IV.—*First Siege and Capture of Louisbourg,* 1745.

By SIR ADAMS ARCHIBALD, K.C.M.G.

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Few events in history are more remarkable than the siege and capture of Louisbourg in 1745. The cession of Acadia to England, in 1713, had left Cape Breton the chief possession of the French in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Thenceforth it became the settled policy of France to construct in that island a fortress of the first order, to be the headquarters of the French fleet in American waters. Great care was taken in the selection of a suitable spot. Seven years of surveys, and numberless reports by engineers, resulted in the selection, for that purpose, of a place known as "English Harbour," situated on the east coast of the island. This harbour is close upon the Atlantic. In half an hour, a ship passes from a tempestuous ocean to a haven of perfect security. The harbour winds inland to a distance of six miles from its mouth. It has a width at the narrowest part of about half a mile. The average depth of the water is from six to eight fathoms. The harbour is spacious enough to hold the entire British fleet. Across its mouth, there stretches, from the shore on the left of the entrance towards that on the right, a belt of low, rocky islets, protecting the harbour from the waters of the Atlantic. This belt extends to within a quarter of a mile of the high and rugged coast on the right. The only ship entrance is between the furthest islet of this belt and the shore on the right. On passing into the harbour, the coast line on the left is found to recede, so as to form a cove. From the shore of the cove the ground rises gently to a moderate height, and this spot was selected for the fort, which fronted on the water of the cove. The ground consisted of an area of one hundred acres.

For the five and twenty years next following the selection, the best engineering talent of Europe was employed in the construction of the fort and its appendages. Around the central area, a wall or rampart of stone was raised to the height of from thirty to thirty-six feet. The wall was over two miles and a half in length. A fosse of eighty feet in width encompassed the walls. The central area was laid off in regular blocks, the streets crossing each other at right angles. Besides barracks, magazines and hospitals for military purposes, the French authorities erected a government house, an opera house, a theatre, and other secular buildings appertaining to a capital city, as also churches and other religious edifices. In the construction of the fort and city they spent over thirty millions of livres. They made it the strongest fortress on this continent and thought it impregnable.

They chose new names for the island and fort. The first was no longer to be called "Cape Breton," though that name was itself French: thenceforth it was "Isle Royale." "English Harbour" ceased to be a suitable name: it became "Louisbourg." The new titles were significant. "Isle Royale" suggested connection with the throne, "Louisbourg" with the person, of the Grand Monarque.

Besides the fort iself, there were outlying posts of great strength. A powerful battery, on one of the low islets we have mentioned at the mouth of the harbour, commanded the narrow ship-entrance between it and the shore on the right; and far up the harbour, on a lofty hill facing the entrance, stood the grand battery with an armament of the heaviest guns. It also commanded the ship-entrance. Thus Louisbourg, strong in itself, with two immense batteries commanding the harbour's entrance, towered proudly in these northern waters, and was the terror of the English colonies from the Strait of Canso to the mouth of the Hudson.

In 1745, the fort was garrisoned by 700 regulars, and 1,000 militia, under command of Duchambon, who was also the French governor of Isle Royale.

For a century before that time, Nova Scotia had been the border-ground between the English and the French on the Atlantic coast. The province was alternately British and French, as the fortune of war determined. But every time that it was wrested from France, the conquest was the work of the British provincials. The possession of Nova Scotia by the English was to the provincials a vital point. When Nova Scotia was French, the border-ground shifted to New England. The peninsula was a wedge between the two powers. So long as the contest was confined to our soil, New England was comparatively safe.

The long peace between the two crowns ended in 1744. The French had taken care to despatch a fast ship at once to Louisbourg to convey the news. The governor of Isle Royale, the predecessor of Duchambon, had immediately equipped an expedition, under Duvivier (a descendant of the famous La Tour) and made a raid on Nova Scotia. The only military posts at the time in this province were Canso and Annapolis. A garrison of eighty men occupied a block house at Canso, which was in no condition to sustain a siege. They surrendered on the first summons. The block house was destroyed, and the garrison sent to Louisbourg, prisoners of war.

