

1710. too well versed in the laws of war to be ignorant that they did not authorize him to resort to reprisals on settlers who had surrendered to him on his express word that he would treat them well; that the French nation should never be accused of inhumanity; and that the English prisoners actually in the colony, could give testimony on the point, to which he had no hesitation in referring; that many had been withdrawn at great expense and out of pure charity, from the hands of the Indians, who on their side did not usually ill-treat them; but that it was in no wise just to make the French responsible for their conduct; that it had not depended on him to stop this disastrous war long before, and that all the evils it entailed should be imputed only to those, who had refused neutrality between the two colonies.

As to an exchange of prisoners, the French General protested that he would willingly consent; but that they must begin by ascertaining the number on both sides; that he could not dispose of those in the hands of his allies, and that the threat of giving up Acadian settlers to the Indians of New England, in case those of New France refused to give up theirs, was against all the rules of justice and humanity; that if it was carried out, he would be compelled to treat all the English in his power in the same way; in conclusion, that he asked him to give a positive answer by the two officers who delivered his letter and state the number of his prisoners and the place to which he would bring them, that he might send his there.¹

The two officers sent by de Vaudreuil with his letter to Nicholson, were the Sieurs de Rouville and Dupuys, and in that which he wrote to the Count de Pontchartrain to inform him of what had occurred, he gave as the motive of his selection, that being also obliged to write by the same conveyance to Dudley, Governor-General of New England, he wished the two best partisan officers in all Canada to have this means of knowing the country, where they might subsequently have occasion to operate.²

¹ Vaudreuil to Pontchartrain, April 25, 1711. N. Y. Col. Doc., ix., p. 864. ² Ib. De Costebelle to same, July 24, 1711, in Sir H. Walker's Journal,