the colony.

Danger of Exclusive Attention to it.

It was also shown that this fur trade was by no means sufficient to sustain a colony of such importance as Canada unquestionably might become under a different system of management; for whether the beaver should finally become extinct through the greed of the traders, or so cheapened by glutting the market abroad as to lose its place in commerce entirely, it was evident that precisely the same result would be reached. In any case, the business was a precarious one. It limited the number of persons who could be profitably employed; it bred them up to habits of 27

indolence and vice without care for the future; and it kept them in ignorance and poverty to the last. But, what was worst of all, this all-engrossing pursuit kept the population from cultivating the soil, the true and only source of prosperity to any country.

Other cogent reasons were given, but these most conclusively set forth what a mercantile monopoly having its silent partners in the local government and church, as well as in the royal palace itself, had been able to do in the way of retarding the development of the great native resources of Canada. It was so ably done that no voice was raised against it. And with this most lucid and fearless exposé of the puerile use thus far made of those resources the memorialist statesmen hoped to open the king's eyes. 28

The two Raudots offer a Remedy.

They now proposed to wholly reorganize this unsound commercial system by directing capital and labor into new channels. Such natural productions of the country as masts, boards, ship-timber, flax, hemp, plaster, iron and copper ores, dried fish, whale and seal oils, and salted meats, might be exported, they said, with profit to the merchant and advantage to the laboring class, provided a suitable port were secured, at once safe, commodious, and well situated for collecting all these commodities, and shipping them abroad.

Cape Breton brought to Notice.

To this end, these intendants now first brought to notice the advantages of Cape Breton for such an establishment. Strangely enough, up to this time little or no attention had been paid to this island. Three or four insignificant fishing ports existed on its coasts, but as yet the whole interior was a shaggy wilderness, through which the Micmac Indians roamed as freely as their fathers had done before Cartier ascended the St. Lawrence. Its valuable deposits of coal and gypsum lay almost untouched in their native beds; its stately timber trees rotted where they grew; its unrivalled water-ways, extending through the heart of the island, served no better purpose than as a highway for wandering savages. 29

Acadia to be helped.

By creating such a port as the Raudots suggested, the voyage from France would be shortened one half, and the dangerous navigation of the St. Lawrence altogether avoided, since, instead of large ships having to continue their voyages to Quebec, the carrying trade of the St. Lawrence would fall to coasting vessels owned in the colony. A strong hand would also be given to the neighbor province, the fertile yet unprotected Acadia, which might thus be preserved against the designs of the English, while a thriving trade in wines, brandies, linens, and rich stuffs might reasonably be expected to spring up with the neighboring English colonies.

A Military and Naval Arsenal proposed.

These were considerations of such high national importance as to at once secure for the project an attention which purely strategic views could hardly be expected to command. And yet, the forming of a military and naval depot, strong enough to guarantee the security of the proposed port, and in which the king's ships might at need refit, or take refuge, or sally out upon an enemy, was an essential feature of this elaborate plan, every detail of which was set forth with systematic exactness. For seven years the project was pressed upon the French court. War, however, then engaging the whole attention of the ministry, the execution of this far-seeing project, which had in view the demands of peace no less than of war, was unavoidably put off until the peace of Utrecht, in 1713, by giving a wholly new face to affairs in the New World, compelled France to take energetic measures for the security of her colonial possessions. 30

Peace of Utrecht.

By this treaty of Utrecht France surrendered to England all Nova Scotia, all her conquests in Hudson's Bay, with Placentia, her most important establishment in Newfoundland. At the same time the treaty left Cape Breton to France, an act of incomparable folly on the part of the English plenipotentiaries who, with the map lying open before them, thus handed over to Louis the key of the St. Lawrence and of Canada. No one now doubts that the French king saw in this masterpiece of stupidity a way to retrieve all he had lost at a single stroke. The English commissioners, it is to be presumed, saw nothing. 31

English Harbor chosen.

Having the right to fortify, under the treaty, it only remained for the French court to determine which of the island ports would be best adapted to the purpose, St. Anne, on the north, or English Harbor on the south-east coast. St. Anne was a safe and excellent haven, easily made impregnable, with all the materials requisite for building and fortifying to be found near the spot. Behind it lay the fertile côtes of the beautiful Bras d'Or, with open water stretching nearly to the Straits of Canso. On the other hand, besides being surrounded by a sterile country, materials of every kind, except timber, must be transported to English Harbor at a great increase of labor and cost. More could be done at St. Anne with two thousand francs, it was said, than with two hundred thousand at the rival port. But the difficulty of taking ships of large tonnage into St. Anne through an entrance so narrow that only one could pass in or out at the same time, finally gave the preference to English Harbor, which had a ship channel of something less than two hundred fathoms in breadth, a good anchorage, and plenty of beach room for erecting stages and drying fish. It was, moreover, sooner clear of ice in spring. 32

Name changed to Louisburg.

The first thing done at Cape Breton was to change the old, time-honored name of the island—the very first, it is believed, which signalled the presence of Europeans in these waters—to the unmeaning one of Ile Royale. English Harbor also took the name of Louisburg, in honor of the reigning monarch. Royalty having thus received its dues, the work of construction now began in earnest. 33

IV RÉSUMÉ OF EVENTS TO THE DECLARATION OF WAR

We will now rapidly sketch the course of events which led to war on both sides of the Atlantic.

Colonists provided for.

Having been obliged to surrender Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, the French court determined to make use of their colonists in those places for building up Louisburg.

Acadians will not emigrate.

In the first place, M. de Costebello, who had just lost his government of the French colony of Placentia, in Newfoundland, under the terms of the treaty, was ordered to take charge of the proposed new colony on Cape Breton, and in accord also with the provisions of that treaty, the French inhabitants of Newfoundland were presently removed from that island to Cape Breton. But the Acadians of Nova Scotia who had been invited, and were fully counted upon to join the other colonists, now showed no sort of disposition to do so. In their case the French authorities had reckoned without their host. These always shrewd Acadians were unwilling to abandon the fertile and well-tilled Acadian valleys, which years of toil had converted into a garden, to begin a new struggle with the wilderness in order to carry out certain political schemes of the French court. Though patriots, they were not simpletons. So they sensibly refused to stir, although their country had been turned over to the English. In this way the French authorities were unexpectedly checked in their first efforts to secure colonists of a superior class for their new establishment in Cape Breton. 34

How strange are the freaks of destiny! Could these simple Acadian peasants have foreseen what was in store for them at no distant day, at the hands of their new masters, who can doubt that, like the Israelites of old, driving their flocks before them, they too would have departed for the Promised Land with all possible speed?

A Thorn in the Side of the English.

Finding them thus obstinate, it was determined to make them as useful as possible where they were, and as a reconquest of Acadia was one of those contingencies which Louisburg was meant to turn into realities, whenever the proper side of the moment should arrive, nothing was neglected that might tend to the holding of these Acadians firmly to their ancient allegiance; to keeping alive their old antipathies; to arousing their fears for their religion, or to strongly impressing them with the belief that their legitimate sovereign would soon drive these English invaders from the land, never to return. For the moment the king's lieutenants were obliged to content themselves with planting this thorn in the side of the English. 35

Why called Neutrals.

Acting upon the advice of the crafty Saint Ovide, De Costebello's successor, the Acadians refused to take the oath of allegiance proffered them by the British governor of Nova Scotia—though they had refused to emigrate they said they would not become British subjects. When threatened they sullenly hinted at an uprising of the Micmacs, who were as firmly attached to the French interest as the Acadians themselves. The governor, therefore, prudently forbore to press matters to a crisis, all the more readily because he was powerless to enforce obedience; and thus it came to pass that the French inhabitants of Nova Scotia, under English dominion, first took the name of neutrals. 36

Victims to French Policy.

Perceiving at last how they were being ground between friend and foe, the Acadians began hoarding specie, and to leave off improving their houses and lands. A little later they are found applying to the Governor-General of Canada for grants of land in the old colony, to which they might remove, and where they could dwell in peace, for they somehow divined that they must be the losers whenever fresh hostilities should break out between the French and English, if, as it seemed inevitable, the war should involve them in its calamities. But that astute official returned only evasive answers to their petition. His royal master had other views, to the successful issue of which his lieutenants were fully pledged, and so it is primarily to French policy, after all, that the wretched Acadians owed their exile from the land of their fathers. What followed was merely the logical result. 37

But in consequence of their first refusal to remove to Louisburg only a handful of the Micmacs responded to Costebello's call, by pitching their wigwams on the skirt of the embryo city.

Laborers from the Galleys.

Laborers were wanted next. For the procuring of these the Governor-General of Canada, the Marquis de Vaudreuil, hit upon the novel idea of transporting every year from France those prisoners who were sentenced to the galleys for smuggling. They were to come out to Canada subject to the severe penalty of never again being permitted to return to their native land, "for which," said the cunning marquis, "I undertake to answer."

Lord Bacon, in one of his essays, makes the following comments upon this iniquitous method of raising up colonies: "It is a shameful and unblest thing," he says, "to take the scum of people, and wicked condemned men to be the people with whom you plant; and not only so, but it spoileth the plantations; for they will ever live like rogues, and not fall to work, but be lazy, and do mischief and spend victuals: and be quickly weary, and then certify over to their country to the discredit of the plantation." 38

Meanwhile, the sceptre that had borne such potent sway in Europe dropped from the lifeless hand of Louis the Great, to be taken up by the "crowned automaton," Louis XV.

Strength of Louisburg.

Pursuant to the policy thus outlined, which had no less in view than the rehabilitation of Canada, the recovery of Nova Scotia, the mastery of the St. Lawrence, and the eventual restoration of French prestige in America, France had in thirty years created at Louisburg a fortress so strong that it was commonly spoken of as the Dunkirk of America. To do this she had lavished millions.^[1] Beyond question it was the most formidable place of arms on the American continent, far exceeding in this respect the elaborate but antiquated strongholds of Havana, Panama, and Carthagen, all of which had been built and fortified upon the old methods of attack and defence as laid down by the engineers of a previous century: while Louisburg had the important advantage of being planned with all the skill that the best military science of the day and the most prodigal expenditure could command. When their work was done, the French engineers boastfully said that Louisburg could be defended by a garrison of women. 39

Armament of Louisburg.

The fortress, and its supporting batteries, mounted nearly one hundred and fifty pieces of artillery on its walls, some of which were of the heaviest metal then in use. It was deemed, and indeed proved itself, during the progress of two sieges, absolutely impregnable to an attack by a naval force alone. From this stronghold Louis had only to stretch out a hand to seize upon Nova Scotia, or drive the New England fishermen from the adjacent seas.

In New England all these proceedings were watched with the keenest interest, for there, at least, if nowhere else, their true intent was so quickly foreseen, their consequences so fully realized, that the people were more and more confounded by the imbecility which had virtually put their whole fishery under French control.

As the situation in Europe was reflected on this side of the Atlantic, it is instructive to look there for the storm which, to the terror and dismay of Americans, was now darkly overspreading the continent. 40

War of the Austrian Succession.

The crowned gamblers of Europe had begun their costly game of the Austrian succession. Upon marching to invade Silesia, Frederick II., the neediest and most reckless gamester of them all, had said to the French ambassador, "I am going, I believe, to play your little game: and if I should throw doublets we will share the stakes." Fortune favored this great king of a little kingdom. He won his first throw, seeing which, for she was at first only a looker-on, France immediately sent two armies into Bavaria to the Elector's aid. This move was not unexpected in London. Ever since England had forced hostilities with Spain, in 1740, it was a foregone conclusion that the two branches of the House of Bourbon would make common cause, whenever a favorable opportunity should present itself. England now retaliated by voting a subsidy to Maria Theresa, and by taking into pay some sixteen thousand of King George's petted Hanoverians, who were destined to fight the French auxiliary contingent. England and France were thus casting stones at each other over the wall, or, as Horace Walpole cleverly put it, England had the name of war with Spain without the game, and war with France without the name. 41

English defeated in Flanders.

