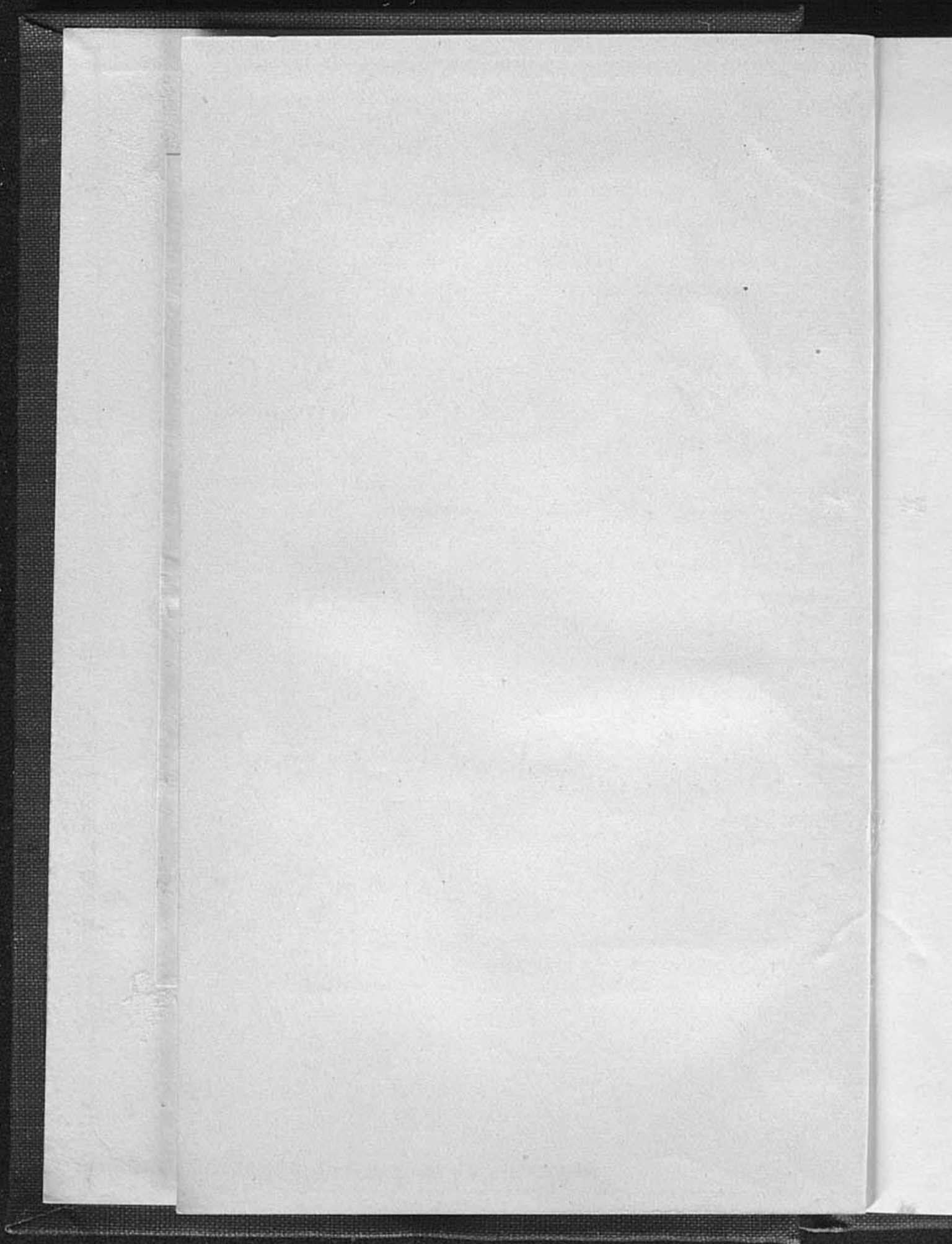


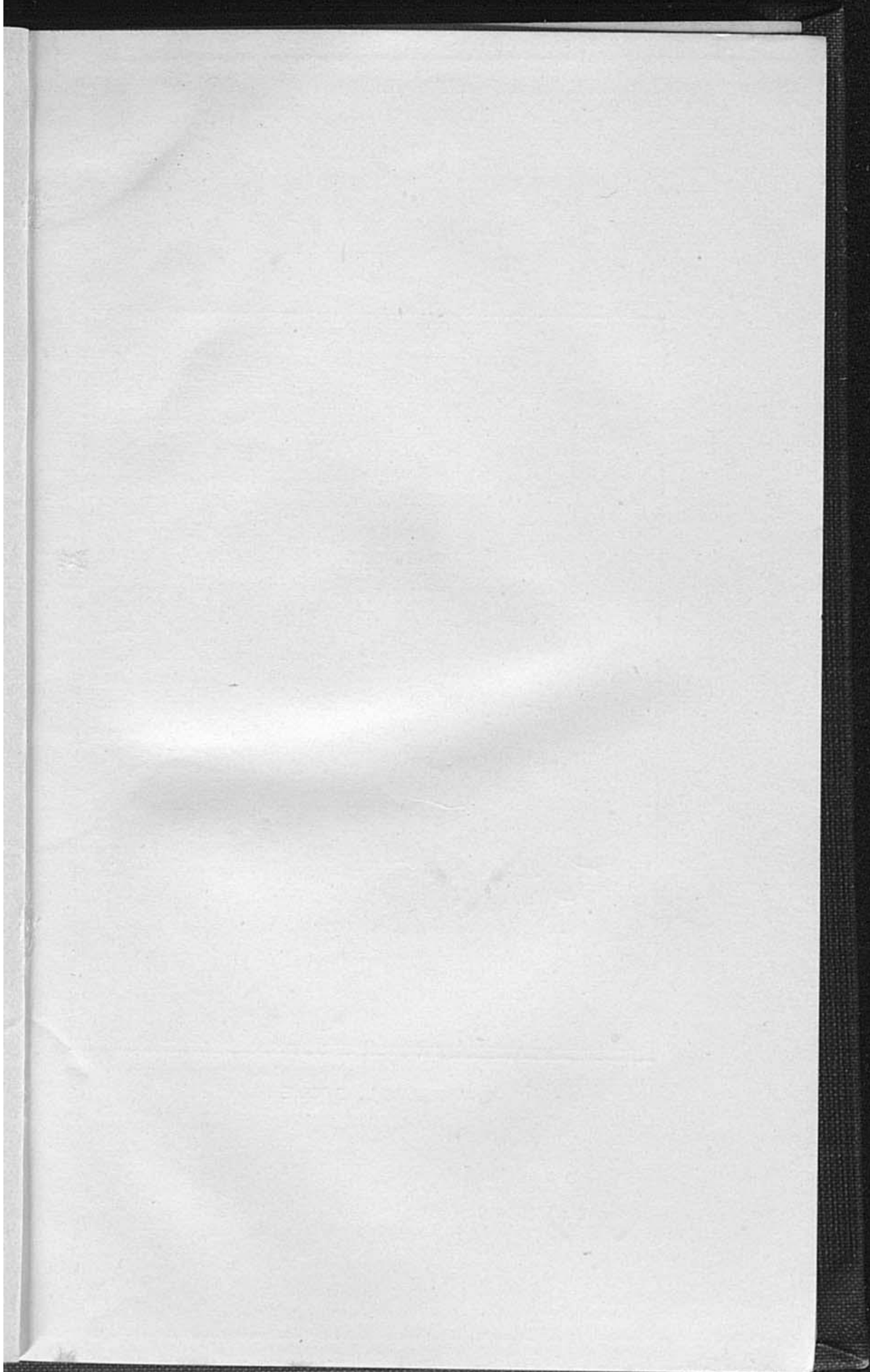


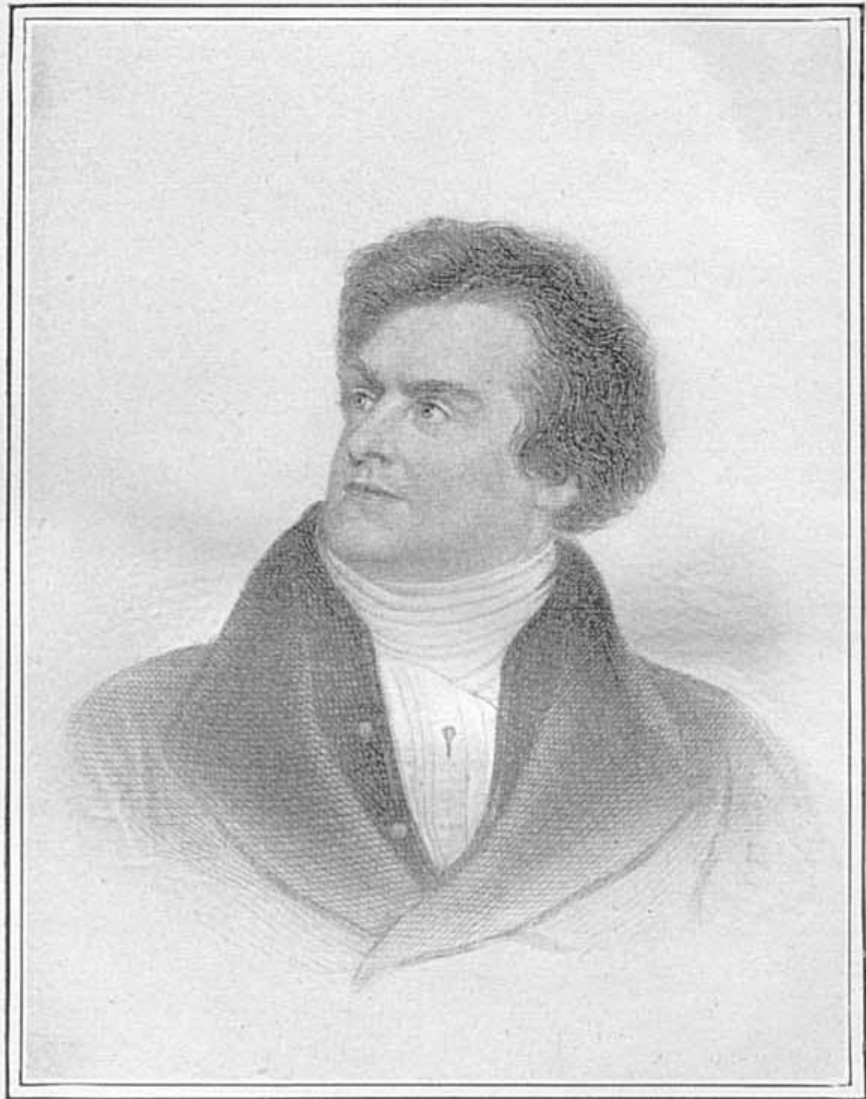


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WILLIAM L. STONE

AMERICAN REVOLUTION

WILLIAM D. STONE

THE LIFE OF THE REVOLUTION

A

AT



BORDER WARS

OF THE

AMERICAN REVOLUTION

BY

WILLIAM L. STONE,

AUTHOR OF THE "LIFE AND TIMES OF RED JACKET,"  
"HISTORY OF WYOMING," Etc., Etc.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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NEW YORK

1900

BORDER WARS

OF THE

AMERICAN REVOLUTION

BY

WALTER D. DILLON

NEW YORK

1892

## P R E F A C E.

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It is related by Æsop, that a forester once meeting with a lion, they travelled together for a time, and conversed amicably without much differing in opinion. At length a dispute happening to arise upon the question of superiority between their respective races, the former, in the absence of a better argument, pointed to a monument on which was sculptured in marble the statue of a man striding over the body of a vanquished lion. "If this," said the lion, "is all you have to say, let us be the sculptors, and you will see the lion striding over the man."

The moral of this fable should ever be borne in mind when contemplating the character of that brave and ill-used race of men, now melting away before the Anglo-Saxons like the snow beneath a vertical sun — the aboriginals of America. No Indian pen traces the history of their tribes and nations, or records the deeds of their warriors and chiefs—their prowess and their wrongs. Their spoilers have been their historians; and although a reluctant assent has been awarded to some of the nobler traits of their nature, yet, without yielding a due allowance for the peculiarities of their situation, the Indian character has been presented,

with singular uniformity, as being cold, cruel, morose, and revengeful, unrelieved by any of those varying traits and characteristics, those lights and shadows, which are admitted in respect to other people no less wild and uncivilized than they.

Without pausing to reflect that, even when most cruel, they have been practising the trade of war—always dreadful—as much in conformity to their own usages and laws as have their more civilized antagonists, the white historian has drawn them with the characteristics of demons. Forgetting that the second of the Hebrew monarchs did not scruple to saw his prisoners with saws, and harrow them with harrows of iron; forgetful, likewise, of the scenes at Smithfield, under the direction of our own British ancestors, the historians of the poor, untutored Indians, almost with one accord, have denounced them as monsters *sui generis*—of unparalleled and unapproachable barbarity—as though the summary tomahawk were worse than the iron tortures of the harrow, and the torch of the Mohawk hotter than the fagots of Queen Mary.

Nor does it seem to have occurred to the “pale-faced” writers that the identical cruelties, the records and descriptions of which enter so largely into the composition of the earlier volumes of American history, were not barbarities in the estimation of those who practised them. The scalp-lock was an emblem of chivalry. Every warrior, in shaving his head for battle, was careful to leave the lock of defiance upon his crown, as for the bravado, “Take it if you can.” The stake and the torture were identified with their rude notions of the power of endurance. They were inflicted

PREFACE.



upon captives of their own race as well as upon the whites ; and, with their own braves, these trials were courted, to enable the sufferer to exhibit the courage and fortitude with which they could be borne—the proud scorn with which all the pain that a foe might inflict could be endured.

If the moral of the fable is applicable to aboriginal history in general, it is equally so in regard to very many of their chiefs whose names have been forgotten, or only known to be detested. Peculiar circumstances have given prominence and fame of a certain description to some few of the forest chieftains : as in the instances of Powhatan in the South, the mighty Philip in the East, and the great Pontiac of the Northwest. But there have been many others, equal, perhaps, in courage, and skill, and energy to the distinguished chiefs just mentioned, whose names have been steeped in infamy in their preservation, because “the lions are no sculptors.” They have been described as ruthless butchers of women and children, without one redeeming quality, save those of animal courage and indifference to pain ; while it is not unlikely that were the actual truth known, their characters, for all the high qualities of the soldier, might sustain an advantageous comparison with those of half the warriors of equal rank in Christendom. Of this class was a prominent subject of the present volumes, whose name was terrible in every American ear during the War of Independence, and was long afterward associated with everything bloody, ferocious, and hateful. It is even within our own day that the name of Brant would chill the young blood by its very sound, and cause the lisping child

to cling closer to the knee of its mother. As the master-spirit of the Indians engaged in the British service during the war of the Revolution, not only were all the border massacres charged directly upon him, but upon his head fell the public maledictions for every individual atrocity which marked that sanguinary contest, whether committed by Indians, or Tories, or by the exasperated regular soldiery of the foe. In many instances great injustice was done to him: as in regard to the affair of Wyoming, in connexion with which his name has been used by every preceding annalist who has written upon the subject; while it has, moreover, for the same cause been consigned to infamy, deep and foul, in the deathless song of Campbell. In other cases, again, the Indians of the Six Nations, in common with their chief, were loaded with execrations for atrocities of which all were alike innocent, because the deeds recorded were never committed: it having been the policy of the public writers, and those in authority, not only to magnify actual occurrences, but sometimes, when these were wanting, to draw upon their imaginations for accounts of such deeds of ferocity and blood as might best serve to keep alive the strongest feelings of indignation against the parent-country, and likewise induce the people to take the field for revenge, if not driven thither by the nobler impulse of patriotism.

In the execution of this task, the author had supposed that the bulk of his labour would cease with the close of the war of the Revolution, or, at most, that some fifteen or twenty pages, sketching rapidly the latter years of the life of Thayendanege

would be all that was necessary. Far otherwise was the fact. When the author came to examine the papers of Brant, nearly all of which were connected with his career subsequent to that contest, it was found that his life and actions had been intimately associated with the Indian and Canadian politics of more than twenty years after the treaty of peace; that a succession of Indian congresses were held by the nations of the great lakes, in all which he was one of the master-spirits; that he was directly or indirectly engaged in the wars between the United States and Indians from 1789 to 1795, during which the bloody campaigns of Harnmar, St. Clair, and Wayne took place; and that he acted an important part in the affair of the Northwestern posts, so long retained by Great Britain after the treaty of peace. This discovery compelled the writer to enter upon a new and altogether unexpected field of research. Many difficulties were encountered in the composition of this branch of the work, arising from various causes and circumstances. The conflicting relations of the United States, the Indians, and the Canadians, together with the peculiar and sometimes apparently equivocal position in which the Mohawk chief—the subject of the biography—stood in regard to them all; the more than diplomatic caution with which the British officers managed the double game which it suited their policy to play so long; the broken character of the written materials obtained by the author, and the necessity of supplying many links in the chain of events from circumstantial evidence and the unwritten records of Indian diplomacy, all combined to render the matters to be

elucidated exceedingly complicated, intricate, and difficult of clear explanation. But, tangled as was the web, the author has endeavoured to unravel the materials, and weave them into a narrative of consistency and truth. The result of these labours is imbodyed in the second part of the present work; and, unless the author has over-estimated both the interest and the importance of this portion of American history, the contribution now made will be most acceptable to the reader.

In addition to the matters here indicated, a pretty full account of the life of Brant, after the close of the Indian wars, is given, by no means barren either of incident or anecdote; and the whole is completed by some interesting particulars respecting the family of the chief, giving their personal history down to the present day.



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BORDER WARS  
OF THE  
AMERICAN REVOLUTION

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CHAPTER I.

THE birth and parentage of JOSEPH BRANT, OR, more correctly, of THAYENDANEGBA—for such was his real name—have been involved in uncertainty, by the conflicting accounts that have been published concerning him. By some authors he has been called a half-breed. By others he has been pronounced a Shawanese by parentage, and only a Mohawk by adoption. Some historians have spoken of him as a son of Sir William Johnson; while others, again, have allowed him the honour of Mohawk blood, but denied that he was descended from a chief.

The facts are these: the Six Nations had carried their arms far to the west and south, and the whole country south of the lakes was claimed by them, to a certain extent of supervisory jurisdiction, by the right of conquest. To the Ohio and Sandusky country they asserted a stronger and more peremptory claim, extending to the right of soil, at least on the lake shore as far as Presque Isle. From their associations in that country, it had become usual among the Six Nations, especially the Mohawks, to make temporary removals to the west during the hunting seasons, and one or more of those families would frequently remain abroad, among the Miamis, the

Hurons, and Wyandots, for a longer or shorter period, as they chose.

It was while his parents were abroad upon one of those hunting excursions that Thayendanegea was born, in the year 1742, on the banks of the Ohio. The home of his family was at the Canajoharie Castle—the central of the three castles of the Mohawks, in their native valley. His father's name was Tehowaghwengaraghkwin, a full-blooded Mohawk of the Wolf Tribe.\* Thayendanegea was very young when his father died. His mother married a second time to a Mohawk; and the family tradition at present is, that the name of Brant was derived from that of her second husband, whose Christian name was Barnet, or Bernard, modified, by contraction, to "Brant." There is reason to doubt the accuracy of this tradition, however, since it is believed that there was an Indian family, of some consequence and extent, bearing the English name of Brant. Indeed, from the recently-discovered manuscripts of Sir William Johnson, it may be questioned whether Tehowaghwengaraghkwin, and an old chief, called by Sir William sometimes Brant, and at others Nickus Brant, were not one and the same person.

The denial that he was a born chief is likewise believed to be incorrect. The London Magazine for July, 1776, contains a sketch of him, probably furnished by Boswell, with whom he was intimate during his first visit to England in 1775-76. In that account it is affirmed that he was the grandson of one of the five sachems who visited England, and excited so much attention in the British capital, in 1710, during the reign of Queen Anne. Of those

\* Each of the original Five Nations was divided into three tribes: the Tortoise, the Bear, and the Wolf. The subject of the present memoir was of the latter. According to David Cusick, a Tuscarora, who has written a tract respecting the history of the ancient Five Nations, the laws of the confederation required that the Onondagas should provide the king and the Mohawks a great war-chief.

chiefs, two were of the Muhhekaneew, or River Indians, and three were Mohawks—one of whom was chief of the Canajoharie clan.\* Thayendanegea was of the latter clan; and as there is reason to believe that his father was a sachem, there can be little doubt of the correctness of the London publication, in claiming for him direct descent from the Canajoharie chief who visited the British court at the time above mentioned. But there is other evidence to sustain the assumption. In the Life of the first President Wheelock, by the Reverend Messrs. M'Clure and Parish, it is asserted that the father of Joseph Brant "was sachem of the Mohawks after the death of the famous King Hendrick." The intimacy for a long time existing between the family of Brant and the Wheelocks, father and sons, renders this authority, in the absence of unwritten testimony still more authentic, very good; and, as Hendrick fell in 1755, when Thayendanegea was thirteen years of age, the *tradition* of the early death of his father, and his consequent assumption of a new name, is essentially weakened. Mrs. Grant, of Laggan, who in early life was a resident of Albany, and intimately acquainted with the domestic relations of Sir William Johnson, speaks of the sister of young Thayendanegea, who was intimately

\* These five sachems, or Indian kings, as they were called, were taken to England by Colonel Schuyler. Their arrival in London created a great sensation, not only in the capital, but throughout the kingdom. The populace followed them wherever they went. The court was at that time in mourning for the death of the Prince of Denmark, and the chiefs were dressed in black under-clothes, after the English manner; but, instead of a blanket, they had each a scarlet ingrain cloth mantle, edged with gold, thrown over all their other clothes. This dress was directed by the dressers of the playhouse, and given by the queen. A more than ordinary solemnity attended the audience they had of her majesty. They were conducted to St. James's, in two coaches, by Sir Charles Cotterel, and introduced to the royal presence by the Duke of Shrewsbury, then lord-chamberlain. (Smith's History.) Oldmixon has preserved the speech delivered by them on the occasion, and several historians record the visit. Sir Richard Steele mentions these chiefs in the Tatler of May 13, 1710. They were also made the subject of a number of the Spectator, by Addison.

associated in the family of the baronet, as "the daughter of a sachem."

In the manuscript diary of Sir William Johnson, just referred to, the baronet often had occasion to speak of Brant, of Canajoharie. Sometimes he was called "Nickus Brant," and at others *Aroghyadagha*, but most frequently "Old Nickus," or "Old Brant." As these private journals of Sir William have never seen the light, and are curious in themselves, a few extracts will probably not be unacceptable to the reader, serving, as they will, not only to illustrate the present history, but also the character of the intercourse and relations existing between the English and the Indians, under the administration of the Indian department by that distinguished officer. A more just idea of the character and importance of the chieftain's family may likewise be derived from a perusal of the extracts proposed to be given, exhibiting, as they do, something of the intercourse maintained between the families of the white and the red warriors.

It must be borne in mind that the diary was written in the years 1757, 1758, and 1759, in the midst of the old French war, ending by the conquest of Canada in 1763. An expedition against that colony, under the conduct of Lord Loudoun, projected early in the former year, had been abandoned, in consequence of his lordship's inability to bring a sufficient number of troops into the field to meet the heavy re-enforcements sent over that year from France. Meantime, the Marquis de Montcalm, with an army of 9000 men, had advanced through Lake George, and carried Fort William Henry—the siege of which was followed by a frightful massacre—and was then threatening Fort Edward and the settlements on the Hudson; while, at the west, the French, with their Indian allies, were continually threatening an invasion by the way of Oswego, and by their scouts and scalping parties were vexing the German settle-



ments on the Upper Mohawk, and continually harassing the Six Nations, or Iroquois, ever the objects of French hostility. In this state of things, it required the utmost activity on the part of Sir William Johnson, his officers, and Indian allies, to keep themselves well informed as to the actual or intended movements of their subtle enemies. There was, therefore, constant employment, until the close of the year, for Indian scouts and messengers, throughout the whole wilderness country from Lake Champlain to Niagara, and Fort Du Quesne, on the Ohio. With this explanation we proceed to the diary :

"1757.—*November 4th.* Canadiorha, alias Nickus Brant's son, who was in quest after De Couagne as far as Oneida, came here (Fort Johnson), and said he inquired what news was stirring among the Oneidas. One of the sachems told him the same piece of news Ogaghte brought some days since, about the French intending to stop the powder from the Six Nations, building a fort near Chennessio, &c. ; that it made a great noise among the nations, and gave them uneasiness ; wherefore they were assembling often at Chennessio, and keeping (holding) often great councils among themselves how to act in this affair of last moment."

In the next extract it will be seen that Sir William speaks of Brant as a "sachem." Of course it could be none other than the elder, or "Old Brant," at the time, as Joseph was not then more than sixteen years old.

"1758.—*April 15th.* Sir William set out for Canajoharie, and took with him Captains Johnson,\* Fonda, and Jacobus Clement, in order to settle some matters with the Indians of that castle. He arrived that night.

"*April 16th.* He delivered a string of wampum to Brant and Paulus, two sachems, desiring them to call all their people out of the woods to attend a

\* Guy Johnson, his son-in-law.

meeting he proposed the next day with them, at which he should let them know General Abercrombie's pleasure, and his own inclination and advice; also what passed between him and the several nations, who of late had had several meetings with him."

