

1697. That officer handed him a letter from the Marquis de Nesmond, informing him that it concerned the conquest of New England, a project of de Pontchartrain, but that the thing had failed. In a letter to the Minister, dated the 15th of October, Frontenac informed him that his preparations were so well advanced, that within a week after receiving the orders he expected, he could have put his troops in motion.

The enterprise for which he was ordered to be in readiness.

His advice as to the project.

He adds that such expeditions are always very uncertain, and require for their execution, far more time than is supposed; that no positive calculation should ever be made positively on the junction of forces, some of which were to come by sea and others by land, and by rivers so difficult to ascend and descend as those of Canada, and that the difficulty of transporting in canoes the provisions required by a large force are almost insurmountable. Coming then to that in question, he continues:

“I will also take the liberty of telling you that the capture of New York (Manhatte) would contribute much more to the security of this colony, and deliver it from the Iroquois more than the capture of Boston, which in no way annoys it: that moreover the former would be much more easily effected simply by his Majesty’s vessels and the troops they could land, while the Canadian forces, to effect a diversion, attacked Albany (Orange), which is at their doors; but even then timely notice would be necessary so as to have time for preparation, beyond what was deemed actually necessary, the seasons being so short in this country, that it is idle to talk of undertaking anything at distant points, without having at least the whole month of September to return in, because the smaller rivers and lakes freeze in October.”¹

However, the operations against Boston were very well concerted, and like all those of the same kind that preceded, failed only from want of due diligence. To conduct it, the King had appointed the Marquis de Nesmond, an officer of high repute, and had assigned him ten men-of-war, one

¹ Canada Documents, II., viii., 185.