It was inevitable that the war should now settle down into a bitter struggle between the two great rivals, France and England. On the 20th of March, 1744, the court of Versailles formally declared war. England followed on the 31st. Flanders became the battle-field between a hundred and twenty-five thousand combatants, led, respectively, by the old Count Maurice de Saxe and the young Duke of Cumberland. In May, 1745, the French marshal suddenly invested Tournay,^[2] the greatest of all the Flemish fortresses. The Duke of Cumberland marched to its relief, gave battle, and was thoroughly beaten at Fontenoy. This disaster closed the campaign in the Old World. It left the English nation terribly humiliated in the eyes of Europe, while France, by this brilliant feat of arms, fully reasserted her leadership in Continental affairs.

Situation in New England.

But what had been a sort of Satanic pastime in the Old World became a struggle for life in the New. The people of New England, being naturally more keenly alive to the dangers menacing their trade, than influenced by a romantic sympathy with the absurd quarrels about the Austrian succession, anxiously watched for the first signal of the coming conflict. They knew the enemy's strength, and they were as fully aware of their own weaknesses. Still there was no flinching. The home government, being fully occupied with the affairs of the Continent, and with the political cabals of London, limited its efforts to arming a few forts in the colonies, and to keeping a few cruisers in the West Indian waters; but neither soldiers, arsenals, nor magazines were provided for the defence of these provinces, upon whom the enemy's first and hardest blows might naturally be expected to fall, nor were such other measures taken to meet such an extraordinary emergency as its gravity would seem in reason to demand. 42

Luckily for them, the colonists had been taught in the hard school of experience that Providence helps those who help themselves. To their own resources they therefore turned with a vigor and address manifesting a deep sense of the magnitude of the crisis now confronting them. 43

French seize Canso.

The proclamation of war was not published in Boston until the 2d of June, 1744. Having earlier intelligence, the French at Louisburg had already begun hostilities by making a descent upon Canso,^[3] a weak English post situated at the outlet of the strait of that name, and so commanding it, and within easy striking distance of Louisburg. News of this was brought to Boston so seasonably that Governor Shirley had time to throw a re-enforcement of two hundred men into Annapolis, by which that post was saved; for the French, after their exploit at Canso, soon made an attempt upon Annapolis, where they were held in check until a second re-enforcement obliged them to retire.

Captain Ryal sent to London, November, 1744.

Governor Shirley lost no time in notifying the ministry of what had happened, and he particularly urged upon their attention the defenceless state of Nova Scotia, where Annapolis alone held a semi-hostile population in check. To the end that the situation might be more fully understood, he sent an officer, who had been taken at Canso, 44

with the despatch.

At this time the incompetent Duke of Newcastle held the post of prime minister. When he had read the despatch he exclaimed, "Oh, yes—yes—to be sure. Annapolis must be defended.—troops must be sent to Annapolis. Pray where is Annapolis? Cape Breton an island! wonderful! Show it me on the map. So it is, sure enough. My dear sir" (to the bearer of the despatch), "you always bring us good news. I must go tell the King that Cape Breton is an island."

January, 1744.

It will be seen, later, that Shirley's timely application to the ministry, on behalf of Nova Scotia, involved the fate of Louisburg itself. Orders were promptly sent out to Commodore Warren, who was in command of a cruising squadron in the West Indies, to proceed as early as possible to Nova Scotia, for the purpose of protecting our settlements there, or of distressing the enemy, as circumstances might require.

Shirley himself had also written to Warren, requesting him to do this very thing, at the same time the ministry were notified, though it was yet too early to know the result of either application. All eyes were now opened to Louisburg's dangerous power. But, come what might, Shirley was evidently a man who would leave nothing undone. 45

^[1]LOUISBURG had cost the enormous sum of 30,000,000 livres or £1,200,000 sterling.

^[2]PEPPERELL was besieging Louisburg at the same time the French were Tournay.

^[3]CANSO was taken by Duvivier, May 13, 1744. The captors burnt everything, carrying the captives to Louisburg, where they remained till autumn, when they were sent to Boston. These prisoners were able to give very important information concerning the fortress, its garrison, and its means of defence. 46

V

"LOUISBURG MUST BE TAKEN"

However Shirley's efforts to avert a present danger might succeed, nobody saw more clearly than he did that his measures only went half way toward their mark. With Louisburg intact, the enemy might sweep the coasts of New England with their expeditions, and her commerce from the seas. The return of spring, when warlike operations might be again resumed, was therefore looked forward to at Boston with the utmost uneasiness. Merchants would not risk their ships on the ocean. Fishermen dared not think of putting to sea for their customary voyages to the Grand Banks or the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Here was a state of things which a people who lived by their commerce and fisheries could only contemplate with the most serious forebodings. It was fully equivalent to a blockade of their ports, a stoppage of their industries, with consequent stagnation paralyzing all their multitudinous occupations. 47

Public Opinion aroused.

Naturally the subject became a foremost matter of discussion in the official and social circles, in the pulpits, and in the tavern clubs of the New England capital. It was the serious topic in the counting-house and the table-talk at home. It drifted out among the laboring classes, who had so much at stake, with varied embellishment. It went out into the country, gathering to itself fresh rumors like a rolling snowball. In all these coteries, whether of the councillors over their wine, of the merchants around their punch-bowls, of the smutty smith at his forge, or the common dock-laborer, the same conclusion was reached, and constantly reiterated—Louisburg must be taken!—Yes; Louisburg must be taken! Upon this decision the people stood as one man.

It did not, however, enter into the minds of even the most sanguine advocates of this idea that they themselves would be shortly called upon to make it effective in the one way possible. Such a proposal would have been laughed at, at first. The general voice was that the land and naval forces of the kingdom ought to be employed for the reduction of Louisburg, because no others were available; but, meantime, a public opinion had been formed which only wanted a proper direction to turn it into a force capable of doing what it had decided upon. There was but one man in the province who was equal to this task. 48

That some other man may have had the same idea is but natural, when the same subject was uppermost in the minds of all; but where others tossed it to and fro, like a tennis-ball, only this one man grasped it with the force of a master mind.^[4] He was William Shirley, governor of Massachusetts.

William Shirley.

Governor Shirley soon showed himself the man for the crisis. He was a lawyer of good abilities, with a political reputation to make. He had a clear head, strong will, plausible manner, and immovable persistency in the pursuit of a favorite project. If not a military man by education, he had, at any rate, the military instinct. He was, moreover, a shrewd manager, not easily disheartened or turned aside from his purpose by a first rebuff, yet knowing how to yield when, by doing so, he could see his way to carry his point in the end. 49

The French, we remember, had made some prisoners at Canso, who were first taken to Louisburg, and then sent to Boston on parole. These captives knew the place, but our smuggling merchantmen knew it much better. They were able to give a pretty exact account of the condition of things at the fortress. We are now looking backward a little. But what seems to have made the strongest impression was the news that the garrison itself had been in open mutiny during the winter, most of the soldiers being Swiss, whose loyalty, it was supposed, had been more or less shaken.^[5]

William Vaughan.

Whether William Vaughan,^[6] a New Hampshire merchant resident in Maine, first broached the project of taking

Louisburg to Shirley, cannot now be determined, but, let the honor belong primarily where it may, Vaughan's scheme, as outlined by him, was too absurd for serious consideration, however strongly he may have believed in it himself. He seems to have belonged to the class of enthusiasts at whose breath obstacles vanish away; yet we are bound to say of him that his own easy confidence, with his habit of throwing himself heart and soul into whatever he undertook, gained over a good many others to his way of thinking. Shirley therefore encouraged Vaughan, who, after rendering really valuable services, became so thoroughly imbued with the notion that he was not only the originator of the expedition, but the chief actor in it, that the value of those services is somewhat obscured. [50]

Governor Shirley's project now was to take Louisburg, with such means as he himself could get together. He, too, was more or less carried away by the spirit which animated him, as men must be to make others believe in them, but he never lost his head. To a cool judgment, some of Shirley's plans for assaulting Louisburg seem almost, if not quite, as irrational as Vaughan's, yet Shirley was not the man to commit any overt act of folly, or shut his ears to prudent counsels. Being so well acquainted with the temper and spirit of the New England people, he knew that, before they would fight, they must be convinced. To this end, he strengthened himself with the proper arguments, wisely keeping his own counsel until everything should be ripe for action. He knew that the garrison of Louisburg was mutinous, that its isolated position invited an attack, and that the extensive works were much out of repair. Moreover, he had calculated, almost to a day, the time when the annual supplies of men and munitions would arrive from France. He knew that Quebec was too distant for effectively aiding Louisburg. An attack under such conditions seemed to hold out a tempting prospect of success; yet realizing, as Shirley did, that under any circumstances, no matter how favorable or alluring they might seem, the enterprise would be looked upon as one of unparalleled audacity, if not as utterly hopeless or visionary, he determined to stake his own political fortunes upon the issue and abide the result. [51]

Counting the Chances of Success.

The garrison of Louisburg had been, in fact, in open revolt, the outbreak proving so serious that the commanding officer had begged his government to replace the disaffected troops with others, who could be depended upon. Shirley, therefore, reckoned on a half-hearted resistance or none at all. In a word, it was his plan to surprise and take the place before it could be re-enforced. [52]

Shirley's Plan.

After obtaining a pledge of secrecy from the members, Shirley proceeded to lay his project before the provincial legislature of Massachusetts, which was then in session. The governor's statement, which was certainly cool and dispassionate, ran somewhat to this effect: "Gentlemen of the General Court, either we must take Louisburg or see our trade annihilated. If you are of my mind we will take it. I have reason to know that the garrison is insubordinate. There is good ground for believing that the commandant is afraid of his own men, that the works are out of repair and the stores running low. I need not dwell further on what is so well known to you all. Now, with four thousand such soldiers as this and the neighboring provinces can furnish, aided by a naval force similarly equipped, the place must surely fall into our hands. I have, moreover, strong hopes of aid from His Majesty's ships, now in our waters. But the great thing is to throw our forces upon Louisburg before the enemy can hear of our design. Secrecy and celerity are therefore of the last importance. Consider well, gentlemen, that such an opportunity is not likely to occur again. What say you? is Louisburg to be ours or not?" [53]

Shirley's Plan rejected.

The conservative provincial assembly deliberated upon the proposal with closed doors, and with great unanimity rejected it. The sum of its decision was this: "If we risk nothing, we lose nothing. Should the enemy strike us, we can strike back again. We can ruin his commerce as well as he can destroy ours. Our policy is to stand on the defensive. Very possibly the men might be raised, but where are the arsenals to equip them; where is the money to come from to pay them; where are the engineers, the artillerists, the siege artillery, naval stores, and all the warlike material necessary to such a siege? Why, we haven't a single soldier; we haven't a penny. Surely your excellency must be jesting with us. It is a magnificent project, but visionary, your excellency, quite visionary."

To make use of parliamentary terms, the governor had leave to withdraw, but those who dreamed that he would abandon his darling scheme at the first rebuff it met with, did not know William Shirley. [54]

The Subject again brought up.

The affair was now no longer a secret. Indeed, it had already leaked out through a certain pious deacon, who most inconsiderately prayed for its success in the family circle. The project had been scotched, not killed. Men discussed it everywhere, now that it was an open secret, and the more it was talked of, the more firmly it took hold on the popular mind. The very audacity of the thing pleased the young and adventurous spirits, of whom there were plenty in the New England of that day. Vaughan now set himself to work among the merchants, who saw money to be made in furnishing supplies of every kind for the expedition; while on the other hand, if nothing was to be done, their ships and merchandise must lie idle for so long as the war might last. Little by little the indefatigable Shirley won men over to his views. People grew restive under a policy of inaction. Public sentiment seldom fails of having a wholesome effect upon legislatures, be they ever so settled in their own opinions. It was so in this case. Presently a petition, signed by many of the most influential merchants in the province, was laid on the speaker's desk, so again bringing the subject up for legislative action. [55]

The Project adopted.