Preparations were now making for a more formidable and vigorous campaign, under General Abercrombie, who had succeeded Lord Loudoun. His object was an attack upon Ticonderoga, and, if successful, a descent upon Crown Point and Montreal. The French in Canada were, of course, making corresponding exertions to repel the expected invasion. With a view of creating a diversion, by annoying the colony of New-York from another quarter, they were said to be preparing to invade the Mohawk Valley by the way of Oswego and Fort Stanwix. A party of their Indians had made a bold irruption, towards the close of April, upon Burnetsfield, on the south side of the Mohawk, and destroyed the entire settlement; massacring men, women, and children—thirty-three in number—being the whole population save two persons. There had likewise been outrages at the German Flatts, where several Indians had been killed by the inhabitants. The militia were promptly ordered into the field, to rendezvous at Canajoharie, whither Sir William repaired on the 4th of May, to lead them against the enemy, reported, on the same day, to be in force at the great carrying-place (Fort Stanwix).

Meantime, it was well known that the French had left no means untried to seduce the five westernmost tribes of the Six Nations from their allegiance to the English. They had long had their Jesuit priests among the Oneidas, Onondagas, &c.; and a variety of circumstances had occurred to induce the Mohawks to distrust their brethren of the other tribes. Under these circumstances Sir William received the invitation thus noted in his diary:

“*April 4th.* Sir William having had an invitation from the Six Nations to attend a grand meeting to be held at Onondaga within a few days hence, where he intends to proceed, in case the last alarm should prove groundless.”

The baronet arrived at Canajoharie in the evening, and attended a dance of the young warriors, having the scalp of one of the hostile Indians engaged in the recent irruption, who had been killed at the German Flatts. He is thus spoken of in the diary, in the handwriting of Sir William's secretary :

“The body of Otqueandageghte, an Onondaga warrior, who lived for some years at 'Swegachy, and formerly a mate of Sir William's, was found. His name was engraved on the handle (of his knife), and how often he had been to war, together with this inscription : ‘*Otqueandageghte le Camera de Jean-son.*’”

Sir William was highly respected by the Six Nations, and by the Mohawks, in particular, was greatly beloved. This affection was not only manifested by their actions, but often in their speeches at their councils, and in their concern for his welfare when sick, and for his safety when in the field. Such being their feelings towards the baronet, they were reluctant, under existing circumstances, to allow him to place himself in the power of the Indians about to assemble at the Great Council Fire at Onondaga. They were likewise apprehensive that he might incur danger from some of the scalping parties of the French. These explanations will render the following extracts from the diary intelligible :

“*May 5th.* Sir William having no farther accounts of the enemy's appearance, sent a scout of two Mohawks, two Canajoharies, and a white man, to go as far as Wood Creek and the Oneida Lake, in order to obtain the certainty of the alarm. About noon, all the women of the chief men of this castle met at Sir William's lodging, and brought with them

several of the sachems, who acquainted Sir William that they had something to say to him in the name of their chief women.

“Old Nickus (Brant) being appointed speaker, opened his discourse with condoling with Sir William for the losses his people had sustained, and then proceeded :

“‘ BROTHER—We understand you intend to go to a meeting to Onondaga ; we can't help speaking with this belt of wampum to you, and giving our sentiments on your intended journey. In the first place, we think it quite contrary to the customs of any governor or superintendent of Indian affairs being called to Onondaga upon public business, as the council fire which burns there serves only for private consultations of the confederacy ; and when matters are concluded and resolved upon there, the confederacy are to set out for the great fireplace which is at your house, and there deliver their conclusion. In the next place, we are almost convinced that the invitation is illegal, and not agreed upon or desired by the confederacy, but only the Oneidas—which gives us the more reason to be uneasy about your going, as it looks very suspicious. Did not they tell you, when they invited you, the road of friendship was clear, and every obstacle removed that was in before ? They scarce uttered it, and the cruelties were committed at the German Flatts, where the remainder of our poor brethren were butchered by the enemy's Indians. Is this a clear road of peace and friendship ? Would not you be obliged to wade all the way in the blood of the poor innocent men, women, and children, who were murdered after being taken ?

“‘ BROTHER, by this belt of wampum, we, the women, surround and hang about you like little children, who are crying at their parents' going from them for fear of their never returning again to give them suck ; and we earnestly beg you will give ear to

our request, and desist from your journey. We flatter ourselves you will look upon this our speech, and take the same notice of it as all our men do, who, when they are addressed by the women, and desired to desist from any rash enterprise, they immediately give way, when, before, everybody else tried to dissuade them from it, and could not prevail.' *Gave the belt.*"

"*May 10th.* This afternoon Sir William returned his answer to the speech of the chief women of this castle, made to him on the 5th instant, which is as follows :

"*DYATTEGO*—Your tender and affectionate speech, made some days ago, I have considered, and thereupon have despatched messengers to Oneida, in order to inquire how things stand there after what happened at the German Flatts, and whether my presence at the meeting would be still necessary. These messengers are returned, and I find by them that the sachems of Oneida likewise disapprove my proceeding any farther, for sundry reasons they give in their reply. Wherefore I shall comply with your request to return, and heartily thank you for the great tenderness and love expressed for me in your speech.' *Returned their belt.*"

The next mention of the Brants contained in the broken manuscripts of Sir William, is found in the private journal kept by him of his tour to Detroit, in 1761, after the surrender of the Canadas. The duty then devolved upon Sir William of meeting the upper Indians around the great lakes, previously under the influence, and many of them in the service, of the French, in Grand Council at Detroit to establish friendly relations with them, and receive a transfer of that *quasi* allegiance which the Indians have generally acknowledged to the whites, French, English, or American. In addition to his own immediate suite, among whom was his son, Lieutenant Johnson (afterward Sir John), he was

attended on the expedition by a detachment of troops and a band of the Mohawk warriors. While at Niagara, Sir William notes :

"Monday, August 10. Nickus,\* of Canajoharie, an Indian, arrived here, and acquainted me that several of his castle had died of malignant fever; and that all Brant's family were ill of the same disorder, except the old woman. He also told me that he had heard by the way, from several Indians, that I was to be destroyed or murdered on my way to Detroit; and that the Indians were certainly determined to rise and fall on the English, as several thou-

\* Nickus Hance—another name and a different person from Nickus Brant; of this Nickus, repeated mention is made in Sir William's previous official diaries. The following quotations are given as curious illustrations of Indian customs :

"Fort Johnson May 22, 1757. Sir William spoke with Nickus Hance, alias Taicarihogo, a Canajoharie chief, who came to see him, and told him that, as he was much concerned for the loss of his (said Hance's) mother, who lately died, he expected he would remove his concern by going to war, and bringing either a prisoner or a scalp to put in her room, or stead, as is usual among Indians. Upon this, Sir William gave him a very fine black belt to enforce his request. Taicarihogo returned Sir William thanks for the concern he shared for the loss of his mother, accepted the belt, and promised he would, on his return home, call his young men together, and lay Sir William's belt and request before them." [The giving of a belt in this way was a sort of commission to make up a scalping party against the forces or the settlements of the enemy.—*Author.*]

Of a similar character is the following extract from the diary :

"Albany, May 18, 1758. Capt. Jacob Head, of a company of Stockbridge Indians, brought to Sir William's lodgings four French scalps, which his cousin, chief of another company of said Indians, had taken from the enemy some few days before, and the aforesaid Jacob spoke as follows :

"Brother Warraghayagey, This scalp (the one with a black belt tied to it, painted) I desire may be delivered to my wife's uncle, old Hickus, of Canajoharie, to replace her mother, who was his sister.

"This scalp (meaning another upon the same stick, with a bunch of black wampum tied to it) I send to the aforesaid man to replace Eusenia, who was Taraghyorie's wife.

"This scalp (meaning a scalp by itself on a stick, with a bunch of black wampum) my cousin, Captain Jacob, gives to replace old King Hendrick, of Canajoharie. [Killed, in 1755, at the battle of Lake George.—*Author.*]

"This scalp (meaning the small one tied round with a bunch of wampum) my said cousin gives to replace Hickus's son, who was killed at the battle of the lake under your command."

sands of the Ottoways and other nations had agreed to join the Five Nations in this scheme or plot."

It is needless, however, to multiply citations to the point immediately in view. The object of those already made has been to clear up the doubts, if possible, and establish the fact as to the immediate ancestry of Thayendanagea, alias Joseph Brant; and although the fact is nowhere positively asserted, yet there is much reason to suppose that he was the son of Nickus Brant, whose Indian name, according to Sir William Johnson, was *Aroghyadec-ka*, but which has been furnished to the author by the family as *Tehowaghwengaraghkwin*. It has been seen, from the extracts, that Nickus Brant was a Canajoharie chief of character and celebrity, between whom and Sir William a close intimacy subsisted. When called to Canajoharie upon business or pleasure, the baronet's quarters were "at Brant's house," as noted in his own diary. It is likewise well known that, after the decease of Lady Johnson (an event which occurred several years antecedent to the period of which we are now writing, and before he had won his baronetcy at Lake George), Sir William took to his home as his wife, Mary Brant, or "Miss Molly," as she was called, with whom he lived until his decease, in 1774, and by whom he had several children. This circumstance is thus mentioned by Mrs. Grant, in her delightful book already referred to: "Becoming a widower in the prime of life, he connected himself with an Indian maiden, daughter to a sachem, who possessed an uncommonly agreeable person and good understanding; and, whether ever formally married to him according to our usage or not, continued to live with him in great union and affection all his life." The baronet himself repeatedly speaks of this Indian lady in his private journals. While on his expedition to Detroit, entries occur of having received news from home, and of having written

to "Molly." He always mentioned her kindly, *ex. gr.* :

"Wednesday, Oct. 21st. Met Sir Robert Davers and Captain Etherington, who gave me a packet of letters from General Amherst. \* \* \* Captain Etherington told me Molly was delivered of a girl; that all were well at my house, where they staid two days."

But to return from these digressions. Molly, as it has already been stated, was the sister of Thay-endanegea; and both, according to the account of the London Magazine of 1776, the earliest printed testimony upon the subject, were the grandchildren of one of the Mohawk chiefs who visited England half a century before. That his father was a chief, several authorities have likewise been cited to show; to which may be added that of Allen's Biographical Dictionary, where the fact is positively asserted.\* From such a body of testimony, therefore, direct and circumstantial, it is hazarding but very little to assume, that, so far from having been of humble and plebeian origin, Joseph Brant was of the noblest descent among his nation.

Of the early youth of Joseph, there are no accounts, other than that he was very young when first upon the war-path. In one of the authorities it is stated that, having attained the age of thirteen years, he joined the warriors of his tribe under Sir William Johnson, and was present at the memorable battle of Lake George, in which the French were defeated, and their commander, the Baron Dieskau, mortally wounded. The Mohawks were led into action by their celebrated king, the brave old Hendrick, who was slain.† It was this victory which

\* President Allen is connected by marriage with the family of the late President Wheelock, and has had excellent opportunities for arriving at the probable truth.

† A council of war was called, Sept. 8. It was proposed to send a de-



aid the foundation of Sir William's military fame, and in reward for which he was created a baronet. It is reported, that in relating the particulars of this bloody engagement, the warrior acknowledged, "That this being the first action at which he was present, he was seized with such a tremour when the firing began, that he was obliged to take hold of a small sapling to steady himself; but that, after the discharge of a few volleys, he recovered the use of his limbs and the composure of his mind, so as to support the character of a brave man, of which he was exceedingly ambitious." He was, no doubt, a warrior by nature. "I like," said he once, in after-life, when the conversation was about music, "the harpsichord well, and the organ still better; but I like the drum and trumpet best of all, for they make my heart beat quick."

President Allen states that the father of 'Thayendanegea had three sons in the army of Sir William Johnson in the year 1756. Of these, Joseph was probably the youngest, since he was but thirteen at the battle of Lake George, in 1755. A young warrior, truly; but he might well have been there, even at that tender age, since, by all the accounts that have descended to us, he must have been a lad of uncommon enterprise—giving early promise of those eminent qualities which were developed in the progress of a life of various and important action.

The youthful warrior likewise accompanied Sir William during the Niagara campaign of 1759, and, in the brilliant achievements of the baronet, after the chief command had devolved upon him by the

detachment to meet the enemy. When the number was mentioned to Hendrick, he replied, "If they are to fight, they are too few; if they are to be killed, they are too many." When it was proposed to send out the detachment in three parties, Hendrick took three sticks, and said, "Put these together, and you can't break them; take them one by one, and you will do it easily." Hendrick's advice was taken, and victory was the result.—*Holmes.*

death of General Pridoux, is said to have acquitted himself with distinguished bravery. On the 24th of July, Monsieur d'Aubrey approached the fortress with a strong force, for the purpose of raising the siege. A severe engagement ensued in the open field, which resulted in the triumph of the British and provincial arms. The action was commenced with great impetuosity by the French, but Sir William was well prepared for their reception. After a spirited contest of half an hour, the French broke, and the fate of the day was decided. The flight of the French was bloody and disastrous for the space of five miles, at which distance D'Aubrey and most of his officers were captured. The Indians behaved uncommonly well on this occasion, and Brant was among them. On the following day, so vigorously did the baronet prosecute his operations, the fort was taken, with all its military supplies and about six hundred prisoners. By this blow the French were cut off from their project of keeping up a line of fortified communications with Louisiana.

The exertions of Sir William Johnson to improve the moral and social condition of his Mohawk neighbours were not the least of his praiseworthy labours among that brave and chivalrous people. Having aided in the building of churches and locating missionaries among them, at the request of the Rev. Mr. Kirkland and others, he selected numbers of young Mohawks, and caused them to be sent to the "Moor Charity School," established at Lebanon, Connecticut, under the immediate direction of the Rev. Doctor Eleazer Wheelock, afterward President of Dartmouth College, of which, by its transfer, that school became the foundation. Among the youths thus selected was young Thayendanegea, the promising brother of "Miss Molly."

The precise year in which he was thus placed under the charge of Dr. Wheelock cannot now be ascertained. The school itself was opened for the

reception of Indian pupils, avowedly as an Indian missionary school, in 1748; the first Indian scholar, Samson Occum, having been received into it five years before.\* It has been asserted that Joseph was received into the school in July, 1761, at which time he must have been nineteen years old, and a memorandum of his preceptor to that effect has been cited. According to Dr. Stewart, however, he was a mere boy when first sent to Lebanon; and it will presently appear that the entry of Dr. Wheelock was most probably incorrect. He was doubtless at the school in that year, and very likely on the point of leaving it; since, three years afterward, he will be found settled in his own native valley, and engaged in very different pursuits.

The correspondence between Doctor Wheelock and Sir William was quite active at this period upon the subject of the school, and Joseph was himself employed as an agent to procure recruits for it. Thus, in a letter from the baronet to the doctor, dated November 17, 1761, he says, "I have given in charge to Joseph to speak in my name to any good boys he may see, and encourage to accept the generous offers now made to them; which he promised to do, and return as soon as possible, and that without horses." The probability, however, is, that he went to the school immediately after his return from the Niagara campaign, in 1759. No doubt he had left it before Sir William wrote the letter just cited, and, being engaged upon some Indian mission, had been instructed to interest himself among the people of the forest in behalf of that institution. That he did not himself remain long at the school, is conceded. According to Dr. Stewart, moreover, he made

\* The success of the doctor with him was a strong inducement for establishing the school. Occum was ordained to the ministry in 1759, and was subsequently located as a missionary among the Oneidas, to which place he was accompanied by Sir William himself. The Indian preacher afterward compiled and published a volume of devotional hymns.

but little proficiency in his studies at this seminary, having "learned to read but very indifferently in the New Testament, and to write but very little." The fact, however, that the Rev. Charles Jeffrey Smith, a missionary to the Mohawks, took Thayendanegea as an interpreter in the year following (1762), and gave him an excellent character, presents a much more favourable idea of his progress in learning while at the school; as also does the following passage from the memoirs of his teacher: "Sir William Johnson, superintendent of Indian affairs in North America, was very friendly to the design of Mr. Wheelock, and at his request sent to the school, at various times, several boys of the Mohawks to be instructed. One of them was the since celebrated Joseph Brant, who, *after receiving his education*, was particularly noticed by Sir William Johnson, and employed by him in public business. He has been very useful in advancing the civilization of his countrymen, and, for a long time past, has been a military officer of extensive influence among the Indians in Upper Canada." Accompanying Thayendanegea to the "Moor School" were several other Mohawk youths, and two Delawares had entered the school before him. The name of one of Thayendanegea's companions was William, a half-breed, who was supposed to be the son of his patron. Only two of the number remained to receive the honours of the future college. The others, impatient of the restraints of a school, and delighting more in the chase of game than of literary honours, returned to their hunter state in about two years. Thayendanegea probably left the school at the same time. He used, when speaking of the school, to relate with much pleasantry an anecdote of "William," who, as he affirmed, was one day ordered by Mr. Wheelock's son to saddle his horse. The lad refused, alleging that, as he was a gentleman's son, the performance of such a menial office

would be out of character. "Do you know," inquired the younger Wheelock, "what a gentleman is?" "I do," replied William: "a gentleman is a person who keeps racehorses and drinks Madeira wine, and that is what neither you nor your father do—therefore, saddle the horse yourself!"

The exigences of the frontier country did not allow Thayendanegea to remain long associated in the mission with Mr. Smith. He was again called out upon the war-path, as appears by the following paragraph in one of the Rev. Mr. Kirkland's\* earliest reports to the Rev. Dr. Wheelock, in regard to the Christian missionaries and teachers employed among the Six Nations:

"Joseph Brant, a Mohawk Indian, and of a family of distinction in that nation, was educated by Mr. Wheelock, and was so well accomplished, that the Rev. Charles Jeffrey Smith (a young gentleman, who, out of love to Christ and the souls of men, devotes his life, and such a fortune as is sufficient to support himself and an interpreter, wholly to this glorious service) took him for his interpreter when he went on his mission to the Mohawks, now three years ago. But the war breaking out at that time between the back Indians and the English, Mr. Smith was obliged to return; but Joseph tarried, and went out with a company against the Indians, and was useful in the war, in which he behaved so much like the Christian and the soldier, that he gained great esteem. He now lives in a decent manner, and endeavours to teach his poor brethren the things of God, in which his own heart seems much engaged

\* The Rev. Samuel Kirkland, father of President Kirkland, late of Harvard University, and for more than forty years a missionary among the Six Nations, chiefly the Oneidas. He was the son of the Rev. Daniel Kirkland, of Norwich, Connecticut, where he was born in 1742. He first commenced his labours among the Senecas in 1766, having learned the Mohawk language while in college. He was often employed by the government in various Indian transactions, and died at Paris, Oneida County, in March, 1808.

His house is an asylum for the missionaries in that wilderness."

Neither the particular war in which the young chief was then engaged, nor the time of the campaign, is noted in the foregoing extract. A passage contained in a letter from Sir William Johnson to Dr. Wheelock, however, dated April 25th, 1764, affords a clew to the desired information: "J— is just returned from an expedition against the enemy, who have abandoned their towns, of which three were burned, with four villages, consisting, in all, of about two hundred houses, built with squared logs, and vast quantities of corn, &c. Parties are now in pursuit of the enemy." It was, therefore, early in the spring of 1764 that young Brant returned from the war, then brought to a close. The war itself could have been none else than that against the great Ottoway chief Pontiac, who, in 1763, undertook to dispossess the English of the country of the lakes, then recently acquired by conquest from the French. Pontiac was by far the most formidable chief with whom the English colonists had had to contend since the fall of Philip. He combined the great Indian tribes of the northwest almost as one man, and in 1763 led thirty-six chiefs, with their trains of warriors, against Detroit, after having carried several of the remote western posts. A well-concerted stratagem, timely discovered to the British commander by an Indian woman, had wellnigh placed that important position within his power also. Foiled in the plan of obtaining admission by stratagem and putting the garrison to death, Pontiac laid siege to the fort, attacking it with great fury. It was besieged for a long time, as also were the fort at Niagara and Fort Pitt. It was not until the autumn of 1763 that the English were able to throw succours into Detroit, in accomplishing which enterprise some of the Mohawk warriors were engaged. There had been several severe engagements

with Pontiac's warriors in the course of that summer, in which the Indians attached to the English cause had fought with great bravery. The vessel carrying the supplies to Detroit was likewise furiously attacked by a force of 350 Indians, in boats on the lake, but they were bravely repulsed. In what particular battles, during this contest, Thayendanegea was engaged, does not appear. But he was in the war, and his courageous and enterprising spirit offered the best evidence that he neither avoided the post of danger, nor failed to reach it for want of activity. Having invested Detroit for a twelvemonth, the French, moreover, with whom he was in alliance, having lost their power in America, Pontiac sued for peace on the approach of General Bradstreet from Pittsburg, at the head of 3000 men.\*

In 1765, Thayendanegea, having been previously married to the daughter of an Oneida chief, was settled at Canajoharie, as appears by a letter from the Rev. Theophilus Chamberlain, one of the missionaries to the Six Nations, to the Rev. Dr. Wheelock, written from Canajoharie, and dated July 17th of that year.

Three years afterward, he was still leading a peaceful life at the same place, as we learn from the following entry in the journal of Mr. Ralph Wheelock, who had been sent to Oneida to relieve Mr. Kirkland, that gentleman being sick :

"*March 18, 1768.* At my old friend, Joseph Brant's, I met one of the chiefs of the Onondagas (who is, by way of eminence, called the Wise Man) on his return to his tribe, with his wife and child ; and, by Joseph Brant's help, I was able to discourse with him, and delivered my message to his nation."

During the three years next ensuing, no certain information has been obtained respecting his course of life. As the country was at peace, however, he

\* Pontiac was assassinated in 1779, during a war between the Ioways and Ottoways. He was a great man.

was probably leading a life of repose at home save when acting, upon occasional business visits among the Indians, under the direction of Sir William Johnson. It is very probable, moreover, that he was at that time connected with the English Episcopal Missions to the Mohawks, commenced in the Mohawk Valley so early as 1702, and continued down to the beginning of the Revolutionary war. Having been employed as an interpreter by one of the missionaries several years before, and as the Rev. Dr. John Ogilvie, the predecessor of Dr. Barclay in that mission, was engaged, in the year 1769, in revising, extending, and reprinting the Mohawk Prayer Book, embracing additional passages of Scripture, some occasional prayers, and Indian versifications of several psalms, it is highly probable that Thayendanegea was employed as an assistant in that labour, since he was partial to exercises of that description.

In the year 1771, the Rev. Mr. Stewart conducted a school at Fort Hunter, thirty miles below Canajoharie. A venerable friend of the author, yet living in Albany,\* states, that being a pupil in Dr. Stewart's school at about that time, he had opportunities of seeing Thayendanegea at that place frequently, and formed an acquaintance with him, which continued, interrupted only by the war of the Revolution, until the death of the warrior. He then formed an excellent opinion of the young chief in regard to talents and good disposition. It is believed that, from the shrewdness of his sister Molly, and the influential position which she occupied in the family of Sir William, added to his own talents and sagacity, he was much employed at home by the baronet, in the discharge of the multifarious duties incident to his important official station. He was also frequently engaged upon distant embassies among the

\* Douw Fonda, Esq., son of Captain Jelles Fonda, who was an active and very efficient officer, both in the Indian and military service, under Sir William Johnson.



western tribes, and talents and tact as a diplomatist of the forest were qualities pertaining to his character through life.

Thayendanegea was thrice married, having been twice a widower before the war of the Revolution. His first two wives were of the Oneida tribe. The Reverend Dr. Stewart states that he first became acquainted with him in the winter of 1771. He was then still residing at Canajoharie, on visiting which village, the doctor says he found him comfortably settled, in a good house, with everything necessary for the use of his family, consisting of a wife, in the last stage of consumption, and two children, a son and a daughter. His wife died some time afterward, on which Thayendanegea repaired to Fort Hunter, and resided with the doctor for a considerable length of time. Doctor Stewart was then engaged upon another revision of the Indian Prayer Book, and Joseph assisted him in making various additional translations. He likewise assisted the doctor in translating a portion of the Acts of the Apostles, and a short history of the Bible, together with a brief explanation of the Church catechism, into the Mohawk language.\*

It is stated on the same authority, that in the winter of 1772-3, he applied to Dr. Stewart to marry him to the half-sister of his deceased wife, but the divine refused the application, on the ground of the forbidden relationship. Brant, however, vindicated the act, much in the manner of white widowers desirous of forming the like connexion; arguing, very naturally, that the fact of the relationship would secure a greater degree of tenderness and care for his children. Still the Episcopal minister persisted in

\* Dr. Stewart states that he was directed to repair to New-York and publish these books at the expense of the Missionary Society, but was prevented by the breaking out of the war. He took the MSS. to Canada, and afterward delivered them to Colonel Daniel Claus, by whom they were taken to England; but it does not appear that they were ever published.

his refusal, and a less scrupulous German ecclesiastic gratified his desire by performing the ceremony.