The plan of operations contemplated that Duvivier, after taking and destroying the block house at Canso, should proceed with his force of 900 men (regulars and militia) to Annapolis, there to combine with other parties, who were to meet him there, in an attack on that place. The fort at Annapolis was in a ruinous state. The place might have been taken with ease, if Duvivier had carried out his project with vigor. But a series of blunders occurred. First, the priest Le Loutre came upon the scene at Annapolis, with 300 savages from Cape Sable and the River St. John, on July 1st. This party spent some time investing the fort, but having no siege guns, they did little damage, beyond shooting a soldier or two, who were found straggling outside the fort. At length Le Loutre, disheartened by his failure, and hearing nothing of the other parties who were to join him, raised the siege and retired to Minas. Next came, in August, Duvivier with his troops, and a body of Indians. They, too, failed, and retired to Minas. Last of all came some ships of war from Louisbourg. Finding, on their arrival, that both the other parties had come and gone, the ships contented themselves with capturing a transport or two, and then retired from the scene. Nothing could have saved Annapolis, if the several parties of the enemy, or any two of them, had reached the spot at the same time.

The destruction of Canso and the attack on Annapolis seriously alarmed the people of New England. They were sure the attempt on Nova Scotia would be repeated the following year, and they feared, with worse results. As things were, their fishery at Canso, the best in the world, was gone. Louisbourg, only a few miles off, sheltered the French privateers and commanded the fishery, and from it armed ships could swoop down at pleasure on any part of the Atlantic coast. With Louisbourg, the only port of any importance in these northern waters, the provincials saw nothing before them but destruction to their commerce and to their settlements. They then began to turn over in their minds, whether it would not he possible to get rid of their trouble by a bold stroke on Louisbourg itself. It is uncertain who it was that originated the idea; but to Shirley, the Massachusetts governor, is certainly due the credit, if, under the circumstances (judged, not from the results, but from what might reasonably have been expected to be the results) credit it be, of inciting and persuading his people to undertake the hazardous adventure. He proposed it first to his legislative assembly in secret session. The members stood aghast at the temerity of the proposal. They rejected it with scarce a dissentient voice. But it was a matter of life and death to the merchants and traders, even more than to the settlers. They pressed for a reconsideration, which was granted. Finally, after long and tedious discussion, the proposal was carried by a majority of one. Once a decision was given in its favour, all concurred in doing their best to make the project successful.

It was proposed to raise 4,000 men for the purpose. The resolution to that effect passed towards the end of January. Within two months from that date the levies were completed: 4,070 men were enrolled and ready to sail. The greatest enthusiasm prevailed. It was not a question merely of politics or of trade: the feeling was largely religious. The savages who raided the British settlements, and massacred and scalped the inhabitants, were, in name, Roman Catholics. The settlers gauged the creed the savages professed by the outrages they practiced. The Indians were under the guidance of Roman Catholic priests. In the rude logic of the provincials, they inferred that it was "like master like man." Hence hatred of Romanism became in New England a living force, drawing in the same line with trading interests and national hatreds. Many of the volunteers enlisted from religious motives. Whitfield, the great English Evangelist, who was in Massachusetts at the time, furnished a motto to be inscribed on the banner of the expedition: *Nil desperandum Christo duce!* "Despair not with Christ for leader." The sentiment was appropriate. It was the motto of a forlorn hope. Humanly speaking, success, in such an expedition, was impossible. If it came at all, it must be the result of divine interposition. In the eyes of the adventurers, the age of miracles was not past. They believed that in so sacred a cause miracles might still be wrought, and when we see what a continuous series of marvellous events actually did occur, we cease to wonder at the credulity of the adventurers in considering themselves the special favorites of Providence.

The volunteers were farmers and mechanics, traders and labourers. They were utterly undisciplined. They had never seen anything of war, except, perhaps, a skirmish with a band of savages. They were to be led by one Pepperel, a merchant, with no more experience of war than themselves; and they were to set out on an expedition against the strongest fort in America, defended by a garrison of regular soldiers, and having behind it all the resources of the French monarchy. Such an undertaking required faith and enthusiasm of no ordinary kind.

The expedition was to sail from the mouth of the Pisquatiqua on March 24th. Besides the transports, thirteen small, armed vessels, belonging to Massachusetts and the other New England colonies, carrying in all 100 guns, accompanied the expedition. Shirley had hoped to secure the assistance of the British fleet on the station, and had written to Commodore Warren, who was then in the West Indies, asking his aid. The answer reached Shirley the very day before the expedition was to sail from Pisquatica. Warren declined: he had no orders from the Admiralty, and would not act without them. This was discouraging. But Shirley did not hesitate. He concealed the news from all except Pepperel and Waldo, the first and second in command. The expedition sailed on March 24th. On April 4th, the fleet, consisting of 150 ships, armed vessels and transports, met by appointment at Canso. They found the whole eastern coast of Cape Breton skirted by a wide belt of floating ice. The stream from the Gulf of St. Lawrence, running along the coast outside of Scatarie, brings with it every spring a body of gulf ice, which receives its direction largely from the wind prevailing at the time. If, after passing Scatarie, the breeze blows toward the shore, it drives the ice before it, and makes an impenetrable barrier between the open sea and the harbours on the coast. This happens only once in several years. But it happened this year. For three weeks, the expedition lay at Canso, waiting for a gap in the ice. But the time was not lost. The men, who were a mere mob on their arrival, were drilled daily. They began to acquire some faint glimmerings of discipline. Some of them were employed in building a fort at Canso, where a garrison was to be left.