This time the governor carried his point after a whole day's animated debate. The measure, however, narrowly missed a second, and, perhaps, a final defeat, it having a majority of one vote only; and this result was owing to an accident which, as it was a good deal talked about at the time it happened, may as well be mentioned here. It so chanced that one of the opposition, while hurrying to the House in order to record his vote against the measure, had a fall in the street, and was taken home with a broken leg. There being a tie vote in consequence, Mr. Speaker Hutchinson gave the casting vote in favor of the measure, and so carried it.

If there had been hesitation before, there was none now. In order to prevent the news from getting abroad, all the seaports of Massachusetts were instantly shut by an embargo.^[71] The neighboring provinces were entreated to do the same thing. The supplies asked for were voted without debate. Even the emission of paper money, that bugbear of colonial financiers, was cheerfully consented to in the face of a royal order forbidding it. Those who before had been strongest in opposition now gave loyal support to the undertaking. 56

Free to act at last, Shirley now showed his splendid talent for organizing in full vigor. The work of raising troops, of chartering transports, of collecting arms, munitions, and stores of every kind, went on with an extraordinary impulse. Common smiths were turned into armorers; wheelwrights into artificers; women spent their evenings making bandages and scraping lint. Shirley's board of war, created for the exigency, took supplies wherever found, paying for them with the paper money the Legislature had just authorized for the purpose. The patience with which these extraordinary war measures were submitted to best shows the temper of the people. The neighboring governments were entreated to join in the expedition and share in the glory. Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Jersey each promised contingents. The other provinces declined having anything to do with it, though New York made a most seasonable loan of ten heavy cannon, upon Shirley's urgent entreaty, without which the siege must have lagged painfully. The governor had, indeed, suggested, when the deficiency of artillery was spoken of, that the cannon of the Royal Battery of Louisburg would help to make good that deficiency; but, as it was facetiously said at the time, this was too manifest a disposal of the skin before the bear was caught, though it is quite likely that the notion of supplying themselves from the enemy may have tickled the fancy of the young recruits. 57

When the application reached Philadelphia, Franklin expressed shrewd doubts of the feasibility of the undertaking. The provincial assembly did, however, vote some supply of provisions, as its contribution toward a campaign which nobody believed would be successful. New Jersey also contributed provisions and clothing. This was not quite what Shirley had hoped for, but could not in the least abate his efforts.

^[4]SUGGESTIONS looking to a conquest of Cape Breton were made by Lieutenant-Governor Clarke of New York, some time in the year 1743 ("Documentary History of New York," I., p. 469). He suggests taking Cape Breton as a first step toward the reduction of all Canada. Then, Judge Auchmuty of the Vice-Admiralty Court of Massachusetts printed in April, 1744, an ably written pamphlet discussing the best mode of taking Louisburg. 58

^[5]THE REVOLT occurred in December, over a reduction of pay. The soldiers deposed their officers, elected others in their places, seized the barracks, and put sentinels over the magazines. They were so far pacified, however, as to have returned to their duty before the English expedition arrived. Under date of June 18, one day after the surrender, Governor-General Beauharnois advises the Count de Maurepas of this revolt. He urges an entire change of the garrison.

^[6]VAUGHAN was a mill-owner, and carried on fishing also at Damariscotta, Me. He knew Louisburg well. Conceiving himself slighted by those in authority at Louisburg, he went from thence directly to England, in order to prefer his claim for compensation as the originator of the scheme. He died of smallpox at Bagshot, November, 1747. He insisted that fifteen hundred men, assisted by some vessels, could take Louisburg by scaling the walls. "A man of rash, impulsive nature."—*Belknap*. "A whimsical, wild projector."—*Douglass*.

^[7]NEWS that an armament was preparing at Boston was carried to Quebec, by the Indians, without, however, awakening the governor's suspicions of its true object. 59

VI THE ARMY AND ITS GENERAL

The next, and possibly most vital step of all, since the fate of the expedition must turn upon it, was to choose a commander. For this important station the province was quite as deficient in men of experience as it was in materials of war: with the difference that one could be created of raw substances while the other could not. Here the nicest tact and judgment were requisite to avoid making shipwreck of the whole enterprise. Not having a military man, the all-important thing was to find a popular one, around whom the provincial yeomanry could be induced to rally. But since he was not to be a soldier, he must be a man held high in the public esteem for his civic virtues. It was necessary to have a clean man, above all things: one placed outside of the political circles of Boston, and who, by sacrificing something himself to the common weal, should set an example of pure patriotism to his fellow-citizens. Again, it was no less important to select some one whose general capacity could not be called in question. Hence, as in every real emergency, the people cast about for their very best man from a political and personal standpoint, who, though he might have 60

"Never set a squadron in the field,"

could be thoroughly depended upon to act with an eye single to the good of the cause he had espoused.

William Pepperell to command.

In this exigency Shirley's clear eye fell on William Pepperell, of Kittery, a gentleman of sterling though not shining qualities, whose wealth, social rank, and high personal worth promised to give character and weight to the post Shirley now destined him for. He was now forty-nine years old. Having held both civil and military offices under the province, Pepperell could not be said to be worse fitted for the place than others whose claims were brought forward, while, on the other hand, it was conceded that hardly another man in the province possessed the public confidence to a greater degree than he did. Still, he was no soldier, and the simple conferring of the title of general could not make him one, while his practical education must begin in the presence of the enemy—a school where, if capable men learn quickly, they do so, as a rule, only after experiencing repeated and severe punishments. That raw 61

soldiers need the best generals, is a maxim of common-sense, but Shirley, in whom we now and then discover a certain disdain for such judgments, seems to have had no misgivings whatever as to Pepperell's entire sufficiency so long as he, Shirley, gave the orders, and kept a firm hand over his lieutenant; nor can it be denied that if the expedition was to take place at all when it did, the choice was the very best that could have been made, all things considered.

That Shirley may have been influenced, in a measure, by personal reasons is not improbable, and the fact that Pepperell was neither intriguing nor ambitious, no doubt had due weight with a man like Shirley, who was both intriguing and ambitious, and who, though he ardently wished for success, did not wish for a rival.

No one seems to have felt his unfitness more than Pepperell himself, and it is equally to his honor that he finally yielded to considerations directly appealing to his patriotism and sense of duty. "You," said Shirley to him, "are the only man who can safely carry our great enterprise through; if it fail the blame must lie at your door." Much troubled in mind, Pepperell asked the Rev. George Whitefield, who happened to be his guest, what he thought of it. The celebrated preacher kindly, but decidedly, advised Pepperell against taking on himself so great a responsibility, telling him that he would either make himself an object for execration, if he failed, or of envy and malignity, if he should succeed. 62

Morale of the Army.

Shirley's pertinacity, however, prevailed in the end. Pepperell's own personal stake in the successful issue of the expedition was known to be as great as any man's in the province, hence, his putting himself at the head of it did much to induce others of like good standing and estate to join him heart and hand, and their example, again, drew into the ranks a greater proportion of the well-to-do farmers and mechanics than was probably ever brought together in an army of equal numbers, either before or since. Hence, at Louisburg, as in our own time, when any extraordinary want arose, the general had only to call on the rank and file for the means to meet it. 63

Several gentlemen, who had the success of the undertaking strongly at heart, volunteered to go with Pepperell to the scene of action. Among them were that William Vaughan, previously mentioned, and one James Gibson, a prominent merchant of Boston, who wrote a journal of the siege from observations made on the spot, besides contributing five hundred pounds toward equipping the army for its work. ^[8]

A Crusade preached.

Pepperell's appointment soon justified Shirley's forecast. It gave general satisfaction among all ranks and orders of men. On the day that he accepted the command Pepperell advanced five thousand pounds to the provincial treasury. He also paid out of his own pocket the bounty money offered to recruits in the regiment he was raising in Maine. Orders were soon flying in every direction, and very soon everything caught the infection of his energy. The expedition at once felt an extraordinary momentum. Volunteers flocked to the different rendezvous. In fact, more offered themselves than could be accepted. Again the loud burr of the drum, 64

"The drums that beat at Louisburg and thundered in Quebec,"

was heard throughout New England. The one question of the day was "Are you going?" In fact, little else was talked of, for, now that the mustering of armed men gave form and consistency to what was so lately a crude project only, the fortunes of the province were felt to be embarked in its success. True to its traditions, the clergy preached the expedition into a crusade. Again the old bugbear of Romish aggression was made to serve the turn of the hour. Religious antipathies were inflamed to the point of fanaticism. One clergyman armed himself with a large hatchet, with which he said he purposed chopping up into kindling wood all the Popish images he should find adorning the altars of Louisburg. Still another drew up a plan of campaign which he submitted to the general. "Carthage must be destroyed!" became the watchword, while to show the hand of God powerfully working for the right, the celebrated George Whitefield wrote the Latin motto, embroidered on the expeditionary standard,— 65

"Never despair, Christ is with us."

Thus the church militant was not only represented in the ranks and on the banner, but it was equally forward in proffering counsel. For example: one minister wrote to acquaint Shirley how the provincials should be saved from being blown up, in their camps, by the enemy's mines. He wanted a patrol to go carefully over the camping-ground first. While one struck the ground with a heavy mallet, another should lay his ear to it, and if it sounded suspiciously hollow, he should instantly drive down a stake in order that the spot might be avoided.

Such anecdotes show us how earnestly all classes of men entered upon the work in hand. How to take Louisburg seemed the one engrossing subject of every man's thoughts.

Having glanced at the qualifications of the general, we may now consider the composition of the army. We have already drawn attention to the excellent quality of its material. In embodying it for actual service, the old traditions of the British army were strictly followed. 66

The Army by Regiments.

The expeditionary corps was formed in ten battalions. They were Pepperell's,^[9] Wolcott's^[10] (of Connecticut), Waldo's,^[11] Dwight's^[12] (nominally an artillery battalion), Moulton's,^[13] Willard's, Hale's,^[14] Richmond's,^[15] Gorham's, and Moore's^[16] (of New Hampshire). One hundred and fifty men of this regiment were in the pay of Massachusetts. Pepperell's, Waldo's, and Moulton's were mostly raised in the District of Maine. Pepperell said that one-third of the whole force came from Maine. Dwight was assigned to the command of the artillery, with the rank of brigadier; Gorham to the special service of landing the troops in the whaleboats, which had been provided, and of which he had charge. There was also an independent company of artificers, under Captain Bernard, and Lieutenant-Colonel Gridley was appointed chief engineer of the army.

Pepperell held the rank of lieutenant-general; Wolcott, that of major-general; and Waldo that of brigadier, the second

place being given to Connecticut, in recognition of the prompt and valuable assistance given by that colony.

67

It goes badly equipped.

As a whole, the army was neither well armed nor properly equipped, or sufficiently provided with tents, ammunition, and stores. Too much haste had characterized its formation for a thorough organization, or for attention to details, too little knowledge for the instruction in their duties of either officers or men. It is true that some of them had seen more or less bush-fighting in the Indian wars, and that all were expert marksmen or skilful woodsmen, but to call such an unwieldy and undisciplined assemblage of men, who had been thus suddenly called away from their workshops and ploughs, an army, were a libel upon the name.

Commodore Edward Tyng^[17] was put in command of the colonial squadron destined to escort the army to its destination, to cover its landing, and afterwards to act in conjunction with it on the spot.

Hutchinson, Belknap.

68

The writers of the time tell us that "the winter proved so favorable that all sorts of outdoor business was carried on as well, and with as great despatch, as at any other season of the year." The month of February, in particular, proved very mild. The rivers and harbors were open, and the fruitfulness of the preceding season had made provisions plenty. Douglass thinks that "some guardian angel" must have preserved the troops from taking the small-pox, which broke out in Boston about the time of their embarkation. All these fortunate accidents were hailed as omens of success.

