

1696.

against troops encumbered with baggage, and harass them to the very gates of Montreal; that it was more advisable to await a pleasant season, and that then there would be nothing to prevent his marching all the regulars, militia and domiciliated Indians; that of these a corps could be made capable of facing on every side and carrying on any project; that it would nevertheless be advisable to go in advance over the ice to attack the Mohawks, who were nearer and who, expecting nothing of the kind, would be easily surprised.

Louvigny
Expedition
over the ice.

The General relished this advice all the more from his having had the same idea, and moreover the season was so bad till the month of January, that around Quebec there was no travel on the Saint Lawrence, either on foot or in vehicle, or canoes. He accordingly ordered the Governor of Montreal to send five or six hundred men from his district, and that of Three Rivers, against the Mohawk canton. This party was soon ready, and was on the point of marching, when certain intelligence was received, that the scheme had become known and that the Mohawks were taking measures to be reinforced not only by the other cantons but also by the English of New York.¹

Mr. de Callieres informed the Count de Frontenac, who directed him to send out only three hundred picked men to fall on the Iroquois hunters, who must be in considerable numbers and totally unsuspecting between the Saint Lawrence and the great river (of the Ottawas,) their usual winter hunting-ground. This detachment actually started toward the end of January under the command of Mr. Louvigny; but was detained thirteen days quite near Montreal by the snow, which fell this year in much greater abundance than usual. He then with incredible hardship continued his march within five leagues from Catarocouy, everywhere meeting soft snow seven or eight feet

¹ In January, Gov. Fletcher, of N. Y., assembled troops at Schenectady. N. Y. Col. Doc., iv. p. 161. A reward of £6 was offered for every Frenchman or Indian killed within three miles of Albany. N. Y. Council Min. vii. p. 189. See Proclamation, May 11, 1696. N. Y. Col. MSS. xl. p. 160. Proclam. Aug. 2, on French preparations, xl., p. 185.