

which in strength, natural and artificial, could not be surpassed. They had also the advantage of compelling the assailant to advance to the attack through a wilderness, remote from his supplies, while our troops had all they required, and were close upon their supports in the rear.

The right bank of the river was covered by a thick forest. In the rear, at the ford, care was taken to post about sixty men of the Beauharnois militia.

Nor did the Colonel limit his precautions to the works above spoken of. To secure himself to the utmost, he detached a party of thirty axe-men of the division of Beauharnois to destroy every bridge within a league and a half of his front. And about a mile ahead of the front line of defence above described, he threw down a formidable *abattis* of trees, with the branches extending outwards, and reaching from the bank of the river on his left, three or four arpents across the front to a *savanne* or swamp on the right, which was almost impassable. Thus the four inner lines were effectually covered, and the American artillery, known to number at least ten guns, was rendered useless. They could not be brought into action.

To these admirable arrangements, as much as to the heroism of his men, must be ascribed the brilliant results which ensued, and to the gallant de Salaberry, alone, must be ascribed the choice of the ground and the dispositions made.

On the 22nd, Major General de Watteville visited the outposts and approved entirely of the precautions taken, but the labour of strengthening the position continued without intermission up to the 25th September. When at about 10 a.m. the American skirmishers opened on the *abattis*, Lieutenant Guy of the Voltigeurs, who was in front with about twenty of his men, fell back, and was supported by Lieutenant Johnson of the same regiment, in charge of the picket, which protected the fatigue party. After a sharp

exchange of musketry, the labourers retired within,—the covering party to the front of the *abattis*.

At this moment, de Salaberry, who had heard the first firing, rode up from the front line of defences. He brought with him three companies of the Canadian Fencibles under Fergusson, which deployed at once on the right rear of the *abattis*. *The* company of Captain J. B. Duchesnay was extended on the left, while the company of Captain Jucherau Duchesnay occupied, *en potence*, a position on the left rear among the trees on the bank of the river, so as to take the enemy in flank if they attempted to carry the ford in the rear, held by the Beauharnois militia.

It should be observed here, that in this part of its course, and between the *abattis* and the ford, the river made a curve or bow, so abrupt, that at the re-entering elbow of the curve, the fire of the defenders flanked the ford in support of the fire in front.

Then de Salaberry, who had already twice during this campaign, tested the American metal—who had longed for another trial—saw his opportunity, and profited by it. He was in the centre of the line—the companies of Fergusson, L'Ecuyer, and deBartzch on his right. In the swamp and wood lay Captain Lamothe and a corps of Indians ; on the left and left rear the companies of the two Duchesnay's. The place of these troops taken from the first and second lines of defence was supplied from the third and fourth by the Canadian Fencible regiment, under Colonel Macdonell of Ogdensburg fame.

While these arrangements were being made with precision and rapidity, the enemy debouched from the wood into a large open space in front of the *abattis*. On the left bank of the river Hampton had the supreme command : under him served General Izzard, at the head of the 10th, the 31st, and other regiments, amounting to 3,000— or 3,500 men with three squadrons of cavalry and four guns—and yet the artillery was not brought into

action. About 1,500 men were thrown on the right bank of the river under Colonel Purdy to force, its way through the bush, and take the Canadian force, in reserve, at the ford below.

The enemy debouched on the plain in front of de Salaberry in column, and advanced in this formation close to the *abattis*, exposing the head of his narrow line to a fire in front, and his flank to the Indians and tirailleurs in the bush and swamp. This was his moment. An American officer had ridden forward, and had attempted to harangue the troops in French. Salaberry seized a rifle, fired, and the orator fell. At the same moment his bugler sounded the order to fire, and a blaze of musketry burst from the *abattis* and the swamp. The column halted, paused for a moment, made a turn to the left, formed line, and opened a vigorous fusilade—but the fire of the left was, by this movement, thrown into the wood, where it had but little effect. Not so with the fire of the right, which compelled our pickets to retire within the *abattis*. The enemy mistook this falling back for a flight, and raised a great shout, which we returned with interest, and it was all they got from us, for they never had possession of one inch of the *abattis*. While the cheers on the one side were re-echoed by cheers on the other, taken up by the troops in our rear, suddenly Salaberry ordered all our bugles to sound, to augment in imagination the strength of our force. *The *ruse* had this effect. We learnt from prisoners afterwards that they had estimated our force at 6,000 or 7,000 men. But for all the shouting and bugling, the musketry fire never ceased. It was so hot and uninterrupted, that the enemy never attempted to carry the *abattis*. After a time their fire slackened, and they appeared to await other events—they looked to the other side of the river.