The Provincial Navy.

Thanks to the enthusiasm of the young men in enlisting, and the energy of the authorities in equipping them, the four thousand men called for were mustered under arms, ready for service, in a little more than seven weeks. In this short time, too, a hundred transports had been manned, victualled, and got ready for sea. The embargo had provided both vessels and sailors. More than this, a little squadron of fourteen vessels, the largest carrying only twenty guns, was created as if by enchantment. Here was shown a vigor that deserved success.

The Connecticut and New Hampshire contingents were also ready to march, but Rhode Island had not yet completed hers. By disarming Castle William in Boston harbor, or borrowing old cannon wherever they could be found, Shirley had managed to get together a sort of makeshift for a siege-train. All being ready at last, after a day of solemn fasting and prayer throughout New England, the flotilla set sail for the rendezvous at Canso in the last week of March. "Pray for us while we fight for you," was the last message of the departing provincial soldiers to their friends on shore.

69

Equal good-fortune attended the transportation of the army by sea to a point several hundred miles distant, during one of the stormiest months of the year. By the 10th of April the whole force was assembled at Canso in readiness to act offensively as soon as the Cape Breton shores should be free of ice. All this had been done without the help of a soldier, a ship, or a penny from England. At the very last moment Shirley received from Commodore Warren, in answer to his request for assistance, a curt refusal to take part in the enterprise without orders, and Shirley could only say to Pepperell when he took leave of him, that his best and only hope lay in his own resources.

70

But by this time the enthusiasm which had carried men off their feet had begun to cool. The excitements, under the influence of which this or that obstacle had been impatiently brushed aside, had given way to the sober second thought. One by one they rose grimly before Pepperell's troubled vision like the ghosts in Macbeth. Land the troops and storm the works had been the popular way of disposing of a fortress which the French engineers had offered to defend with a garrison of women.

^[8]GIBSON was very active during the siege, especially when anything of a dangerous nature was to be done. He was a retired British officer. He was one of the three who escaped death, while on a scout, May 10. With five men he towed a fireship against the West Gate, under the enemy's fire, on the night of May 24. It burnt three vessels, part of the King's Gate, and part of a stone house in the city. Being done in the dead of night, it caused great consternation among the besieged.

^[9]PEPPERELL'S own regiment was actually commanded by his lieutenant-colonel, John Bradstreet, who was afterwards appointed lieutenant-governor of Newfoundland, but on the breaking out of the next war with France, he served with distinction on the New-York frontier, rising through successive grades to that of major-general in the British army. Bradstreet died at New York in 1774.

^[10]GENERAL ROGER WOLCOTT had been in the Canada campaign of 1711 without seeing any service. He was sixty-six when appointed over the Connecticut contingent under Pepperell. Wolcott was one of the foremost men of his colony, being repeatedly honored with the highest posts, those of chief judge and governor included. David Wooster was a captain in Wolcott's regiment.

71

^[11]SAMUEL WALDO was a Boston merchant, who had acquired a chief interest in the Muscongus, later known from him as the Waldo Patent, in Maine, to the improvement of which he gave the best years of his life. Like Pepperell, he was a wealthy land-owner. They were close friends, Waldo's daughter being betrothed to Pepperell's son later. His patent finally passed to General Knox, who married Waldo's grand-daughter.

^[12]JOSEPH DWIGHT was born at Dedham, Mass., in 1703. He served in the Second French War also. Pepperell commends his services, as chief of artillery, very highly.

^[13]JEREMIAH MOULTON was fifty-seven when he joined the expedition. He had seen more actual fighting than any other officer in it. Taken prisoner by the Indians at the sacking of York, when four years old, he became a terror to them

in his manhood. With Harmon he destroyed Norridgewock in 1724.

[14] ROBERT HALE, colonel of the Essex County regiment, had been a schoolmaster, a doctor, and a justice of the peace. He was forty-two. His major, Moses Titcomb, afterwards served under Sir William Johnson, and was killed at the battle of Lake George.

[15] SYLVESTER RICHMOND, of Dighton, Mass., was born in 1698; colonel of the Bristol County regiment. He was high sheriff of the county for many years after his return from Louisburg. Died in 1783, in his eighty-fourth year. Lieutenant-Colonel Ebenezer Pitts of Dighton, and Major Joseph Hodges of Norton, of Richmond's regiment, were both killed during the campaign.

[16] SAMUEL MOORE'S New Hampshire regiment was drafted into the *Vigilant*. His lieutenant-colonel, Meserve, afterward served under Abercromby, and again in the second siege of Louisburg under Amherst, dying there of small-pox. Matthew Thornton, signer of the Declaration, was surgeon of Moore's regiment. 72

[17] EDWARD TYNG, merchant of Boston, son of that Colonel Edward who was carried a prisoner to France, with John Nelson, by Frontenac's order, and died there in a dungeon. 73

VII THE ARMY AT CANSO

The Plan of Attack.

The crude plan of attack, as digested at Boston, consisted in an investment of Louisburg by the land forces and a blockade by sea. To enforce this blockade, Shirley had sent out some armed vessels in advance of the expedition, with orders to cruise off the island, and to intercept all vessels they should fall in with, so that news of the armament might not get into Louisburg, by any chance, before its coming.

Shirley's Project.

This was all the more necessary because Shirley had indulged hopes, from the first, of taking the place by surprise, and so obstinately was he wedded to the notion that the thing was practicable, that he had drawn up at great length a plan of campaign of which this surprise was the chief feature, and in which he undertook to direct, down to the minutest detail, where, how, and when the troops should land, what points they should attack, what they should do if the assault proved a failure or only partially successful, where they should encamp, raise batteries and post guards; how the men must be handled under fire, and even how the prisoners should be disposed of, for Shirley, as we have seen, was considerably given to counting his chickens before they were hatched. 74

A Saving Clause.

Being a lawyer rather than a soldier, Shirley had written out a brief instead of an order—clear, concise, direct. But, lengthy as it was, the plan had one redeeming feature, which turns away criticism from the absurdities with which it was running over. This was the postscript appended to it: "Sir, upon the whole, notwithstanding the instructions you have received from me, I must leave it to you to act upon unforeseen emergencies according to your best discretion." The reading of it must have lifted a load from Pepperell's mind! It really looked as if Shirley had meant to be the real generalissimo himself, and to capture Louisburg by proxy.

Pepperell's Council. 75

Pepperell was still hampered, however, with a council of war, consisting of all the general and field officers of his army, whom he was required to summon to his aid in all emergencies. If it be true that in a multitude of counsels there is wisdom, then Pepperell was to be well advised, for his council aggregated between twenty and thirty members.

Pepperell seems to have conceived that he ought to submit himself wholly to Shirley's guidance, since he himself was now to serve his first apprenticeship in war, for it was now loyally attempted to carry out Shirley's instructions to the letter. In all these preliminary arrangements the difference between Shirley's brilliancy and dash and Pepperell's methodical cast of mind is very marked indeed. It would sometimes seem as if the two men ought to have changed places.

Why the army was at Canso.

Importance of St. Peter's. 76

Shirley had appointed the rendezvous to be at Canso, which place had been abandoned soon after it was taken from us; first, because it was the natural base for operations against Cape Breton, and next so that if the descent on Louisburg failed, Canso and the command of the straits would, at least, have been recovered. It was, as we have said, within easy striking distance of Louisburg. Out in front of Canso, between the Nova Scotia and Cape Breton shores, lay Isle Madame or Arichat, on which a few French fishermen were living. Across the water from Arichat, at the entrance to the Bras d'Or, lay the Village of St. Peter's, the second in point of importance in Cape Breton, Louisburg being the first. At Arichat everything that was being done at Canso could be easily seen and communicated to St. Peter's. At St. Peter's word could be sent to Louisburg by way of the Bras d'Or Lakes. It therefore stood Pepperell in hand to clear his vicinity of these spies and informers without delay, unless he wished to find the enemy forewarned and forearmed.

The Ice Blockade at Louisburg.

Shirley had directed Pepperell to destroy St. Peter's. Pepperell, therefore, sent a night expedition there, which, however, returned without accomplishing its purpose. But his greatest fear, lest supplies or re-enforcements should get into Louisburg by sea, was set at rest on finding that the field or pack-ice, which had come down out of the St. Lawrence, and the east winds had driven up against the shores of Cape Breton, formed a secure blockade against all comers, himself as well as the enemy. This contingency had not been sufficiently weighed. 77

Canso fortified.

Meanwhile, Pepperell set to work fortifying Canso. A blockhouse, ready framed, had been sent out for the purpose. This was now set up, garrisoned, and christened Fort Prince William. Some earthworks were also thrown up to cover this new post. In these occupations, or in scouting or exercising, the troops were kept employed until the ice should move off the shores.

French Cruiser driven off.

On the 18th of April a French thirty-gun ship was chased off the coast, while trying to run into Louisburg. Being the better sailer, she easily got clear of the blockading vessels, after keeping up for some hours a sharp, running fight. Even this occurrence does not seem to have fully opened the eyes of the French commandant of Louisburg to the true nature of the danger which threatened him, since he has declared that he thought the vessels he saw watching the harbor were only English privateers. Perhaps nothing about the whole history of this expedition is more strange than that this officer should have remained wholly ignorant of its being at Canso for nearly three weeks. 78

April 23, Warren's Fleet arrives.

Effect on the Army.

The army had been lying nearly two weeks inactive, when, to Pepperell's great surprise as well as joy, Commodore Warren appeared off Canso with four ships of war, and, after briefly communicating with the general, bore away for Louisburg. At last he had received his orders to act in concert with Shirley, and, like a true sailor, he had crowded all sail for the scene of action. His coming put the army in great spirits, for it was supposed to be part of the plan, already concerted, by which the attack should be made irresistible. And for once fortune seems to have determined that the bungling of ministers should not defeat the objects had in view.

April 24, Connecticut Forces arrive.

On the following day, the Connecticut forces joined Pepperell. The shores of Cape Breton were now eagerly scanned for the first appearance of open water, but even as late as the 28th Pepperell wrote to Shirley, saying, "We impatiently wait for a fair wind to drive the ice out of the bay, and if we do not suffer for want of provisions, make no doubt but we shall, by God's favor, be able soon to drive out what else we please from Cape Breton." The consumption of stores, occasioned by the unlooked-for detention at Canso, had, in fact, become a matter of serious concern with Pepperell, whose nearest source of supply was Boston. 79

VIII THE SIEGE

Fleet sails from Canso, April 29.

Our guard-vessels having reported the shores to be at last free from ice, and the wind coming fair for Louisburg, the welcome signal to weigh anchor was given on the 29th of April. On board the fleet all was now bustle and excitement. In a very short time a hundred transport-vessels were standing out of Canso Harbor, under a cloud of canvas, for Gabarus Bay, the place fixed upon by Shirley for making the contemplated descent.

Night Assault given up.

Bound to the letter of his orders, Pepperell seems to have first purposed making an attempt to put Shirley's rash project in execution. To do this, he must have so timed his movements as to reach his anchorage after dark, have landed his troops without being able to see what obstacles lay before them, have marched them to stations situated at a distance from the place of disembarkation, over ground unknown, and not previously reconnoitred, to throw them against the enemy's works before they should be discovered. And this most critical of all military operations, a night assault, was to be attempted by wholly undisciplined men. 80



SIEGE OF LOUISBOURG IN 1745.