Some days after their arrival at that port, three ships were descried in the offing. They were soon discovered to be men of war. There was no little excitement among the adventurers. If the ships should turn out to be French, as was quite possible, the expedition would have terminated almost as soon as it began. What was the relief of the provincials, when they discovered that the ships were British, and shortly afterwards that they were three of Commodore Warren's fleet, come to take part in the expedition! It turned out that the very day after Warren had despatched his letter to Shirley, orders had reached him from the Admiralty to sail at once to Boston and join the expedition. He set sail forthwith, and having, on approaching the coast, learned from a merchantman, that the expedition had already sailed, he proceeded at once to Canso, to the intense relief of Shirley and of the two commanding officers to whom the secret of his refusal had been confided.

Another piece of good fortune occurrred during the stay at Canso. A French brig from Martinique, laden with rum and molasses, and bound for Louisbourgh, was prevented by the ice from reaching that port. She put into Canso and was captured. The cargo was a valuable addition to the commissariat of the expedition.

But what were the authorities at Louisbourg about all this time? Strange to say, they knew nothing of the expedition. Louisbourg is distant from Canso less than thirty leagues. For three weeks, a fleet of 150 sail had been lying at Canso, and not the slightest hint of the fact had reached Louisbourg. Across the strait from Canso lay the French village of Nerica, (now "Arichat"). The fleet was visible from the shores of Isle Madame. Yet it lay for three weeks in sight of Nerica, and not a man in that place was found to carry the tidings to Duchambon. Port Toulouse, as it was then called (now "St. Peters"), was within a few miles of Canso. It was garrisoned by French soldiers under the command of Capt. Benoit. Surely in a time of war that officer should have advised his superior at Louisbourg of the large fleet in his neighborhood. He did not, however.

After Warren reached Canso he sent some of the smaller vessels to cruise backwards and forwards, in front of Louisbourg harbour, to prevent any French vessels hovering off the coast from entering, should a gap appear in the ice belt. These were seen by people on the shore, and the fact reported to Duchambon. This did not alarm him. He assumed that the vessels were French, waiting an opportunity to enter the harbour. Every year a supply ship, despatched from Brest, reached the coast early in the spring. He took for granted that one at least of the cruisers was the expected supply ship. Still he thought it might be worth while to make some inquiry whether there was anything going on at Canso to excite suspicion. He accordingly sent a message to Capt. Benoit at Port Toulouse, directing him to make inquiries. That officer despatched three men on this service, a soldier, a *habitant* and an Indian. They proceeded to Canso, landed on the shore opposite the island, and made their observations of the state of things there. They then set out on their return to Port Toulouse. On their way they met a temptation that they could not resist. Accident gave them the opportunity of falling on a small party of English and making four of them prisoners. They then proceeded homeward with their captives. One night they all stretched themselves out by the camp fire. The messengers were weary and soon fell asleep. The prisoners seized the opportunity, released themselves from their shackles, and killed their captors. The tidings of the doings at Canso perished with the messengers. The commander at Port Toulouse, lost his men. The governor at Louisbourg remained as ignorant as ever of what was going on at Canso.