It was at about the same period of his life that Thayendanegea became the subject of serious religious impressions. He attached himself to the Church; was a chastened and regular communicant at the celebration of the Eucharist; and from his serious deportment, and the anxiety he had ever manifested to civilize and Christianize his people great hopes were entertained from his future exertions in that cause. No doubt has ever been entertained of his sincerity at that time; and it has been attributed to the counteracting influences of the dreadful trade of war, in which it was his fortune afterward again so actively to become engaged, that those manifestations of Christian utility were effaced; entirely eradicated they were not, as will be seen at a subsequent stage of the career of this remarkable man.

In compliance with Indian custom, he selected a bosom friend, during that period of his life we are now contemplating, in the person of a Lieutenant Provost, a half-pay officer residing in the Mohawk Valley. Those unacquainted with Indian usages are not probably aware of the intimacy, or the importance attached to this relationship. The selected friend is, in fact, the counterpart of the one who chooses him, and the attachment often becomes romantic; they share each other's secrets, and are participants of each other's joys and sorrows. As the Revolutionary troubles were approaching, Lieutenant Provost was ordered to his regiment and upon foreign service, greatly to the regret of the future chieftain. His lamentations attracted the attention of Dr. Stewart, who advised him to select another friend, offering to stand as a substitute himself. But no: the young chief declared that such a transfer of his affections could not take place. He was Captain John's friend, and another such friend could not

be in existence at the same time. Lieutenant Provost had been ordered to the West Indies; and, in order to assure him of the strength and constancy of his attachment, Thayendanegea procured an entire Indian costume of the richest furs he could obtain, which was sent to him in Jamaica. This incident has been detailed, not because in itself of any particular importance, but as disclosing an excellent trait of character, besides illustrating a feature of Indian life which may not be familiar to all.\* Other events will now occupy the attention of the reader, in which the Mohawk chieftain will be but one of many actors, though seldom an obscure one.

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## CHAPTER II.

It has been usually asserted by historians, that the first blood in the war of the American Revolution was shed at Lexington, but such is not the fact. The Boston massacre of 1770 was the beginning of that contest, so fearful in its commencement, so doubtful in its progress, and so splendid in its results. The storm had even then been gathering for several years, and the public mind had become exceedingly feverish, not only in regard to the conduct of the parent government, but in respect to the language and bearing of the officers of the crown stationed in the colonies. When, moreover, the people of Boston were subjected to what they considered a still greater indignity, by the quartering of soldiers among them, the irritation was such that but a small degree of forecast was necessary

\* A similar custom prevailed among the ancient Greeks. Two young warriors often assumed this obligation of brotherhood, which was taken with peculiar ceremonies, and maintained inviolate through life.

to the perception of an approaching explosion. The affair at Gray's Ropewalk, on the 2d of March, increased the mutual exasperation; and the massacre that followed on the 5th was but the natural consequence. The first blow was then struck. The town was thrown into commotion, the drums beat to arms; and the news, with the exaggerations and embellishments incident to all occasions of alarm, spread through the country with the rapidity of lightning. Everywhere, throughout the wide extent of the old thirteen colonies, it created a strong sensation, and was received with a degree of indignant emotion which very clearly foretold that blood had only commenced flowing; and although five years intervened before the demonstration at Lexington, there were too many nervous pens and eloquent tongues in exercise to allow those feelings to subside, or to suffer the noble spirit of liberty that had been awakened to be quenched. Such stirring orations as those of Joseph Warren were not uttered in vain; and so often as the anniversary of the 5th of March returned, were the people reminded by him or by his compatriots of kindred spirit, "The voice of your brethren's blood cries to you from the ground." The admonition had its effect, and the resolutions of vengeance sank deeper and deeper into the hearts of the people, until the fulness of time should come.

Sir William Johnson was too observing and sagacious not to note the signs of the times. He saw the gathering tempest, and it is believed to have given him great uneasiness. His sympathies, according to the testimony of those who knew him, were undoubtedly with the people. He was from the body of the people himself, having been the architect of his own rank and fortunes; and those who were acquainted with, and yet survive him, represent the struggle in his bosom to have been great, between those sympathies and his own strong prin-

ciples of liberty on the one hand, and his duty to his sovereign on the other—a sovereign whom he had served long and faithfully, and who, in turn, had loaded him with princely benefactions. His domains in the Valley of the Mohawk were extensive; and his influence, through a large number of subordinate officers and a numerous tenantry, was correspondingly great. To the Indians, not only of the Six Nations, but those far in the west beyond, who had fallen within the circle of his influence after the conquest of Canada and the subjugation of Pontiac, he had been as a father, and they looked up to him with veneration. Long association with him and great respect for his character—which, from its blunt honesty, frankness, and generosity, not altogether devoid of that roughness incident to a border population, was well calculated to secure the attachment of such people—had also given to his opinions the force of legal authority among the colonists. The population, aside from the Indians, was chiefly Dutch, in the lower part of the Mohawk Valley; while in the interesting vale of the Schoharie Kill and the upper district of the Mohawk, it was composed of the descendants of the German Palatinates, who had been planted there fifty years before. It was not at that period a very intelligent population; and the name of Sir William, who had been their friend and companion in peace, and their leader in war, like that of the king, was a tower of strength. It was very natural, therefore, that their opinions upon the great political questions then agitating the country should take their complexion, for the most part, from those entertained by him. Hence, when the storm of civil war commenced, the loyalists in that valley were probably more numerous, in proportion to the whole number of the population, than in almost any other section of the northern colonies.

In connexion with the troubles which every man

of ordinary sagacity could not but perceive were fermenting, Sir William visited England for the last time in the autumn of 1773, returning in the succeeding spring. He probably came back with his loyal feelings somewhat strengthened. It was not his fortune, however, good or ill, to see the breaking out of the tempest, the near approaches of which he had been watching with an intenseness of observation corresponding with the magnitude of his own personal interests, which must necessarily be involved. He died suddenly, at Johnson Hall, on or about the 24th of June, 1774.

It was reported by his enemies—or, rather, by the enemies of the crown—that he perished by his own hand, in consequence of the clouds which he saw darkening the political sky; and such an impression is yet very generally entertained. The tradition is, that on the day of his decease he had received despatches from England, which were handed to him while sitting in court, and with which he immediately left the courthouse and walked to his own house. These despatches, it was afterward reported, contained instructions to him to use his influence with the Indians in behalf of the crown, in the event of hostilities. Another version of the tradition is, that on the day in question he had received despatches from Boston, the complexion of which, in his own mind, indicated that a civil war was near and inevitable. In such an event, he saw that he must either prove recreant to his principles, or take part against the crown; and, to avoid either alternative, it has been extensively believed that he put an end to his life. But there is no just ground for this uncharitable conclusion. It is true that he had, on the evening of the 24th, received despatches from Massachusetts, the tenour of which, by excitement, may have hastened the malady to which his system was predisposed. It was a busy day at Johnstown. The Circuit Court was in session, at which, howev

er, Sir William was not present, being engaged in holding a treaty with some of the Six Nations. In the course of his speech to the Indians on that occasion, he alluded to the despatches he had received, and stated to them that troubles were brewing between the Americans and their king, advising them not to abandon the cause of the latter, who had always been benevolent and kind to them. "Whatever may happen," said the baronet, "you must not be shaken out of your shoes."

In the afternoon of that day Sir William was taken with a fit. Colonel Johnson, his son, was absent at the Old Fort, distant nine miles. An express was sent for him, and, mounting a fleet English blood-horse, he rode for the hall with all possible haste. His horse fell dead when within three quarters of a mile of the house, having run upward of eight miles in fifteen minutes. The colonel hired the horse of some one standing by, and pushed forward to the hall. On entering the room, he found his father in the arms of a faithful domestic, who attended upon his person. He spoke to his parent, but received no answer; and in a few minutes afterward the baronet expired—of apoplexy, beyond a doubt. This was early in the evening. While the judges of the court were at supper in the village, one mile distant, a young Mohawk Indian entered their apartment and announced the event.

Sir William was succeeded in his titles and estates by his son, Sir John Johnson; but the reins of authority, as general superintendent of the Indian department, fell into the hands of the son-in-law of Sir William, Colonel Guy Johnson, who had long been in office as the assistant or deputy of the old baronet. This officer was assisted by Colonel Daniel Claus, who had likewise married a daughter of Sir William. On the decease of his father, Sir John also succeeded to his post as major-general of the militia

Of the early life of Sir John Johnson not much is known. He was not as popular as his father, being less social, and less acquainted with human nature and the springs of human action. He accompanied his father on some of his warlike expeditions, however, and probably saw considerable service. Before the Revolution commenced, Sir John married Miss Mary Watts, of the city of New-York.\*

The successors of Sir William Johnson did not possess the same degree of moral power over the population of Tryon county, Indian or white, as had been exercised by him. But they, nevertheless, derived essential aid from "Miss Molly," who was a woman of talents as well as tact, and possessing great influence among the Indians, who were her own people. Molly was, in turn, aided by the counsels and exertions of her brother, Joseph Thayendanegea, who had been much in the service of Sir William during the latter years of his life, and who, on the death of the baronet, was advanced to the post of secretary of Guy Johnson. These gentlemen, however (Sir John Johnson, Guy Johnson, and Colonel Claus), living in great splendour at, and in the neighbourhood of Johnstown, and thus allied with the family of a powerful Mohawk sachem, were still enabled to exert a decided influence, especially among the Indians. They were likewise in close official and political alliance with Colonel John Butler, an opulent and influential gentleman of that county, and his son, Walter N. Butler—names rendered memorable, if nothing worse, by association with certain bloody transactions, which will be developed in the progress of the present volume.

But, notwithstanding all their influence—and no family in America had ever been regarded with greater deference by the surrounding population than that of the Johnsons—they were not long in discovering that the principles now openly avowed

\* Sister to the late venerable John Watts, who died in September, 1836



in Massachusetts could not be confined within the limits of that colony, or even of New-England. Though less openly proclaimed, yet, as the waters of a fountain ooze through the earth unseen until they have gathered force enough to break the surface and gush forth, so was it with the principles of liberty sent abroad by "the Boston rebels," as they worked their way up the valley of the Mohawk; and the successors of Sir William Johnson were not long in discovering that, although they could still count among their retainers a large number of adherents, the leaven of civil liberty had been more deeply at work than they had desired, or probably supposed. The celebrated "Boston Port Bill," enacted in consequence of the destruction of the tea in that harbour in 1773, had gone into operation only a month preceding the death of Sir William; and, in the month subsequent to his decease, a public meeting was held in the Palatine district, warmly seconding the proposition of Massachusetts for the assembling of a General Congress, for mutual consultation and counsel in the existing posture of the political affairs of the colonies. The original draught of the proceedings of that meeting is yet in existence, in the handwriting of Colonel Hendrick Frey, a patriot who lived to a great age, and is but recently deceased. They breathed the genuine spirit of freedom, and, as a declaration of rights, are well entitled to a place among the fervid papers of that day, which were so powerful in their operation upon the public mind. After setting forth the concern and sorrow felt by the meeting at the shutting up the port of Boston, and the tendency of the acts of Parliament for raising a revenue in the American colonies, which they held to be an abridgment of the privileges of the people, the meeting resolved, 1st. That they recognised the king as their lawful sovereign, would bear true faith and allegiance to him, and would, with their lives and fortunes, sup-

port and maintain him on the throne of his ancestors, and the *just* dependance of the colonies upon the crown of Great Britain. 2d. That they considered it their greatest happiness to be governed by British laws, and would pay cheerful submission to them, as far as they could do so consistently with the security of the constitutional rights of English subjects, "*which were so sacred that they could not permit them to be violated.*" 3d. That all taxes without their own consent, or the consent of their representatives, were unjust and unconstitutional; and the acts of Parliament upon the subject were denounced, as obvious encroachments upon the rights and liberties of British subjects. 4th. That the act closing the port of Boston was arbitrary, and oppressive to the inhabitants, whom they considered to be suffering in the common cause. 5th. That they would unite with their brethren elsewhere in relieving the necessities of the suffering poor in Boston, and in "anything tending to support our rights and liberties." 6th. Approving of the calling of a General Congress, and of the five members who had already been appointed by their brethren of New-York. 7th. That they would abide by such regulations as might be agreed upon by the said Congress. 8th. Appointing a committee of correspondence for that district,\* and recommending the other districts of the county to do the same.

The Congress met in Philadelphia in September, 1774, and after adopting a declaration of rights, and setting forth wherein those rights had been violated, they agreed upon an address to the king, exhibiting the grievances of the colonies, and praying for his majesty's interposition for their removal. An address to the people of British America was likewise adopted, together with an appeal to the people of Great Britain, as also a letter to the people of Canada. The Congress then adjourned, to meet again in

\* Christopher P. Yates, Isaac Paris, and John Frey.

May, 1775. The papers put forth from that august assembly had a powerful effect upon the public mind. They were also highly extolled by Lord Chatham in the House of Peers, who declared, that "In all his reading and observation—and it had been his favourite study, for he had read Thucydides, and had studied and admired the master states of the world—for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, under such complication of circumstances, no nation or body of men could stand in preference to the General Congress at Philadelphia."

The Provincial Assembly of New-York was the only legislature in the colonies that withheld its approbation from the proceedings of the Congress—the loyalists of that colony being, from a variety of causes, more numerous and influential than in any other of the provinces. In the Valley of the Mohawk they were particularly zealous and active; and the Johnson family, with their associates, were ceaseless in their efforts to divert the revolutionary spirit, which was but too obviously abroad.

But, like the bitter plant in the vegetable pharmacopœia, the principles of liberty only thrive more rapidly beneath a pressure; and the spark which had been struck in the Palatine district they not only found it impossible to extinguish, but a measure of their own adoption had the effect of kindling it into a blaze; and, once kindled, the fire of liberty is as inextinguishable as the Greek.

In Massachusetts, however, other menacing measures besides the passage of resolutions were adopted towards the close of 1774. Governor Gage having issued writs for the holding of a General Assembly, in October, afterward countermanded the writs by proclamation. But the new members, to the number of ninety, maintaining the illegality of the proclamation, met notwithstanding. Neither the governor, nor any substitute, appearing to complete

their organization, they formed themselves into a Provincial Congress, and adjourned to Concord. From Concord, after some collisions with the governor, they removed to Cambridge; and in the course of their sittings measures were adopted for the public defence, and the organization of minute men, to the number of twelve thousand. Connecticut and New-Hampshire were requested to augment the number to twenty thousand. Governor Gage complained bitterly that the edicts of this Congress were implicitly obeyed throughout the country. Before the year had expired, a royal proclamation was received, prohibiting the exportation of military stores to America. This document caused general indignation. In Rhode Island and New-Hampshire the people at once seized upon the arms and ordnance in their public places and garrisons, and other corresponding measures were adopted by the colonial authorities. In the more southern provinces signs of jealousy and discontent began to be more unequivocally manifested. A meeting of the military officers of Virginia, under Lord Dunmore, was held, at which resolutions, professing loyalty and looking rebellion, were adopted. The Provincial Congress of Maryland approved of the proceedings of the General Congress; and in South Carolina, Judge Dayton, in a memorable charge to a grand-jury at Camden, set the ball in motion in that colony. Doctor Franklin, being in London, was required to attend a meeting of the Committee for Plantations, to whom had been referred the petition of the Massachusetts Assembly for the removal of Governor Hutchinson and Lieutenant-governor Oliver. He supported the petition, and was, the day after, dismissed by the crown from the office of postmaster for the colonies.

It may readily be conceived that an excitement thus increasing from day to day, and thus rapidly extending the circle of its influence, would not long

be confined to measures of remonstrance and petition. Most unfortunate was it, therefore, that just at this conjuncture, while all sagacious men saw by the shadows what events were coming, and all good men were solicitous for the preservation of the character and augmentation of the physical strength of the country, a small band of bad ones adopted a course well fitted to awaken the jealousy of the whole Indian race, and exasperate a portion of them to the highest pitch of anger and revenge. It was evident that the colonies were about to measure swords with one of the strongest powers in Christendom, and to strike for freedom. True wisdom, therefore, required that the clouds of Indians darkening more than a thousand miles of our border, and in the North forming an intermediate power between our own settlements and the country of the anticipated foe, should be at least conciliated into neutrality, if not courted into an alliance. But a contrary course was taken by some of the frontier-men of Virginia, and a hostile feeling awakened by a succession of outrages, unprovoked and more cruel than savages, as such, could have committed. The well-informed reader will at once anticipate that reference is now had to the hostilities upon the north-western frontier of Virginia, commonly known as *CRESAP'S WAR*, from the agency of a subaltern officer of that name, whose wanton cruelty provoked it, and one striking event of which has rendered every American ear familiar with the name of *LOGAN*, the celebrated "Mingo Chief."\*

The wars and the conquests of the Six Nations had been the cause of transplanting many families, among whom were some of distinction, over the countries subjected to their arms. Among these was the family of Logan, the son of *Shikellimus*, a distinguished Cayuga sachem, who had removed

\* Mingo, Mengwe, Maquas, and Iroquois, are all only different names applied to the Six Nations.

from the particular location of his own tribe to Shamokin, or Canestoga, within the borders of Pennsylvania, where he executed the duties of principal chief of those of the Six Nations residing on the Susquehanna. He was a man of consequence and humanity, and one of the earliest to encourage the introduction of Christianity by Count Zinzendorf. He was a great friend to the celebrated James Logan, who accompanied William Penn on his last voyage to America, and who subsequently became distinguished in the colony for his learning and benevolence. Hence the name of the famous son of Shikellimus, so closely identified with the scenes about to be described.

Logan had removed from his father's lodge at Shamokin to the Shawanese country on the Ohio, where he had become a chief. He was a friend of the white men, and one of the noblest of his race; not only by right of birth, but in consideration of his own character. During the Indian wars connected with the contest with France, which were continued for a considerable time after the conquest of Canada, he took no part, save in the character of a peacemaker.

The circumstances which transformed this good and just man from a sincere friend into a bitter foe, will appear in the following narrative: It happened, in April or May of 1774, that a party of land-jobbers, while engaged in exploring lands near the Ohio River, were robbed, or pretended to have been robbed, of a number of horses by the Indians. The leader of the land-jobbers was Captain Michael Cresap. Alarmed at the depredation upon their property, or affecting to be so, Cresap and his party determined to make war upon the Indians, without investigation, and irrespective, as a matter of course, of the guilt or innocence of those whom they should attack. On the same day, falling in with two Indians, Cresap and his men killed them. Hearing,

moreover, of a still larger party of Indians encamped at some distance below the site of the present town of Wheeling, the white barbarians proceeded thither, and, after winning the confidence of the sons of the forest by pretended friendship, fell upon and slaughtered several of their number, among whom were a part of the family of the white man's friend—Logan.

Soon after this atrocious affair, another followed, equally flagitious. There was a white settlement on the east bank of the Ohio, about thirty miles above Wheeling, among the leading men of which were one named Daniel Greathouse, and another named Tomlinson. A party of Indians, assembled on the opposite bank of the river, having heard of the murders committed by Cresap, determined to avenge their death, of which resolution Greathouse was admonished by a friendly squaw, who advised him to escape, while he was reconnoitring for the purpose of ascertaining their numbers. He had crossed the river with thirty-two men under his command, and secreted them for the purpose of falling upon the Indians; but finding that they were too strong for him, he changed his plan of operations, recrossed the river, and, with a show of friendship, invited them over to an entertainment. Without suspicion of treachery, the Indians accepted the invitation, and, while engaged in drinking—some of them to a state of intoxication—they were set upon and murdered in cold blood. Here, again, fell two more of the family of Logan—a brother and sister, the latter being in a situation of peculiar delicacy. The Indians who had remained on the other side of the river, hearing the noise of the treacherous attack, flew to their canoes to rescue their friends. This movement had been anticipated; and sharp-shooters, stationed in ambuscade, shot numbers of them in their canoes, and compelled the others to return.

These dastardly transactions were enacted on the 24th of May. They were soon followed by another

er outrage, which, though of less magnitude, was not less atrocious in its spirit, while it was even more harrowing to the feelings of the Indians. The event referred to was the murder, by a white man, of an aged and inoffensive Delaware chief, named the *Bald Eagle*. He had for years consorted more with the white people than his own, visiting those most frequently who entertained him best. At the time of his murder he had been on a visit to the fort at the north of the Kanhawa, and was killed while alone, paddling his canoe. The man who committed the murder, it was said, had been a sufferer at the hands of the Indians; but he had never been injured by the object upon whom he wreaked his vengeance. After tearing the scalp from his head, the white savage placed the body in a sitting posture in the canoe, and sent it adrift down the stream. The voyage of the dead chief was observed by many, who supposed him living, and upon one of his ordinary excursions. When, however, the deed became known, his nation were not slow in avowals of vengeance. Equally exasperated, at about the same time, were the Shawanese against the whites, by the murder of one of their favourite chiefs, *Silver Heels*, who had, in the kindest manner, undertaken to escort several white traders across the woods from the Ohio to Albany, a distance of nearly two hundred miles.

The consequence of these repeated outrages, perpetrated by white barbarians, was the immediate commencement of an Indian war, the first leader of which was Logan, who, with a small party of only eight warriors, made a sudden and unexpected descent upon a Muskingum settlement, with complete success. In the course of the summer great numbers of men, women, and children fell victims to the tomahawk and scalping-knife. Logan, however, though smarting under a keen sense of his own wrongs, set his face against the practice of putting



prisoners to the torture, so far as he could. In one instance, he so instructed a prisoner doomed to run the guantlet, as to enable him to escape without receiving essential injury. In another case, with his own hand he severed the cord which bound a prisoner to the stake, and by his influence procured his adoption into an Indian family.

To punish these atrocities, provoked, as all authorities concur in admitting, by the whites, a vigorous campaign was undertaken by the Governor of Virginia, Lord Dunmore, with a force of between two and three thousand men. Eleven hundred of these provincials mostly riflemen, and comprising much of the chivalry of Virginia, constituting the left wing, were intrusted to the command of General Andrew Lewis, with instructions to march direct for Point Pleasant, at the mouth of the Great Kanhawa; while his lordship, proceeding with the right wing, was to cross the Ohio at a higher point, and fall upon the Indian towns in their rear. For reasons never satisfactorily explained, although the cause of some controversy at the time, there was a failure of the expected co-operation on the part of Lord Dunmore.

General Lewis commenced his march on the 11th of September. His course was direct, through a trackless wilderness, one hundred and sixty miles, over which all the supplies of the army were to be transported on pack-horses. The march was very slow and tedious, occupying nineteen days. Arrived at or near the junction of the Kanhawa with the Ohio, Lewis waited eight or nine days to obtain tidings from Lord Dunmore, but heard not a syllable.

Early on the morning of the 10th of October, two of Lewis's scouts, who were about a mile in advance, were fired upon by a large body of Indians; one of the scouts was killed, and the other escaped to camp with the intelligence. It was yet half an

hour to sunrise, and instant dispositions were made to move forward and attack. Just as the sun was rising, the Indians, who were advancing upon a like errand, were met, and an engagement ensued, which continued with greater or less severity through the day. The Virginians had bivouacked upon a point of land between the two rivers, giving the Indians an important advantage of position, inasmuch as, if defeated, retreat would be impossible for the former, while the latter could fly at their pleasure. But such was not the purpose of the Indians. Their numbers have been variously stated from eight to fifteen hundred, consisting of Shawanese, Delawares, Mingoos, Wyandots, Cayugas, and several other tribes, led in chief by Logan, assisted by other celebrated chiefs, among whom were *Cornstock*, *Ellenipsico* (his son), and the *Red Eagle*.

The onset was impetuous on both sides. Colonel Charles Lewis led the right of the Virginians, and was in advance. He fell almost at the first fire, mortally wounded, and shortly afterward expired, having walked back to his own camp. The Virginians, like the Indians, sought every advantage by fighting from the shelter of trees and bushes; but in the first part of the engagement the advantages were with the Indians, and two of the Virginia regiments, after severe loss, especially in officers, were compelled to give way. Colonel Fleming, who commanded the left, though severely wounded, in the beginning of the action, by two balls through his arm and another through the breast, bravely kept the field for some time, cheering his men, and, urging them not to lose an inch of ground, directed them to outflank the enemy. But the assault of the Indians was vigorous, and their fire so severe, that the left, like the right, was yielding, when, at the most critical moment, Colonel Field's regiment was brought with great spirit and resolution into the action, by which timely movement the fortunes of the

lay were retrieved. The impetuosity of the Indians was checked, and they were in turn forced to retreat, falling back to avail themselves of a rude breastwork of logs and brushwood, which they had taken the precaution to construct for the occasion. Colonel Field was killed at the moment his gallant regiment had changed the aspect of the battle, and he was succeeded by Captain Isaac Shelby, afterward the brave and hardy old Governor of Kentucky.

The Indians made a valiant stand at their breastwork, defending their position until nearly nightfall. For several hours every attempt to dislodge them was unsuccessful, the savages fighting like men who had not only their soil and homes to protect, but deep wrongs to avenge. "The voice of the mighty Cornstock was often heard during the day, above the din of battle, calling out to his warriors, 'Be strong! Be strong!' And when, by the repeated charge of the Virginians, some of his warriors began to waver, he is said to have sunk his tomahawk into the head of a coward who was attempting to fly."

