COLONIAL HISTORY.—CONTINUED.

FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR.

CHAPTER XXX.

CAUSES.

THE time came when the American colonies began to act together. From the beginning they had been kept apart by prejudice, suspicion and mutual jealousy. But the fathers were now dead, old antagonisms had passed away, a new generation had arisen with kindlier feelings and more charitable sentiments. But it was not so much the growth of a more liberal public opinion as it was *the sense of a common danger* that at last led the colonists to make a united effort. The final struggle between France and England for colonial supremacy in America was at hand. Necessity compelled the English colonies to join in a common cause against a common foe. This is the conflict known as THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR; with this great event the separate histories of the colonies are lost in the more general history of the nation. The contest began in 1754, but the causes of the war had existed for many years.

The first and greatest of these causes was *the conflicting territorial claims* of the two nations. England had colonized the sea-coast; France had colonized the interior of the continent. From Maine to Florida the Atlantic shore was spread with English colonies; but there were no inland settlements. The great towns were on the ocean's edge. But the claims of England reached far beyond her colonies. Based on the discoveries of the Cabots, and not limited by actual occupaticn, those claims extended westward to the Pacific. In making grants of territory the English kings had always proceeded upon the theory that the voyage of Sebastian Cabot had given to England a lawful right to the country from one ocean to the other. Far different, however, were the claims of France; the French had first colonized the valley of the St. Lawrence. Montreal, one

of the earliest settlements, is more than five hundred miles from the sea. If the French colonies had been limited to the St. Lawrence and its tributaries, there would have been little danger of a conflict about territorial dominion. But in the latter half of the seventeenth century the French began to push their way westward and southward; first, along the shores of the great lakes, then to the head-waters of the Wabash, the Illinois, the Wisconsin and the St. Croix, then down these streams to the Mississippi, and then to the Gulf of Mexico. The purpose of the French, as manifested in these movements, was no less than to divide the American continent and to take the larger portion, to possess the land for France and for Catholicism. For it was the work of the Jesuit missionaries. So important and marvelous are those early movements of the French in the valley of the Mississippi that a brief account of the leading explorations may here be given.

The zealous Jesuits, purposing to extend the Catholic faith to all lands and nations, set out fearlessly from the older settlements of the St. Lawrence to explore the unknown West, and to convert the barbarous races. In 1641, Charles Raymbault, the first of the French missionary explorers, passed through the northern straits of Lake Huron and entered Lake Superior. In the thirty years that followed, the Jesuits continued their explorations with prodigious activity. Missions were established at various points north of the lakes, and in Michigan, Wisconsin and Illinois. In 1673, Joliet and Marquette passed from the head-waters of Fox River over the watershed to the upper tributaries of the Wisconsin, and thence down that river in a seven days' voyage to the Mississippi. For a full month the canoe of the daring adventurers carried them on toward the sea. They passed the mouth of Arkansas River, and reached the limit of their voyage at the thirty-third parallel of latitude. Turning their boat up stream, they entered the mouth of the Illinois and returned by the site of Chicago into Lake Michigan, and thence to Detroit. But it was not yet known whether the great river discharged its flood of waters into the southern gulf or into the Pacific Ocean.

It remained for Robert de la Salle, most illustrious of the French explorers, to solve the problem. This courageous and daring man was living at the outlet of Lake Ontario when the news of Marquette's voyage reached Canada. Fired with the passion of discovery, La Salle built and launched the first ship above Niagara Falls. He sailed westward through Lake Erie and Lake Huron, anchored in Green Bay, crossed Lake Michigan to the mouth of the St. Joseph, ascended that stream with a few companions, traversed the country to the upper Kankakee, and dropped down with the current into the Illinois. Here disasters overtook the expedition, and La Salle was obliged to return on foot to Fort Frontenac, a distance of nearly a thousand miles. During his absence, Father Hennepin, a member of the company, traversed Illinois, and explored the Mississippi as high as the Falls of St. Anthony.