At last, on Sunday, April 29th, the wind shifted, driving the ice seaward, and leaving the shore clear. The expedition sailed at once. It reached Chapeau Rouge (Gabarus) Bay, back of Louisbourg, and was within a couple miles of the fort, on Sunday evening. But the wind died away and it was impossible to land then. The fleet lay off till the morning. At early dawn, the French soldiers on duty, descried from off the walls of Louisbourg an immense fleet, whitening with its sails the whole extent of Gabarus Bay. It was a perfect surprise. So little thought had Duchambon of an enemy being at hand, that he had, the evening before, given a ball at Government House, which was kept up to a late hour. The officers, who had been at the party, had scarcely got to bed before they were roused by the alarm. Governor, and officers alike, were in a state of consternation. They soon, however, recovered so far as to make some attempt to resist the landing. From the ramparts were seen several boats, full of soldiers, steering in a direction towards White Point, immediately in rear of the town. Duchambon at once despatched a body of eighty men towards the point, under command of a famous partisan of the name of Morpen. The boats approached within a short distance of the shore, then veered about and returned towards the fleet. There they were joined by a number of other boats, fully manned, that been hidden behind the transports, waiting the return of their comrades from the feint on White Point. All then made for the shore of Gabarus Bay, at a place some two miles distant from White Point. The Morpen party, seeing their mistake, marched at once for the new landing place. But the ground was difficult, and the English had already landed in sufficient force to keep their ground and repel their assailants. The French were driven back to the fort. A high hill intervened between the shore of the bay and the town of Louisbourg. Next day, a party of 400 men, under Col. Vaughan, set out on a reconnoitring expedition. They pushed their way through the forest to the top of the hill. From that point they overlooked the fort. They shewed themselves for a moment on the crest of the hill, then uttered a defiant shout to the soldiers on the walls. Then they plunged again into the forest on the hill side, and made their way towards the upper part of the harbour. Two miles above the fort, on the edge of the harbour, stood several warehouses filled with quantities of pitch, tar and other inflammables. To these they set fire. In an incredibly short space of time the whole was one mass of flame. The smoke from the burning buildings and materials was driven by the wind in the direction of the grand battery already mentioned. The garrison of this post thought that the whole British force was upon them. They immediately reported the state of things to Duchambon, and obtained his consent to abandon the battery, first spiking their cannon. In hot haste they acted on this permission, hardly taking time to spike the guns effectually. They escaped to Louisbourg at midnight, leaving the French flag floating on the staff. Next morning Col. Vaughan, on returning from his reconnoitring expedition, with a small detachment of thirteen men of whom one was an Indian, came in sight of the battery. The flag was flying, but he was surprised not to see any smoke issuing from the chimneys. After waiting a while, and seeing no appearance of motion or life in the fort, he sent the Indian to scale the wall and ascertain what all this meant. The Indian, on climbing up, found that the fort had been abandoned. He then opened the gate and let his comrades in. Vaughan immediately ordered the French flag to be hauled down, and having none of his own to replace it with, he directed one of the men to nail a soldier's red coat to the mast. He then sent a message to the general, informing him that "by the Grace of God, and the courage of thirteen men, he was in possession of the grand battery," and asked for a reënforcement and a flag.

But it seemed for a while as if Vaughan was not likely to keep his new possession long. Duchambon, ashamed apparently of the cowardly abandonment of the battery, sent next morning a body of sixty soldiers, in boats, to retake the fort. Vaughan saw the boats leaving the wharf, and steering towards the foot of the hill on which the battery stood. He immediately rushed with his thirteen men to the shore, and opened fire on the boats. This was returned vigorously. For many minutes there seemed no hope of successful resistance, but Vaughan and his men were determined to sell their lives dear. They continued their fire. At length they had the satisfaction to see the boats turn about and head towards the town. The little band marched back in triumph to their battery, where they were soon joined by such a reënforcement as put the retention of the post beyond the region of doubt.

An immense number of powerful guns, and a great quantity of shells and other war material were found in the battery. The gunsmiths, of whom there were many in the ranks of the volunteers, soon drilled out the spikes, and within a week, the powerful armament of this battery was turned against the fortress it was built to protect, doing, with its plunging shot, infinite damage to the walls and buildings of the beleaguered fort.

At the same time, the invading force, after reaching the crest of the hill, were gradually advancing their batteries down the hill side, sloping towards the fort. Each battery came nearer and nearer the walls. From these batteries and from that which the thirteen men had captured, a constant cannonade was kept up. At last, a battery was constructed within the eighth of a mile from the walls, and played directly on the west gate. The balls from this point raked the streets, which were on the same line with the battery and the west gate.

Meanwhile the fleet could do nothing. It was anchored off the harbour. The island battery effectually blocked the ship-entrance. It became necessary, therefore, if the ships were to take any part in the siege, that this battery should be silenced and an attempt was accordingly made to take it by assault. On the evening of May 27th, 400 men, who had volunteered for the purpose, led by a Captain Brooks, an officer of their own choice, embarked at White Point, in thirty-five boats, and stole quietly round in the direction of the islet on which the battery was placed. But the sea was rough, the night dark and foggy, and many of the boats perished in the surf that beat from the Atlantic on the islet belt. Some of the men were drowned, and all had their firearms soaked with water. Those who landed and attempted to scale the battery, were driven back by the garrison, which consisted of 200 men. Sixty of the provincials were killed, and 116 made prisoners. It was a serious reverse, the only one, indeed, which the invaders met with during the siege. But they were not discouraged, and immediately set about other means of accomplishing their object—the silencing of the island battery, so as to enable the fleet to enter the harbour.

