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THE

CONQUEST OF CANADA.

BY

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CHAPTER I.

IN the year 1750, commissioners met at Paris to adjust the various boundaries of the North American territories, M. de Galissonière and M. de Silhouette on the part of France, and Messrs. Shirley and Mildmay on the part of Great Britain. The English commissioners, however, soon perceived that there was little chance of arriving at a friendly arrangement. The more they advanced in their offers, the more the French demanded; futile objections were started, and unnecessary delays continued; at length Mr. Shirley* and his colleague broke up the conference, and returned to England. [1752.] It now became evident that a decisive struggle was at hand.

Under the rule of M. de la Jonquière, a great and growing evil cankered the spirit of Canada. The scanty salaries †

* Mr. Shirley was born in England, and brought up to the law. In that profession he afterward practiced for many years in the Massachusetts Bay, and in 1741 was advanced to the supreme command of that colony. Upon the conclusion of the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle he was chosen as one of the British commissioners at Paris, and when the conference there broke up, he resumed his government in New England (in 1753).

† “The salaries allotted to the officers of the civil departments in the French colonial governments were extremely moderate, and inadequate to support their respective situations. In 1758, that of the Marquis de Vaudreuil, governor and lieutenant general of Canada, amounted to no more than £272 1s. 8d. sterling, out of which he was

allowed to the government officers afforded a great inducement to peculation, especially as the remoteness of the colony rendered retribution distant and uncertain. The Indian trade opened a field for enormous dishonesty: M. Bigot, the intendant, discontented with his inadequate stipend, ventured to farm out trade licenses for his own profit and that of his creatures, and speedily accumulated considerable wealth; he, the governor, and a few others, formed themselves into a company, and monopolized nearly all the commerce of the country, to the great indignation of the colonists. M. de la Jonquière and his secretary, St. Sauveur, also kept exclusively to themselves the nefarious privilege of supplying brandy to the Indians: by this they realized immense profits.

At length a storm of complaints arose against the unworthy governor, and even reached the dull ears of his patrons at the court of France. Aware that his case would not bear investigation, he demanded his recall; but, before a successor could be appointed, he died at Quebec on the 17th of May, 1752,* aged sixty-seven years. Though not possessed of

to clothe, maintain, and pay a guard for himself, consisting of two sergeants and twenty-five soldiers, furnishing them with firing in winter, and with other necessary articles. The pay of the whole officers of justice and police was £514 11s. sterling, and the total sum appropriated for the pay of the established officers, composing the various branches of the civil power, did not exceed £3809 8s. sterling."—*Heriot's Travels in Canada*, p. 98.

* "On the 1st January of this year England adopted the New Style, which had been long before in use among all civilized nations except Russia and Sweden. They, with England, still clung to the exploded system, for no better reason, apparently, than because it was a Pope who established the new. 'It was not, in my opinion,' writes Chesterfield, 'very honorable for England to remain in gross and avowed error, especially in such company.' The bill for the reformation of the calendar was moved by Lord Chesterfield in a very able, and seconded by Lord Macclesfield in a very learned speech, and it was successfully carried through both Houses. The bill had been framed by these two noblemen in concert with Dr. Bradley and other eminent men of science. To correct the old calendar, eleven nominal days were to be suppressed in September, 1752, so that the day following the 2d of that month should be styled the 14th. The difficulties that might result from the change, as affecting rents, leases, and bills of exchange, were likewise carefully considered and effectually prevented."—*Lord Mahon's History of England*, vol. iv., p. 23.

brilliant gifts, M. de la Jonquière was a man of considerable ability, and had displayed notable courage and conduct in many engagements; but a miserable avarice stained his character, and he died enormously wealthy, while denying himself the ordinary necessaries of his rank and situation.* Charles Le Moine, Baron de Longueuil, then governor of Montreal, being next in seniority, assumed the reins of power until the arrival of a successor.