The action had continued extremely hot until past twelve o'clock, after which it was abated at intervals, though a scattering fire was kept up most of the time during the day. Towards night, finding that each successive attack upon the line of the Indians in front but weakened his own force, without making any perceptible impression upon the Indians, and rightly judging that, if the latter were not routed before dark, the contest must be resumed under at least doubtful circumstances on the following day, Lewis made a final attempt to throw a body of troops into the rear. Three companies were detached upon this service, led by Captain Shelby. The ground favoured the enterprise. Availing themselves of the tall weeds and grass upon the bank of a creek flowing into the Kanhawa, those companies passed the flank of the Indian ranks unobserved, and, falling vigorously upon their rear, drove them from their

lines with precipitation. Night came on, and the Indians, supposing that re-enforcements of the Virginians had arrived, fled across the Ohio, and continued their retreat to the Scioto. They had not the satisfaction of taking many scalps—the bodies of a few stragglers only falling into their possession. In the official account, it was stated that they scalped numbers of their own warriors to prevent the Virginians from doing it. Of those Indians first killed, the Virginians scalped upward of twenty. The loss of the Indians was never known. It must, however, have been severe; since, in addition to the killed and wounded borne away, numbers of the slain were thrown into the river, and thirty-three of their warriors were found dead upon the field on the following day. The loss of the Virginians was likewise severe. Two of their colonels were killed, four captains, many subordinate officers, and between fifty and sixty privates, besides a much larger number wounded.\*

Arrived at Chilicothe, a council of the Indians was convened to debate upon the question what was next to be done. Cornstock, it was said, had been opposed to giving battle at Point Pleasant, but had resolved to do his best on being overruled in council. Having been defeated, as he had anticipated, he demanded of the council, "*What shall we do now? The Long Knives are coming upon us by two routes. Shall we turn out and fight them?*" No response being made to the question, he continued, "*Shall we kill all our squaws and children, and then fight until we are*

\* Doddridge states the number of killed at 75, and of wounded at 140. In the estimate given in the text, Thatcher has been followed. It is stated by Drake, that a stratagem was resorted to in this action by the Virginians, similar to one that had been practised in the early New-England war of the Indians at Pawtucket. The Virginians, concealing themselves behind trees, would hold out their hats from behind and draw the fire of the Indians; the hat being instantly dropped, the Indian warrior who had brought it down, supposing that he had killed the owner, would rush forward to secure the scalp of his supposed victim, only to fall beneath an unexpected tomahawk.

*all killed ourselves?"* As before, all were silent; whereupon Cornstock struck his tomahawk into the war-post standing in the midst of the council, and remarked, with emphasis, "*Since you are not inclined to fight, I will go and make peace.*" Saying which, he repaired to the camp of Lord Dunmore, who, having descended the Ohio, was now approaching the Scioto.

Meantime, General Lewis, having buried his dead and made the necessary dispositions for an advance into the heart of the Indian country, moved forward in pursuit of the enemy, resolved upon his extermination. He was soon afterward met by a counter-order from Lord Dunmore, which he disregarded; and it was not until the governor visited Lewis in his own camp that a reluctant obedience was exacted. Meantime the negotiation proceeded, but under circumstances of distrust on the part of the Virginians, who were careful to admit only a small number of the Indians into their encampment at any one time. The chief speaker on the part of the Indians was Cornstock, who did not fail to charge the whites with being the sole cause of the war, enumerating the provocations which the Indians had received, and dwelling with peculiar force upon the murders committed in the family of Logan.\* This lofty chief himself refused to appear at the council. He was in favour of peace, but his proud spirit scorned to ask for it; and he remained in his cabin, brooding in melancholy silence over his own wrongs.

Of so much importance was his name considered by Lord Dunmore, however, that a special messen-

\* Cornstock was a truly great man. Colonel W. lson, who was present at the interview between the chief and Lord Dunmore, thus speaks of the chieftain's bearing on the occasion: "When he arose he was in no wise confused or daunted, but spoke in a distinct and audible voice, without stammering or repetition, and with peculiar emphasis. His looks, while addressing Dunmore, were truly grand and majestic, yet graceful and attractive. I have heard the first orators in Virginia, Patrick Henry and Richard Henry Lee, but never have I heard one whose powers of delivery surpassed those of Cornstock."

ger was despatched to ascertain whether he would accede to the articles of peace. This messenger was Colonel John Gibson, an officer in Dunmore's army, and afterward a man of some distinction. The "Mingo Chief" did not dissent from the terms, but gave not his sanction without an eloquent rehearsal of his grievances, relating in full the circumstances of the butchery of his own entire family, to avenge which atrocities he had taken up the hatchet. His conference with Gibson took place in a solitary wood, and, at its close, he charged him with the celebrated speech to Lord Dunmore, which has become familiar wherever the English language is spoken :

"I appeal to any white man to say if he ever entered Logan's cabin hungry, and he gave him not meat; if ever he came cold and naked, and he clothed him not. During the course of the last long and bloody war, Logan remained idle in his cabin, an advocate for peace. Such was my love for the whites, that my countrymen pointed as they passed, and said, 'Logan is the friend of the white men.' I had even thought to live with you, but for the injuries of one man. Colonel Cresap, the last spring, in cold blood and unprovoked, murdered all the relations of Logan, not even sparing my women and children. There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature. This called on me for revenge. I have sought it; I have killed many; I have fully glutted my vengeance. For my country, I rejoice at the beams of peace; but do not harbour a thought that mine is the joy of fear. Logan never felt fear. He will not turn on his heel to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Logan? Not one."

This speech has ever been regarded as one of the most eloquent passages in the English language. Mr. Jefferson remarked of it, "I may challenge the whole orations of Demosthenes, and of Cicero, and

of any more eminent orator, if Europe has furnished more eminent, to produce a single passage superior to it;" and an American statesman and scholar,\* scarcely less illustrious than the author of this noble eulogium, has subscribed to that opinion.†

Lord Dunmore, it is believed, was sincerely desirous of peace—from motives of humanity, we are ready to believe, although writers of less charity have attributed his course to a more unworthy feeling. Peace, therefore, was the result of the council. But it will readily be conceded that the Indian warriors could not have retired to their respective tribes and homes with any feelings of particular friendship towards the white men. On the contrary, the pain of defeat, and the loss of the warriors who fell, were causes of irritating reflection, in addition to the original and grievous wrong they had suffered at the hands of Cresap and Greathouse. The Six Nations,

\* De Witt Clinton.

† Thatcher's Indian Biography. It is due in candour to state, that the authenticity of this celebrated speech has been questioned. On the first publication of Jefferson's Notes, the relatives and friends of Cresap made a great outcry against the charge of his having murdered Logan's family. Among other arguments in his defence, it was contended that the speech attributed to Logan had in substance, and almost in words, been delivered to the General Assembly of Virginia by a sachem named Lonan, twenty years before the date assigned to it by Mr. Jefferson. The speech referred to was discovered in the travels of Robin, a Frenchman, who visited the colonies at an early period of the war of the Revolution. The passage stands thus in the English translation of "Robin's New Travels in America:"

"Speech of the savage Lonan, in a General Assembly, as it was sent to the Governor of Virginia, anno 1754:

"Lonan will no longer oppose making the proposed peace with the white men. You are sensible he never knew what fear is; that he never turned his back in the day of battle. No one has more love for the white men than I have. The war we have had with them has been long and bloody on both sides. Rivers of blood have run on all parts, and yet no good has resulted therefrom to any. I once more repeat it—let us be at peace with these men. I will forget our injuries; the interest of my country demands it. I will forget—but difficult, indeed, is the task! Yes, I will forget that Major — cruelly and inhumanly murdered, in their canoes, my wife, my children, my father, my mother, and all my kindred. This roused me to deeds of vengeance! I was cruel in despite of myself. I will die content if my country is once more at peace. But when Lonan shall be no more, who, alas! will drop a tear to the memory of Lonan?"

as a confederacy, had not taken part in the war of the Virginia border; but many of their warriors were engaged in it, especially the Cayugas, to which nation Logan belonged, and the warriors of the Six Nations colonized on the banks of the Susquehanna, and its tributary, the Shamokin. These, it may be reasonably inferred, returned from the contest only to brood over their accumulated wrongs, and in a temper not over-inclined to cultivate the most amicable relations with the colonies. In one word, the temper of the whole Indian race, with the exception of the Oneidas, was soured by these occurrences of the year 1774: a most unfortunate circumstance, since events were then following in rapid succession, which within a twelvemonth rendered the friendship of the nations not only desirable, but an object of vast importance.

But before the direct narrative leading to those events is resumed, it may be well to end the melancholy tale of Logan, "which can be dismissed with no relief to its gloomy colours." After the peace of Chilicothe, he sank into a state of deep mental depression, declaring that life was a torment to him. He became in some measure delirious; went to Detroit, and there yielded himself to habits of intoxication. In the end, he became a victim to the same ferocious cruelty which had already rendered him a desolate man. Not long after the treaty, a party of whites murdered him as he was returning from Detroit to his own country.

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### CHAPTER III.

THE parent government did not relax its coercive measures, notwithstanding the efforts of the Earl of Chatham, now venerable for his years, who, after a



long retirement, returned into public life, to interpose his eloquence and the influence of his great name in behalf of the colonies. His lordship's address to the king for the removal of the troops from Boston was rejected by a large majority. His conciliatory bill was also rejected. On the 26th of January, Messrs. Bolland, Franklin, and Lee, the committee from the colonies charged with presenting the petition of the Continental Congress for a redress of grievances, brought the subject before the House of Commons, and after an angry debate, they refused to receive it by a decisive vote. Meantime, bills were passed, by large majorities, restraining all the thirteen colonies, excepting only New-York, Delaware, and North Carolina, from the prosecution of any foreign commerce other than with Great Britain and her dependances. The Eastern States were likewise excluded from the fisheries of Newfoundland. But notwithstanding that, from motives of policy, New-York had been thus excepted from the restraining law, its local legislature was at the same time engaged in preparing a memorial to the crown for a redress of grievances: a fact which the ministers soon learned, and not without mortification. The New-York address was a strong denunciation of the measures of the government towards the colonies, and an energetic appeal for redress. The address was presented to the House of Commons by Mr. Burke, but was never called up.

A new Provincial Congress was assembled in Massachusetts in February, which, anticipating that the parent government was preparing to strike the first blow at that colony, adopted farther means of precaution and defence, but, with great wisdom, avoiding anything like an overt act of resistance. Hostilities had wellnigh been commenced, on the 26th of February, between Salem and Danvers, by the opposition of Colonel Timothy Pickering and others to Colonel Leslie, who had been sent to Salem by

General Gage to seize some military stores which he had been informed were collecting at the former place. The interposition of Mr. Barnard, the minister of Salem, prevented the effusion of blood, and Leslie returned to Boston from a bootless errand.

The ill-starred expedition, by the direction of General Gage, to Concord, and the battle of Lexington on the 19th of April, gave the signal of a general rush to arms throughout most of the colonies. True, it was not admitted to be a formal commencement of hostilities, and the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts despatched an account of that affair to Great Britain, with depositions establishing the fact, indisputably, that both at Concord and Lexington the firing had been commenced by the king's troops, Major Pitcairn himself discharging the first shot at the former place. But although this message was accompanied by an address to the people of Great Britain with continued professions of loyalty, those professions were sent, hand in hand, with a declaration that they would "not tamely submit to the persecution and tyranny" of the existing ministry, and with an appeal to Heaven for the justice of a cause in which they were determined to die or conquer. It was very evident, therefore, that reconciliation was out of the question, and that a trial of arms was near at hand. Of course, the exasperation of the public mind was now at its height, and those who had not taken sides could no longer stand neutral.

It was at this moment, just as the Continental Congress was about to reassemble, that, most unwisely for themselves, the influential Loyalists of Tryon county undertook to make a demonstration against the proceedings of the Congress of the preceding autumn. A declaration in opposition to those proceedings was drawn up, and advantage taken of the gathering of the people at a court holden in Johnstown, to obtain signatures. The discussions ran high upon the subject, but the movers in the affair

succeeded in obtaining the names of a majority of the grand-jurors, and the greater portion of the magistracy of the county.

The Whigs in attendance at the court were indignant at this procedure, and, on returning to their respective homes, communicated their feelings to those of their neighbours who had embraced kindred principles. Public meetings were called, and committees appointed in every district, and sub-committees in almost every hamlet in the county.\* The first of these public meetings was held at the house of John Veeder, in Caughnawaga. It was attended by about three hundred people, who assembled, unarmed, for the purpose of deliberation, and also to erect a liberty-pole—the most hateful object of that day in the eyes of the Loyalists. Among the leaders of the Whigs on that occasion were SAMPSON SAMMONS, an opulent farmer residing in the neighbourhood, and two of his sons, JACOB and FREDERIC. Before they had accomplished their purpose of raising the emblem of rebellion, the proceedings were interrupted by the arrival of Sir John Johnson, accompanied by his brothers-in-law, Colonels Claus and Guy Johnson, Colonel John Butler, and a large number of their retainers, armed with swords and pistols. Guy Johnson mounted a high stoop and harangued the people at length, and with great vehemence. He dwelt upon the strength and power of the king, and attempted to show the folly of opposing his officers or revolting against the authority of his crown. A single ship, he said, would be sufficient to capture all the navy which could be set afloat by the colonies; while on the frontiers, the Indians were under his majesty's control, and his arms were sustained

\* The county of Tryon then included all the colonial settlements west and southwest of Schenectady. It was taken from Albany county in 1772, and named in honour of William Tryon, then governor of the province. In 1784 the name was changed to Montgomery. When formed, it embraced all that part of the state lying west of a line running north and south, nearly through the centre of the present county of Schoharie.

by a chain of fortified posts, extending from the Gulf of the St. Lawrence to the Mississippi. He was very virulent in his language towards the disaffected, causing their blood to boil with indignation. But they were unarmed, and for the most part unprepared, if not indisposed, to proceed to any act of violence. The orator at length became so abusive, that Jacob Sammons, no longer able to restrain himself, imprudently interrupted his discourse by pronouncing him a liar and a villain. Johnson thereupon seized Sammons by the throat, and called him a d—d villain in return. A scuffle ensued between them, during which Sammons was struck down with a loaded whip. On recovering from the momentary stupor of the blow, Sammons found one of Johnson's servants sitting astride of his body. A well-directed blow relieved him of that encumbrance, and, springing upon his feet, he threw off his coat and prepared for fight. Two pistols were immediately presented to his breast, but not discharged, as Sammons was again knocked down by the clubs of the Loyalists and severely beaten. On recovering his feet once more, he perceived that his Whig friends had all decamped, with the exception of the families of the Fondas, Veeders, and Visschers.\* The Loyalists also drew off, and Jacob Sammons returned to his father's house, bearing upon his body the first scars of the revolutionary contest in the county of Tryon.

One of the largest and most spirited of these meetings took place in Cherry Valley. It was held in the church, and the people entered into the subject with so much enthusiasm, that they took their children to the assembly, that they might imbibe lessons of patriotism, as it were, at the altar—thus hallowing the cause in which they were about to engage with the impressive sanctions of religion. The orator of the occasion was an Indian interpret-

\* Narratives of Jacob and Frederic Sammons, furnished to the author repeated references to both of which will be made hereafter.

er named Thomas Spencer ; he was rude of speech, but forcible ; and warming with his theme, spoke with such power and effect, that the story of his eloquence yet lives in the annals of tradition. The result of this meeting was the adoption of a strong counter-declaration, condemning the proceedings of the Loyalists at Johnstown, and approving, in the most unequivocal and solemn terms, of the proceedings of the Continental Congress.

These proceedings took place early in May. But from a letter addressed to the Committee of Safety of Albany, by the Committee of the Palatine District, on the 18th of that month, it appears that the Johnsons, and their powerful confederates in the Mohawk District, succeeded, by threats, intimidation, and an array of military strength, in preventing the adoption of a corresponding declaration by the Whigs. The committee farther notified their friends in Albany, that Sir John Johnson was fortifying the Baronial Hall, by planting several swivels around it ; and he had paraded parts of the regiment of militia which he commanded, on the day previous, for the purpose of intimidation, as it was conjectured. It was likewise reported that the Scotch Highlanders, settled in large numbers in and about Johnstown, who were Roman Catholics, had armed themselves to the number of one hundred and fifty, ready to aid in the suppression of any popular outbreaks in favour of the growing cause of liberty.

Strong suspicions were early entertained that the Johnsons, Butlers, and Colonel Claus, were endeavouring to alienate the good-will of the Indians from the colonists, and prepare them, in the event of open hostilities, to take up the hatchet against them. Thayendanagea, alias Joseph Brant, as heretofore mentioned, was now the secretary of Colonel Guy Johnson, the superintendent, and his activity was ceaseless. Notwithstanding his former friendship for Mr. Kirkland<sup>d</sup>, the faithful missionary to the One-

idas, Thayendanega was apprehensive that his influence would be exerted to alienate the Indians from the interests of the crown, and attach them to those of the colonists. The wily chief, accordingly, attempted to obtain the removal of Mr. Kirkland from his station; and at his instigation a dissolute sachem of the Oneidas preferred charges against the minister to Guy Johnson, the superintendent. A correspondence took place between Johnson and Mr. Kirkland upon the subject, in which the latter sustained himself with force and dignity. The Oneida nation, moreover, rallied to his support, almost to a man; so that the superintendent was obliged, for the time, to relinquish the idea of his forcible removal.

Justice, however, both to Brant and Guy Johnson, requires it to be stated, that the vigilant eyes of the Bostonians had already been directed to the importance of securing an interest among the Indians of the Six Nations, in anticipation of whatever events were to happen. To this end, a correspondence was opened through Mr. Kirkland, even with the Mohawks, by the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, before the affair of Lexington and Concord.

There were at that time dwelling at Stockbridge, in the western part of Massachusetts, a remnant of the Mohickanders, or "River Indians," as they were usually called during the greater portion of the last century, but latterly Stockbridge Indians, from their locality. These Indians were the remains of the Muhhekaneew\* of the Hudson River, at the time o

\* This is the orthography of Dr. Edwards, who was long a missionary among them at Stockbridge. Heckewelder says their proper name was *Mahicanni*. It is one of the most difficult things in the world to arrive at anything like system or certainty in regard to Indian names of persons, places, or things. For instance, the author has papers before him at the time of writing, in which the River Indians are called *Moheagans Mourigans*, or *Mahungans* (French), *Mahickanders* (Dutch), *Mohiccons* (English), *Mohuccans*, *Mahickinders*, *Schaticooks*, *Wabingas*, *Muhheak unnuks*, and the *Moheakounucks*; indeed, it has been the practice of writers of different, and of even the same nations, to spell more by the ear

the discovery. They came originally, according to their own traditions, from the far West—even beyond the great lakes. That such was their original location is supported by the fact, that their language was radically different from that of the Narragansetts and New-England Indians generally, and also from the language of the Five Nations. Its affinities were allied to the Shawanese and Chippewa, affording farther evidence that they had emigrated from the West, crossing the country of the Delawares, and establishing themselves on the banks of the Hudson, or Mohickannittuck, as the North River was called. They were a powerful tribe at the time of the discovery, numbering a thousand warriors, and inhabiting the country between the Upper Delaware and the Hudson, together with portions of territory now included in Massachusetts and Vermont. They dwelt mostly in little towns and villages, their chief seat being the site of the present city of Albany, called by them Pempotowwuthut-Muhhecanneuw, or the Fireplace of the Nation. Becoming feeble and dispersed as the white population increased around and among them—although their numbers had been partially recruited by refugees from the Narragansetts and Pequods, on the conquest of those nations—the Muhhekaneew were collected together at Stockbridge, in 1736, under the care of the Rev. John Sergeant, who, and his son after him, were long the spiritual guides of the tribe. They were ever faithful to the English, having been actively employed by General Shirley to range the country between Lake George and Montreal, during the French war ending in the conquest of Canada.

The relations of the Stockbridge Indians with the Oneidas had become intimate, and it is very possible that the negotiations had even then commenced

than by rule, until our Indian names have been involved in almost incredible confusion.

between the two tribes, which a few years afterward resulted in the removal of the Stockbridge Indians to the Oneida. Be that, however, as it may, when the troubles began to thicken, the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts sent a message to the Stockbridge Indians, apprizing them of the gathering tempest, and expressing a desire to cultivate a good understanding between them. The Indians, in return, despatched Captain Solomon Ahhaunnauwaumut, their chief sachem, to the Congress, to make a reply, and on the 11th of April he delivered the following speech:

“BROTHERS—We have heard you speak by your letter—we thank you for it: we now make answer.

“BROTHERS—You remember, when you first came over the great waters, I was great, and you was little, very small. I then took you in for a friend, and kept you under my arms, so that no one might injure you; since that time we have ever been true friends; there has never been any quarrel between us. But now our conditions are changed. You are become great and tall. You reach to the clouds. You are seen all around the world, and I am become small, very little. I am not so high as your heel. Now you take care of me, and I look to you for protection.

“BROTHERS—I am sorry to hear of this great quarrel between you and Old England. It appears that blood must soon be shed to end this quarrel. We never till this day understood the foundation of this quarrel between you and the country you came from.

“BROTHERS—Whenever I see your blood running, you will soon find me about to revenge my brother's blood. Although I am low and very small, I will gripe hold of your enemy's heel, that he cannot run so fast, and so light, as if he had nothing at his heels.

“BROTHERS—You know I am not so wise as you



are ; therefore I ask your advice in what I am now going to say. I have been thinking, before you come to action, to take a run to the westward, and feel the mind of my Indian brethren, the Six Nations, and know how they stand—whether they are on your side, or for your enemies. If I find they are against you, I will try to turn their minds. I think they will listen to me, for they have always looked this way for advice concerning all important news that comes from the rising of the sun. If they hearken to me, you will not be afraid of any danger behind you. However their minds are affected, you shall soon know by me. Now I think I can do you more service in this way than by marching off immediately to Boston, and staying there ; it may be a great while before blood runs.\* Now, as I said, you are wiser than I ; I leave this for your consideration, whether I come down immediately, or wait till I hear some blood is spilled.

“BROTHERS—I would not have you think, by this, that we are falling back from our engagements. We are ready to do anything for your relief, and shall be guided by your counsel.

“BROTHERS—One thing I ask of you : if you send for me to fight, that you will let me fight in my own Indian way. I am not used to fight English fashion, therefore you must not expect I can train like your men. Only point out to me where your enemies keep, and that is all I shall want to know.”

These facts are introduced, not only as being connected with the main history, and interesting in themselves, but in justice to Guy Johnson ; since, in regard to his own measures of defensive preparation, he is entitled to the benefit of all the facts, going to warrant his suspicions that an extraneous

\* A company of minute-men, composed of the Stockbridge Indians, was organized by the Massachusetts Congress before the battle of Lexington. They were retained in service some time after the war began, and came down and joined the camp at Cambridge.—*Sparks*.

'nfluence was exerting over the subjects of his general superintendence ; and it can hardly be supposed that he was kept altogether in ignorance, either of the correspondence with Mr. Kirkland or of that with the Stockbridge Indians, through whom, probably, the Bostonians were at the same time holding intercourse with the Six Nations. These circumstances could not but awaken a lively jealousy in regard to the movements of the white people among the Indians under his charge, and especially in regard to Mr. Kirkland. Accordingly, although in the month of February the superintendent had not been able to effect the removal of Mr. Kirkland from his station among the Oneidas, he accomplished that object in the course of the spring, as appears by a letter from the missionary himself, addressed from Cherry Valley to the Albany Committee.

The influence of Mr. Kirkland was great among the Oneidas, and deservedly so. Hence, had he undertaken the task, he might, beyond all doubt, and easily, have persuaded the Indians of his forest-charge to espouse the cause of the colonies. But he did no such thing ; or, at least, he avoided the exertion of any farther influence than to persuade them to the adoption of a neutral policy. This determination, probably, was an act of their own volition, after listening to the interpretation of the proceedings of Congress. It was made known to the people of New-England by the following address, transmitted by the Oneidas to Governor Trumbull, of Connecticut, with a request that he would cause it to be communicated to the four New-England colonies :

THE ONEIDA INDIANS TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

"As my younger brothers of the New-England Indians, who have settled in our vicinity, are now going down to visit their friends, and to move up parts of their families that were left behind—with

this belt by them, I open the road wide, clearing it of all obstacles, that they may visit their friends and return to their settlements here in peace.

"Now we more immediately address you, our brother, the governor, and the chiefs of New-England.

"BROTHERS—We have heard of the unhappy differences and great contention between you and Old England. We wonder greatly, and are troubled in our minds.

"BROTHERS—Possess your minds in peace respecting us Indians. We cannot intermeddle in this dispute between two brothers. The quarrel seems to be unnatural. You are *two brothers of one blood*. We are unwilling to join on either side in such a contest, for we bear an equal affection to both you Old and New England. Should the great King of England apply to us for aid, we shall deny him; if the colonies apply, we shall refuse. The present situation of you two brothers is new and strange to us. We Indians cannot find, nor recollect in the traditions of our ancestors, the like case, or a similar instance.

"BROTHERS—For these reasons possess your minds in peace, and take no umbrage that we Indians refuse joining in the contest. We are for peace.

"BROTHERS—As we have declared for peace, we desire you will not apply to our Indian brethren in New-England for their assistance. Let us Indians be all of one mind, and live with one another; and you white people settle your own disputes between yourselves."