We have already noticed the high land, on the right of the entrance of the harbour, which rises abruptly from the water. On the summit was placed a lighthouse, and the hill itself had long been known as Lighthouse Point. Before the attempt made on the island battery by water, it was contemplated to establish a battery on this point. From this elevation, guns of sufficient power could soon render the island battery untenable. But how were the besiegers to get heavy guns to the spot? They would have to be dragged from the camp for miles, through the forest, over ground strewn with huge rocks, interspersed with morasses almost impassable. This must be done by the labour of men, for, of horses or cattle, even if they could have been used, there were none to be had. It was an appalling task, but the failure of the attack by sea seemed to render it inevitable. At this moment, just at the time when guns were so necessary, and the difficulty of getting them to the spot almost insuperable, a most fortunate discovery was made. A number of large cannon were noticed under water at a place called the careening ground, in close vicinity to Lighthouse Point. They had been there for ten years, sunk in a hurry, and never fished up, though well known to be there by all the French governors of the period. No time was lost in raising them to the surface, and making them ready for use. They were dragged to the site of the proposed battery and duly mounted. In a few days they were playing on the island battery below, doing effective work. By and by, some larger guns and a mortar procured from the camp were, with infinite difficulty, added to the armament. Then the new battery began to make fearful hovoc with its plunging shot on the island fort, dismounting the guns and driving away the gunners. In a few days the island battery was as good as silenced.

We have already mentioned that the French government were in the habit of sending every spring from Brest, a ship with supplies for Louisbourg. The ship generally left in time to reach the Cape Breton coast early in the spring. This year, the vessel destined for that service took fire and burnt to the water's edge, just as she was about to be loaded. There was no other transport in the harbour of Brest available for the service. But the "Vigilante," an eighty-gun ship of war, was on the stocks, nearly ready to launch. She was finished as rapidly as possible, laden with supplies and despatched to Louisbourg. But all this caused delay, and she did not reach the coast of Isle Royale till May 18th, a little over a fortnight after the arrival of the besieging force. The captain of the "Vigilante," the Marquis de Maison Forte, on approaching the coast, descried the "Mermaid," one of Warren's small ships of war, and immediately gave chase. The "Mermaid" hoisted all sail and ran for Louisbourg. All of a sudden the Marquis found himself in the middle of Warren's fleet. An action took place in sight of Louisbourg; and though Duchambon himself witnessed the battle, he had no idea how deeply he was interested in it. In a short time the "Vigilante" surrendered, the crew of 650 men becoming prisoners of war. The supplies she carried were of great use to the besiegers. The "Vigilante" herself was repaired, and manned by a British crew, thus adding a powerful ship to the strength of the British fleet.

The time had at last arrived for bringing the fleet on the scene. Preparatory to that Duchambon must learn the hopelessness of his condition. It was reported in the English camp that the French and their savage allies had treated the British prisoners with great cruelty. De Maison Forte was spoken to on the subject. He was asked to visit the different ships in which his captive officers and crew were distributed, and see how the prisoners were treated by the English. Finding everything to his satisfaction, he was asked to write to Duchambon, remonstrating against the cruelties alleged to be committed on the French side. He wrote accordingly, and his note was sent under flag of truce. This gave Duchambon the first intimation he had of the loss of the "Vigilante." Though he, himself, had witnessed the hard battle which had ended in the surrender of a ship, as yet it had never occurred to him that the ship was the one that contained his supplies. So the letter fell on Duchambon and his officers like a bomb-shell.

While the governor and his subordinates were labouring under the depression caused by this intelligence, the besiegers were making preparations for a general assault. This was to be made on June 11th, the anniversary of King George's accession. The grand battery and all the new batteries on the hill side near the west gate, were to open a general cannonade on the fort. The lighthouse battery was to play on the island below, and during the cannonade, the ships of war, at a given signal, were to enter the harbour and join in the grand assault.

Duchambon saw that the crisis was at hand. A day or two before, he had, according to his own account, received a petition, signed by 1,000 inhabitants, imploring him to spare further bloodshed, by offering a capitulation. He had then held a council of war, who recommended the same course. He then sent a flag of truce to the general and commodore. On their first arrival, they had summoned him to surrender. He had replied proudly, that he would send his answer by the mouth of his guns. But things had changed since then. It was now his place to drop lofty airs and to ask for terms. The conditions were sent. He was obliged to comply, and on June 16th, the fort surrendered.