Providentially for Pepperell, the wind died away before he could reach the designated point of disembarkation, so that this mad scheme perished before it could be put to the test; but early the next morning the flotilla was discovered entering Gabarus Bay, five miles southeast from the fortress, and in full view from its ramparts. So, also, the New England forces could see the gray turrets of the redoubtable stronghold rising in the distance, and could hear the bells of Louisburg pealing out their loud alarm. The fortress instantly fired signal guns to call in all out parties. It is said that there had been a grand ball the night before, and that the company had scarce been asleep when called up by this alarm. The booming of artillery, sounding like the drowsy roar of an awakening lion, was defiantly echoed back from the bosom of the deep, and borne on the cool breeze to the startled foemen's ears the distant roll of drum, and bugle blast, peopled the lately deserted sea with voices of the coming strife. 83

Duchambon, commander of the fortress, instantly hurried off a hundred and fifty men to oppose the landing of our troops. 84

Landing at Gabarus Bay, April 30.

The fleet quickly came to an anchor, and the signal was hoisted for the troops to disembark at once. Before them stretched the lonely Cape Breton shore, on which the breakers rose and fell in a long line of foam. Though this heavy surf threatened to swamp the boats, the men crowded into them as if going to a merry-making. It was a gallant and inspiring sight to see them dash on toward the beach, emulous who should reach it first, and eager to meet the enemy, who were waiting for them there. By making a feint at one point, and then pulling for another at some distance from the first, the boats gained an undefended part of the shore before the French could come up with them. As soon as one struck the ground, the men jumped into the water, each taking another on his back and wading through the surf to the shore. In this manner the landing went on so rapidly that, when the enemy finally came up, they were easily driven off, with the loss of six or seven men killed, and some prisoners. Before it was dark two thousand men bivouacked for the night within cannon shot of Louisburg. 85

Vaughan now led forward a party after the retreating enemy, who, finding themselves pursued, set fire to thirty or forty houses outside the city walls.

On the next day, the work of landing the rest of the army, the artillery and stores, was pushed to the utmost, though the heavy surf rendered this a work of uncommon difficulty. Pepperell now pitched his camp in an orderly manner next the shore, at a place called Flat Point Cove, where he could communicate with the transports and fleet, and they with him. He now took his first step towards clearing the two miles of open ground lying between him and Louisburg harbor, with the view of fixing the location of his batteries, and of driving the enemy inside the walls of the fortress.

Royal Battery deserted.

To this end four hundred men were sent out to destroy the enemy's magazines situated at the head of the harbor, Vaughan again marching with them. This detachment having set fire to some warehouses containing naval stores, the smoke from which drifted down upon the Royal Battery, the officer in command there, convinced that the provincials were about to fall upon him, spiked his cannon and abandoned the works in haste, though not till after receiving permission to do so. 86

In the morning, as Vaughan was returning to camp with only thirteen men, the deserted appearance of the battery

caused him to carefully examine it, when, seeing no signs of life about the place,—no flag flying or smoke rising or sentinels moving about,—he sent forward an Indian of his party, who, finding all silent, crept through an embrasure, and undid the gate to them. Vaughan then despatched word to the camp that he was in possession of the place, and was waiting for a re-enforcement and a flag; but meantime, before either could reach him, one of his men climbed up the staff, and nailed his red coat to it for a flag.

Vaughan attacked.

87

At about the same hour Duchambon was sending a strong detachment back to the battery, to complete the work of destruction that his lieutenant had left unfinished. At least this is his own statement. It was supposed that the battery was still unoccupied or occupied weakly, otherwise the French would hardly have risked much for its possession. When this detachment came round in their boats to the landing-place, near the battery, Vaughan's little band attacked them with great spirit, keeping them at bay until other troops had time to join him, when the discomfited Frenchmen were driven back whence they came.

Advantage of this Capture.

Thus unexpectedly did one of the most formidable defences fall into our hands; for though its isolated situation invited an attack, and though communication with the city could be easily cut off except by water, the prompt attempt to recover the Royal Battery implies that its abandonment was at least premature. Yet as this work was primarily a harbor defence only, it was evidently not looked upon as tenable against a land attack, although it is quite as clear that the time had not yet come for deserting it. But the fact that it was left uninjured instead of being 88 blown up assures us that the garrison must have left in a panic.

But whether the French attached much or little consequence to this battery so long as it remained in their hands, it became in ours a tremendous auxiliary to the conquest of the city. By its capture we obtained thirty heavy cannon, all of which were soon made serviceable, besides a large quantity of shot and shell, than which nothing could have been more acceptable at this time. And although only three or four of its heavy guns could be trained upon the city, its capture removed one of the most formidable obstacles to the entrance of our fleet. It also afforded an excellent place of arms for our soldiers, whose confidence was greatly strengthened. In a word, the siege was making progress.

We cannot help referring here to the fact that notwithstanding Shirley's idea had met with so much ridicule it had, nevertheless, come true in one part at least, since if the proposal to turn the enemy's own cannon against them had seemed somewhat whimsical when it was broached, it certainly proved prophetic in this case, for within twenty-four hours after its taking the guns of the Royal Battery were thundering against the city. 89

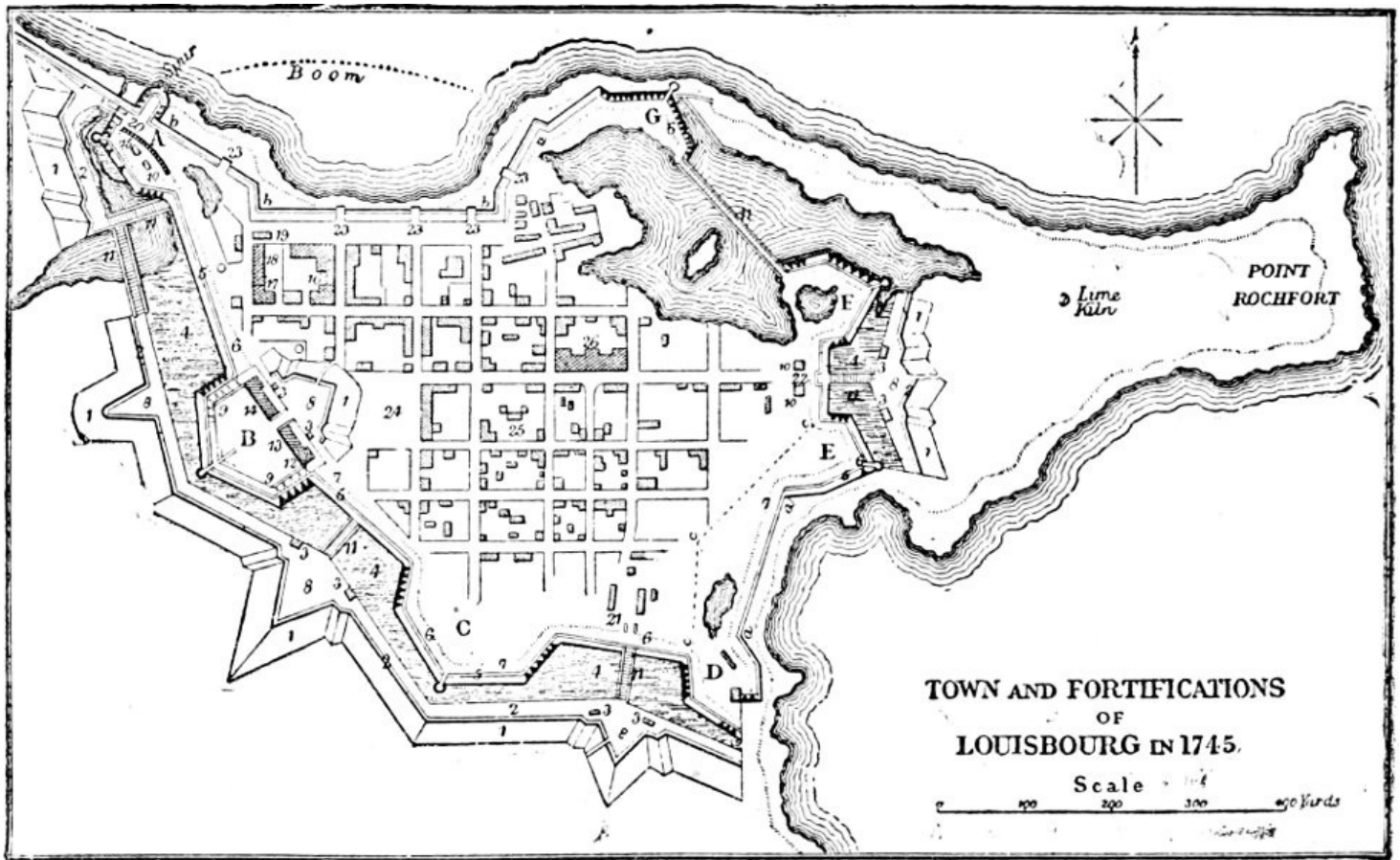
Firing begun.

Pepperell had at once ordered Waldo's regiment into the captured battery. The enemy had not even stopped to knock off the trunnions of the cannon, so that the smiths, under the direction of Major Pomeroy,^[18] who was himself a gunsmith, had only to drill them out again. Waldo fired the first shot into the city. It is said to have killed fourteen men. The fire was maintained with destructive effect, and it drew forth a reply from the enemy, with both shot and shell.

The siege may now be said to have fairly begun, and begun prosperously. Both sides had stripped for fighting, and it remained to be seen whether Pepperell's raw levies would continue steadfast under the many trials of which these events were but a foretaste.

Louisburg was now practically invested on the land side, the fleet, with its heavy armament, remaining useless, however, with respect to active co-operation in the siege itself, because its commander dared not take his ships into the harbor under fire of the enemy's batteries. The army and navy were acting therefore without that concert which alone would have allowed their united strength to be effectively tested. On its part, the navy was simply making a display of force which could not be employed, though it maintained a strict blockade. In any case, then, the brunt of the siege must fall on the army, since, as Warren informed Pepperell, the fleet could take no part in battering the city until the harbor defences should first have been taken or silenced. And when this was done, the siege must probably have been near its end, fleet or no fleet. 90

Pepperell manfully turned, however, to a task which he had supposed would be shared between the commodore and himself. If he was no longer confident under fresh disappointments, they developed in him unexpected firmness and most heroic patience. Let us see what this task was, and in what manner the citizen-general set about it. That it was done with true military judgment is abundantly proved by the fact that, when Louisburg was assaulted and taken in 1758, by the combined land and naval forces of Amherst and Boscawen, Pepperell's plan of attack was followed step by step, and to the letter. 91



TOWN AND FORTIFICATIONS OF LOUISBOURG IN 1745.

The Harbor Defences.

93

The most formidable of the harbor defences were the Island Battery, to which attention has been called in a previous chapter, the Circular Battery, a work situated at the extreme northwest corner of the city walls, and forming the reverse face of the powerful Dauphin Bastion, from which the West Gate of the city opened, with the Water Battery, or Batterie de la Grève, placed at the opposite angle of the harbor shore.^[19] The cross-fire from these two batteries effectually raked the whole harbor from shore to shore, but it was by no means so dangerous as that of the Island Battery, where ships must pass within point-blank range of the heaviest artillery.

Such, then, was the admirable system of harbor defences still remaining intact, even after the fall of the Royal Battery. Instead, therefore, of concentrating his whole fire upon one or two points, in his front, with a view of breaching the walls in the shortest time, and of storming the city at the head of his troops, Pepperell was made to throw half his available fire upon the batteries that were not at all in his own way, though they blocked the way to the fleet.^[20]

94

It will be seen that these circumstances imposed upon Pepperell a task of no little magnitude. They compelled him to attack the very strongest, instead of the weakest, parts of the fortress, and necessarily confined the siege operations within a comparatively small space of the enemy's long line.

No time was lost in getting the siege train over from Gabarus Bay to the positions marked out for erecting the breaching batteries. The infinite labor involved in doing this can hardly be understood except by those who have themselves gone over the ground. Every gun and every pound of provisions and ammunition had to be dragged two miles, through marshes and over rocks, to the allotted stations. This transit being impracticable for wheel-carriages, sledges were constructed by Lieutenant-Colonel Meserve of the New Hampshire regiment, to which relays of men harnessed themselves in turn, as they do in Arctic journeys, and in this way the cannon, mortars, and stores were slowly dragged through the spongy turf, where the mud was frequently knee-deep, to the trenches before Louisburg. None but the rugged yeomen of New England—men inured to all sorts of outdoor labor in woods and fields—could have successfully accomplished such a herculean task. But such severe toil as this was soon put half the army in the hospitals.