Of an Indian foe the inhabitants of Tryon county entertained a special dread. In the communication of the Palatine Committee to that of Albany, therefore, cited a few pages back, it was suggested whether it would not be expedient to prevent the

sending of powder and ammunition into the Mohawk Valley, unless consigned to the committee, to be sold under their inspection. In conclusion, the committee declared that, although few in number, they were determined to let the world see who were, and who were not, attached to the cause of American liberty; and they closed by avowing their fixed determination "to carry into execution everything recommended by the Continental Congress, and to be free or die."

Three days after making this communication to their Albany brethren, that is to say, on the 21st of May, the question whether Guy Johnson was or was not tampering with the Indians in anticipation of hostilities, was solved by an intercepted communication from Thayendanegea to the chiefs of the Oneida tribe. The letter, written in the Mohawk language, was found in an Indian path, and was supposed to have been lost by one of their runners. The following is a translation, being the earliest specimen extant of the composition of Brant:

*"Written at Guy Johnson's, May, 1775.*

"This is your letter, you great ones or sachems. Guy Johnson says he will be glad if you get this intelligence, you Oneidas, how it goes with him now; and he is now more certain concerning the intention of the Boston people. Guy Johnson is in great fear of being taken prisoner by the Bostonians. We Mohawks are obliged to watch him constantly. Therefore we send you this intelligence, that you shall know it; and Guy Johnson assures himself, and depends upon your coming to his assistance, and that you will, without fail, be of that opinion. He believes not that you will assent to let him suffer. We therefore expect you in a couple of days' time. So much at present. We send but so far as to you Oneidas, but afterward, perhaps, to all the

other nations. We conclude, and expect that you will have concern about our ruler, Guy Johnson, because we are all united.

“(Signed)

“AREN KANNENZARON,

“JOHANNES TEGARIHOGE,

“DEYAGODEAGHNAWEAGH.

“JOSEPH BRANT,

“*Guy Johnson's Interpreter.*”

The surface of this intercepted despatch discloses nothing more than a desire on the part of Guy Johnson to strengthen his domestic forces for the protection of his person, in the event of any attempt to seize and carry him away. But the inhabitants allowed him no credit for sincerity. Information had been received from Canada, through the emissaries sent thither by the revolutionary leaders in Massachusetts, that secret agents of the crown had been sent among the Six Nations to stir them up against the colonies. Hence the correspondence of the Massachusetts Congress with Mr. Kirkland and the Indians; and hence, also, the increasing apprehension of the people that the Indians were to be inflamed and let loose upon them. Such, consequently, was their distrust of Johnson, that they neither believed there was any design against his person, nor that he was labouring under any apprehension of the kind. There is no reason to doubt, however, that Guy Johnson did feel his position to be critical. General Schuyler had his eye upon him; and, beyond question, his every motion was so closely watched as to make him feel very uncomfortable.\*

In addition to the before-mentioned intercepted letter, it was ascertained that already expresses had actually been sent to the upper tribes of the Six Na-

\* “Watch the movements of the Indian agent, Colonel Guy Johnson, and prevent so far as you can, the effect of his influence, to our prejudice, with the Indians.”—*Letter from Washington to General Schuyler, June, 1775*

tions, to invite them down to Guy Johnson's house. His own domestic army amounted to five hundred men, and he had now cut off all free communication between the upper Mohawk settlements and Albany. And although the districts of Palatine, Canajoharie, and the German Flatts were sanctioning the proceedings of the Continental Congress with much unanimity, they were in a great measure unarmed and destitute of ammunition, not having more than fifty pounds of powder in the districts. Under these circumstances, the committee wrote an urgent letter to Albany, representing their situation, and suggesting whether it might not be expedient to open the communication through the lower districts of the valley by force. They also advised the sending of two trusty messengers, well acquainted with the Indian language, to the upper nations, to dissuade them, if possible, from obeying the summons of Guy Johnson, and to enlighten them in respect of the true nature and causes of the quarrel with the king's government.

This letter was despatched by express, and the Albany Committee replied on the following day, advising their friends of the upper districts that they had no ammunition to spare, and dissuading them from any attempt to reopen the communication by force. That project was, accordingly, abandoned; but the committee sent four of its members to Albany, to gain information as to the condition of the country generally, and with instructions to procure a quantity of powder and lead, the committee holding itself responsible for the purchase money. Meantime, they pushed their measures of internal organization with great energy and success, establishing sub-committees wherever it was expedient, and assuming the exercise of legislative, judicial, and executive powers. Secret articles for mutual succour and defence were prepared, and very generally signed by the Whigs; and threats having been

uttered by Guy Johnson, that unless the committees desisted from the course they were pursuing, he would seize and imprison certain of their number; they solemnly bound themselves to rescue any who might thus be arrested by force, "unless such persons should be confined by legal process, issued upon a legal ground, and executed in a legal manner."

It is here worthy, not only of special note, but of all admiration, how completely and entirely these border-men held themselves amenable, in the most trying exigencies, to the just execution of the laws. Throughout all their proceedings, the history of the Tryon Committees will show that they were governed by the purest dictates of patriotism, and the highest regard to moral principle. Unlike the rude inhabitants of most frontier settlements, especially under circumstances when the magistracy are, from necessity, almost powerless, the frontier patriots of Tryon county were scrupulous in their devotion to the supremacy of the laws. Their leading men were likewise distinguished for their intelligence; and while North Carolina is disputing whether she did not, in fact, utter a declaration of independence before it was done by Congress, the example may almost be said to have proceeded from the Valley of the Mohawk.

On the whole, there is no good reason to doubt that Guy Johnson was, in reality, apprehensive of a clandestine visit from the Yankees, and possibly of an abduction. The great influence of his official station, and his equivocal conduct, had created universal distrust; and the affair of the "Tea Party" had taught the Loyalists that the Bostonians were as adroit and fearless in stratagem as in deeds of open daring and bold emprise. It was well understood that he had arrested and searched the persons of two New-Englanders, suspicious, as it was inferred, and probably not without reason, that they had been despatched on a mission to the Indians, with whom

it was policy to prevent any communication, save through his own interposition. Nor could he be ignorant of the fact, that at that critical conjuncture, the possession of his person might be of as much consequence to those who were on the verge of rebellion as of detriment to the service in which his predilections would probably induce him to engage.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

A COUNCIL of the Mohawk chiefs was held at Guy Park\* on the 25th of May, which was attended by delegates from Albany and Tryon counties. The records of this council are very scanty and unsatisfactory. The principal chief of the Mohawk tribe at that time was *Little Abraham*,† a brother of the famous Hendrick who fell at Lake George, in the year 1775.

This council having been but thinly attended, and only by one tribe of the Indians, the superintendent immediately directed the assembling of another in the western part of the county, to attend which he proceeded to the German Flatts with his whole family and retinue. His quarters were at the house of a Mr. Thompson, on Cosby's Manor, a few miles above the Flatts. It has been alleged that this second council was convoked because of the superintendent's dissatisfaction with the first—a conclusion not unlikely, from the absence of the western Indians, who had been invited.

On the 2d of June there was, for the first time, a

\* Guy Park, a beautiful situation immediately on the bank of the Mohawk. The elegant stone mansion is yet upon the premises, giving the best evidences of substantial building.

† Little Abraham seems rather to have been a leading chief at the Lower Castle of the Mohawks—not the principal war-chief.



full meeting of the Tryon County Committee, the Loyalists having previously prevented the attendance of delegates from the lower, or Mohawk District.\* This committee addressed a strong and patriotic letter to the superintendent, formally notifying him of the purposes of their organization. The following is an extract from this letter:

"We are not ignorant of the very great importance of your office as superintendent of the Indians, and therefore it is no more our duty than inclination to protect you in the discharge of the duty of your proper province; and we meet you with pleasure, in behalf of ourselves and our constituents, to thank you for meeting the Indians in the upper parts of the county, which may be the means of easing the people of the remainder of their fears on this account, and prevent the Indians committing irregularities on their way down to Guy Park. And we beg of you to use your endeavours with the Indians to dissuade them from interfering in the dispute with the mother-country and the colonies. We cannot think that, as you and your family possess very large estates in this county, you are unfavourable to American freedom, although you may differ with us in the mode of obtaining a redress of grievances. Permit us farther to observe, that we cannot pass over in silence the interruption which

\* It may be interesting to some to give the names of this body of men, who had so often professed their willingness to peril their lives and property in defence of the liberties of their country. (From Palatine District)—Christopher P. Yates, John Frey, Andrew Fink, Andrew Reeber, Peter Waggoner, Daniel M'Dougal, Jacob Klock, George Ecker, Jun., Harmanus Van Slyck, Christopher W. Fox, Anthony Van Veghten. (Catajoharie District)—Nicholas Herkimer, Ebenezer Cox, William Seiber, John Moore, Samuel Campbell, Samuel Clyde, Thomas Henry, John Pickard. (Kingsland and German Flatts Districts)—Edward Wall, William Petry, John Petry, Augustine Hess, Frederic Orendorf, George Wentz, Michael Ittig, Frederic Fox, George Herkimer, Duncan M'Dougal, Frederic Helmer, John Frink. (Mohawk District)—John Morlett, John Bliven, Abraham Van Horne, Adam Fonda, Frederic Fisher, Sampson Sammons, William Schuyler, Volkert Veeder, James M'Master, Daniel Line—42. Christopher P. Yates was chosen chairman of this body—*Campbell's Annals*.

the people of the Mohawk District met in their meeting, which, we are informed, was conducted in a peaceable manner; and the inhuman treatment of a man whose only crime was being faithful to his employers, and refusing to give an account of the receipt of certain papers, to persons who had not the least colour of right to demand anything of that kind. We assure you that we are much concerned about it, as two important rights of English subjects are thereby infringed—to wit, a right to meet, and to obtain all the intelligence in their power.”

Colonel Nicholas Herkimer and Edward Wall were deputed to deliver the letter to the superintendent, for which purpose they proceeded to Cosby's Manor, and discharged their trust. The following was Colonel Johnson's reply—manly and direct; and with which, if sincere, certainly no fault could be found, bating the lack of courtesy in its commencement:

“Thompson's, Cosby's Manor, June 5th, 1775.

“GENTLEMEN,

“I have received the paper signed Chris. P. Yates, chairman, on behalf of the districts therein mentioned, which I am now to answer, and shall do it briefly, in the order you have stated matters. As to the letter from some Indians to the Oneidas, I really knew nothing of it till I heard such a thing had been by some means obtained from an Indian messenger; and from what I have heard of its contents, I can't see anything material in it, or that could justify such idle apprehensions; but I must observe, that these fears among the people were talked of long before, and were, I fear, propagated by some malicious persons for a bad purpose.

“As to your political sentiments, on which you enter in the next paragraph, I have no occasion to enter on them or the merits of the cause. I desire to enjoy liberty of conscience and the exercise of

my own judgment, and that all others should have the same privilege; but, with regard to your saying you might have postponed the affair, if there had been the least kind of probability that the petition of the General Assembly would have been noticed more than that of the delegates, I must, as a true friend to the country, in which I have a large interest, say, that the present dispute is viewed in different lights, according to the education and principles of the parties affected; and that, however reasonable it may appear to a considerable number of honest men here, that the petition of the delegates should merit attention, it is not viewed in the same light in a country which admits of no authority that is not constitutionally established; and I persuade myself you have that reverence for his majesty, that you will pay due regard to the royal assurance given in his speech to Parliament, that whenever the American grievances should be laid before him by their constitutional assemblies, they should be fully attended to. I have heard that compulsory steps were taken to induce some persons to come into your measures, and treasonable toasts drank; but I am not willing to give too easy credit to flying reports, and am happy to hear you disavow them.

“I am glad to find my calling a Congress on the frontiers gives satisfaction; this was principally my design, though I cannot sufficiently express my surprise at those who have, either through malice or ignorance, misconstrued my intentions, and supposed me capable of setting the Indians on the peaceable inhabitants of this county. The interest our family has in this county, and my own, is considerable, and they have been its best benefactors; any malicious charges, therefore, to their prejudice, are highly injurious, and ought to be totally suppressed.

“The office I hold is greatly for the benefit and protection of this county, and on my frequent meetings with the Indians depends their peace and secu-

city; I therefore cannot but be astonished to find the endeavours made use of to obstruct me in my duties, and the weakness of some people in withholding many things from me, which are indisputably necessary for rendering the Indians contented; and I am willing to hope that you, gentlemen, will duly consider this, and discountenance the same.

“You have been much misinformed as to the origin of the reports which obliged me to fortify my house and stand on my defence. I had it, gentlemen, from undoubted authority from Albany, and since confirmed by letters from one of the committee at Philadelphia, that a large body of men were to make me prisoner. As the effect this must have on the Indians might have been of dangerous consequences to you (a circumstance not thought of), I was obliged, at great expense, to take these measures. But the many reports of my stopping travellers were false in every particular, and the only instance of detaining anybody was in the case of two New-England men, which I explained fully to those of your body who brought your letter, and wherein I acted strictly agreeable to law, and as a magistrate should have done.

“I am very sorry that such idle and injurious reports meet with any encouragement. I rely on you, gentlemen, to exert yourselves in discountenancing them; and I am happy in this opportunity of assuring the people of a county I regard, that they have nothing to apprehend from my endeavours, but that I shall always be glad to promote their true interests.

“I am, gentlemen, your humble servant,  
“G. JOHNSON.”

Guy Johnson did not remain long at Cosby's Manor, nor did he hold the Indian council there which had been notified, but departed immediately farther west. His removal from Thompson's was

thus announced to the Committee of Palatine by Mr Wall, on the 8th of June: "Our people are greatly alarmed at Colonel Johnson's motions, and cannot understand his reasons for the same. We dare say that before now you have been [made] acquainted that he has removed with his retinue from Mr. Thompson's to Fort Stanwix, and there are rumours that he intends to move yet farther. We leave you to conjecture what may be his reasons."

These apprehensions were certainly not unreasonable. For although Colonel Johnson's letters were plausible, and apparently frank and sincere, when the people saw him setting his face thus to the west, and moving up through the valley, not only with his own family, but accompanied by a large retinue of his dependants and the great body of the Mohawk Indians—who left their own delightful country at this time, never more peaceably to return—it is not strange that suspicions as to his ulterior designs were excited.

The affair of Lexington had, of course, been the signal for war throughout the colonies. The forts, magazines, and arsenals were everywhere seized. Troops were raised, and money for their support; and it was not many weeks before an army of thirty thousand men appeared in the environs of Boston, under the command of General Putnam—a veteran of the old French war, in whom the people had great confidence. Early in May, Colonel Ethan Allen, a hardy leader of the settlers upon the New-Hampshire grants (now Vermont), concerted an expedition against Ticonderoga and Crown Point. About forty volunteers from Connecticut were of the expedition, which, with the forces collected for the object at Castleton, made up the number of two hundred and thirty. Allen was unexpectedly joined by Colonel Benedict Arnold, who had planned the same enterprise. They readily agreed to act in concert; and so admirably was the project carried

into execution, that the Americans actually entered the fortress by the covered way just at daylight, formed upon the parade ground within, and awoke the sleeping garrison by their huzzas. A slight skirmish ensued, and the commander, De la Place surrendered to the novel summons of Allen, "I demand a surrender in the name of the great Jehovah and the Continental Congress." Colonel Seth Warner was sent thence to Crown Point, which was easily taken, the garrison consisting of only a dozen men, commanded by a sergeant. Arnold proceeded northward to St. Johns, and succeeded in capturing a sloop-of-war by surprise; while, at the same time, the pass of Skenesborough, at the south end of Champlain, was taken possession of, Colonel Skene and a small number of troops being made prisoners, and several pieces of cannon taken. Thus, by a sudden blow, and without the loss of a man, was the command of Lakes George and Champlain obtained.

The next act in the grand drama then unfolding was the battle of Bunker Hill. Towards the close of May re-enforcements of troops from England had arrived at Boston, with Generals Howe, Burgoyne, and Clinton, all of whom were officers of reputation. The Provincial Congress of Massachusetts had, early in that month, renounced General Gage as governor of the colony, declared him an enemy of the country, and forbidden obedience to his orders. On the other hand, General Gage had issued his proclamation, promising a gracious pardon to all who would lay down their arms and return to the duties of peaceable subjects, excepting only Samuel Adams and John Hancock, whose offences were declared to be of "too flagitious a nature to admit of any other consideration than that of condign punishment." By the same instrument Massachusetts was declared to be under martial law. General Gage was also preparing, in other respects, for more

energetic action ; but every measure he took, and every moment that passed, served only to unite and imbolden the Whigs, and increase the audacity with which they now, in action, if not in words, contemned the royal authority. The provincial troops began to assemble in force around Boston, and were throwing up defences, when the battle of Bunker Hill, at once and forever, severed the tie that bound the colonies to the parent country. The fighting on this occasion was of such a determined character as to show the enemy that it was no pastime upon which they had entered. One of the British officers, in writing home to a friend, declared that "the rebels fought more like devils than men." The loss of the British, in killed and wounded, was 1054. That of the provincials, 139 killed and 314 wounded. The great calamity of the day was the fall of the brave and accomplished Warren, who was shot through the head early in the action.

It is not to be supposed that, with the evidence before them of Colonel Johnson's exertions to excite the Indians against the provincial cause, the friends of the latter were by any means inactive. On the contrary, they left no fair and honourable means untried so far to win upon their favour as, at least, to secure their neutrality in the contest ; nor were they wholly unsuccessful, although the majority of the Six Nations ultimately threw themselves into the opposite scale. Disappointed in not meeting a fuller and more general council at Guy Park in May, a conference was arranged with the Oneidas and Tuscaroras, through the agency of their friend, the Rev. Mr. Kirkland, which took place at the German Flatts on the 28th of June. The Indians were met by the inhabitants of that district, and also by a deputation from Albany. The minutes of that meeting were not preserved at large among the papers of the Tryon County Committee. The result of the council, however, was to obtain a pledge of neu-

trality from the greater portion of the Indians assembled. The efforts of Mr. Kirkland had uniformly been directed to the same humane design.

Colonel Guy Johnson, as we have already seen, had previously left the lower district of the Mohawk Valley. He was a man of too much discernment, holding the opinions he did, to remain at Johnstown an inactive spectator of events, the inevitable tendency of which could only be very soon to rouse the whole thirteen colonies to arms against the British power, and he had prudently anticipated the battle of Bunker Hill in his departure. But his movements had thus far been pacific, or, rather, not openly belligerent; and it is probable that an excited and jealous people may not have treated him, during his hegira, with all their wonted respect.

Making a very brief sojourn at Fort Stanwix, Guy Johnson hastened as far west as Ontario, there to hold a grand council with the Indians, remote from the white settlements; and where, as he alleged, their action might be independent, and unembarrassed by the interference of the colonists. It was at Ontario that he received a letter from the Provincial Congress of New-York, written at the solicitation of the Congress of Massachusetts, and complaining of his alleged endeavours to fill the minds of the Indian tribes with sentiments injurious to the colonies. He replied to it, on the 8th of July, in a letter glowing with loyalty, and complaining bitterly of the malecontents, and those in opposition to regular governments, who, he again repeated, were exciting the Indians against him.

Colonel Johnson was accompanied in his departure by Joseph Brant, or Thayendanegea, his secretary, and by Colonel John Butler and his son Walter, and they succeeded in convening a very large council at Ontario. The greater portion of the Indians attending, however, were probably Cayugas



and Senecas. These were now far the most numerous of the Six Nations, although the Mohawks yet stood in rank at the head of the confederacy. Formerly the last-mentioned tribe had been the most numerous and powerful of the cantons; but at an early day after the planting of the colony of New-York, the French had succeeded in seducing a large section of the Mohawks to return to Canada, whence they originally came, after breaking the vassalage in which they had been held by the Algonquins. Their proximity to the whites, moreover, had been attended by the effect, invariable and seemingly inevitable, in regard to their race, of diminishing their numbers. Added to all which, their warlike character, and their daring ferocity, exposing them to more frequent perils than were encountered by their associated cantons, had contributed still farther to this unequal diminution.\*

It is not known that any record of this council was preserved, although the speeches interchanged were doubtless written, since that was the universal practice in the conduct of Indian intercourse. But no doubt exists as to the fact that the superintendent succeeded in still farther alienating the affections of the great majority of the Indians from the Americans, if they did not immediately join the ranks of the invaders. Nor, when all the circumstances of their case and position are dispassionately considered, is it surprising that their inclinations were favourable to the crown. On the contrary, the wonder is that Colonel Johnson did not

\* Among the manuscripts of Sir William Johnson, I have found a census of the Northern and Western Indians, from the Hudson River to the great lakes and the Mississippi, taken in 1763. The Mohawk warriors were then only 160; the Oneidas, 250; Tuscaroras, 140; Onondagas, 150; Cayugas, 200; Senecas, 1050; total, 1950. According to the calculation of a British agent, several of the tribes must have increased between the close of the French war and the beginning of the American Revolution, as it was computed that, during the latter contest, the English had in service 300 Mohawks, 150 Oneidas, 200 Tuscaroras, 300 Onondagas, 230 Cayugas, and 400 Senecas — *Author*

succeed in carrying with him the Oneidas and Tucaroras also ; and he probably would have done so but for the salutary, though indirect influence of Mr Kirkland, and their noble chief, the sagacious Schenandoah, always the warm and unwavering friend of the colonists. With regard to these Indians, it must be considered that they had then been in alliance with Great Britain during a period of more than one hundred years. In all their wars with their implacable enemies the Algonquins, acting in alliance with the French, the Six Nations had been assisted by the English, or fighting side by side with them. For a long series of years Sir William Johnson had been their counsellor and friend. His family was, to a certain extent, allied with the head canton of the confederacy, and he was consulted by them in all affairs of business, or of high emergency, as an oracle. They had drawn their supplies through him and his agents, and it was natural that, upon his decease, their affection for him should be transferred to his successor in office, who was also his son-in-law. Miss Molly, moreover, was a woman of vigorous understanding and of able management. And, as we have already seen, she and Colonel Guy himself were sustained by the powerful aid of Thayendanegea, who united the advantages of education with the native sagacity of his race. Added to all which, the cause was considered, if not desperate, at least of doubtful issue ; while the unenlightened Indians had been taught to hear the name of the king with great reverence, and to believe him all-powerful. They considered the officers of the crown their best friends ; and it was but natural that they should hold on upon the great chain which they had so long laboured to keep bright between them.

It has already been remarked, that, thus far, Colonel Guy Johnson had committed no act of actual hostility. While this council was holding in Ontario, however, the whole valley of the Mohawk was filled with alarm, by reports that he was preparing an

expedition to return upon them, and lay the country waste by fire and sword. On the 11th of July, Colonel Herkimer wrote from Canajoharie to the Palatine Committee, that he had received credible intelligence that morning, that Guy Johnson was ready to march back upon them with a body of eight or nine hundred Indians, and that the attack would be commenced from the woods below the Little Falls, on the northern side of the river. He therefore proposed sending to Albany immediately for a corresponding number of men. An urgent letter was forthwith despatched by the committee to Schenectady and Albany for the amount of assistance mentioned, "to prevent these barbarous enterprises," and to enable them "to resist their inhuman enemies with good success—that they might not be slaughtered, like innocent and defenceless sheep before ravaging wolves."

From the positive character of the intelligence, and the mysterious movements of Guy Johnson and his followers, the inhabitants had good cause of alarm; more especially as Sir John Johnson\* remained at the Hall in Johnstown, having at his beck a large body of Loyalists, making his castle (for the Hall was now fortified) their headquarters, who, in the event of such a movement by his brother-in-law from the west, would doubtless be prepared to join the Indians in the enterprise, and, between them both, be able to overwhelm the settlements in destruction at a single blow. Every possible preparation was therefore made for their defence, but the alarm proved to be without foundation; and after Guy Johnson had completed his business at Ontario, he returned to Oswego, where he very soon afterward convened another council and held a treaty, at which he succeeded in still farther estranging the Indians from the colonies.†

\* Sir John Johnson held a commission as brigadier-general of militia.

† The following passage from Ramsay's History of the Revolution

From Oswego Guy Johnson crossed into Canada, and thence descended the St. Lawrence to Montreal, accompanied by a large number of the chiefs and warriors of the Six Nations, who were invited to an interview with Sir Guy Carleton and Sir Frederic Haldimand—both those distinguished officers being in that city at the time—and were induced by them to embark in the cause of the king.

It has often been asserted, especially by British historians, that Sir Guy Carleton was opposed to the employment of the Indians in the contest, from principles of humanity. Such, however, was not the fact. Brant repeatedly asserted in after life, in speeches delivered by him, copies of which are yet extant, that on their first arrival in Montreal, General Carleton proposed to them to enter the service.

Strict historical accuracy is often of slow attainment; but, after all deductions from the merits of General Carleton, afterward Lord Dorchester, enough that is truly excellent and great will remain to leave him a reputation of which most public men might well be proud.

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## CHAPTER V.