Thus, in the course of less than seven weeks from the time when first the ships were seen from the battlements of Louisbourg, that stronghold was in the possession of the invaders.

In the preceding autumn, the Marquis de Beauharnois, the governor-general of Canada, having reason to believe that the provinces would take some steps to avenge the capture of Canso, and the raids on Annapolis, had sent a letter to Duchambon, offering reënforcements for the Louisbourg garrison, if required. But that officer felt himself quite safe in his stronghold, and declined the offer. When, however, he found himself sorely pressed by the enemy, he repented of his decision. He then bethought him of a force under Marin, which had been sent in the previous year to aid in the attack on Annapolis. It had wintered at Beaubassin, and was now on its way to make another attack on Annapolis. It was supposed to be at Minas, and thither Duchambon sent messengers, ordering Marin to come at once to Louisbourg with all the troops under his command. On the arrival of the messengers at Minas, they found that Marin and his party had already gone on to Annapolis. They followed thither. On receipt of Duchambon's order, Marin held a council of war. Some of his officers were disposed to disregard the order, and go on with the attack of Annapolis. But Marin persuaded the bulk of his party to obey. But then came the difficulty of transport. All Acadia could not furnish ships enough for the purpose. At last, however, Marin succeeded in procuring a vessel of twenty-five tons and also some 150 bark canoes. In these he embarked his men, numbering—Canadians and Indians together—some 400 men, and set off for Louisbourg. He made fair progress down the bay, till in doubling a headland near Cape Sable, he found himself close upon a British privateer, which immediately opened fire. Nothing daunted, Marin and his party returned the fire, and rushed on the privateer. They were already scaling her sides, with a prospect of soon getting possession of her, when a second privateer, a comrade of the other, hove in sight and prepared to take part in the contest. The Canadians and Indians, seeing that there was no further chance for them, abandoned the attack and, flying in their canoes to the shore, hid themselves in the forest. When the privateers left, the party gathered themselves together. The skirmish had thinned their ranks. They had lost their vessel and many of their canoes. At length they got afloat again and proceeded on their vogage. But the delay was fatal. They did not reach Isle Royale till over a fortnight after Louisbourg had fallen. Duchambon, in his report to the minister, says that, if they had arrived when he expected them, the fort would have been saved; that the English supposed the force to consistof 2,500 men, and would have raised the siege on the arrival of Marin's force. This is one of the many excuses which Duchambon assigns for his failure.

The English forces entered into possession of Louisbourg. The garrison marched out with the honors of war, flags flying and drums beating. The men, after giving up their arms, went on board the English ships. Under the terms of the capitulation, over 4,000 souls were afterwards sent to France.

All England was in a state of delirous excitement, over the capture. Church bells proclaimed the joyful tidings in every town of the kingdom. The grateful monarch gave Pepperel a title and Warren a flag. The spoils of war taken at Louisbourg were enormous. To these were added, a few days afterwards, two Indiamen, richly laden, decoyed into Louisbourg by the French flag, left purposely floating on the citadel. One of these carried half a million of Spanish dollars, hidden under a cargo of cocoa. The value of the captures exceeded three millions of pounds sterling.

We have alluded to the strong element of religious enthusiasm in the adventurers. One of the chaplains brought with him a hatchet for the express purpose of hewing down idolatrous images in the Roman Catholic churches. When the miracle of the capture of the grand battery took place, it was looked upon, and not unnaturally, as a special interposition of Divine Providence. The event was celebrated on the Sunday following, on the spot, by a sermon, the first Protestant discourse ever heard in Isle Royale. The preacher took for his text the words, "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise." There is no doubt the Old Testament narrative of conquests in Canaan figured largely in the sermon.

When the city itself fell, there were no bounds to the devout enthusiasm of the victors. On the occasion of a festival held shortly afterwards, a long-winded minister was called upon to ask a blessing. He disappointed his auditors who knew, and dreaded, his verbosity, by one of the pithiest of graces on record: "Lord, we have so many things to thank Thee for, that time would fail us to do it fully. We leave it, therefore, for the work of eternity."

The men who undertook and carried out this enterprise, displayed great courage and unflagging energy. From beginning to end, their conduct was irreproachable. No danger deterred, no difficulty daunted them. They did their work with a zeal, an energy and an earnestness, and in a spirit of obedience, that would have commanded admiration, even had they been veteran soldiers. We would not detract in the smallest degree from the credit to which the display of these great qualities entitles them, and yet we venture to say that, had the expedition failed, history would have regarded the whole project as one of the maddest that ever entered into the heart of man to conceive. Let us recapitulate some of the incidents we have mentioned, bearing on the final result.