In 1681, La Salle returned to his station on the Illinois, bringing men and supplies. A boat was built and launched, and early in the following year the heroic adventurer, with a few companions, descended the river to its junction with the Mississippi, and was borne by the Father of Waters to the Gulf of Mexico. It was one of the greatest exploits of modern times. The return voyage was successfully accomplished. La Salle reached Quebec, and immediately set sail for France. The kingdom was greatly excited, and vast plans were made for colonizing the valley of the Mississippi. In July of 1684 four ships, bearing two hundred and eighty emigrants, left France. Beaujeu commanded the fleet, and La Salle was leader of the colony. The plan was to enter the gulf, ascend the river, and plant settlements on its banks and tributaries. But Beaujeu was a bad and headstrong captain, and against La Salle's entreaties the squadron was carried out of its course, beyond the mouths of the Mississippi, and into the Bay of Matagorda. Here a landing was effected, but the store-ship, with all its precious freightage, was dashed to pieces in a storm. Nevertheless, a colony was established, and Texas became a part of Louisiana.

La Salle made many unsuccessful efforts to rediscover the Mississippi. One misfortune after another followed fast, but the leader's resolute spirit remained tranquil through all calamities. At last, with sixteen companions, he set out to cross the continent to Canada. The march began in January of 1687, and continued for sixty days. The wanderers were already in the basin of the Colorado. Here, on the 20th of March, while La Salle was at some distance from the camp, two conspirators of the company, hiding in the prairie grass, took a deadly aim at the famous explorer, and shot him dead in his tracks. Only seven of the adventurers succeeded in reaching a French settlement on the Mississippi.

France was not slow to occupy the vast country revealed to her by the activity of the Jesuits. As early as 1688 military posts had been established at Frontenac, at Niagara, at the Straits of Mackinaw, and on the Illinois River. Before the middle of the eighteenth century, permanent settlements had been made by the French on the Maumee, at Detroit, at the mouth of the river St. Joseph, at Green Bay, at Vincennes on the Lower Wabash, on the Mississippi at the mouth of the Kaskaskia, at Fort Rosalie, the present site of Natchez, and on the Gulf of

Mexico at the head of the Bay of Biloxi. At this time the only outposts of the English colonies were a small fort at Oswego, on Lake Ontario, and a few scattered cabins in West Virginia. It only remained for France to occupy the valley of Ohio, in order to confine the provinces of Great Britain to the country east of the Alleghanies. To do this became the sole ambition of the French, and to prevent it the stubborn purpose of the English.

A second cause of war existed in the long-standing *national animosity of France and England.* The two nations could hardly remain at peace. The French and the English were of different races, languages and laws. For more than two centuries France had been the leader of the Catholic, and England of the Protestant, powers of Europe. Religious prejudice intensified the natural jealousy of the two nations. Rivalry prevailed on land and sea. When, at the close of the seventeenth century, it was seen that the people of the English colonies outnumbered those of Canada by nearly twenty to one, France was filled with envy. When, by the enterprise of the Jesuit missionaries, the French began to dot the basin of the Mississippi with fortresses, and to monopolize the fur-trade of the Indians, England could not conceal her wrath. It was only a question of time when this unreasonable jealousy would bring on a colonial war.

The third and immediate cause of hostilities was *a conflict between the frontiersmen of the two nations* in attempting to colonize the Ohio valley. The year 1749 witnessed the beginning of difficulties. For some time the strolling traders of Virginia and Pennsylvania had frequented the Indian towns on the upper tributaries of the Ohio. Now the traders of Canada began to visit the same villages, and to compete with the English in the purchase of furs. Virginia, under her ancient charters, claimed the whole country lying between her western borders and the southern shores of Lake Erie. The French fur-gatherers in this district were regarded as intruders not to be tolerated. In order to prevent further encroachment, a number of prominent Virginians joined themselves together in a body called THE OHIO COMPANY, with a view to the immediate occupation of the disputed territory. Robert Dinwiddie, governor of the State, Lawrence and Augustus Washington, and Thomas Lee, president of the Virginia council, were the leading members of the corporation. In March of 1749 the company received from George II. an extensive land-grant covering a tract of five hundred thousand acres, to be located between the Kanawha and the Monongahela, or on the northern bank of the Ohio. The conditions of the grant were that the lands should be held free of rent for ten years, that within seven years a colony of one hundred families should be established in the district, and that the territory should be immediately selected.