THE second Continental Congress, composed of delegates, assembled at Philadelphia on the 10th of

seems to refer to this Indian convocation at Oswego. There was no other meeting during that year to which this notice of Ramsay could refer. "Colonel Johnson had repeated conferences with the Indians, and endeavored to influence them to take up the hatchet, but they steadily refused. In order to gain their co-operation, he invited them to a feast on a Bostonian, and to drink his blood. This, in the Indian style, meant no more than to partake of a roasted ox and a pipe of wine at a public entertainment, which was given on design to influence them to co-operate with the British troops. The colonial patriots affected to understand it in its literal sense. It furnished, in their mode of explication, a convenient handle for operating on the passions of the people."

May. Hostilities having actually commenced, and it being well understood that large re-enforcements of the British army were on their way from England, no time was lost in preparing for the public defence. Protesting that they "wished for a restoration of the harmony formerly subsisting between the mother-country and the colonies," they resolved again to present "a humble and dutiful petition to his majesty;" prepared addresses to the people of Great Britain, to those of Canada, and to the Assembly of Jamaica; voted for the immediate equipment of 20,000 men; voted to raise three millions on bills of credit for the prosecution of the war; and, on the nomination of John Adams, commissioned GEORGE WASHINGTON, of Virginia, as commander-in-chief. On the 4th of July, Congress denounced the two acts of Parliament of the preceding session, restraining the trade and commerce of the colonies, as "unconstitutional, oppressive, and cruel;" and on the 6th they agreed to a manifesto, "setting forth the causes and necessity of their taking up arms." After a spirited but temperate preamble, presenting an historical view of the origin, progress, and conduct of the colonies, and of the measures of the British government since the peace of 1763; and after an eloquent recapitulation of the grievances which had produced the collision, and proclaiming their confidence of obtaining foreign aid if necessary, and of ultimate success; disavowing, moreover, any intention to dissolve the connexion between the parent country and the colonies, the declaration proceeded, "We most solemnly, before God and the world, DECLARE, that, exerting the utmost energy of those powers which our beneficent Creator hath bestowed upon us, the arms we have been compelled by our enemies to assume, we will, in defiance of every hazard, with unabating firmness and perseverance, employ for the preservation of our liberties, being with one mind resolved to

die FREEMEN rather than live SLAVES." They protested that they would lay down their arms when hostilities should cease on the part of the aggressors, and not before. Reposing their confidence in the mercy of the Impartial Judge and Ruler of the Universe, and imploring his goodness to protect and carry them through the conflict, they appointed the 20th of July to be observed as a day of public humiliation, fasting, and prayer with that view. It was generally observed, and was the first national fast ever proclaimed in the New World.

But amid all the arduous duties demanding the attention of Congress, the importance of keeping a watchful eye upon the Indians was universally conceded. The position of the Six Nations, as well as their power to do mischief, could not but strike the observation of all. They had served as a useful barrier between the English settlements and the French in Canada in former wars, and were often actively engaged as auxiliaries. Their position and their utility would be now precisely the same between the Americans and the English in Canada. It was, therefore, deemed of the first consequence, if possible, to prevent them from taking sides with the English; not, however, with a view to their employment in arms by ourselves; since, notwithstanding the disposition manifested by the Congress of Massachusetts to employ the Indians, and the actual engagement of the Stockbridge Indians as auxiliaries, it was, nevertheless, the anxious desire of the Congress to keep them in a position of neutrality as between England and the colonies, and at peace among themselves and with all. For the purpose of closer observation and more efficient action in respect to the Indian relations of the country, therefore, an Indian Department, with three subdivisions, Northern, Middle, and Southern, was established on the 12th of July, and commissioners were appointed for each, "with power to treat with

the Indians in their respective departments, to preserve peace and friendship, and to prevent their taking any part in the present commotions." The commissioners of the Northern Department were, Major-general Philip Schuyler, Major Joseph Hawley, Mr. Turbot Francis, Mr. Oliver Wolcott, and Mr. Volkert P. Douw. The form of an address to the several tribes of Indians, in all the departments, was agreed upon, to be altered as occasion might require for local adaptation. This address was framed after the manner of Indian speeches, and contained a summary history of the colonies, and of the rise and progress of the difficulties between them and the parent country. In the course of the address, the Indians were informed of the nature and objects of the contest then begun, and were strongly advised to the preservation of neutrality.

No time was lost by the commissioners of the Northern Department in the adoption of measures pursuant to its wise spirit and policy. For this purpose, a treaty was appointed to be held with the Six Nations at Albany, in the month of August, and the tribes were all invited to attend. Previous to the day of meeting, two of the commissioners, Mr. Douw and Colonel Francis, met a number of the chiefs and warriors in a preliminary council at the German Flatts, which was not well attended. This conference was holden on the 15th and 16th days of August. Observing that the council was thinly attended, Colonel Francis urged them, in his speech, to send a general invitation to all the Six Nations to appear at Albany; and he proposed that they should also send belts of invitation to the Caughnawagas in the neighbourhood of Montreal, together with the Indians of the Seven Nations on the St. Lawrence.

The council having adjourned over to the 16th, *Tiahogwando*, an Oneida sachem, made the following reply to the speech of the commissioners:

"BROTHER SOLIHOANY,\* and our Albany Brothers attend! We are now assembled at the German Flatts, at which place you kindled up a council fire, and yesterday called us together, and acquainted us from whence you came, and by whose authority—namely, by that of the Twelve United Colonies—and you opened your business to us.

"BROTHERS—We thank you for this invitation. It meets with our entire approbation. Here we are, of every tribe in the Six Nations. It shall be done as you have said.

"BROTHERS—You have desired that all our confederates should receive this invitation. This cannot be done short of one year, as we extend very far, and could not possibly call the extremities of our confederacy to this intended meeting. But possess your minds in peace. When this congress is over, and the council fire is raked up, we shall acquaint all our allies with what has passed. This is the answer of all the Six Nations, who are now here represented from every tribe.

"BROTHERS, ATTEND! Yesterday you said you were sensible our confederacy extended to Caughnawaga, and you desired our assistance to forward this your belt of invitation to the Caughnawagas and the seven tribes in that quarter.

"BROTHERS—Possess your minds in peace. We, the Six Nations, are put to difficulty to grant this request. We are much embarrassed, for this reason. The man is now there who will vex your minds, and never consent to their coming down, and will draw hard upon their minds another way.† He is of your own blood.

"BROTHERS—Possess your minds in peace. We of the Six Nations, have the minds of the Caughnawagas and the seven tribes in that quarter. At our central council-house, when this took place, they

\* The name bestowed upon Colonel Francis by the Indians.

† Guy Johnson was doubtless the man referred to



addressed us of the Six Nations in the following manner: 'You are better capable of maintaining peace than we are; therefore we deliver up our minds to you.' For these reasons we advise you to reconsider your petition to us, seeing we are so embarrassed we cannot grant it. Perhaps you will say to us, when your intended council fire shall be over, 'Brothers, do you of the Six Nations acquaint all your confederates and allies of what has passed at this council fire of peace;' and this we shall do with great care and exactness. Now, brothers, you see how we are embarrassed, and therefore give you this advice."

*Belt returned.*

The Board of Commissioners for the Northern Department met at Albany on the 23d of August (with the exception of Major Hawley, who had declined his appointment in consequence of ill health), and made the necessary arrangements for holding the treaty. An invitation was given to the civil authorities of Albany, to pay the sachems and warriors a complimentary visit, in company with the commissioners, which was accepted. A committee of the principal gentlemen of Albany was likewise appointed to join in the complimentary visit on the 24th.

In the course of this interview, the sachems intimated a desire to have a consultation with the municipal officers of the city of Albany before they met the commissioners in formal council. It appears that there had been some diplomatic passages between the Oneida Indians and the Albanians, and an interchange of messengers, and the chiefs were now desirous of having a conference with them. The commissioners, anxious to humour the Indians, assented to the request; and the Albanians appointed a committee, consisting of Walter Livingston, Jeremiah Van Rensselaer, and Samuel Stringer, to make the arrangements. The interview took place the same evening, when *Seaghnagerat*, an Oneida

chief, opened the proceedings with a speech of very unusual length for an Indian. He commenced by an expression of his gratification that, on opening the ashes to rekindle the old council fire, they had found some of the sparks remaining. He next referred to the proceedings of a previous consultation at the German Flatts, touching the conduct of Guy Johnson in removing their missionaries, and other matters. The meeting referred to seems to have been a partial council, to which the Albanians had sent a deputation, the object of which was, by the exhibition of some ancient belts, to remind the Indians of a former covenant of peace with Quedar, and to dissuade them from engaging in the existing quarrel. What had been said by the Albany deputies at the conference referred to, but of which no record seems to have been preserved, was now repeated in substance by the Oneida chief, after the Indian manner of conducting their councils. He then proceeded to reply *seriatim*; from which circumstance it is probable that the former council fire had been raked up before its proceedings were brought to a close. The chief admitted that "evil birds" had been busy in circulating unpleasant rumours, and that efforts had been made to make them swerve from their neutrality by Guy Johnson or his agents—at least, such was the inference from the speech; but he over and over again protested the determination of the Six Nations to avoid interfering with the controversy, and only exhorted the colonists to keep the path into their country open, so that they could pass and repass without molestation. In regard to the removal of their missionary, the chiefs said Guy Johnson had done it pursuant to "a belt"\* received from Governor Gage. He expressed the greatest respect for Mr. Kirkland; but, at the same time, under the circumstances of the case, suggested whether it would not, on the

\* An order.

whole, be better for Mr. K. to leave then, for the present, until the storm should be over and gone.

The speech having been ended, the Albanian Committee thanked them for it, and promised a reply after the grand council with the Commissioners of the Twelve Colonies should be terminated.

That council commenced its sittings on the day following, August 25th. The Oneida speaker of the preceding evening opened the council very appropriately, after which the commissioners, before proceeding formally to business, proposed that they should all sit down and smoke the pipe of peace together. The suggestion was acceded to, and the calumet passed round. This ceremony having been ended, the commissioners opened their mission by a very appropriate and effective speech, reminding the Indians of some ancient covenants of friendship with the colonists, and repeating to them a portion of the speech of *Cannassateego*, an old and popular sachem of the Six Nations, whose name and character were held in great reverence by them, delivered thirty years before at a great council held in Lancaster.\* The exhortation was, to union among themselves, and peace and friendship with the colonists.

The council was then adjourned to the 26th, when the commissioners presented the address from the Congress, of which particular mention has been made on a preceding page. The deliberations of Indian councils are slow procedures. Their language is composed of long and intricate compounds, and the necessity of deliberate and thorough interpretations, so that the matter spoken and explained be fastened upon the memories of the Indians, who possess not the advantage of written language, renders the process tedious. The entire sittings of two days were therefore required for the delivery and

\* A brother of *Cannassateego* was present on this occasion, and well remembered his words.

interpretation, by Mr. Kirkland, of the congressional "talk" with which the commissioners were charged. At the close, one of the chiefs declared that the address contained "nothing but what was pleasant and good." But, as the matters proposed were of high importance, they requested the next day for separate deliberation among themselves, promising on the succeeding day, August 27th, to make their reply. It was not, however, until the 31st of August that the Indians were ready to make known the results of their own secret councils. Their answer was delivered by *Little Abraham*, the Mohawk sachem of the Lower Castle. It was an able speech, thoroughly pacific. But there was one declaration which it is difficult to reconcile with the admitted veracity of the Indians, since it was inconsistent with the well-known course of Guy Johnson, and the covenant which had then already been made by Brant and his followers with Sir Guy Carleton and General Haldimand at Montreal. We allude to the declaration of Little Abraham, that Johnson had advised them to assume and preserve a neutral position at the recent Oswego council. The proceedings of Brant and Guy Johnson at Montreal had not then probably transpired in the Mohawk Valley. Still Guy Johnson must have dissembled, or spoken with a "forked tongue," to those Indians whom he supposed friendly to the colonies, or so great a mistake could not have been made by Little Abraham.

In the course of their speech, the chiefs expressed a strong attachment for Sir John Johnson as the son of their old friend, Sir William, who was born among them, and of Dutch extraction by his mother.\* They desired, whatever might be the cause of the war, Sir John might be left unmolested. The same request was also interposed in behalf of their missionary, the Rev. Mr. Stewart, who, they said,

\* The mother of Sir John was a German lady, but in the Mohawk Valley the Germans are usually called Dutch to this day.

had been sent to them by the king ; and also because he never " meddled with civil affairs," but was intent only on " instructing them in the way to heaven."

In the conclusion of his speech, Abraham took occasion to refer to some domestic matters between themselves and the people of Albany. He charged them with having taken two pieces of land from the Mohawks, without paying therefor so much even as a pipe. These lands the Indians desired the Twelve Colonies to restore, and put them into peaceable possession again. " If you refuse to do this," said he, " we shall look upon the prospect as bad ; for if you conquer, you will take us by the arm and pull us all off." In thus saying, he spoke with the spirit of prophecy !

When Little Abraham had ended, *Tiahogwando*, an Oneida, made a short speech on the subject of the then pending bloody and bitter controversy between Connecticut and Pennsylvania respecting the territory of Wyoming, of which a full account will follow in its proper place. The Indians avowed that the land had been conveyed by them to Penn as a free gift, the Great Spirit not allowing them to sell that country. In the course of their speeches, the chiefs requested that the Indian trade might be reopened with them, both at Albany and Schenectady, and that somebody might be appointed to guard the tree of peace at Albany, and keep the council fire burning.

On the 1st of September the commissioners made their reply, conciliatory in its character, and acceding to the principal requests of the Indians. They also informed the chiefs that they had appointed General Schuyler and Mr. Douw to keep the fire burning. Thus ended the council with the agents of the colonies. The " unfinished business" with the Albanians was resumed on the next day, September 2d, for which purpose a council was formed

in the Presbyterian church. The Commissioners of the United Colonies were likewise in attendance. After the preliminaries of form had been gone through with, the Indians were addressed at length by the Albany Committee. In the course of their speech, they adverted particularly to the council at Oswego, and the proceedings of Guy Johnson at that place, respecting which, they said, they had received no certain advice, and of which they wished to be fully and explicitly informed. In regard to the land-question interposed by the Indians, the committee said they presumed reference was had to the lands at Ticonderoga. That was a question between the Indians and the corporation of Albany, whereas they were a committee from the people, and could not entertain the question. They reminded the Indians, however, that the question had been agitated before, and settled by the Colonial Assembly. They also gave them to understand that the Indians were not the party having cause of complaint in that matter.

The reply of the Indians was delivered by Little Abraham. Waiving the land-question, he proceeded to answer the questions put to them concerning the Oswego council. "We look upon it," said he, "that God will punish us should we conceal anything from you." The following passage is quoted from the reply of Abraham:

"BROTHERS—The transactions of that treaty were very public. The Shawanese were there, and some from Detroit. Mr. Johnson told us that the fire kindled there was a fire of peace; that all the white people were the king's subjects, and that it seemed they were intoxicated. He said the white people were all got drunk, and that God's judgment hung over them, but he did not know on which side it would fall. Mr. Johnson farther told us that the present council fire was kindled on account of the present dispute, and desired us not to interfere, as

they were brothers ; and begged us to sit still and maintain peace. This is what Colonel Johnson told us at that council fire. He also said he had his eye on Mr. Kirkland : that he was gone to Philadelphia, and along the seacoast : that he was become a great soldier and a leader. 'Is this your minister?' says he ; 'do you think your minister minds your souls? No. By the time he comes to Philadelphia, he will be a great warrior, and when he returns, he will be the chief of all the Five Nations.'"

The report of the proceedings of Guy Johnson at Oswego was certainly unexpected, and entirely at variance with the tenour of his conduct previous to his departure from the Mohawk Valley, and during his progress to the West. It is barely possible that he had not fully made up his mind as to the course he might ultimately pursue, and that his purpose was not definitively determined upon until after his meeting with Carleton and Haldimand at Montreal ; and it is abundantly certain that his notions of Indian neutrality, even had he entertained them, were very speedily abandoned

With the delivery of Abraham's speech, however, the council was closed ; and although Schuyler and Douw had been appointed to keep the council fire burning, the ashes were soon raked up—never to be opened again at Albany, for that was the last grand Indian council ever held in that city.

The result was highly satisfactory to the commissioners, and apparently so to the Indians, who had been well provided for during the three weeks occupied at the German Flatts and Albany. On their departure, moreover, they were handsomely supplied with presents, and they took their leave with manifestations of great good-will.

Most unfortunately, soon after their return from Albany, an epidemic disorder appeared among them, in the form of a highly malignant fever. It was a disease which they had never seen, and by it great

numbers were swept away. The Schoharie canton of the Mohawks, in particular, suffered very severely; indeed, they were almost exterminated. The small number who survived, imbibed the impression that the Great Spirit had sent the pestilence upon them in anger for not having taken sides with the king. They therefore followed their brethren from the Mohawk Valley, who had escaped to Canada with Guy Johnson. In the subsequent invasions of the Tryon county settlements, these Schoharie Indians, who thus deserted by an impulse of superstition, were among the most forward and cruel. It should also be borne in mind that, after all, the council comprised but an inadequate and partial representation of the Six Nations, with the exception of the Oneidas and the lower clan of the Mohawks. The great body of the Mohawk warriors, headed by Thayendanegea, had left the country; and the most influential of the Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas had also accompanied Brant and Guy Johnson to Montreal; and events, at no very distant day, proved that the Albany treaty had been held to very little purpose. It is not consistent with the nature or habits of Indians to remain inactive in the midst of war.

Still, for a time, those proceedings were not without benefit to the cause of the country. The people of Tryon county were relieved, by the stipulations of peace and neutrality, from apprehensions of immediate danger from without; and the Committee of Safety was consequently enabled to direct its attention, not only to the more efficient organization of the settlements for defence, but to the civil government of the country.

But, notwithstanding the fine spirit manifested thus far by a majority of the people in the interior, and that, too, under all the disadvantages we have been contemplating; notwithstanding the decisive tone of the language used in denouncing the oppres-



sions of the crown, it was not yet exactly certain that the colony of New-York would range itself against the royal authority. Governor Tryon, who was popular in the colony, had recently been recalled from North Carolina, and again appointed governor of New-York; and he was exerting his utmost powers to detach her from the cause of the Union, seconded by the *Asia* man-of-war, then lying in the harbour, and commanding the city of New-York by her guns. The captain of the *Asia* had threatened to destroy the town should General Lee, who was then approaching with an army from the east, be allowed to enter it; and such were the prevalence of terror and the power of intrigue, that disaffection to the cause of the Union began to exhibit itself openly in the Provincial Congress. Indeed, avowals of a design to place themselves under the royal standard were unequivocally uttered. These untoward appearances were rendered the more threatening by the discovery of a secret correspondence, from which it was ascertained that the parent government was preparing to send a fleet into the Hudson, and to occupy both New-York and Albany with its armies. Of these designs Sir John Johnson was probably well aware, and the hope of their accomplishment may have induced him to linger behind, watching the signs of the times, after the departure of his brother-in-law and *his* army of followers. Sir John had also a numerous tenantry, who were mostly Loyalists; and the Scotch colonists, settled in large numbers in Johnstown and its neighbourhood, of whom mention has formerly been made, being Loyalists likewise, constituted for him a respectable force upon which he could rely in a case of emergency.

The Dutch and German population of the valley, however, were chiefly Whigs; as also, by this time, were a decided majority of the entire white population, not only of the Mohawk Valley, but of Scho-

harie, Cherry Valley, and the other settlements in the southern part of that widely-extended county. The General Committee executed their functions with equal diligence and vigour. The inhabitants were enrolled and organized into militia; the committee deposed the sheriff, Alexander White, and caused Colonel John Frey to be appointed in his place; and, in one word, they took upon themselves both the civil and military jurisdiction of the large section of country over which they had provisionally assumed the government. White had rendered himself particularly odious to the Whigs from the first. Under some trifling pretext, he had arrested a Whig named John Fonda, and committed him to prison. His friends, to the number of fifty men, under the conduct of Sampson Sammons, went to the jail at night and released him by force. From the prison they proceeded to the lodgings of the sheriff, and demanded his surrender. White looked out from the second story window, and probably recognising the leader of the crowd, inquired, "Is that you, Sammons?" "Yes," was the prompt reply; upon which White discharged a pistol at the sturdy Whig, but happily without injury. The ball whizzed past his head, and struck in the sill of the door. This was the first shot fired in the war of the Revolution west of the Hudson. It was immediately returned by the discharge of some forty or fifty muskets at the sheriff, but the only effect was a slight wound in the breast, just sufficient to draw blood. The doors of the house were broken, and White would have been taken, but at that moment a gun was fired at the hall by Sir John. This was known to be a signal for his retainers and Scotch partisans to rally in arms; and as they would muster a force of five hundred men in a very short time, the Whigs thought it most prudent to disperse. They collected again at Caughnawaga, however, and sent a deputation to Sir John, demanding that White

should be given up to them. This demand, of course, was not complied with.

After his dismissal, as already mentioned, by an act of the people "in their sovereign capacity," White was recommissioned by Governor Tryon; but the County Committee would not suffer him to re-enter upon the duties of the office. On the contrary, so high was the popular indignation against him that he was obliged to fly, setting his face towards Canada, accompanied by a white man named Peter Bone, and two or three Indians. He was pursued to Jessup's Landing on the Hudson River, where the house in which he lodged was surrounded, and the fugitive sheriff taken prisoner; from thence he was taken to Albany and imprisoned. Shortly afterward he was released on his parole, and left the country.

The exigencies of the times required prompt and vigorous action, and the committee seems to have been composed of exactly the right description of men. They arrested suspicious persons, tried them, fined some, imprisoned more, and executed others. Their duties also involved the preservation of the peace in a critical period, among a mixed population of border-men, ever more or less disposed to impatience under legal restraint, and, of course, requiring the controlling power of a strong arm. And yet these high duties were generally discharged with great satisfaction to the public—the Loyalists excepted, of course—and their resolutions and decrees were submitted to by their constituents with alacrity. Their influence was likewise successfully exerted in winning friends to the popular cause, by deciding the wavering and confirming the irresolute.

Added to these multifarious duties was the necessity of keeping a vigilant watch over the motions of Sir John Johnson, whose position and conduct were alike equivocal, and the numerous Loyalists by whom he was surrounded. By these people ev-

ery possible obstacle was thrown in the way of the committee, and no method of annoying and embarrassing them left untried. They laboured to destroy the confidence of the people in the committee; called public meetings themselves, and chose counter-committees; now attempted to cover the Whig committees with ridicule, and now again charged them with illegal and tyrannical conduct. The consequence was mutual exasperation—sometimes between near neighbours, and the reciprocal engendering of hostile feelings between friends, who ranged themselves under opposing banners. These incipient neighbourhood quarrels occasioned, in the progress of the contest that ensued, some of the most bitter and bloody personal conflicts that ever marked the annals of a civil war. Several members of the committee subsequently acted a distinguished part in the field; many of them sacrificed their estates, and some of them fell. CHRISTOPHER P. YATES, the first chairman, accompanied General Montgomery as a volunteer to Ticonderoga and Canada, and afterward raised and commanded a corps of rangers. The fate of Nicholas Herkimer is well known, though his death will be invested with new and additional interest in the progress of this narrative.

In regard to Sir John, matters were now fast approaching to a crisis. On the 7th of September the committee wrote to the Provincial Congress in New-York, denouncing his conduct and that of his associates, particularly the Highlanders, who, to the number of two hundred, were said to be gathered about him, and by whom the Whigs "were daily scandalized, provoked, and threatened." They added, "We have great suspicions, and are almost assured, that Sir John has a continual correspondence with Colonel Guy Johnson and his party."\*

\* It was afterward ascertained that such a correspondence was carried on through the Indians, who conveyed letters in the heads of their

No sooner had the Congress of THE TWELVE UNITED COLONIES agreed to the Declaration, or manifesto, mentioned in the beginning of the present chapter, proclaiming to the world the causes, and the necessity of their appeal to arms, than it was felt, on all hands, even by the timid and hesitating, that England and the colonies now stood, not in the relation of parent and children, but in the attitude of two nations legally at war. Hence the patriots of Tryon county began to look more closely, and with greater assurance, to the deportment of Sir John, of whose designs, as has been seen, they had from the first entertained strong suspicions. The movements of Sir Guy Carleton, moreover, Governor-general of Canada, who had been commissioned to muster and arm all persons within that province, and to wage war by land and sea against "all enemies, pirates, or rebels, either in or out of the province," to "take them and put them to death, or preserve them alive, at his discretion," were now creating great uneasiness on the northern frontier, from which quarter they were apprehending a formidable invasion. The management of the northern department having been committed to Generals Schuyler and Montgomery, who were now directing a force upon Montreal and Quebec, the Tryon County Committee determined to probe the intentions of Sir John Johnson at once and to the bottom. For this purpose, on the 26th of October, they addressed him the following letter:

"Tryon County Committee Chamber, Oct. 26, 1775

"HONOURABLE SIR,

"As we find particular reason to be convinced of your opinion in the questions hereafter expressed, we require you that you'll please to oblige us with your sentiments thereupon in a few lines by our

tomahawks and in the ornaments worn about their persons. The Indians also brought powder across from Canada.—*Campbell's Annals*

messengers, the bearers hereof, Messrs. Ebenezer Cox, James M'Master, and John James Klock, members of our committee.

"We want to know whether you will allow that the inhabitants of Johnstown and Kingsborough may form themselves into companies, according to the regulations of our Continental Congress, for the defence of our country's cause; and whether your honour would be ready himself to give his personal assistance to the same purpose?"