The Marquis du Quesne de Menneville was appointed governor of Canada, Louisiana, Cape Breton, &c., on the recall of M. de la Jonquière in 1752. He was reputed a man of ability, but was of haughty and austere disposition. Galissonnière, who had recommended the appointment, furnished him with every information respecting the colony and the territorial claims of France: thus instructed, he landed at Quebec in August, where he was received with the usual ceremonies.

The orders given to the new governor with regard to the disputed boundaries were such as to leave little doubt on his mind that the sword alone could enable him to secure their execution, and the character of his stubborn though unwarlike rivals promised a determined resistance to his views.†

* "He amassed, while governor of Canada, by commerce alone, more than a million livres, besides which, he had for many years sixty thousand livres from his appointments and pensions. Yet, notwithstanding his riches, his avarice was in many instances so extreme, that he denied himself the common necessaries of life. During his last illness, he ordered the wax tapers that were burning in his room to be changed for tallow candles, observing that 'the latter would answer every purpose, and were less expensive.'"—Smith's *Hist. of Canada*, vol. i., p. 223.

† "While Britain claimed an indefinite extent to the west, France insisted on confining her to the eastern side of the Allegany Mountains, and claimed the whole country whose waters run into the Mississippi, in virtue of her right as the first discoverer of that river. The delightful region between the summit of those mountains and the Mississippi was the object for which these two powerful nations contended, and it soon became apparent that the sword alone could decide the contest."—Marshall's *Life of Washington*, vol. i., p. 294; Belsham, vol. ii., p. 363, 364.

"Thus France would have enjoyed, in time of peace, the whole Indian trade, and the English colonies, in time of war, must have had a

His first attention was therefore directed to the military resources of his command. He forthwith organized the militia* of Quebec and Montreal under efficient officers, and attached bodies of artillery to the garrison of each city ; the militia of the country parishes next underwent a careful inspection, and nothing was neglected to strengthen the efficiency of his army.

In 1753, several French detachments were sent to the banks of the Ohio, † with orders to establish forts, and to

frontier of 1200 miles to defend against blood-thirsty savages, conducted by French officers, and supported by regular troops. It was, in fact, to attempt the extinction of the British settlements, and yet, without such interior communication as was projected between Canada and Louisiana, the French settlements on the St. Lawrence and Mississippi could never, it was said, attain any high degree of consequence or security ; the navigation of one of those rivers being at all seasons difficult, and that of the other blocked up with ice during the winter months, so as to preclude exterior support or relief. This scheme of usurpation, which is supposed to have long occupied the deliberations of the court of Versailles, was ardently embraced by M. de la Jonquière, now commander-in-chief of the French forces in North America, and by La Galissonnière, a man of a bold and enterprising spirit, who had been appointed governor of New France in 1747. By their joint efforts, in addition to those of their predecessors, forts were erected along the Great Lakes, which communicate with the River St. Lawrence, and also on the Ohio and Mississippi. The vast chain was almost completed from Quebec to New Orleans, when the court of England, roused by repeated injuries, broke off the conferences relative to the limits of Nova Scotia."—Russell's *Modern Europe*, vol. iii., p. 273.

* See Appendix, No. LXV.

† "The governors of Canada, who were generally military men, had, for several preceding years, judiciously selected and fortified such situations as would give their nation most influence with the Indians, and most facilitate incursions into the northern English provinces. The command of Lake Champlain had been acquired by erecting a strong fort at Crown Point, and a connected chain of posts was maintained from Quebec up the St. Lawrence and along the Great Lakes. It was now intended to unite these posts with the Mississippi, by taking positions which should enable them to circumscribe, and at the same time annoy, the frontier settlements of the English. The execution of this plan was probably in some degree accelerated by an act of the British government. The year after the conclusion of the war with France, several very influential persons, both in England and Virginia, who associated under the name of the Ohio Company, obtained from the crown a grant for 600,000 acres of land, lying in the country which