Here the bugles indicated an advance, and Colonel Macdonell, eager to add to the laurels he had won at Ogdensburg, moved rapidly in the direction of the fire with two companies from the

first and second line of retrenchments under Captain Levesque. The Beauharnois militia, defending the ford, had been attacked by Purdy in superior force, and had been compelled to retire. Macdonell ordered Captain Daly with his company of the 5th Incorporated to cross the ford in their support.

At this moment de Salaberry, perceiving the fire in his front to relax, and the shouts of the combatants and the fire of musketry to increase on his left flank and rear, saw, at once; that a diversion was about to be operated at the ford, and betook himself to his left where the company of Juchereau du Chesnay was drawn up *en potence*, and came down to the river just as Daly crossed the stream. From a stump, he watched the advance of the enemy with a field glass, exposed the while to a heavy fire, and gave words of encouragement to Captain Daly as he waded through the water. This gallant officer got his men into order and most bravely thrust the enemy home. They fell back, rallied and reformed, and opened a well-sustained fire. Daly was over-matched. He and his brave Canadians slowly fell back. He had been, wounded in the advance, and while retiring, while encouraging his men by word and example, he was wounded a second time and 411. Captain Bruyere of the Hike de Beauharnois was also wounded at the same time. Their men, unequal in numbers, were compelled to recede, slowly, and, with face to the foe, under the command of the gallant Lieutenant Schiller, and once more was heard the joyful shouts and jeers of the advancing enemy—but their exultation was brief—for rushing forward, unobservant of the company formed *en potence* on the other side of the river, they became suddenly exposed to a crushing fire in flank, which at short distance arrested their march and threw them into utter confusion. Vain was the attempt to rally—they broke and scrambled back into the bush. There, it is believed, that advancing parties fired upon their retiring comrades, mistaking them for enemies. On the

other hand, Hampton, learning that his stratagem had failed, and that the attack on the ford, on which he had so much relied, had resulted so disastrously, drew off his left attack, which for an hour had been inactive, though incessantly persecuted by our skirmishers from the *abattis*. The Canadian troops remained in position, and slept that night on the ground on which they had fought.

In the morning, being reinforced by the company of Voltigeurs under Captain de Rouville and the grenadiers of Captain Levesque of the 5th Incorporated and sixty of the Beauharnois Division, de Salaberry confided to Colonel Macdonell the defence of the *abattis* against any renewed attack, and pushed forward his videttes cautiously—incredulous of Hampton's retreat. About twenty prisoners were taken, and the line of flight was indicated by muskets, knapsacks, drums, and provisions strewed in the way. Forty dead bodies were interred by our people, many graves were found, and notably, those of two officers of distinction, buried by their own men. The wounded were carried off, but we knew afterwards that the enemy estimated their own loss *hors de combat* at upwards of one hundred.

This brilliant achievement cost the Canadian force, two killed, sixteen wounded. Among the officers most prominent on this occasion—and all did their duty nobly—were Captains Fergusson, de Bartzch,* and Levesque of the 5th ; Captain L'Ecuyer of the

* Captain de Bartzch, of the Voltigeurs, in after years the Hon.P.D. de Bartzch, of St. Charles on the river Richelieu, Seigneur of the Seigniorship of that name, and as member of the Assembly and of the Legislative Council, an active able, and eloquent advocate of reform, so long as reform eschewed revolution—has bequeathed an honourable name to a family who, in the bloom of life, recall pleasant recollections of the promise of the bud. The eldest daughter of this gentleman married the Hon. Lewis T. Drummond, late Attorney General for Lower Canada. The second is the wife of the Hon. Cornwallis Monk, Judge of the Superior Court. The fourth married the Count de **ROtter.**

Voltigeurs; the two du Chesnays of the Voltigeurs,* who both distinguished themselves by their *sang froid* and precision in the execution of difficult manoeuvres. To these must be added the

mund, a Polish exile and savant ; and the third M. de Kierzkowski, son of the late Lieutenant-General Kierzkowski, an old and distinguished officer in the service of Russia. This gentleman has been returned, and held a seat, in both branches of the Canadian Legislature, at a member of the House of Assembly and member of the Legislative Council,

ad unguem

Factus homo,—non ut magis alter, amicus.