But the French were equally active. Before the Ohio Company could send out a colony, the governor of Canada despatched Bienville with three hundred men to explore and occupy the valley of the Ohio. The expedition was successful. Plates of lead bearing French inscriptions were buried here and there on both banks of the river, the region was explored as far west as the towns of the Miamis, the English traders were expelled from the country, and a letter was written to Governor Hamilton of Pennsylvania admonishing him to encroach no farther on the territory of the king of France. This work occupied the summer and fall of 1749. In the mean time, the Ohio Company had equipped an exploring party, and placed it under command of Christopher Gist. In November of 1750 he and his company reached the Ohio opposite the mouth of Beaver Creek. Here the expedition crossed to the northern side, tarried at Logstown, passed down the river through the several Indian confederacies to the Great Miami, and thence to within fifteen miles of the falls at Louisville. Returning on foot through Kentucky, the explorers reached Virginia in the spring of 1751.

This expedition was followed by still more vigorous movements on the part of the French. Descending from their headquarters at Presque Isle, now Erie, on the southern shore of the lake, they built a fortress called Le Bœuf, on French Creek, a tributary of the Alleghany. Proceeding down the stream to its junction with the river, they erected a second fort, named Venango. From this point they advanced against a British post on the Miami, broke up the settlement, made prisoners of the garrison and carried them to Canada. The king of the Miami confederacy, who had assisted the English in defending their outpost, was inhumanly murdered by the Indian allies of the French. About the same time the country south of the Ohio, between the Great Kanawha and the Monongahela, was explored by Gist and a party of armed surveyors, acting under orders of the company. In the summer of 1753 the English opened a road from Will's Creek through the mountains into the Ohio valley, and a colony of eleven families was planted on the Youghiogheny, just west of Laurel Hill. It was impossible that a conflict between the advancing settlements of the two nations could be much longer averted.

The Indian nations were greatly alarmed at the threatening prospect. Solemn councils were held among all the tribes, and the affairs of the race were gravely discussed by the copper-colored orators. From the first the Red men rather favored the English cause, but their allegiance

was wavering and uncertain. After the murder of the Miami chieftain their hostility to the French became more decided. When, in the spring of 1753, the news was borne to the council-fires on the Ohio that Du Quesne, the governor of Canada, had despatched a company of twelve hundred men to descend the Alleghany and colonize the country, the jealousy of the natives was kindled into open resistance. The tribes most concerned were the Delawares, the Shawnees, the Miamis and the Mingoes. The chieftain of this confederacy, named Tanacharisson, was called the Half-King from the fact that his subjects, except the Miamis, owed a kind of indefinite allegiance to the Iroquois or Six Nations. By the authority of a great council held at Logstown the Half-King was now sent to Erie to remonstrate with the French commandant against a further invasion of the Indian country. "The land is mine, and I will have it," replied the Frenchman, with derision and contempt. The insulted sachem returned to his nation to lift the hatchet against the enemies of his people. It was at this time that the chiefs of many tribes met Benjamin Franklin at the town of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and formed a treaty of alliance with the English.

Virginia was now thoroughly aroused. But before proceeding to actual hostilities, Governor Dinwiddie determined to try the effect of a final remonstrance with the French. A paper was accordingly drawn up setting forth the nature and extent of the English claim to the valley of the Ohio, and solemnly warning the authorities of France against further intrusion into that region. It was necessary that this paper should be carried to General St. Pierre, now stationed at Erie as commander of the French forces in the West. Who should be chosen to bear the important parchment to its far-off destination? It was the most serious mission ever yet undertaken in America. A young surveyor, named George Washington, was called to perform the perilous duty. Him the governor summoned from his home on the Potomac and commissioned as ambassador, and to him was committed the message which was to be borne from Williamsburg, on York River, through the untrodden wilderness to Presque Isle, on the shore of Lake Erie.