"Also, whether you pretend a prerogative to our county courthouse and jail, and would hinder or interrupt the committee to make use of the same public houses to our want and service in the common cause?"

"We don't doubt you will comply with our reasonable requests, and thereby oblige,

"Honourable Sir,

"Your obedient and humble servants.

"By order of the committee,

"NICHOLAS HERKIMER, Chairman

"To the Hon. Sir John Johnson, Johnson Hall."

The deputation named in the letter waited upon Sir John in person to receive his answer, the substance of which they reported to the committee verbally as follows, viz.:

"1. By perusing our letter, Sir John replied that he thinks our requests very unreasonable, as he never had denied the use either of the courthouse or jail to anybody, nor would yet deny it, for the use which these houses have been built for; but he looks upon it that the courthouse and jail are his property till he is paid £700, the amount of which being out of his pocket for the building of the same.

"2. In regard of embodying his tenants into companies, he never did forbid them, neither should do it, as they may use their pleasure; but we might save ourselves the trouble, he being sure that they would not.

"3. Concerning himself, he said, that before he would sign any association, or would lift his hand up against his king, he would rather suffer that his head shall be cut off.

"Farther, he replied, that if we should make any unlawful use of the jail, he would oppose it, and also he mentions that there have many unfair means been used for increasing the association and uniting the people; for he was informed by credible gentlemen in New-York that they were obliged to unite, otherwise they could not live there; and that he was informed by good authority that likewise two thirds of the Canajoharie and German Flatts people have been forced to sign the articles; and in his opinion the Boston people are open rebels, and the other colonies have joined them."

Immediately on receiving this report, the committee determined to bring the question of the occupancy of the jail to an issue. They therefore directed that two of their prisoners, named Lewis Clement and Peter Bowen, who had been sentenced to certain periods of confinement for political offences, should be forthwith conveyed to the prison, under a guard commanded by Captain JACOB SEEBER, with instructions that, should the jailer refuse to receive them into close confinement for the time specified, or should they be opposed by Sir John, then Captain Seeber was to bring them to the house of "our voted and elected new high-sheriff, John Frey, Esq., who shall immediately inform thereof our chairman for farther directions."

Sir John did not allow the committee to take possession of the jail, and they were obliged to fit up a private house as a temporary prison; while some of their prisoners were sent to Albany, and others as far as Hartford, for safe keeping.

The first act of positive hostility on the part of the Indians, during this bitter and bloody contest, was committed in the autumn of the present year.

General Schuyler having been obliged temporarily to leave the northern army in consequence of ill health, the command devolved upon General Montgomery, who had advanced a second time upon St. John's and captured the fortress, Sir Guy Carleton having been repulsed by Colonel Warner, at Longueuil, in his attempt to cross the St. Lawrence and advance to its succour. It appears that, either in the first or second attack upon St. John's, or in both, the Americans had been opposed by some of the Mohawk Indians—those, doubtless, who had accompanied Guy Johnson to Canada. Hence, on the 27th of October, the Tryon County Committee “unanimously resolved that a letter should be sent to the sachems of the Canajoharie Castle, in regard to the return and present abiding of some Indians in their castle from Canada, who have acted inimically against us, and fought against our united forces near the Fort St. John, not to give shelter to such real enemies among them.”

No copy of the letter written pursuant to this resolution has been preserved. It is noted among the papers of the committee, however, that the sachems and warriors of Canajoharie Castle appeared before them in person, and made a pacific answer to their letter of remonstrance, from which, and other circumstances, the presumption is reasonable that the Mohawks remaining about their ancient castles had not yet determined to swerve from their engagement of neutrality.

Such was the progress of the Revolution in the county of Tryon down to the close of 1775. A rapid glance at contemporaneous events not already noted, occurring elsewhere, will close the history of the year. The battle of Bunker Hill had roused all New-England to arms; and by the time of General Washington's arrival to assume the command, during the first week in July, the British forces were so effectually shut up in Boston as to be obliged to



send out small vessels to a distance for supplies. To cut up this species of coastwise commerce, the colonies of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut each fitted out two small cruisers, before Congress had made a suggestion respecting a naval armament. The first avowal of offensive hostility against the mother-country was contained in the act of the Massachusetts Congress for fitting out a naval armament; and among the first fruits was the capture, by Captain Manly, of Marblehead, of a large British ordnance brig, laden with several brass pieces of artillery, a large supply of small arms, tools, and utensils of all warlike descriptions, &c. Three days afterward Captain Manly captured three more British ships laden with military stores. South Carolina was at the same time making vigorous preparations for war, but had not exceeding 3000 lbs of gunpowder within the province. By fitting out a fast-sailing vessel, however, they were enabled to intercept a supply vessel off St. Augustine, and obtain a large and timely addition to their stores—15,000 pounds of gunpowder alone. Meantime, the affairs of the colonies continued to form the leading and most exciting topic of debate in the British Parliament. Lord North, who, it is now known, acted throughout this great struggle more in obedience to the positive requisitions of the king than in accordance with his own private wishes, insisted upon the strongest measures of compulsion. General Conway, Colonel Lutterell, Mr. James Grenville, the Duke of Grafton, and Lord Lyttleton, spoke in favour of concession, and argued in favour of repealing every enactment respecting the matters in dispute with the colonies subsequent to the year 1763. The ministers contended that they might as well acknowledge the independence of the colonies at once. Mr. Burke, during this season, made his great speech on American affairs, and introduced his conciliatory bill, proposing “a renunciation of the

exercise of taxation, without at all interfering with the question of right. It preserved the power of levying duties for the regulation of commerce, but the money so raised was to be at the disposal of the several general assemblies. The tea-duty was to be repealed, and a general amnesty granted." This proposition, though regarded with more favour than the others, was rejected; and the administration was sustained in the policy of sending a large sea and land force against the colonies, with offers of mercy upon a proper submission. The Continental Congress, however, still continued its efforts to prevent a final separation; and another address to the king was adopted, beseeching the interposition of his royal authority to afford relief from their afflicting fears and jealousies, and restore harmony by the adoption of such measures as would effect a permanent reconciliation. This petition, signed by John Hancock, was presented in Parliament on the 7th of December, and gave rise to several motions for pacification, all of which were rejected.

The military operations of the autumn were chiefly confined to the expedition against Canada. Lord Dunmore, it is true, had given several additional impulses to the revolutionary spirit in Virginia by the manner of his opposition, and the enemy had still farther exasperated the people of New-England by burning the town of Falmouth, in the northeastern part of Massachusetts. Having timely notice, the people fled from the town, which was furiously bombarded, and 139 dwelling-houses and 278 warehouses were burned. The invasion of Canada by Generals Schuyler and Montgomery has already been incidentally mentioned. General Schuyler had issued a suitable proclamation to the inhabitants of Canada on entering that territory, but he was obliged by ill health to relinquish the command to General Montgomery. St. John's surrendered on the 3d of November; but, while the siege was pending,

Colonel Ethan Allen, with thirty-eight of his Green Mountain Boys, was captured, and sent to England in irons. Allen deserved his fate, however, for his rashness and disobedience of orders. Still, he was very near capturing Montreal with the small party he had led in advance, as was subsequently admitted by one of the British officers.

The fort at Chamblée fell into the hands of Montgomery, together with a large quantity of military stores, which were of great use; among them were three tons of powder. Montreal was next taken by the provincials, General Carleton escaping in a boat with muffled oars to Three Rivers, whence he hastened to Quebec. Montgomery, with his little army, was swift to follow him thither, where his arrival had been anticipated by Colonel Arnold, with upward of 700 New-England infantry and riflemen, with whom he had performed the incredible service of traversing the unexplored forest from the Kennebec to the mouth of the Chaudiere. Uniting the forces of Arnold with his own, Montgomery laid siege to Quebec on the 1st of December. His artillery, however, was too light to make any impression upon its walls, and it was at length determined, if possible, to carry the town by a combined assault from two directions, one division to be led by Montgomery, and the other by Arnold. The enterprise was undertaken on the 31st of December, and the year closed by the repulse of both divisions and the fall of Montgomery.

The success which had marked the American arms in the early part of the Canadian campaign, made a strong impression upon the Caughnawaga Indians. The Canadians, generally, were exceedingly averse to engaging in the unnatural contest, and were strongly inclined to favour the cause of the colonies; and, notwithstanding the descent of Brant and the Mohawks to Montreal, and the solicitations of Governor Carleton, the Caughnawagas

sent a deputation to General Washington, at Cambridge, as early as the month of August, avowing their readiness to assist the Americans in the event of an expedition into Canada. This assurance was fulfilled. In a letter from Sir Guy Carleton to General Gage, written in August, which was intercepted, the Canadian governor said, "Many of the Indians have gone over to them (the Americans), and large numbers of the Canadians are with them." "I had hopes of holding out for this year, though I seem abandoned by all the world, had the savages remained firm. I cannot blame these poor people for securing themselves, as they see multitudes of the enemy at hand, and no succour from any part, though it is now four months since their operations against us first began." The subsequent reverses of the Americans, however, changed the masters of those Indians, and they were, ere long, found warring in the ranks of the crown.

But all the Indians did not join the British standard. Notwithstanding that the Delawares had been engaged in the Cresap war the year before, they refused the solicitations of the British emissaries and the Senecas to take up the hatchet with them in this contest. A meeting of Indians was held in Pittsburg to deliberate upon the question, at which a select deputation of the Senecas attended. Captain *White Eyes*, a sensible and spirited warrior of the Lenape, boldly declared that he would not embark in a war to destroy a people born on the same soil with himself. The Americans, he said, were his friends and brothers, and no nation should dictate to him or his tribe the course they should pursue.

## CHAPTER VI.

THE dawn of the New Year was lighted up by the conflagration of Norfolk, by order of Lord Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia. His lordship had previously retired with his adherents to the fleet; and this act of Vandalism was directed by way of retaliating upon the Whigs of that borough for having refused supplies to the Liverpool man-of-war. The people themselves destroyed the buildings nearest the water, in order to deprive the ships even of those sources of supply. After cruising for a time on the coast of Virginia, and being everywhere repulsed—some of his ships having been driven on shore, and their crews captured and imprisoned by the colonists—his lordship was obliged to destroy those of his vessels which were not seaworthy, and seek refuge himself in Florida and the West Indies. Another incident adverse to the royal arms was the defeat, by the provincials under General Moore, of General M'Donald (commissioned by Governor Martin), in his attempts to bring North Carolina to obedience. The battle resulting in this defeat was gallantly fought at Moore's Creek Bridge by Colonels Caswell and Lillington, commanding about 1000 minute-men and militia. A large quantity of arms fell into the hands of the provincials, and the defeat, equally unexpected and decisive, greatly depressed the spirits of the Loyalists in that quarter.

Resuming the history of the Mohawk Valley: although the autumn of the preceding year had passed quietly away in that region, no small degree of uneasiness was created, early in the winter, by the suspicious conduct of Sir John Johnson; heightened, as will appear in the sequel, by false representations

sent forth by a man who, in the end, proved to be an impostor. Such were the spirit of the times, moreover, and the jealousies mutually entertained, that it is more than probable the measures of Sir John were concerted in consequence of apprehensions honestly indulged, and in all likelihood awakened by the same or a kindred imposture. At all events, Sir John was actively engaged in defensive preparations, with a view, as it was believed, of throwing up fortifications around the baronial hall. His adherents, as we have seen, were numerous, particularly among the Scotch Highlanders, by several hundreds of whom he was surrounded; and reports became rife, that, in addition to these, the works he was erecting were to be garrisoned by three hundred Indians, to be let loose upon the settlements as opportunities might occur.

It was undoubtedly true that the Tories of that region were preparing actively to espouse the royal cause, and enlistments for the king's service, it is very likely, were secretly making. Information to this effect was laid before Congress in December. It was also declared, by a man named Connell, that a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition, and other warlike articles, had been collected and concealed by the Tories at Johnstown, to be used when the proper moment for action arrived. The facts disclosed by Connell were supported by his deposition; whereupon a resolution was adopted by Congress, directing General Schuyler to be informed of these circumstances, and requesting him to adopt the most speedy and effectual measures for securing the said arms and military stores; for disarming the Loyalists, apprehending their leaders, and taking such measures in general as might be judged necessary to ensure the tranquillity of the frontier.\* This

\* The sum of *forty dollars* was appropriated by Congress for this object, and the special committee having the subject in charge were directed to count the gold and silver in the treasury, and forward the same to General Schuyler under a guard!

resolution was received by General Schuyler at Albany early in January, and no time was lost in concerting measures for its execution. General Schuyler at first supposed that a force of three hundred men, with the assistance they would be certain to receive from the Whigs of Tryon county, would be amply sufficient. It was determined, however, in order to produce a deeper effect upon the Loyalists against whom they were proceeding, to march with a force of seven hundred men.

Nevertheless, in order to preserve the good-will of the Indians of the Lower Mohawk Castle,\* and guard against taking them by surprise or giving them unnecessary alarm, Mr. Bleecker, the Indian interpreter, residing at Albany, was despatched to the castle on the 15th, charged with a belt and a friendly message to the Indians.

General Schuyler, however, did not wait for the return of his messenger from the Indians, but proceeded to Schenectady on the 16th, at the head of a strong division of militia, and accompanied by General Ten Broeck, Colonel Varick, and several other officers. The militia turned out with great alacrity, notwithstanding the severity of the weather and the badness of the roads. On the evening of his arrival at Schenectady, General Schuyler was met by a deputation of the Mohawks, headed by Little Abraham, who, in a very haughty tone, addressed him as follows :

“BROTHERS—You lately sent to our place four men, who arrived to us last Sunday morning. They told us they were sent up to us by you to inform us of those military preparations which were making down in this quarter. By them you let us know that you thought it not prudent to send armed men among us without previously notifying us. Likewise, brothers, your messengers informed us of the

\* The Mohawks of the Lower Castle, with Little Abraham, had not been drawn away by Thayendanega and Guy Johnson

reasons of your coming in this manner. You informed us that you had heard that there were a number of men embodied at Sir John's about Johnstown. You told us likewise, that, as soon as they had completed their body, they intended to destroy the settlements up and down the river.

"BROTHERS—You told us that you came to inquire into the truth of the report, which might be done by four or six without any danger in making the inquiry. We proposed your sending up six persons to inquire into the truth of this matter, as it would be a shame to interrupt them, as no person would be so mean to give them any obstruction. As for sending your belt forward, we thought to retain it until we had heard whether our proposal had been accepted or no. And we desire that you would consider of this matter, and keep your troops at home, and let us know your mind; and if, after considering of our proposals, you do not agree to them, that you will then let us know what you intend to do.

"BROTHERS—We expected an answer to our proposals, but none arrived until we were informed by a woman who returned from Albany that those preparations were actually making, and that troops were actually marching in the country. We come, brothers, to beg of you that you take good care and prudence of what you are going about. We beg of you, brothers, to remember the engagement which was made with the Twelve United Colonies at our interview last summer, as we then engaged to open the path of peace, and to keep it undefiled from blood. At the same time, something of a different nature made its appearance. You assured us, brothers, that if any were found in our neighbourhood inimical to us, you would treat them as enemies. The Six Nations then supposed that the son of Sir William was pointed at by that expression. We then desired particularly that he might not be injured, as it was not in his power to injure the cause, and that,



therefore, he might not be molested. The Six Nations then said they would not concern themselves with your operations in other parts, but particularly desired that this path might be free from blood. And now, brothers, we repeat it again: we beg of you to take good care and not to spill any blood in this path; and the more especially, brothers, as it is but of this day that the Six Nations had so agreeable an interview with the colonies; and our chiefs are now hunting in the woods, and not dreaming that there is any prospect that this path is or will be defiled with blood.

“BROTHERS, ATTEND! It was your request, and a matter agreed upon by the twelve United Colonies, that we should mind nothing but peace; therefore, brothers, as we mean to observe that agreement, we have expressed ourselves as above, and as brothers: we mind nothing but peace. We look upon ourselves as mediators between the two parties; therefore, brothers, as your messengers declared that you would not be the aggressors, we informed Sir John of this, and earnestly begged of him not to be the aggressor, or the means of spilling blood; and at the same time assured him, that if we found that he should be the aggressor, we would not pay any farther attention to him; and likewise told him, that if our brothers of the United Colonies were the aggressors, we should treat them in the same manner. This is what we told Sir John, as we look upon ourselves to be the mediators between both parties, and, as we have said before, desired him not to be the aggressor. To which Sir John replied, that we knew his disposition very well, and that he had no mind to be the aggressor. He assured us that he would not be the aggressor, but if the people came up to take away his life, he would do as well as he could, as the law of nature justified every person to stand in his own defence.

“According to the news we have heard, it is as

though Sir John would shut up the path of peace in that quarter ; but it is impossible he should do it, as he had but a mere handful of friends ; but, brothers, if this company, who are now passing by, should go up, and anything bad should happen, we shall look on you as shutting up the path.

“ It has been represented to you, brothers, that it seems that Sir John is making military preparations, and that he is making a fort around his house, but, brothers, as we live so near him, we should certainly know it if anything of that nature should be done, especially as we go there so frequently on account of our father, the minister, who sometimes performs divine service at that place. We have never seen any hostile preparations made there ; there is no cannon, or anything of that kind, and all things remain in the same situation it was in the lifetime of Sir William.

“ We have declared to you, brothers, that we would not deceive, and that we mean to declare our minds to you openly and freely. We, the sachems, have all along inculcated to the warriors sentiments of peace, and they have hitherto been obedient to us, though there have been frequent rumours that they should be disturbed ; yet we have, hitherto, been able to calm their minds. But now, brothers, so large a party coming alarms the minds of our warriors. They are determined, brothers, to go and be present at your interview with Sir John, and determined to see and hear everything that should be there transacted ; and, if it shall then appear that this party shall push matters to extremes, we then cannot be accountable for anything that may happen. But as for us, brothers, the counsellors are fully determined ever to persevere in the path of peace.

‘ BROTHERS, ATTEND ! Though I have finished what I had purposed to say, yet I will add one thing more. When the news of your approach arrived at our

town, it caused great confusion : some were ready to take to their arms, observing that those reports respecting the unfriendly disposition of the colonies were now verified. I begged of them, brothers, to possess their minds in peace for a few days. I told them that I myself would go to Albany, and inquire into the truth of the matter : I was so conscious of my own innocency, that no hostile appearance could deter me, however formidable. I therefore desired them to sit still until my return, which might be in two days, if I went to Albany. This, brothers, is the present situation of our people. They are waiting to see what news I bring.

“BROTHERS—When I made this request to the warriors, that they should sit still till my return, they told me that they would, which they are now in expectation of, and will do nothing till I get back. But, brothers, after my return I will repeat to them the speech you will now make to me ; and if any of our people should still persist to be present at your interview with Sir John, we hope, brethren, you will not think hard of us as counsellors, as it is not in our power to rule them as we please. *If they should go, and anything evil should happen, we beg to know, brothers, what treatment we may expect who remain at home in peace.*

“BROTHERS—This is all we have to say. This is the business which has brought us down, and we now expect an answer to carry home to our people.”

General Schuyler made a reply, as long as the speech of Little Abraham, touching on all the points adverted to by the latter, explaining and enforcing the necessity of the movement in progress, reiterating assurances of none but friendly purposes towards the Indians, assenting to their presence at the desired interview with Sir John Johnson, exhorting them to peace, but warning them against the consequences of a violation, by any of their

warriors, of the agreement to remain neutral which had been entered into at Albany.

Little Abraham responded briefly, expressing his satisfaction, and that of his people, at what they had heard, and promising the best efforts of the Indians to maintain peace uninterrupted.

General Schuyler assured them again of his pacific intentions, and that nothing unpleasant should happen to them. He also informed them, that if they desired to attend the expedition to Johnstown, or to be present at the intended interview with Sir John as mediators, they should be protected in that character. With this understanding, they took their departure the same night. A letter, of which the following is a copy, was at the same time despatched to Sir John Johnson :

GENERAL SCHUYLER TO SIR JOHN JOHNSON.

“ Schenectady, January 16, 1776

“ SIR,

“ Information having been received that designs of the most dangerous tendency to the rights, liberties, property, and even lives of those of his majesty's faithful subjects in America who are opposed to the unconstitutional measures of his ministry, have been formed in a part of the county of Tryon, I am ordered to march a body of men into that county to carry into execution certain resolutions of my superiors, and to contravene those dangerous designs.

“ Influenced, sir, by motives of humanity, I wish to comply with my orders in a manner the most peaceable, that no blood may be shed. I therefore request that you will please to meet me to-morrow, at any place on my way to Johnstown, to which I propose then to march. For which purpose, I do hereby give you my word of honour, that you, and such persons as you may choose should attend you, shall pass safe and unmolested to the place where

you may meet me, and from thence back to the place of your abode.

“Rutgers Bleecker and Henry Glen, Esqrs., are the bearers hereof, gentlemen who are entitled to your best attention, which, I dare say, they will experience, and by whom I expect you will favour me with an answer to this letter.

“You will please to assure Lady Johnson, that whatever may be the result of what is now in agitation, she may rest perfectly satisfied that no indignity will be offered her.

“I am, sir, your humble servant,

“PH. SCHUYLER.

“To Sir John Johnson, Baronet.”

General Schuyler resumed his march on the morning of the 17th, his forces constantly increasing, until, before nightfall, they numbered upward of three thousand. Having proceeded about sixteen miles from Schenectady, the expedition was met by Sir John, attended by several of his leading friends among the Scotchmen, and two or three others. The result of the interview was the proffer, by General Schuyler, of the following terms to Sir John and his retainers :

“That Sir John should give up all cannon, arms, and military stores within his possession or control, whether belonging to the crown, or private property ; that he should remain quietly on his parole of honour, at such place of residence as should be assigned to him by the Continental Congress ; that the Scotch inhabitants of the county should give up their arms, and promise not to take any part in the approaching contest, giving hostages for the fulfilment of such promise ; that such other inhabitants of the county as had avowed themselves hostile to the measures of the United Colonies should do the same ; and, finally, that all articles belonging to the crown, and intended as presents to the In

dians, should be given up for distribution, under the direction of General Schuyler."

On these conditions, the general promised that Sir John Johnson and his adherents should not be molested, but protected in the quiet enjoyment of their property; and that, at the close of the contest, the surrendered arms, &c., being private property, should be restored or paid for.

In the course of the interview, Sir John assured General Schuyler that the Indians would support him, and that numbers of them were already at Johnson Hall for that purpose. He was assured, in return, that if the proffered terms were not acceded to, force would be opposed to force, without distinction of persons, and that the consequences of resistance would be of the most serious description. In conclusion, Sir John begged until the evening of the following day to consider of the propositions, which request was granted, and the baronet took his leave.

In about an hour after his departure, Abraham and another of the Mohawks, made their appearance at General Schuyler's quarters. On being informed of what Sir John had said respecting the Indians being in arms at the Hall for his defence, Abraham pronounced the story untrue, and repeated his assurances that the Mohawks would interfere in no other way than as mediators. The general replied, that he hoped they would not; but he at the same time assured them, with emphasis, that if they should do so, he should not hesitate a moment in destroying every one who opposed him in arms.

On the following day (the 18th), General Schuyler moved forward to Caughnawaga, four miles from Johnstown, where he was joined by Colonel Herkimer and the Tryon county militia. At about 6 o'clock in the afternoon, Sir John's answer to the terms proposed to him was received, as follows:

"That Sir John Johnson and the rest of the gentlemen expect that all such arms, of every kind, as are

their own property, may remain in their possession : all the other arms shall be delivered up to such person or persons as may be appointed for that purpose ; as to military stores belonging to the crown, Sir John has not any.

“ Sir John expects that he will not be confined to any certain county, but be at liberty to go where he pleases.

“ The Scotch inhabitants will deliver up their arms, of what kind soever they may be ; and they will each solemnly promise that they will not, at any time hereafter, during the continuance of this unhappy contest, take up arms without the permission of the Continental Congress, or of their general officers. Hostages they are not in a capacity to give, no one man having command over another, or power sufficient to deliver such. Therefore, this part of the article to be passed over, or the whole included—women and children to be required, being a requisition so inhuman as, we hope, the general will dispense with.

“ Sir John has not any blankets, strouds, or other presents intended for the Indians.”

These propositions were rejected by General Schuyler as altogether unsatisfactory, and four hours were given by him for reconsideration ; at the expiration of which, he wrote to Sir John, no proposals would be received, and he should go on to obey his orders.