" The Brothers du Chesnay, whose names will ever stand in our Canadian story as the foremost in this conflict—the Ajaces of the fight,

art ag5(7)» KAeog cacrera ear' aiaiv,

were of an old family. Their first settlement in Canada dates from 1640. The family name is Juchereau de St. Denis,—du Chesnay (of the oak grove) being the designation of a fief which became the appanage of a younger branch bearing the patronymic of Juchereau. One of the two brothers, Juchereau du Chesnay, had served the British crown for some years in the 60th regiment—on foreign stations—and on the death of his father, retired from active service, in the interests of his estate and of his family. But the hereditary passion was inextinguishable. On the first sound of war he transferred to the militia the knowledge he had acquired in the line. He raised a company in the Canadian Voltigeurs, and during the war was constantly on the frontier. He was, as given in the text, actively engaged at Chateauguay. He was subsequently appointed Deputy Adjutant General of Militia and Superintendent of the Indian Department. His devotion to the Throne has descended as an heir-loom to those, whose friendship is a pleasure, and a pride to the contemporary annalist. His surviving children are the Hon. Juchereau du Chesnay, M.L.C., and Philippe, now Provincial Aide-de-Camp and Lieutenant-Colonel, Militia. Of his daughters, the eldest is the widow of the late Hon. Roch St. Ours, M.L.C., formerly Sheriff of the District of Montreal, and the representative of one of the oldest and best families in French Canada. The second is the wife of T. C. Campbell, Esquire, C.B., late Major in the 7th Hussars, Seigneur of St. Hilaire de Rouville, and Colonel, Militia. And the third is married to Lieutenant-Colonel Ermatinger, who earned for himself, rank, and for Canada, distinction, in the service of Spain, and is now one of the Inspecting Field Officers of Militia of the Province.

The second brother, better known as the " Chevalier" du Chesnay, was also

gallant Captain Daly * of the Canadian Fencibles and Gruyere of the Chateauguay Chasseurs, both of whom were wounded. Captain Lamothe made the most of his handful of savages. Lieutenants Pinguet, f of the Light Infantry ; Guy, Johnson, Powell, and Hebben of the Voltigeurs ; Schiller, of Daly's company,—all

in the British service, previous to the war of 1812. On the outbreak of the contest he devoted his services to his country's cause, raised a company of Voltigeurs, and at Chateauguay, and on all other occasions, upheld, at the head of his French fellow countrymen, the honour of the British flag. A nephew, Narcisse, the son of an elder brother Antoine, a lad of 16 years of age, was also in the field at Chateauguay, actually engaged. " Those who were there behaved themselves so loyally that their heirs to this day are honoured for their sake." Froissart, Vol. II, p. 220.

* Joseph Daly, Esquire, of Montreal, H.M. agent for emigrants, is a nephew of this brave officer.

t Captain Pinguet.—This officer appears to have been a Quebecquois. Since writing the above, there has appeared in a *Feuilleton*, published in Quebec, and entitled "Soirees Canadiennes," two letters, indited by Captain Pinguet, one shortly before, and the other, immediately after the Battle of Chateauguay. In the second he says : " C'etait le dimanche que l'abattis fut commence, et le mardi, comme les bucheurs flnissaient quelque chose qui manquait, un parti de dix hommes de notre compagnie et de vingt des Voltigeurs, qui etaient en avant pour proteger les travailleurs, aperçurent l'avant-garde de l'ennemi qui s'avancait. . . . Nous avions a combattre contre deux mille hommes de pied et deux-cents hommes de cavalerie ; nous ne perdions pas de temps ; nos soldats ont tire entre trente-cinq et quarante cartouches, et en si bonne direction que les prisonniers que nous fimes le lendemain disaient que nos belles passaient toutes a l'egalite, soit de la tete, soit de la poitrine. Notre compagnie seule s'est battue la environ trois-quarts d'heure avant que de recevoir du renfort. * * * * And to show that campaigning in Canada is not a *mere promenade militaire*, may be added : " Apres la bataille, on nous a ramenes dans nos retranchements, oit nous avons passe huit jours, a la pluie, au froid, sans feu et sans couvertures ; de la, nous sommes descendus aux maisons, oil nous etions presque aussi mal que dans les bois ; nous y avons ete huit jours, et avons recu ordre de remonter. Je crois a present qu'un homme est capable d'endurer sans crever, plus de misere qu'un bon ehien."

displayed intelligence and vigour. Captains Longtin and Huneau of the Milice de Beauharnois gave to their men an honourable example. Of the former it is related, that on the commencement of the action, he knelt down at the head of his company and offered up a brief and earnest prayer. " And now, *mes enfans*," said he, rising, " having done our duty to God, we will do the same by our King." Here spoke out that olden spirit of chivalrous devotion which the history of a thousand years has made the heritage of the Canadian people.