95

Nova Scotia freed of Invaders.

By the 5th of May Pepperell had got two mortar-batteries playing upon the city from the base of Green Hill, over which the road passes to Sydney. Meantime, Duchambon, seeing himself blockaded both by sea and by land, had hurriedly sent off an express to recall the troops that had gone out some time before against Annapolis, in concert with a force sent from Quebec, little dreaming that he himself would soon be attacked.^[21] The first fruits of Shirley's sagacity ripened thus early in relieving Nova Scotia from invasion.

First Sabbath in Camp.

The 5th being Sunday, divine service was held in the chapel of the Royal Battery. Pepperell's hardy New Englanders listened to the first Protestant sermon ever preached, perhaps, on the island of Cape Breton, from the well-chosen text "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise." After their devotions were over, we are told that the troops "fired smartly at the city."

96

Meantime, also, Colonel Moulton, who had been left at Canso for the purpose, rejoined the army after destroying St. Peter's. Two sallies made by the enemy against the nearest mortar-battery had been repulsed. Its fire, augmented by some forty-two-pounders taken from the Royal Battery, already much distressed the garrison, its balls coming against the caserns and into the town, where they traversed the streets from end to end, and riddled the houses in their passage. It never ceased firing during the siege. In his report Duchambon calls it the most dangerous of any that the besiegers raised.

Garrison summoned.

On the 7th a flag was sent into the city with a summons to surrender. Firing was suspended until its return, with Duchambon's defiant message, that inasmuch "as the King had confided to him the defence of the fortress, he had no other reply but by the mouths of his cannon."

Scouting Party defeated.

97

This check prompted a disposition to attack the city by storm at once, but upon reflection more moderate counsels prevailed, and the attempt was put off. Pepperell went on with his approaches toward the West Gate, under a constant fire from all the enemy's batteries. And as every collection of men drew the enemy's fire to the spot, this work could only be done at night, under great disadvantages. The balls they sent him were picked up and returned from his own cannon with true New England thrift, in order to husband his own ammunition. While thus engaged with the enemy in his front, he had also to keep an eye upon the outlying parties of French and Indians in his rear, who had been scraped together from scattered settlements, and were lurking about his camp with the view of raiding it unawares. On May 10, a scouting party of twenty-five men from Waldo's regiment was sent out to find and drive off these marauders. While they were engaged in plundering some dwelling-houses at one of the out-settlements, they themselves were unexpectedly attacked by a superior force, and all but three killed, the Indians murdering the prisoners in cold blood. On the following day our men returned to the scene of disaster, and after burying their fallen comrades, they burned the place to the ground. 98

With these events the campaign settled down into the slow and laborious operations of a regular siege; and here began those inevitable bickerings between the chiefs of the land and naval forces, which, in a man of different temper than Pepperell was, might have led to serious results.

Disagreements.

In Shirley, his lawful captain-general, Pepperell had always a superior whose orders he felt bound to obey to the best of his ability, cost what it might. Fortunately, Shirley's power of annoyance was limited by distance, though he kept up an animated fire of suggestions. In Warren, however, the brusque and impulsive sailor, Pepperell now found a tutor and a critic, whose irritation at the subordinate part he was playing showed itself in unreasonable demands upon his slow but sure coadjutor, and now and then even in a hardly concealed sneer. As time wore on, Warren grew more and more restive and importunate, while Pepperell continued patient, calm, and methodical to the last. 99 Warren would call his fleet-captains together, hold a council, discuss the situation from his point of view, and send off to Pepperell the result of their deliberations, with the final exhortation attached, "For God's sake let us do something!"—that "something" being that Pepperell should practically finish the siege without him, as we have already shown. Warren was a man standing at a door to keep out intruders, while the two actual adversaries were fighting it out inside. He might occasionally halloo to them to be quick about it, but he was hardly in the fight himself.

Pepperell would then get his council together in his turn, and, smarting under the sense of injustice, would submit the lecture that Warren had read him, with its thinly veiled irony, and unconcealed hauteur, to which the imputation of ignorance was not lacking. The situation would then be again discussed in all its bearings, from the army's standpoint, which might be stated as follows: The fortress cannot be stormed until we have made a practicable breach in the walls. We must finish our batteries before this can be done. Or let the commodore bring in his ships and assist in silencing the enemy's fire. The army is losing strength every day by sickness, while the fleet is gaining by the arrival of fresh ships. We cannot, if we would, pull the commodore's chestnuts out of the fire and our own too. 100

[18] MAJOR SETH POMEROY of Northampton, Mass., was lieutenant-colonel of Williams's regiment in the battle of Lake George, 1755, succeeding to the command after Williams's death. At the beginning of the Revolution he fought as a volunteer at Bunker Hill.

[19] REFERENCE should be made to the plan at [page 91](#). It will greatly simplify the siege operations to the reader if he will keep in mind the fact that the land attack was wholly confined within the points designated by A and B on this plan, or between the Dauphin and King's bastions. For our purpose, it is only necessary to add that the harbor front was defended by a strong wall of masonry, joining the Water Battery, G, with the Dauphin Bastion, A. In this wall were five gates, leading to the water-side. It was the point at which the city would be exposed to assault from shipping or their boats.

[20] THE ISLAND BATTERY could not materially hinder the progress of the siege, and must have fallen with the city. The Circular Battery could not fire upon the besiegers at all, as it bore upon the harbor, but Warren insisted that he could not go in until these two works were silenced. If the time spent in doing this had been wholly employed in battering down the West Gate and its approaches, the city might have been taken without the fleet, leaving out of view, of course, the supposition of a repulse to the storming party. It is a strong assertion to say that the city could not have been taken without the fleet, because no trial was made.

[21] THE ATTACK upon Annapolis having failed, these troops tried to get back to Louisburg, but were unable to do so. With their assistance Duchambon thinks he could have held out.

IX THE SIEGE CONTINUED

Camp Routine.

The routine of camp life is not without interest as tending to show what was the temper of the men under circumstances of unusual trial and hardship. They were housed in tents, most of which proved rotten and unserviceable, or in booths, which they built for themselves out of poles and green boughs cut in the neighboring woods. The relief parties, told off each day for work in the trenches, were marched to their stations after dark, as the enemy's fire swept the ground over which they must pass. For a like reason, the fatigue parties could only bring up the daily supplies of provisions and ammunition to the trenches from Gabarus Bay, after darkness had set in. By great good-fortune, the weather continued dry and pleasant; otherwise the bad housing and severe toil must have told on the health of the army even more severely than it did, while work in the trenches would have been suspended during the intervals of wet weather. 102

Spirit of the Army.

A force like this, composed of men who were the equals of their officers at home, not bound together by habits of passive obedience formed under the severe penalties of martial law, could not be expected to observe the exact discipline of regular soldiers. It was not attempted to enforce it. Not one case of punishment for infraction of orders is reported during the siege. But officers and men had in them the making of far better soldiers than the ordinary rank and file of armies. There were men in the ranks who rose to be colonels and brigadiers in the revolutionary contest.^[22] The hardest duty was performed without grumbling; the most dangerous service found plenty of volunteers; and Pepperell himself has borne witness that nothing pleased the men better than to be ordered off on some scouting expedition that promised to bring on a brush with the enemy.

This spirit is plainly manifest in the letters which have been preserved. In one of them Major Pomeroy tells his wife that "it looks as if our campaign would last long; but I am willing to stay till God's time comes to deliver the city into our hands." The reply is worthy of a woman of Sparta: "Suffer no anxious thoughts to rest in your mind about me. The whole town is much engaged with concern for the expedition, how Providence will order the affair, for which religious meetings every week are maintained. I leave you in the hand of God." 103

There is not a despatch or a letter of Pepperell's extant, in which this dependence upon the Over-ruling Hand is not acknowledged. The barbaric utterance that Providence is always on the side of the strongest battalions would have shocked the men of Louisburg as deeply as it would the men of Preston, Edgehill, and Marston Moor. The conviction that their cause was a righteous one, and must therefore prevail, was a power still active among Puritan soldiers: nor did they fail to give the honor and praise of achieved victory to Him whom they so steadfastly owned as the Leader of Armies and the God of Battles.

There were not wanting incidents which the soldiers treasured up as direct manifestations of Divine favor. Moses Coffin, of Newbury, who officiated in the double capacity of chaplain and drummer, and who had been nicknamed in consequence the "drum ecclesiastic," carried a small pocket-Bible about with him wherever he went. On returning to camp, after an engagement with the enemy, he found that a bullet had passed nearly through the sacred book, thus, undoubtedly, saving his life. 104

Frolics in Camp.

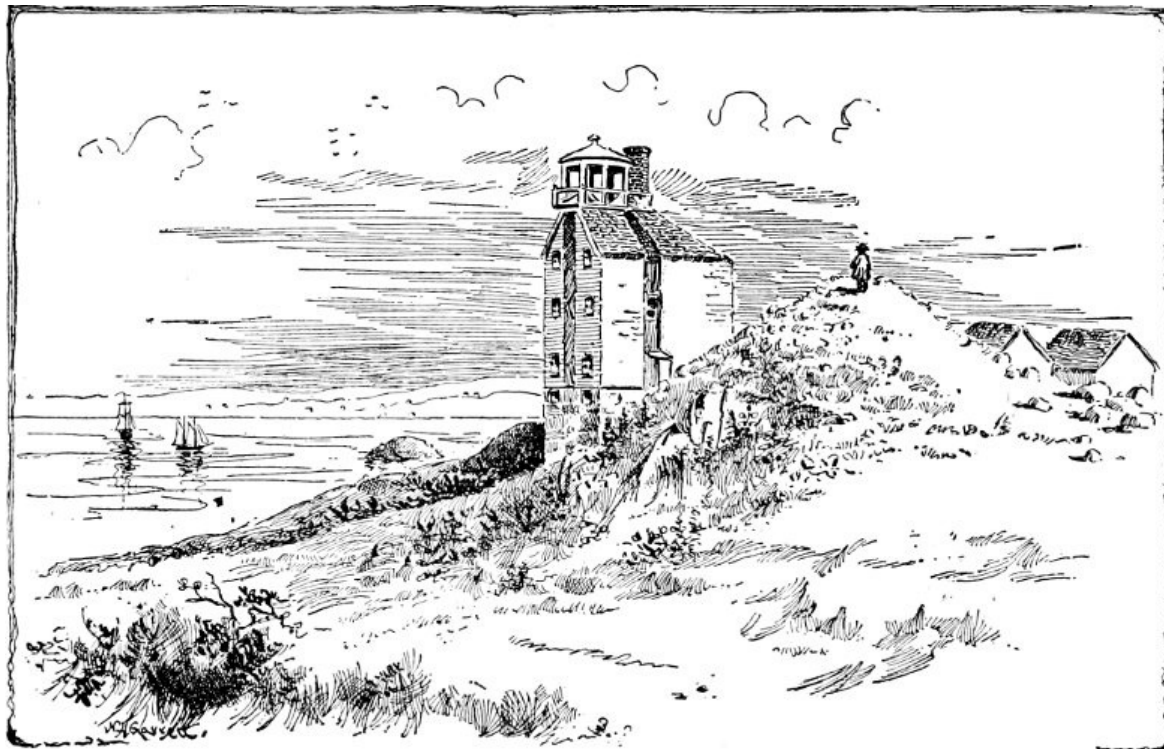
The relaxation from discipline has been more or less commented upon by several writers, as if it implied a grave delinquency in the head of the army. We are of the opinion, however, that it was the safety-valve of *this* army, under the extraordinary pressure laid upon it. So while we may smile at the comparison made by Douglass, who says that the siege resembled a "Cambridge Commencement," or at the antics described by Belknap,^[23] we need not feel ourselves bound to accept their conclusions. This author says: "Those who were on the spot, have frequently in my hearing laughed at the recital of their own irregularities, and expressed their admiration when they reflected on the almost miraculous preservation of the army from destruction. They indeed presented a formidable front to the enemy, but the rear was a scene of confusion and frolic. While some were on duty at the trenches, others were racing, wrestling, pitching quoits, firing at marks or birds, or running after shot from the enemy's guns for which they received a bounty." 105

Our Fascine Batteries.