First, the unexpected arrival of Commodore Warren and his fleet, after the expedition had sailed for Canso. On leaving the Pisquatica, the commander of the expedition had no right to expect the aid of the British fleet. He arrived at Canso in the belief that he should not receive that aid, and yet if it had not been given, the "Vigilante" which reached Gabarus on May 18th, would have captured or dispersed every ship in the bay, and put in peril the land forces sandwiched between the bay and the fort.

Then, again, the ice on the coast gave an unexpected delay, which enabled the officers to get into something like discipline a body of rustics, wholly unacquainted with military movements, who had never acted together, and were, when they arrived at Canso, only a mob. Nor did the delay occasion any of the inconveniences that might have been expected from it. The surprise of the French, on May 1st, was as complete as if the ships had arrived direct from New England. Had the intended invasion been known at Louisbourg, surely some better attempts to prevent the landing would have been made. And why was it not known?

It is perfectly marvellous, that no Frenchman at Nerica, no soldier, *habitant*, or Indian at Port Toulouse, should have been found to convey the intelligence to Louisbourg. And the marvel is emphasised by the extraordinary incidents which attended the despatch of the three spies from Fort Toulouse to Canso, and their assassination on the homeward journey. Then again, the destruction by fire of the supply-ship, and the substitution in its place of the "Vigilante," had a great bearing on the result. Had the supply ship arrived earlier on the coast, it could have entered the harbour of Louisbourg before the ice broke up in the gulf. When the "Vigilante" reached the coast, and fell into the hands of the English, it furnished them with the supplies which were sadly needed by the garrison, and it added to the blockading force a first-class ship of war.

The fatuity which induced the garrison of the grand battery to abandon their stronghold without firing a gun, within twenty-four hours of the landing of the expedition, and that too, without seeing an enemy, was one of the wonders of the siege. This battery should have defied for weeks any attempt to take it. Its retention would have retarded indefinitely the advance of the fascine batteries towards the west gate, while its surrender opened the town to a most destructive plunging fire from guns heavier than any previously in possession of the besieging force. If the defence of the battery could have been prolonged, a powerful French fleet, then on its way across the Atlantic, might have reached Louisbourg in time to take part in the conflict. That fleet had already come half way across, when it received news of the surrender of the fort, and returned to France.

Had Marin and his party not been detained by a series of adverse accidents, the surrender might probably have been postponed. Their being at Annapolis, when they were supposed to be at Minas, the loss of time in finding the means of transport, and when these, insufficient as they were, had been found, the further delay arising from the capture of the vessel, and the dispersion of the canoes, which prevented arrival in time to be of any use, were unfortunate events for Duchambon, while Marin's obedience to his summons probably saved Annapolis from capture.

The only hope for Louisbourg was in the protraction of the siege. If the surrender could have been postponed, succour was on the way.

There was, indeed, an element of protection for the besieged and of danger to the besiegers, that neither of them thought of, but which might have seriously affected the result. From the day the invaders landed on the shore of Gabarus Bay, to the day of the surrender of the fort, there was an unbroken spell of fine weather, and the provincials, though exposed to unusual toil and fatigue, with little shelter, were free from illness of any kind. But immediately after June 16th, there was a change. A season of rain, wind and foul weather set in, which lasted for weeks. Had the provincials, with their insufficient shelter, been exposed to this, it would certainly have greatly hindered their progress, and probably brought on the diseases which always accompany siege operations in foul weather. Happily for the provincials, the surrender of the fort came opportunely for them. It put an end to their toil, and furnished the shelter which the fort afforded. But even then the effects of the weather were severely felt. Putrid fever and dysentery broke out among them. Seven hundred of their number, sick or unfit for duty, were sent home, and their place supplied by fresh recruits from the provinces. The New England regiments were relieved in the spring by regulars from Gibraltar, but before that time came round, some hundreds of the men found their last resting place under the green sward of Point Rochefort—a tract of low ground at the left of the entrance of the harbour, a continuation, in fact, on the mainland, of the belt of low islets, already referred to. What would have been the result had the weather changed some weeks earlier, and disease set in while the men were toiling in the trenches and erecting batteries, we can hardly say, but it does not admit of a doubt, that in such a case, the surrender would have been deferred, and in delay the only hope of Louisbourg was to be found.