On the last day of October, 1753, Washington set out on his long journey. He was attended by four comrades besides an interpreter and Christopher Gist, the guide. The party arrived without accident at the mouth of Will's Creek, the last important tributary of the Potomac on the north. From this place Washington proceeded through the mountains to the head-waters of the Youghiogheny, and thence down that stream to the site of Pittsburg. The immense importance of this place, lying at the confluence of the two great tributaries of the Ohio, and com-

manding them both, was at once perceived by the young ambassador, who noted the spot as the site of a fortress. Washington was now conducted across the Alleghany by the chief of the Delawares, and thence twenty miles down the river to Logstown. Here a council was held with the Indians, who renewed their pledges of friendship and fidelity to the English. The emissaries of the French were already in the country trying in every conceivable way to entice the Red men into an alliance; but every proposal was rejected. In the beginning of December, Washington and his party moved northward to the French post at Venango. The officers of the fort took no pains to conceal their purpose; the project of uniting Canada and Louisiana by way of the Ohio valley was openly avowed.

FIRST SCENE OF THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR, 1750.

From Venango, Washington set out through the forest to Fort le Bœuf on French Creek, fifty miles above its junction with the Alleghany. This was the last stage in the journey. It was still fourteen miles to Presque Isle; but St. Pierre, the French commander, had come down from that place to superintend the fortifications at Le Bœuf. Here the conference was held. Washington was received with great courtesy, but the general of the French refused to enter into any discussion on the rights of nations. He was acting, he said, under military instructions given by the governor of New France. He had been commanded by his superior officer to eject every Englishman from the valley of the Ohio, and he meant to carry out his orders to the letter. A firm but courteous reply was returned to Governor Dinwiddie's message. France claimed the country of the Ohio in virtue of discovery, exploration and occupation, and her claim should be made good by force of arms.

Washington was kindly dismissed, but not until he had noted with keen anxiety the immense preparations which were making at Le Bœuf. There lay a fleet of fifty birch-bark canoes and a hundred and seventy boats of pine ready to descend the river to the site of Pittsburg. For the French, as well as the English, had noted the importance of that spot, and had determined to fortify it as soon as the ice should break in the rivers. It was now the dead of winter. Washington returned to Ve-

nango, and then, with Gist as his sole companion, left the river and struck into the woods. It was one of the most solitary marches ever made by man. There in the desolate wilderness was the future President of the United States. Clad in the robe of an Indian, with gun in hand and knapsack strapped to his shoulders; struggling through interminable snows; sleeping with frozen clothes on a bed of pine-brush; breaking through the treacherous ice of rapid streams; guided by day by a pocket compass, and at night by the North Star, seen at intervals through the leafless trees; fired at by a prowling savage from his covert not fifteen steps away; thrown from a raft into the rushing Alleghany; escaping to an island and lodging there until the river was frozen over; plunging again into the forest; reaching Gist's settlement and then the Potomac,—the strong-limbed young ambassador came back without wound or scar to the capital of Virginia. For his flesh was not made to be torn with bullets or to be eaten by the wolves. The defiant despatch of St. Pierre was laid before Governor Dinwiddie, and the first public service of Washington was accomplished.

In the mean time, the Ohio Company had not been idle. About mid-winter a party of thirty-three men had been organized and placed under command of Trent, with orders to proceed at once to the source of the Ohio and erect a fort. The company must have been marching to its destination when Washington returned to Virginia. It was not far from the middle of March, 1754, when Trent's party reached the confluence of the Alleghany and the Monongahela, and built the first rude stockade on the site of Pittsburg.* After all the threats and boasting of the French, the English had beaten them and seized the key to the Ohio valley.