In his unscientific way, Pepperell was daily tightening his grasp upon Louisburg. Gridley,^[24] who acted in the capacity of chief engineer, had picked up from books all the knowledge he possessed, but he soon showed a natural aptitude for that branch of the service. Dwight, the chief of artillery, is not known ever to have pointed a shotted gun in his life. Instead of gradual approaches, of zigzags and épaulements, the ground was simply staked out where the batteries were to be placed. After dark the working parties started for the spot, carrying bundles of fascines on their backs, laid them on the lines, and then began digging the trenches and throwing up the embankment by the light of their lanterns. All the batteries at Louisburg were constructed in this simple fashion. The work of making the platforms, getting up the cannon, and mounting them, was attended with far greater labor and risk. 106

The Advanced Battery opens Fire May 18.

In this manner a fascine battery covered by a trench in front, on which the provincials had been working like beavers for two days and nights, was raised within two hundred and fifty yards of the West Gate, against which it began sending its shot on the 18th. This was by much the most dangerous effort that the besiegers had yet made, and the enemy at once trained every gun upon it that would bear, in the hope of either demolishing or silencing the work. It was so near that the men in the trenches, and those on the walls, kept up a continual fire of musketry at each other, interspersed with sallies of wit, whenever there was a lull in the firing. The French gunners, who were kept well supplied with wine, would drink to the besiegers, and invite them over to breakfast or to take a glass of wine.



THE LIGHTHOUSE, WITH DÉBRIS OF OLD WORKS.

Cannon discovered.

109

In two days the fire of our guns had beaten down the drawbridges, part of the West Gate, and some of the adjoining wall. Pepperell complains at this time of his want of good gunners, also of a sufficient supply of powder to make good the daily consumption, of which he had no previous conception, but is cheered by finding thirty cannon sunk at low-water mark on the opposite side of the harbor, which he designed mounting at the lighthouse forthwith, for attacking the Island Battery. Gorham's regiment was posted there with this object. Thus again were the enemy furnishing means for their own destruction. Foreseeing that this fortification would shut the port to ships coming to his relief, Duchambon sent a hundred men across the harbor to drive off the provincials. A sharp fight ensued, in which the enemy were defeated.

Titcomb's Battery at Work.

By this time another fascine battery situated by the shore, at a point nine hundred yards from the walls, began raking the Circular Battery of the enemy, in conjunction with the direct fire from our Advanced Battery. It was called Titcomb's, from the officer in charge, Major Moses Titcomb of Hale's regiment. These two fortifications were now knocking to pieces the northwest corner of the enemy's ponderous works, known as the Dauphin Bastion. 110
We were now playing on Louisburg from three batteries on the shore of the harbor, three in the rear of these, and had another in process of construction at the lighthouse, all of which, except the last, had been completed under fire within twenty days, without recourse to any scientific rules whatever.

Capture of the Vigilant.

In spite of Warren's watchfulness one vessel had slipped through his squadron into Louisburg unperceived, bringing supplies to the besieged. An event now took place which, to use Pepperell's words, "produced a burst of joy in the army, and animated the men with fresh courage to persevere." The annual supply ship from France, for which our fleet had been constantly on the lookout, had run close in with the harbor in a thick fog, undiscovered by our vessels, and wholly unsuspecting of danger herself. When the fog lifted she was seen and engaged by the Mermaid, a forty-gun frigate, until the rest of the squadron could come to her aid, when, after a spirited combat, the French ship was forced to strike her colors. The prize proved to be the Vigilant, a new sixty-gun ship, loaded with stores and munitions for Louisburg. She was soon put in fighting trim again, and manned by drafts made from the army and transports. 111

Warren proposes to attack.

By the 24th, two more heavy ships, which the ministry had sent out immediately upon receiving Shirley's advices that the expedition had been decided upon, ^[25] now joined Warren, who at length felt himself emboldened to ask Pepperell's co-operation in the following plan of attack. It was proposed to distribute sixteen hundred men, to be taken from the army, among the ships of war, all of which should then go into the harbor and attack the enemy's batteries vigorously. Under cover of this fire, the soldiers, with the marines from the ships, were to land and assault the city. Pepperell himself was to have no share in this business, except as a looker-on, but was to put his troops under the command of an officer of marines who should take his orders from Warren only.

This implied censure to the conduct of the army and its chief, followed up the next day by the tart question of "Pray how came the Island Battery not to be attacked?" seems to have goaded Pepperell into giving the order for a night attack upon that strong post. Indeed, Pepperell's perplexities were growing every hour. On the day he received Warren's cool proposition to take the control of the army out of his hands, he had been obliged to send off a 112

flying column in pursuit of a force which his scouts had reported was at Mirá Bay, fifteen miles from his camp. In fact, the forces which Duchambon had recalled from Annapolis were watching their chance either to make a dash into Louisburg, or throw themselves upon the besiegers' trenches unawares.

Island Battery stormed May 27.

Gallantry of William Tufts, Jr.

Notwithstanding the hazard, it was determined to storm the Island Battery. For this purpose, four hundred volunteers embarked in whale-boats on the night of the 27th, and rowed cautiously round the outer shore of the harbor toward the back of the island, in the expectation of finding that side unguarded. They were, however, discovered by the sentinels in season to thwart the plan of surprise. The garrison was alarmed. Still the brave provincials would not turn back. Cannon and musketry were turned on them from the island and city. Through this storm of shot, by which many of the boats were sunk before they could reach the shore, only about half the attacking force passed unscathed. In scrambling up the rocks through a drenching surf, most of their muskets were wet with salt water, and rendered useless. Not yet dismayed, the assailants fought their numerous foes hand to hand for nearly an hour. Captain Brooks, their leader, was cut down in the *mélee*. One William Tufts, a brave lad of only nineteen, got into the battery, climbed the flagstaff, tore down the French colors, and fastened his own red coat to the staff, under a shower of balls, many of which went through his clothes without harming him. Sixty men were slain before the rest would surrender, but these were the flower of the army, whose loss saddened the whole camp, when the enemy's exulting cheers told the story of the disaster, at break of day. About a hundred and eighty-nine men were either drowned, killed, or taken in this desperate encounter. It was an exploit worthy of the men, but there was not one chance in ten of its being successful. For once Pepperell had allowed feeling to get the better of judgment by taking that chance.

Pepperell could now say to Warren that his proposal would not be agreed to. His effective force had been reduced by sickness to twenty-one hundred men, six hundred of whom were at that moment absent from camp. As a compliance with Warren's requisition for sixteen hundred men would be equivalent to exposing everything to the uncertain chances of a single bold dash, Pepperell's council very wisely concluded that it was far better to hold fast what had been gained, than to risk all that was hoped for. They offered to lend the commodore five hundred soldiers, and six hundred sailors, if he would go and assault the Island Battery, in his turn, but Warren's only reply was to urge the completion of the Lighthouse Battery for that work.

The siege had now continued thirty days without decisive results. So far Duchambon had showed no sign of yielding, and Pepperell found it difficult to get information as to the state of the garrison. An expedient was therefore hit upon which was calculated to test both the temper and condition of the besieged thoroughly: for although the capture of the Vigilant had been witnessed from the walls of Louisburg, it had not produced the impression that the besiegers had expected. This was the key to what now took place.

Effect of Stratagem tried.

Maisonforte, captain of the Vigilant, was still a prisoner on board the fleet. He was given to understand that the provincials were greatly exasperated over the cruel treatment of some prisoners, who had been murdered after they were taken, and he was asked to write to Duchambon informing him just how the French prisoners were treated, to the end that such barbarities as had been complained of might cease, and retaliation be avoided.

Maisonforte readily fell into the trap laid for him. He unhesitatingly wrote the letter as requested, it was sent to Duchambon by a flag, and was delivered by an officer who understood French, in order to observe its effect. The letter thus conveyed to Duchambon the disagreeable news of the Vigilant's capture, of which he had been ignorant, and it made a visible impression. He now knew that his determination to hold out in view of the expected succors from France, was of no further avail. This correspondence took place on the 7th.

Lighthouse Battery completed.

Island Battery silenced.

By the arrival of ships destined for the Newfoundland station, the fleet had been increased to eleven ships carrying five hundred and forty guns. On the 9th two deserters came into our lines, who said that the garrison could not hold out much longer unless relieved. On the 11th, which was the anniversary of the accession of George II., a general bombardment took place, in which the new Lighthouse Battery joined, for the first time. The effect of its fire upon the Island Battery was so marked, that Warren now declared himself ready to join in a general attack, whenever the wind should be fair for it. For this attempt Pepperell pushed forward his own preparations most vigorously. Boats were got ready to land troops at different parts of the town. The Circular Battery was about silenced. All the 13th, 14th, and 15th a furious bombardment was kept up. Our marksmen swept the streets of the doomed city, with musketry, from the advanced trenches, so that no one could show his head in any part of it without being instantly riddled with balls. The artilleryists at the Island Battery were driven from their posts, some even taking refuge from our shells by running into the sea. Our boats now passed in and out of the harbor freely, with supplies, without molestation. It was evident that the fall of this much dreaded bulwark had brought the siege practically to a close.

On the 14th the whole fleet came to an anchor off the harbor in line of battle. It made a splendid and imposing array. At the same time the troops were mustered under arms, and exhorted to do their full duty when the order should be given them to advance upon the enemy's works. In the midst of these final preparations for a combined and decisive assault, an ominous silence brooded over the doomed city. It was clear to all that the crisis was at hand.

Duchambon felt that he had now done all that a brave and resolute captain could for the defence of the fortress. He saw an overwhelming force about to throw itself with irresistible power upon his dismantled walls, in every assailable part at once. His every hope of help from without had failed him. Food for his men and powder for his guns were nearly exhausted. He was now confronted with the soldier's last dread alternative of meeting an assault sword in hand, with but faint prospect of success, or of lowering the flag he had so gallantly defended. The

wretched inhabitants, who had endured every privation cheerfully, so long as there was hope, earnestly entreated him to spare them the horrors of storm and pillage.

The Fortress surrenders.

On the 15th, in the afternoon, while the two chiefs of the expedition were in consultation together, Duchambon sent a flag to Pepperell proposing a suspension of hostilities until terms of capitulation should be agreed upon. This was at once granted until eight o'clock of the following morning. Duchambon's proposals were then submitted and rejected as inadmissible, but counter proposals were sent him, to which, on the same day, he gave his assent, by sending hostages to both Pepperell and Warren, saving only that the garrison should be allowed to march out with the honors of war. For reasons to be looked for, no doubt, in his pride as a professional soldier, and in his reluctance to treat with any other, he addressed separate notes to the land and naval commanders. As neither felt disposed to stand upon a point of mere punctilio, Duchambon's request was immediately acceded to. A striking difference, however, is to be observed between Pepperell's and Warren's replies to the French commander. In his own Pepperell generously, and honorably, makes the full ratification of this condition subject to Warren's approval. In the commodore's there is not one word found concerning the general of the land forces, or of his approbation or disapprobation, any more than if he had never existed; but in Warren's note the extraordinary condition is annexed "that the keys of the town be delivered to such officers and troops *as I shall appoint to receive them*, and that all the cannon, warlike and other stores in the town, be also delivered up to the said officers."