Another thing on which the provincials had some reason to count—and on which it appears they did count—remains to be mentioned. It seems that in December preceding, a month or two after Duchambon had declined Beauharnois' offer of additional men, a serious mutiny had broken out in the garrison at Louisbourg, which had lasted all winter. This was known in New England, where it was believed that the garrison would refuse to fight, and that, therefore, the fort would yield on the first summons. But Duchambon, on the first appearance of the fleet, called the soldiers together, and made a stirring speech to them, pointing out the splendid opportunity the invasion gave them of wiping out the offences of the winter, by returning loyally to their duty as soldiers, and manfully fighting the enemies of their king and country.

The soldiers responded at once to the appeal, returned to their duty, and proved loyal to their flag throughout the siege. Still, however, the officers continued to mistrust them, and did not feel safe in allowing the men to sally forth against the enemy in the trenches. Sallies, from time to time, by veteran soldiers against raw recruits, at work in dangerous services, quite new to them, could not have failed of some success, and would, certainly, have retarded the progress of the besiegers. The conduct of the garrison during the siege leaves no room to suppose they could not have been trusted beyond the walls, but the fear of the officers, in effect, allowed the siege operations to be carried on without interruption, except so far as they were obstructed by cannonades from the fort. If, therefore, the besiegers did not derive benefit, in the form they expected, from the disaffection of the garrison, they had ample compensation for it in a form they did not count upon.

We think, therefore, we have made it clear that the success of the New England expedition, if not miraculous, was, at all events, accompanied by a series of happy occurrences, which no sagacity could have foreseen. The result of the expedition had, we believe, much to do with shaping the future of this continent. Had it failed, it would have entailed disastrous results on all the British provinces. In that case, posterity would have denounced it as a mad adventure. But nothing succeeds like success. On the strength of the result, Old England went wild. Nor was New England less ecstatic in its joy. The provincials felt themselves no longer on a plane inferior to that of Englishmen. They rose in their own estimation. They began to feel that in vigor and pluck, in hardihood and energy, they were quite the equal of the English, and they knew that in education and intelligence, and in the peculiarly American quality of versatility, they possessed a marked superiority over their English brethren. They felt that they might rely in the future on the same measure of success which had attended their first great enterprise. Therefore, though for the time their warlike exploit was ineffective, the British having, at the close of the war, ignominously handed back Louisbourg to the French, still the provincials cherished the memory of the siege, and of its incidents, and were ready for like exploits when the occasion should offer. We have little doubt that the spirit, thus created, fostered by subsequent warlike exploits in company with English troops, was a powerful factor in shaping the future destiny of the continent.

The first siege of Louisbourg naturally suggested the second, in which imperial and colonial forces were again mingled. The second capture of the Cape Breton stronghold, in 1758, naturally led to the siege of Quebec in the following year, and the fall of that great fortress was the end of French power in America.

So long as the provinces needed the aid of England to repel French aggression, the English monarch could count on the allegiance of his colonial subjects. But when these no longer needed imperial assistance, the warlike spirit, bred of participation in contests with the French, rapidly took a new direction. Within twenty years from the peace which gave us New France, came another peace which cost us thirteen provinces.

Had the French flag continued to float over Quebec for another century, who shall say what would have been the present state of our continent? Is it not quite possible, in that case, that North America, or the bulk of it, would at this moment consist of a great French empire, extending from the mouth of the St. Lawrence to its source, and from the great lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, while the English provinces on the Atlantic, confined to the contracted strip between the Alleghanies and the ocean, would have formed a narrow fringe on the edge of the great French domain, holding their own against powerful neighbours only by the aid of Great Britain, whose empire, would be thus "cabined, cribbed, confined" in the west, while in the meantime it was attaining to colossal dimensions in the east, by colonies in Africa, Asia, Australia and Australasia, and by conquests in India and Burmah. Our own little province, which as long as one hundred and thirty years ago, was occupied by Acadians, whose fecundity had already spread their race from Annapolis to Truro, would, of course, have been French, and have formed the southern boundary of New France on the Atlantic. With the aid of British armies and fleets, the crest of the Allegahanies might probably have been retained, as the western boundary of the English provinces.

If it be true that the first siege of Louisbourg had so powerful an influence in shaping the fortune of North America, then the United States and British America have cause to bless the day when a majority of one in the Massachusetts Assembly first set on foot a policy pregnant with such wonderful results.

When we think of the number of fortuities which determined the result of the first act in the drama, it is difficult not to recognise the hand of Providence in the whol-series of events which has occurred from that day to this. And in connection with the wonderful character of many of these events, we are constrained to admit that White field's motto was by no means inappropriate.