But it was a short-lived triumph. As soon as the approaching spring broke the ice-gorges in the Alleghany, the French fleet of boats, already prepared at Venango, came sweeping down the river. It was in vain for Trent with his handful of men to offer resistance. Washington had now been commissioned as lieutenant-colonel, and was stationed at Alexandria to enlist recruits for the Ohio. A regiment of a hundred and fifty men had been enrolled; but it was impossible to bring succor to Trent in time to save the post. On the 17th of April the little band of Englishmen at the head of the Ohio surrendered to the enemy and withdrew from the country. The French immediately occupied the place, felled the forest-trees, built barracks and laid the foundations of FORT DU QUESNE. To recapture this place by force of arms Colonel Washington set out from Will's Creek in the early part of May, 1754. Negotiations had failed; remonstrance had been tried in vain; the possession of the disputed territory was now to be determined by the harsher methods of war.

* The accounts of this important event are very obscure and unsatisfactory.

CHAPTER XXXI.

CAMPAIGNS OF WASHINGTON AND BRADDOCK.

WASHINGTON now found himself in command of a little army of Virginians. His commission was brief and easily understood: To construct a fort at the source of the Ohio; to destroy whoever opposed him in the work; to capture, kill or repel all who interrupted the progress of the English settlements in that country. In the month of April the young commander left Will's Creek, but the march westward was slow and toilsome. The men were obliged to drag their cannons. The roads were miserable; rain fell in torrents on the tentless soldiers; rivers were bridgeless; provisions insufficient. All the while the faithful Half-King was urging Washington by repeated despatches to hasten to the rescue of the Red men.

On the 26th of May the English regiment reached the Great Meadows. Here Washington was informed that a company of French was on the march to attack him. The enemy had been seen on the Youghiogheny only a few miles distant. A stockade was immediately erected, to which the commander gave the appropriate name of Fort Necessity. Ascertaining from the scouts of the Half-King that the French company in the neighborhood was only a scouting-party, Washington, after conference with the Mingo chiefs, determined to strike the first blow. Two Indians followed the trail of the French, and discovered their hiding-place in a rocky ravine. The English advanced cautiously, intending to surprise and capture the whole force; but the French were on the alert, saw the approaching soldiers and flew to arms. Washington with musket in hand was at the head of his company. "Fire!" was the clear command that rang through the forest, and the first volley of a great war went flying on its mission of death. The engagement was brief and decisive. Jumonville, the leader of the French, and ten of his party were killed, and twenty-one were made prisoners.

A month of precious time was now lost in delays. While Washington at Fort Necessity waited in vain for reinforcements, the French at

Fort du Quesne were collecting in great numbers. One small company of volunteers from South Carolina arrived at the English camp; but the captain was an arrogant blockhead who, having a commission from the king, undertook to supersede Washington. The latter, with the Virginians, spent the time of waiting in cutting a road for twenty miles across the rough country in the direction of Fort du Quesne. The Indians were greatly discouraged at the dilatory conduct of the colonies, and the strong war-parties which had been expected to join Washington from the Muskingum and the Miami did not arrive. His whole effective force scarcely numbered four hundred. Learning that the French general De Villiers was approaching with a large body of troops, besides Indian auxiliaries, Washington deemed it prudent to fall back to Fort Necessity. The Carolina captain, who had remained within the fortifications, had done nothing to strengthen the works, although there was the greatest need.