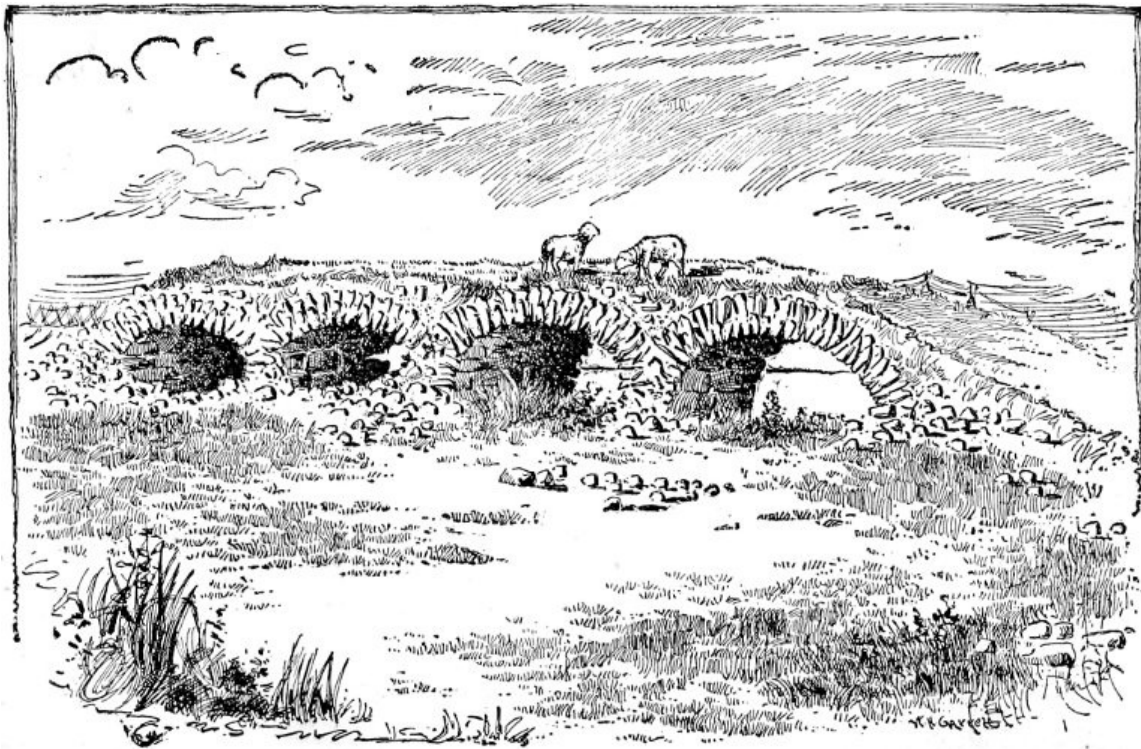
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On the 17th Warren took formal possession of the Island Battery, and shortly after went into the city himself to confer with the governor. In the meantime, conceiving it to be his right to receive the surrender, Pepperell had informed the governor of his intention to put a detachment of his own troops in occupation of the city defences that same afternoon. This communication was immediately shown to Warren, who at once addressed Pepperell, in evident irritation, upon the "irregularity" of his proceedings, until the articles of surrender should have been formally signed and sealed. The fact that he had just proposed to receive the surrender of the fortress himself was not even referred to, nor does it appear that Pepperell ever knew of it. One cannot overlook, therefore, the presence of some unworthy manœuvring, seconded by Duchambon's professional vanity, to claim and obtain a share of the honor of this glorious achievement, not only unwarranted by the part the navy had taken in it, since it had never fired a shot into Louisburg, or lost a man by its fire: but calculated to mislead public opinion in England.

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An unpublished letter of General Dwight, written three days after the entry of the provincial troops, relates the closing scenes of this truly memorable contest. It runs as follows:—

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REMAINS OF CASEMATES AT LOUISBURG.

"We entered the city on Monday last (17th) about five o'clock P.M., with colors flying, drums, hautboys, violins, trumpets, etc. Gentlemen and ladies caressing (the French inhabitants) as well they might, for a New England dog would have died in the holes we drove them to—I mean the casemates where they dwelt during the siege.

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"This fortress is so valuable, as well as large and extensive, that we may say the one half has not been conceived.... Sometimes I am ready to say a thousand men in a thousand years could not effect it. Words cannot convey the idea of it.... One half of ye warlike stores for such a siege were not laid in; however, the Vigilant (French supply ship) being taken and Commodore Warren's having some supply of stores from New England was very happy, and so it is that his readiness has been more than equal to his ability."

Governor Duchambon puts his whole force at thirteen hundred men at the beginning of the siege, and at eleven hundred at its close. About two thousand men were, however, included in the capitulation, of which number six hundred and fifty were veteran troops. The besiegers' shot had wrought destruction in the city. There was

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not a building left unharmed or even habitable, by the fifteen thousand shot and shells that Pepperell's batteries had thrown into it.

When Pepperell saw the inside of Louisburg he probably realized for the first time the magnitude of the task he had undertaken. On looking around him, he said, with the expeditionary motto in mind no doubt, "The Almighty, of a truth, has been with us."

As the expedition began, so it now ended, with a prayer, which has come down to us as a part of its history. Pepperell celebrated his entry into Louisburg by giving a dinner to his officers. When they were seated at table, the general called upon his old friend and neighbor, the Rev. Mr. Moody of York, to ask the Divine blessing. As the parson's prayers were proverbial for their length, the countenances of the guests fell when he arose from his chair, but to everybody's surprise the venerable chaplain made his model and pithy appeal to the throne of grace in these words: 125

"Good Lord! we have so many things to thank thee for, that time will be infinitely too short to do it: we must therefore leave it for the work of eternity."

[22] GENERAL JOHN NIXON is one of those referred to.

[23] DOUGLASS (Summary), BELKNAP ("History of New Hampshire") and HUTCHINSON ("History of Massachusetts Bay") have accounts of the Louisburg expedition. Douglass and Hutchinson wrote contemporaneously, and were well informed, the latter especially, upon all points relating to the inception and organization. Of their military criticism it is needless to speak. There is a host of authorities, both French and English, most of which are collected in Vol. V. "Narrative and Critical History of America."

[24] RICHARD GRIDLEY subsequently laid out the works at Bunker Hill and Dorchester Heights, in much the same manner.

[25] SHIRLEY'S second messenger, Captain Loring, on presenting his despatches, was allowed but twelve hours in London, being then ordered on board the Princess Mary, one of the ships referred to. 126

X AFTERTHOUGHTS

And now comes the strangest part of the story. We get quite accustomed to thinking of the American colonies as the football of European diplomacy, our reading of history has fully prepared us for that: but we are not prepared to find events in the New World actually shaping the course of those in the Old. In a word, England lost the battle in Europe, but won it in America. France was confounded at seeing the key to Canada in the hands of the enemy she had just beaten. England and France were like two duellists who have had a scuffle, in the course of which they have exchanged weapons. Instead of dictating terms, France had to compromise matters. For the sake of preserving her colonial possessions, she now had to give up her dear-bought conquests on the continent of Europe. Hostilities were suspended. All the belligerents agreed to restore what they had taken from each other, and cry quits; but it is plain that France would never have consented to such a settlement at a time when her adversaries were so badly crippled, when all England was in a ferment, and she hurrying back her troops from Holland in order to put down rebellion at home, thus leaving the coalition of which she was the head to stand or fall without her. France would not have stayed her victorious march, we think, under such circumstances as these, unless the nation's attention had been forcibly recalled to the gravity of the situation in America. 127

In some respects this episode of history recalls the story of the mailed giant, armed to the teeth, and of the stripling with his sling.

As all the conquests of this war were restored by the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, Cape Breton went to France again.

Thus had New England made herself felt across the Atlantic by an exhibition of power, as unlooked-for as it was suggestive to thoughtful men. To some it was merely like that put forth by the infant Hercules, in his cradle. But to England, the unnatural mother, it was a notice that the child she had neglected was coming to manhood, ere long to claim a voice in the disposal of its own affairs. 128

To New England herself the consequences of her great exploit were very marked. The martial spirit was revived. In the trenches of Louisburg was the training-school for the future captains of the republic. Louisburg became a watchword and a tradition to a people intensely proud of their traditions. Not only had they made themselves felt across the ocean, but they now first awoke to a better knowledge of their own resources, their own capabilities, their own place in the empire, and here began the growth of that independent spirit which, but for the prompt seizure of a golden opportunity, might have lain dormant for years. Probably it would be too much to say that the taking of Louisburg opened the eyes of discerning men to the possibility of a great empire in the West; yet, if we are to look about us for underlying causes, we know not where else to find a single event so likely to give birth to speculative discussion, or a new and enlarged direction in the treatment of public concerns. What had been done would always be pointed to as evidence of what might be done again. So we have considered the taking of Louisburg, in so far as the colonies were concerned, as the event of its epoch. 129

Nor would these discussions be any the less likely to arise, or to grow any the less threatening to the future of crown and colony, when it became known that to balance her accounts with other powers England had handed over Cape Breton to France again, thus putting in her hand the very weapon that New England had just wrested from her, as the pledge to her own security. The work was all undone with a stroke of the pen. The colonies were still to be the football of European politics.

Nobody in the colonies supposed this would be the reward of their sacrifices—that they should be deliberately sold by the home government, or that France, after being once disarmed, would be quietly told to go on strengthening her American Gibraltar as much as she liked. Yet this was what really happened, notwithstanding the Duke of Newcastle's bombastic declaration that "if France was master of Portsmouth, he would hang the man who should give up Cape Breton in exchange for it." 130

King George, who was in Hanover when he heard of the capture of Louisburg, sent word to Pepperell that he would be made a baronet, thus distinguishing him as the proper chief of the expedition. This distinction, which really made Pepperell the first colonist of his time, was nobly won and worthily worn. After four years of importunity the colonies succeeded in getting their actual expenses reimbursed to them, which was certainly no more than their dues, considering that they had been fighting the battles of the mother country. ^[27]

Warren was made an admiral. The navy came in for a large amount of prize money, obtained from ships that were decoyed into Louisburg after it fell, to the exclusion of the army. ^[28] This disposition of the spoils was highly resented by the army, who very justly alleged that, while the success of the army without the fleet might be open to debate, there could be no question whatever of the fleet's inability to take Louisburg without the army. 131

^[26]THE SURRENDER caused great rejoicing in the colonies, as was natural it should, with all except those who had always predicted its failure. For some reason the news did not reach Boston until July 2, in the night. At daybreak the inhabitants were aroused from their slumbers by the thunder of cannon. The whole day was given up to rejoicings. A public thanksgiving was observed on the 18th. The news reached London on the 20th. The Tower guns were fired, and at night London was illuminated. Similar demonstrations occurred in all the cities and large towns of the kingdom. At Versailles the news caused deep gloom. De Luynes speaks of it thus in his Memoirs: "People have been willing to doubt about this affair of Louisburg, but unhappily it is only too certain. These misfortunes have given rise to altercations among ministers. It is urged that M. Maurepas is at fault in having allowed Louisburg to fall for want of munitions. The friends of M. Maurepas contend that he did all that was possible, but could not obtain the necessary funds from the Treasury." The government got ready two fleets to retake Louisburg. One was scattered or sunk by storms in 1746, and one was destroyed by Lord Anson, in 1747, off Cape Finisterre.

^[27]THE AMOUNT was £183,649 to Massachusetts, £16,355 to New Hampshire, £28,863 to Connecticut, and £6,332 to Rhode Island. Quite a large portion was paid in copper coins.

^[28]AMONG OTHERS the navy took a Spanish Indiaman, having \$2,000,000, besides gold and silver ingots to a large value, stowed under her cargo of cocoa. The estimated value of all the prizes was nearly a million sterling, of which enormous sum only one colonial vessel got a share.

THE END

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