Nor should we pass over in silence the names of the *simples soldats*, — *Vincent*, Pelletier, Vervais, Dubois, and Caron,—all of the Voltigeurs, who swam the river and cut off the retreat of the prisoners who were taken.*

It will be seen at once that the whole brunt of the action fell upon the advanced corps under the command of Colonel de Salaberry. This force barely numbered 300 combatants. The battle was fought in front of the first line of entrenchments, at the *abattis*, and at the ford in the rear. On this part of the field de Salaberry commanded alone, and to him alone is to be ascribed the glory of the victory.

* Among the officers in command of companies who had not the good fortune to be actually engaged—who were " well in hand," but not wanted—on the 26th October, may be noted the names of de Beaujeu, de Lery, de Rouville, de Tonnancour, Malhiot, Raymond, Bruere, the indefatigable McKay, and Berczy. The company, however, of this last officer was in the charge of Lieutenant Tache, now the Hon. Sir Etienne Tache, Colonel and Aide-de-Camp to the Queen—of whom more hereafter. A sister of Captain de Tonnancour married the Hon. Thomas Coffin, of Three Rivers, and his eldest son is Prothonotary of the Court of Queen's Bench, Montreal.

CHAPTER XXV

Macdonell of Ogdensburg—The Canadian Fencibles—Descent of the St. Lawrence—Running the Rapids—Night March through the Bush—"Always on Hand"—French and English—"Shoulder to Shoulder"—Natural Exultation of the French Canadians—Practical Reply to Dishonouring Imputations—Gratitude of the British Government—Queenston Heights—Chateauguay—Chevy Chace and the "Combat des Trentes"—Beaumanoir and Bembro—Croquart.

Had the gallant de Salaberry required the services of a fellow soldier, or had the fortune of war, even for a moment, deprived us of his own, there stood, happily, at his side the most efficient substitute Canada could supply. Macdonell of Ogdensburg had been lately appointed to the command of a battalion of French Canadian Fencibles, and was at Kingston drilling and organizing the force confided to him. On the 20th October, Sir George Prevost, then at Kingston, received intelligence of Hampton's irruption on the Beauharnois frontier. At the time, Wilkinson was known to be within a few miles in front, at the head of 10,000 men. Kingston was presumed to be his object. The distracting effect of this double menace, in front, and in flank and rear, demanded prompt and judicious counteraction. Here Sir George did well. He dared not weaken Kingston by withdrawing a single man of the line. As he mounted his horse for Lower Canada he sent for Macdonell, and inquired if his corps was in a fit state to meet the enemy; and was assured that they were ready to embark so soon as *they had done dinner*. Prevost gave his prompt subordinate *carte blanche*, enjoining, simply, a prompt rencounter with Hampton on the Beauharnois frontier. Left to himself and to his own resources,

Macdonell was not unequal to the emergency. He had offered men. He had now to find boats, and boatmen and pilots, to conduct those men in safety down the dangerous rapids of the St. Lawrence. In that named "of the Coteau du Lac" Lord Amherst lost in 1760 sixty-eight batteaux and eighty-eight men. Those who have descended the rapids of the St. Lawrence for a pastime, in a well-found steamer, manned and piloted and handled, to provide against all chance of accident, and can recall the combined sensation of awe and misgiving with which they sank and surged amid those boiling waters, whirled by rocks and shoals, where a touch would have been destruction, with the speed and rush and roar of a tempest, and who rejoice even now that the rapids are passed and the danger over, may be able to appreciate the resolution of men who dared the same danger at the call of duty, in huge unwieldy row-boats or batteaux, to which a disabled oar or a misdirection of the rudder must have brought instantaneous destruction. But no misgivings troubled the minds of these brave men or their resolute leader. His arrangements were rapidly made. Boats were soon procured—his own personal experience supplied pilotage—his soldiers volunteered to the oar. Every French Canadian is a boatman. The perilous waters to which they are accustomed demand the constant exercise of bravery and skill. The world does not produce better material for soldier or sailor. After a few hours' delay he embarked with his 600 men, encountered great dangers, but surmounted all; ran all the rapids successfully; crossed Lake St. Francis in a tempest; disembarked on the Beauharnois shore; and in the dead of the night threaded the forest in Indian file, reaching the bank of the Chateauguay, on the morning of the 25th September, in advance of Sir George Prevost, who had ridden down the opposite shore of the St. Lawrence aided by relays of horses. When the Commander-in-Chief asked him in a tone of some surprise "And where are your men?"