The little fort stood in an open space, midway between two eminences covered with trees. Scarcely were Washington's forces safe within the enclosure, when on the 3d of July the regiment of De Villiers, numbering six hundred, besides the savage allies, came in sight, and surrounded the fort. The French stationed themselves on the eminence, about sixty yards distant from the stockade. From this position they could fire down upon the English with fatal effect. Many of the Indians climbed into the tree-tops, where they were concealed by the thick foliage. For nine hours, during a rain-storm, the assailants poured an incessant shower of balls upon the heroic band in the fort. Thirty of Washington's men were killed, but his tranquil presence encouraged the rest, and the fire of the French was returned with unabated vigor. At length De Villiers, fearing that his ammunition would be exhausted, proposed a parley. Washington, seeing that it would be impossible to hold out much longer, accepted the honorable terms of capitulation which were offered by the French general. On the 4th of July the English garrison, retaining all its accoutrements, marched out of the little fort, so bravely defended, and withdrew from the country. The whole valley of the Ohio remained in undisturbed possession of the French.

Meanwhile, a congress of the American colonies had assembled at Albany. The objects had in view were twofold: first, to renew the treaty with the Iroquois confederacy; and secondly, to stir up the colonial authorities to some sort of concerted action against the French. The Iroquois had wavered from the beginning of the war; the recent reverses of the English had not strengthened the loyalty of the Red men. As to the French aggressions, something must be done speedily, or the flag of

England could never be borne into the vast country west of the Alleghanies. The congress was not wanting in abilities of the highest order. No such venerable and dignified body of men had ever before assembled on the American continent. There were Hutchinson of Massachusetts, Hopkins of Rhode Island, Franklin of Pennsylvania, and others scarcely less distinguished. After a few days' consultation, the Iroquois, but half satisfied, renewed their treaty and departed. The chieftains were anxious and uneasy lest, through inactivity and want of union on the part of the colonies, the Six Nations should be left to contend alone with the power of France.

The convention next took up the important question of uniting the colonies in a common government. On the 10th day of July, Benjamin Franklin laid before the commissioners the draft of a federal constitution. His vast and comprehensive mind had realized the true condition and wants of the country; the critical situation of the colonies demanded a central government. How else could revenues be raised, an army be organized and the common welfare be provided for? According to the proposed plan of union, Philadelphia, a central city, was to be the capital. It was urged in behalf of this clause that the delegates of New Hampshire and Georgia, the colonies most remote, could reach the seat of government *in fifteen or twenty days!* Slow-going old patriots! The chief executive of the new confederation was to be a governor-general appointed and supported by the king. The legislative authority was vested in a congress composed of delegates to be chosen triennially by the general assemblies of the respective provinces. Each colony should be represented in proportion to its contributions to the general government, but no colony should have less than two or more than seven representatives in congress. With the governor was lodged the power of appointing all military officers and of vetoing objectionable laws. The appointment of civil officers, the raising of troops, the levying of taxes, the superintendence of Indian affairs, the regulation of commerce, and all the general duties of government, belonged to congress. This body was to convene once a year, to choose its own officers, and to remain in session not longer than six weeks.*

Such was the constitution drafted by Franklin and adopted, not without serious opposition, by the commissioners at Albany. It remained for the colonies to ratify or reject the new scheme of government. Copies of the proposed constitution were at once transmitted to the several colonial capitals, and were everywhere received with disfavor; in Connecticut, rejected; in Massachusetts, opposed; in New York, adopted with indifference. The chief objection urged against the instrument was the power of

* See Appendix C.

veto given to the governor-general. Nor did the new constitution fare better in the mother country. The English board of trade rejected it with disdain, saying that the froward Americans were trying to make a government of their own. Meanwhile, the French were strengthening their works at Crown Point and Fort Niagara, and rejoicing over their success in Western Pennsylvania.

But the honor of England, no less than the welfare of her colonies, was at stake, and Parliament came to the rescue. It was determined to send a British army to America, to accept the service of such provincial troops as the colonies might furnish, and to protect the frontier against the aggressions of France. As yet there had been no declaration of war. The ministers of the two nations kept assuring each other of peaceable intentions; but Louis XV. took care to send three thousand soldiers to Canada, and the British government ordered General Edward Braddock to proceed to America with two regiments of regulars. Early in 1755 the English armament arrived in the Chesapeake. On the 14th of April Braddock met the governors of all the colonies in a convention at Alexandria. The condition of colonial affairs was fully discussed. It was resolved, since peace existed, not to invade Canada, but to repel the French on the western and northern frontier. The plans of four campaigns were accordingly submitted and ratified. Lawrence, the governor of Nova Scotia, was to complete the conquest of that province according to the English notion of boundaries. Johnson of New York was to enroll a force of volunteers and Mohawks in British pay, and to capture the French post at Crown Point. Shirley of Massachusetts was to equip a regiment and drive the enemy from their fortress at Niagara. Last and most important of all, Braddock himself as commander-in-chief was to lead the main body of regulars against Fort du Quesne, retake that post and expel the French from the Ohio valley.

In the latter part of April the British general set out on his march from Alexandria to Will's Creek. The name of the military post at the mouth of this stream was now changed to Fort Cumberland. Braddock's army numbered fully two thousand men. They were nearly all veterans who had seen service in the wars of Europe. A few provincial troops had joined the expedition; two companies of volunteers, led by Colonel Horatio Gates of New York, were among the number. Washington met the army at Fort Cumberland, and became an aid-de-camp of Braddock. The colonies would have assisted with large levies of recruits, had it not been for the nature of the general's authority. It was prescribed in his commission that the provincial captains and colonels *should have no rank* when serving in connection with the British army. So odious was this

regulation that Washington had set the example of withdrawing from the service; patriotic motives and the wish of Virginia now induced him to return and to accept a post of responsibility.

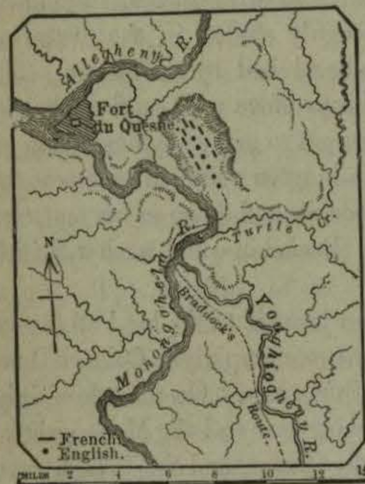
On the last day of May the march began from Fort Cumberland. A select force of five hundred men was thrown forward to open the roads in the direction of Fort du Quesne. Sir Peter Halket led the advance, and Braddock followed with the main body. The army, marching in a slender column, was extended for four miles along the narrow and broken road It was in vain that Washington pointed out the danger of ambuscades and suggested the employment of scouting-parties. Braddock was self-willed, arrogant, proud; thoroughly skilled in the tactics of European warfare, he could not bear to be advised by an inferior. The sagacious Franklin had admonished him to move with caution; but he only replied that it was impossible for savages to make any impression on His Majesty's regulars. Now, when Washington ventured to repeat the advice, Braddock flew into a passion, strode up and down in his tent, and said that it was high times when Colonel Buckskin could teach a British general how to fight.

On the 19th of June, Braddock put himself at the head of twelve hundred chosen troops and pressed forward more rapidly. Colonel Dunbar was left behind with the remainder of the army. On the 8th of July the van reached the junction of the Youghiogheny and the Monongahela. It was only twelve miles farther to Fort du Quesne, and the French gave up the place as lost. On the next morning the English army advanced along the Monongahela, and at noon crossed to the northern bank just beyond the confluence of Turtle Creek. Still there was no sign of an enemy. Colonel Thomas Gage was leading forward a detachment of three hundred and fifty men. The road was but twelve feet wide; the country uneven and woody There was a dense undergrowth on either hand; rocks and ravines; a hill on the right and a dry hollow on the left. A few guides were in the advance, and some feeble flanking-parties; in the rear came the general with the main division of the army, the artillery and the baggage. All at once a quick and heavy fire was heard in the front.

France was not going to give up Fort du Quesne without a struggle. For two months the place had been receiving reinforcements; still the garrison was by no means able to cope with Braddock's army. Even the Indians realized the disparity of the contest. It was with great difficulty that, on the night before the battle, the commandant of the fort induced the savages to join in the enterprise of ambuscading the British. At last a force of two hundred and thirty French, led by Beaujeu and

Dumas, and a body of six hundred and thirty-seven Indians set out from Du Quesne with a view to harass and annoy the English rather than to face them in a serious battle. It was the purpose of the French, who were entirely familiar with the ground, to lay an ambuscade at a favorable point seven miles distant from the fort. They were just reaching the selected spot and settling into ambush when the flanking-parties of the English came in sight. The French fired; the Indians yelled and slunk into their hiding-places, and the battle began.

If Gage had at once thrown forward his forces to the support of the guards, the day could have been saved; but he was confused and undecided. The flanking parties were driven in, leaving their six-pounders in the hands of the enemy. Gage's men wavered, and were mixed in the thickset underwood with a regiment which Braddock had pushed forward to the rescue. The confusion became greater, and there were symptoms of a panic. The men fired constantly, but could see no enemy. Every volley from the hidden foe flew with deadly certainty into the crowded ranks of the English. The rash but brave general rushed to the front and rallied his men with the energy of despair; but it was all in vain. The men stood huddled together like sheep, or fled in terror to the rear. The forest was strewn with the dead; the savages, emboldened by their unexpected success, crept farther and farther along the flanks; and the battle became a rout. Braddock had five horses shot under him; his secretary was killed; both his English aids were disabled; only Washington remained to distribute orders. Out of eighty-two officers twenty-six were killed and thirty-seven wounded. Of the privates seven hundred and fourteen were dead or bleeding with wounds. At last the general received a ball in his right side and sank fainting to the ground. "What shall we do now, colonel?" said he to Washington, who came to his assistance. "Retreat, sir—retreat by all means," replied the young hero, upon whom everything now depended. His own bosom had been for more than two hours a special target for the savages. Two horses had fallen under him, and four times his coat had been torn with balls. A Shawnee chief singled him out and bade his warriors do the same; but their volleys



SCENE OF BRADDOCK'S DEFEAT, 1755.

FALL OF BRADDOCK.

went by harmless. The retreat began at once, and the thirty Virginians, who, with Washington, were all that remained alive, covered the flight of the ruined army. The artillery, provisions, baggage and private papers of the general were left on the field.

The losses of the French and Indians were slight, amounting to three officers and thirty men killed, and as many others wounded. There was no attempt made at pursuit. The savages fairly reveled in the spoils of the battle-field. They had never known so rich a harvest of scalps and booty. The tawny chiefs returned to Fort du Quesne clad in the laced coats, military boots and cockades of the British officers. The dying Braddock was borne in the train of the fugitives. Once he roused himself to say, "Who would have thought it?" and again, "We shall better know how to deal with them another time." On the evening of the fourth day he died, and was buried by the roadside a mile west of Fort Necessity. When the fugitives reached Dunbar's camp, the confusion was greater than ever. Dunbar was a man of feeble capacity and no courage; pretending to have the orders of the dying general, he proceeded to destroy the remaining artillery, the heavy baggage, and all the public stores, to the value of a hundred thousand pounds. Then followed a precipitate retreat to Fort Cumberland, and then an abandonment of that place for the safer precincts of Philadelphia. It was only the beginning of August, yet Dunbar pleaded the necessity of finding winter quarters for his forces. The great expedition of Braddock had ended in such a disaster as spread consternation and gloom over all the colonies.

CHAPTER XXXII.

RUIN OF ACADIA.

BY the treaty of Utrecht, made in 1713, the province of Acadia, or Nova Scotia, was ceded by France to England. During the following fifty years the colony remained under the dominion of Great Britain, and was ruled by English officers. But the great majority of the people were French, and the English government amounted only to a military occupation of the peninsula. The British colors, floating over Louisburg and Annapolis, and the presence of British garrisons here and there, were the only tokens that this, the oldest French colony in America, had passed under the control of foreigners.