Immediately after the latter had been despatched to the Hall, the sachems of the Lower Castle, with all their warriors and several from the Upper Castle, called upon General Schuyler, having come to his quarters directly from the residence of the baronet. They informed the general that Sir John had related to them the substance of the terms of surrender that had been proposed. Sir John, they said, had declared to them that all he desired was protection for his family and friends from insult and

the outrages of riotous people, and protested that he had no unfriendly intentions against the country. The Indians, therefore, begged the general to accept the terms offered by Sir John. The general told the chiefs that he could not accept of those terms, and pointed out the objections. He likewise informed them of the tenour of the letter he had just transmitted to the Hall. The Indians were apparently contented with those reasons and with the course adopted, but begged that, should the answer of Sir John be still unsatisfactory, the general would give him until four o'clock in the morning, that they might have time to go and "shake his head," as they expressed it, "and bring him to his senses." They likewise begged, as an additional favour, that General Schuyler would not remove Sir John out of the country. They apologized for the threats of their own warriors, alleging that they were attributable to the circumstance of their not being present at the treaty of Albany, and repeated the assurance that they would never take arms against the colonies. In reply, General Schuyler complimented the Indians for their pacific intentions, and informed them that he should accede to their request, although the conduct of Sir John had been so censurable that he should be justified in holding him a close prisoner. His reason for granting the request, the general told them, were twofold: first, to show the love and affection of the Americans for the Indians, and to convince them that they could obtain, by asking as a favour, that which they could not obtain by demanding as a right. Secondly, that by leaving Sir John among them, they might, by their example and advice, induce him to alter his conduct.

The extension of time solicited by the Indians proved to be unnecessary, the answer of Sir John, acceding to the terms proposed, with some modifications, being received at the hour originally desig-



nated; and these modifications, somewhat limited, being assented to by General Schuyler, the latter on the same day marched to Johnstown, having previously detailed several detachments of his troops to scour the country, and bring in the disaffected not comprehended in the arrangements with the baronet. On the same afternoon Sir John delivered up the arms and ammunition in his possession, the quantity of both being much smaller than was expected. On Saturday, the 20th, General Schuyler paraded his troops at noon, to receive the surrender of the Highlanders, who, to the number of between two and three hundred, marched to the front and grounded their arms. These having been secured, the Scotchmen were dismissed with an exhortation to remain peaceable, and with an assurance of protection if they did so.

The general's attention was next directed to the discovery and capture of the secret *depôt* of arms and ammunition, of which information had been given by Connell. Two of the persons named in his affidavit were taken, but they denied, most unequivocally, all knowledge upon the subject. Connell was produced to confront them; but they still persisted in maintaining their innocence, and denounced him as a perjured villain. He was then sent with a number of officers to point out the spot where, as he alleged, the arms were concealed. He conducted them to a pond of water, containing a small island or mound in the middle, within which he declared the arms were buried. The snow and ice were forthwith removed, and the mound dug down. Connell had particularly described the manner in which the arms had been deposited under ground, but it was soon discovered that the earth had not recently been disturbed, if ever; and in the end it was ascertained, to the satisfaction of all, that the fellow was a base impostor. General Schuyler returned to Caughnawaga that evening. On the two following days upward of a hundred Tories were

brought in from different parts of the country. Colonel Herkimer was left to complete the disarming of the disaffected and receive the hostages, and the general, with his miscellaneous army, marched back to Albany. In his letters to Congress, and also to General Washington, he spoke of the anxiety and trouble he had experienced in preventing so large a body of men, collected on the sudden, without discipline, and, withal, greatly exasperated, from running into excesses. In these efforts, however, he succeeded much better than, under the circumstances, was reasonably to have been anticipated. Before his return, Mr. Dean, the Indian interpreter, was despatched by the general with a belt and a talk to the Six Nations, which has not been preserved. Thus ended the expedition to Johnstown.

General Schuyler transmitted a full report of his proceedings to Congress, by whom a special resolution was passed thanking him for the fidelity, prudence, and expedition with which he had performed such a meritorious service. A second resolution was also adopted, so curiously constructed, and containing such an ingeniously-inserted hint to the officers and militia-men accompanying General Schuyler on this expedition, as to render it worthy of preservation. It was in the words following:

*Resolved*, That the cheerful and ready assistance of those who accompanied General Schuyler in his march to the county of Tryon, and their useful services in that expedition, discovered such a patriotic spirit, that it is hoped none of them will allow their countrymen to entertain a suspicion that any ignoble motive actuated them, by requiring a pecuniary reward, especially when they were employed in suppressing a mischief in their own neighbourhood."

The resolutions were enclosed to General Schuyler in a flattering letter from President Hancock, in which, among other things, he says: "It is with great pleasure I inform you that the prudence, zeal,

and temper manifested in your late expedition, met with the warmest approbation of Congress."

For some unexplained reason, Sir John Johnson did not observe the compact of neutrality, nor the obligations of his parole. Or, if he kept himself within the letter, his conduct was such as to reawaken the suspicions of the people, and was considered by General Schuyler a virtual violation of the spirit of the parole he had given, to take no part against the colonies. In fact, the information received by General Schuyler convinced him that Sir John was secretly instigating the Indians to hostilities, and was thus likely to produce much mischief on the frontiers. To prevent such a calamity, it was thought advisable by Schuyler to secure the person of Sir John, and once more to quell the rising spirit of disaffection in the neighbourhood of Johnstown, especially among the Highlanders. For this purpose, in the month of May following the events already narrated, Colonel Dayton, with a part of his regiment then on its way to Canada, was despatched by General Schuyler to prosecute this enterprise. There were, however, large numbers of Loyalists in Albany, with whom Sir John was then and subsequently in close correspondence. It is therefore not surprising that he received timely notice of these preparations for his second arrest, in anticipation of Dayton's arrival. Such was the fact; and, hastily collecting a large number of his tenants and others, disaffected towards the cause of the colonists, the baronet was prepared for instant flight on the approach of the Continentals. This purpose was successfully executed. Colonel Dayton arrived at Johnstown in the evening, whereupon Sir John and his retainers immediately took to the woods by the way of the Sacandaga.\* Not

\* There is some reason to suppose that an expedition, led by the Mohawk Indians, was sent from Montreal on purpose to bring Sir John away, or rescue him from the *espionage* of the Americans. In one of

knowing whether his royalist friends were in possession of Lake Champlain or not, the fugitives dared not venture upon that route to Montreal; and Sir John was, accordingly, obliged to strike deeper into the forests between the head waters of the Hudson and the St. Lawrence. Having but a brief period of preparation for their flight, the party was but ill supplied for such a campaign. Their provisions were soon exhausted; their feet became sore from travelling; and several of their number were left, from time to time, in the wilderness, to be picked up and brought in afterward by the Indians sent out for that purpose.

After nineteen days of severe hardship, the baronet and his partisans arrived at Montreal in a pitiable condition, having encountered all of suffering that it seemed possible for man to endure. Such was the precipitation of his departure from the parental hall, and such his deficiency of the means of transportation, that an iron chest, containing the most valuable of his family papers, was hastily buried in the garden. The family Bible, containing the only record of the marriage of his father and mother, and, of course, the only written evidence of his own legitimacy, was also left behind.\* Such of the papers as were found were examined by Col-

Brant's speeches, delivered long afterward, when rehearsing the exploits of the Mohawks in the Revolutionary war, the following passage occurs: "We then went in a body to a town then in the possession of the enemy, and rescued Sir John Johnson, bringing him fearlessly through the streets." Brant, at the time of this rescue, was himself in England, as also was Guy Johnson.

\* After the confiscation of the property of Sir John, the furniture of the hall was sold by auction at Fort Hunter. The late Lieutenant-governor of New-York, John Taylor, purchased several articles of the furniture, and, among other things, the Bible mentioned in the text. Perceiving that it contained the family record, which might be of great value to Sir John, Mr. Taylor wrote a civil note to Sir John, offering its restoration. Some time afterward, a messenger from the baronet called for the Bible, whose conduct was so rude as to give offence. "I have come for Sir William's Bible," said he, "and there are the four guineas which it cost." The Bible was delivered, and the runner was asked what message Sir John had sent. The reply was, "Pay four guineas, and take the book!"

Colonel Dayton, in compliance with his orders; "and Lady Johnson was removed to Albany, where she was retained as a kind of hostage for the peaceable conduct of her husband. She wrote to General Washington complaining of this detention, and asking his interference for her release; but the commander-in-chief left the matter with General Schuyler and the Albany Committee." Colonel Dayton was stationed several weeks at Johnstown with his troops, and for the time secured the tranquillity of the country.

Sir John was immediately commissioned a colonel in the British service, and raised a command of two battalions, composed of those who accompanied him in his flight, and other American Loyalists who subsequently followed their example. They were called the Royal Greens. In the month of January following he found his way into New-York, then in possession of the British forces. From that period he became not only one of the most active, but one of the bitterest foes of his own countrymen of any who were engaged in that contest, and repeatedly the scourge of his own former neighbours. He was unquestionably a Loyalist from principle, else he would scarcely have hazarded, as he did, and ultimately lost, domains larger and fairer than probably ever belonged to a single proprietor in America, William Penn only excepted. But the immediate cause of his breaking his pledge of honour is not known. Unexplained as it ever has been, the act has always been regarded as a stain upon the baronet's character. It was held as such by the Provincial Congress of New-York, as will be seen by the annexed extract from a letter addressed by that body to General Washington immediately after his flight: "We apprehend no doubt can exist whether the affair of Sir John Johnson is within your immediate cognizance. He held a commission as brigadier-general of the militia, and, it is said, another

commission as major-general. That he hath shamefully broken his parole is evident, but whether it would be more proper to have him returned or exchanged, is entirely in your excellency's prudence." His estates were, of course, confiscated by the Provincial Congress of New-York, and in due time sold under the direction of the committee of that body having such matters in charge.

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## CHAPTER VII.

THE progress of events renders it necessary again to introduce the Indian hero of the war of the Revolution more prominently upon the stage of action. Thayendanegea had now been advanced to the situation of principal war-chief of the confederacy, an officer, according to the ancient usages of the Six Nations, uniformly taken from the Mohawks.

It has been seen, in a preceding chapter, that Thayendanegea had accompanied Guy Johnson from the Mohawk Valley, first, westwardly to Ontario, thence back to Oswego, and thence to Montreal, where his services, and those of his warriors, were courted by Generals Carleton and Haldimand, and an agreement was speedily made that they were to take up the hatchet in the cause of the king. For the prosecution of a border warfare the officers of the crown could scarcely have engaged a more valuable auxiliary. Distinguished alike for his address, his activity, and his courage—possessing, in point of stature and symmetry of person, the advantage of most men even among his own well-formed race—tall, erect, and majestic, with the air and mien of one born to command—having, as it were, been a man of war from his boyhood—his

name was a tower of strength among the warriors of the wilderness. Still more extensive was his influence rendered by the circumstance that he had been much employed in the civil service of the Indian department, under Sir William Johnson, by whom he was often deputed upon embassies among the tribes of the confederacy, and to those yet more distant, upon the great lakes and rivers of the north-west, by reason of which his knowledge of the whole country and people was accurate and extensive.

Whether, after the compact with Sir Guy Carleton, the chief again visited the Indian country of the Six Nations during the summer of 1775, is unknown. Probably not; since, in the autumn of that year, or early in the following winter, he embarked on his first visit to England. What was the precise object of this visit does not appear. It is very probable, however, that, notwithstanding the agreement so hastily formed at Montreal, the sagacious chieftain may have judged it prudent to pause before committing himself too far by overt acts of hostility against the colonies. The Oneidas were evidently inclining to espouse the colonial side of the controversy, if any; the River Indians had already ranged themselves on the same side; Captain White-Eyes, of the Delawares, had determined upon neutrality; and the Caughnawagas, or, at least, some of their leading chiefs, were in the camp with Washington. To all which may be added the fact, that at that time the American arms were carrying everything before them in Canada. These circumstances were certainly enough to make the chieftain hesitate as to the course dictated by true wisdom. His predilections, doubtless, from the first, inclined him to espouse the cause of the king. Nay, he maintained through life, that the ancient covenants of his people rendered it obligatory upon him so to do. In addition to which were the strong ties of blood, of

association, and of gratitude, by which he was bound to the family and the interests of the Johnsons. Still, the brilliant successes with which the Americans had opened the campaign in Canada presented another view of the case, which was certainly entitled to grave consideration. Thus situated, the chief may have found his position so embarrassing as to induce him to visit the parent country, and go himself into the presence of "THE GREAT KING," as the British monarch was styled by the Indians, before he should finally determine whether actually to take the field or not. By making the voyage, he would have the additional advantage of studying the resources and the power of the parent country, and would thereby be the better able to determine for himself whether success was likely to crown his majesty's arms in the end, or whether, by an over-scrupulous observance of an ancient stipulation of alliance, he should not, with his people, be rushing upon certain destruction.

But whether he thus reasoned or not, it is certain that he sailed for England towards the close of the year 1775, and reached London early in 1776, accompanied by Captain Tice, an officer of English extraction, born in America, who had resided in the neighbourhood of the Mohawk nation.

Only a very brief account of this, his first visit to England, has been found. It has always been said, however, that he was not only well received, but that his society was courted by gentlemen of rank and station—statesmen, scholars, and divines. He had little of the savage ferocity of his people in his countenance; and when, as he ordinarily did, he wore the European dress, there was nothing besides his colour to mark wherein he differed from other men. Upon his first arrival in the British capital, he was conducted to the inn called "*The Swan with two Necks.*" Other lodgings were soon provided for him more suitable to his rank as an Indian king; but



he said the people of the inn had treated him with so much kindness and civility, that he preferred remaining there during his stay in London; and he accordingly did so.

Although he was dressed in the European habit, he was not unprovided with a splendid costume after the manner of his own nation, in which he appeared at court, and upon visits of state and ceremony. James Boswell was at that time in his glory, and an intimacy appears to have been contracted between him and the Mohawk chief, since the latter sat for his picture at the request of this most interesting of egotists. He also sat, during the same visit, to Romney, one of the most distinguished artists of his day, for the Earl of Warwick. He was, of course, painted in his native dress, and the picture was greatly prized. The tomahawk worn by him in London was a very beautiful article, polished to the highest degree; upon which was engraved the first letter of his Christian name with his Mohawk appellation, thus: "*J. Thayendanega.*"

He did not remain in England many months, but, in company with Captain Tice, sailed on his return towards the close of March or early in April, and arrived on the coast near the harbour of New-York, after a very short passage. Having fully determined to fulfil his stipulations with General Carleton, and take up the hatchet in the cause of the crown, he was cautiously and privately landed somewhere in the neighbourhood of New-York, whence he performed a very hazardous journey to Canada, having, of course, to steal his way through a hostile population, until he could hide himself in the forests beyond Albany. He had taken the precaution, however, in England, to provide evidence of the identity of his body in case of disaster, or of his fall in any of the battles he anticipated, by procuring a gold finger ring, with his name engraven thereon at length.\*

\* This ring he wore until his death. It was kept as a precious relic

What were the particular arguments addressed to the Mohawk in the British capital, or by what process he became impressed with the idea that the arms of the king would, in the end, be victorious in the colonies, is not known. It is certain, however, that whatever doubts he might have entertained, were most effectually dispelled; since, on taking leave, it was understood that he pledged himself heartily to embrace the royal cause, and promised to take the field with three thousand warriors of his race.\*

It is no more than justice, however, to allow Captain Brant to speak for himself in regard to the principle by which he was governed in his decision. In a letter written by him to Sir Evan Nepean, the under-secretary of state, when in England after the peace of 1783, he said: "When I joined the English in the beginning of the war, it was purely on account of my forefathers' engagements with the king. I always looked upon these engagements, or covenants between the king and the Indian nations, as a sacred thing: therefore, I was not to be frightened by the threats of the rebels at that time; I assure you I had no other view in it, and this was my real case from the beginning."

by his widow for four years, when it was lost. Strange as it may seem, however, during the last summer (1836), the identical ring was found by a little girl in a ploughed field near Wellington Square, while the venerable Indian queen was on a visit to her daughter, the accomplished lady of Colonel Kerr. The aged widow of the old chief was overjoyed at once more possessing the memento, after it had been lost six-and-twenty years.

\* It appears that Colonel Guy Johnson must have visited England at the same time, or nearly the same time, with Brant. Perhaps they went together, although Johnson did not return so soon. General Washington announced his arrival at Staten Island, from England, on the 6th of August, 1776, in a letter written to the President of Congress on the 8th. In Dunlap's History of the American Stage, Guy Johnson's name is given, in 1778, as one of the managers of the old Theatre Royal, John-street. The players were all *amateurs*, officers of the British army, and the avails of their performances were appropriated for benevolent purposes. The unfortunate Major Andre was one of the actors, and the scene painter. A drop-curtain, painted by him, was used many years after his death.

By "threats," in this letter to the under-secretary, Brant probably meant no more than the efforts made by the Americans to prevent his joining the royal standard, and to preserve the neutrality of the Indians. In connexion with these efforts, there is a scrap of unwritten history, which, whether true or not, is characteristic of the shrewdness, and dry, sarcastic humour of the chief. It is related, that during the early part of the year 1775, while it was yet considered doubtful which side the Mohawks would espouse, and when it was, of course, very desirable to ascertain the views of Brant upon the subject, President Wheelock was applied to as a medium of communication with his former pupil. The doctor, according to the tradition, wrote him a long epistle upon the aspect of the times, and urged upon Brant those considerations which appeared most likely to win him over, or, rather, to secure his neutrality, if not his friendship, to the colonists. Brant replied very ingeniously. Among other things he referred to his former residence with the doctor, recalled the happy hours he had passed under his roof, and referred especially to his prayers and the family devotions to which he had listened. He said he could never forget those prayers; and one passage, in particular, was so often repeated, that it could never be effaced from his mind. It was, among other of his good preceptor's petitions, "that they might be able to live as good *subjects*—to fear God and HONOUR THE KING."

If doubt had existed among the colonists before, as to the direction of the channel in which ran his inclinations, there was surely none after the perusal of this letter. But scenes of a more stirring character now demand the attention.

Towards the close of the memorable Canadian campaign—so brilliantly commenced, so successfully prosecuted for many months, and yet so disastrously terminated—while the shattered remains of

the American forces were retiring before the troops of Sir Guy Carleton, the former experienced a sad disaster at "the Cedars," a point of land extending far into the St. Lawrence, about forty miles above Montreal, which was occupied by Colonel Bedell with three hundred and ninety provincial troops and two fieldpieces. General Carleton directed a descent upon this post from the British station at Oswegatchie, under the command of Captain Forster, at the head of one company of regular troops and a body of Indians numbering nearly six hundred. The latter were led by Thayendanegea. On the appearance of the enemy before the American works, Colonel Bedell repaired immediately to Montreal for assistance, leaving the Cedars in charge of Major Butterfield. Colonel (afterward general) Arnold, who was then in command of Montreal—not yet evacuated by the Americans—forthwith detached Major Sherburne with one hundred men, to proceed to the Cedars, and prepared to follow himself with a much larger force. Meantime, however, Major Butterfield, who, it was believed, might have easily defended the position, was intimidated by a threat from the enemy, that, should the siege continue and any of the Indians be slain, in the event of an eventual surrender it would be impossible for the British commander to prevent a general massacre, and consented to a capitulation, by which the whole garrison became prisoners of war. Major Sherburne approached on the day following, without having received any information of the change of circumstances until within four miles of the post, where, on the 20th of May, he was attacked by the Indians, and, after a sharp conflict, compelled to surrender at discretion. No sooner had Arnold received information of these events, than he marched against the foe, then at Vaudreuil, at the head of seven hundred men, with a view of chastising the enemy and recovering the prisoners. "When preparing for an

engagement, he received a flag accompanied by Major Sherburne, giving him the most positive assurances that if he persisted in his design it would be entirely out of the power of Captain Forster to prevent his savages from pursuing their horrid customs, and disencumbering themselves of their prisoners by putting every man to death. This massacre was already threatened, and Major Sherburne confirmed the information. Under the influence of this threat, Arnold desisted from his purpose, and consented to a cartel, by which the prisoners were delivered up to him; he agreeing, among other things, not only to deliver as many British soldiers in exchange for them, but also that they should immediately return to their homes."

This disaster, or, perhaps, more correctly speaking, the conduct of the officers to whose cowardice it was imputed, was a source of deep mortification to General Washington, and he gave utterance to his vexation in several letters written soon afterward. Nor was Butterfield alone blamed, Colonel Bedell being placed in the same category of condemnation. The commander-in-chief was likewise incensed at the conduct of Captain Forster, in resorting to deceptive and very unjustifiable means to procure hostages for ratifying a treaty of exchange.

The name of Captain Brant is not mentioned in any of the books in connexion with these transactions at the Cedars. There is positive evidence, however, that he was not only there, but that he exerted himself efficiently, after the surrender of Major Sherburne, to control the Indians and prevent the massacre of the prisoners. Among these latter was Captain John M'Kinstry, who commanded a company on that occasion. From his account of the battle, Major Sherburne fell into an ambushade, and the fighting was severe. Captain M'Kinstry's command was engaged sharply with a body of Indians, before whom his troops were several

times compelled to retire. Rallying, however, with spirit, the Indians were repeatedly driven back in turn; and the respective parties were thus successively driven by each other, back and forth, according to the doubtful and varying fortunes of the hour, until the Americans were overpowered by numbers, and compelled to surrender; Captain M'Kinstry being wounded, fell by the side of a tree, and was there taken. He subsequently ascertained that he had been marked as a victim by the Indians, who had actually made the usual preparations for putting him to death by the torture of fire; and that he was rescued by the personal exertions of Captain Brant, who, in connexion with some humane English officers, made up a purse and purchased an ox, which the Indians roasted for their carousal instead of the gallant prisoner. Captain M'Kinstry was treated with kindness while a prisoner, and contracted an intimacy with Brant, which continued until the chieftain's death. Brant never visited the Hudson after the Revolution without spending a few days with Colonel M'Kinstry at the Manor; and at the time of his last visit, about the year 1805, in company with his friend, who, like himself, was a member of the brotherhood, he attended the Freemason's Lodge in the city of Hudson, where his presence attracted great attention.

But to return. The conduct of Major Butterfield at the Cedars was likewise severely denounced in Congress, and his capitulation pronounced, by resolution, "a shameful surrender." Due credit was at the same time awarded to Major Sherburne for the bravery displayed by himself and his troops, who only "surrendered at last on absolute necessity." Notwithstanding, moreover, the interposition of Captain Brant to prevent a massacre, and the rescue of Captain M'Kinstry, such outrages were reported to Congress as to call forth a series of indignant resolutions upon the subject. In the preamble

to these resolutions, it was stated that, immediately after the surrender, the prisoners were delivered over to the Indians; their baggage plundered, their clothes taken from them, and several of their number killed; and one of them, who had only been wounded, roasted alive. From the circumstance that Captain M'Kinstry had been wounded, and designated for the torture, though rescued, as we have already seen, by Captain Brant, it is quite probable that Congress was misinformed as to the actual consummation of such a purpose in the person of any prisoner. Assuming the fact, however, the enemy's conduct was denounced in the strongest terms: Congress asserting the right of demanding indemnification for the wrongs inflicted upon the prisoners in their persons and property; and in regard to the murder of prisoners by the Indians, requiring that the authors of those murders be delivered into their hands for condign punishment, as a condition precedent to an exchange of prisoners. In regard to the torturing of prisoners, a resolution was also adopted, denouncing, "as the sole means of stopping the progress of human butchery," a retaliation of punishment, of the same kind and degree, to be inflicted upon a like number of prisoners of the enemy, in every case of outrage thereafter to occur.

These resolutions were, in effect, a refusal to confirm the treaty for the exchange of prisoners entered into by General Arnold, and were so considered by the commanding officers in Canada. The consequence was, the indulgence of much crimination and recrimination on the part both of the American and British commanders. Indeed, complaints of the cruel treatment of the prisoners falling into their hands had been preferred against the enemy several months before, particularly in the case of Colonel Ethan Allen and his fellow-captives. Allen had been captured by General Prescott, by whom,

in addition to other indignities, he had been heavily ironed, and sent like a common felon to England. Prescott was afterward taken by the Americans and treated with considerable rigour, in retaliation for the ill usage of Allen. This produced a remonstrance from General Howe, who, on being reminded of the case of Allen, disclaimed any responsibility in regard to that transaction, inasmuch as it was an occurrence in a district beyond the boundaries of his particular command. The affair of the Cedars excited the strongest feelings of indignation, not only in Congress and among the people, but in the army. Soon afterward the account was in part balanced, by a diabolical outrage committed by an American scouting party in the neighbourhood of St. John's. It was the deliberate assassination, by the lieutenant at the head of the party, of Brigadier-general Gordon of the British army. General Gordon was riding alone, and in full uniform, from La-prairie to St. John's. The lieutenant and his party were in ambush within the British lines; and, as the general passed, the former wantonly and barbarously shot him through the body. Although the wound was mortal, the general rode on, and speedily reached St. John's, where he expired. This painful incident aroused as warm a burst of indignation among the British officers as the affair of the Cedars had done among the Americans. General Carleton availed himself of the occurrence to issue a violent, though artful proclamation, which was pronounced by Washington, in a letter to the President of Congress, to be "highly unbecoming the character of a soldier and gentleman." Although the prisoners were not exchanged, under the arrangement made with Arnold, yet Carleton set the American captives at liberty, on condition of their returning to their own homes, there to remain as prisoners. Each of the prisoners was furnished with a copy of his insidious proclamation.



It was not supposed that any considerable numbers of the Indians of the Six Nations participated in the battle of the Cedars, other than the Mohawks and their kindred tribe, the Caughnawagas, or the Seven Nations of Canada, as they chose to call themselves. Indeed, the Six Nations were, at that stage of the contest, far from being unanimous in opposition to the colonies; and at the very time of these occurrences, a deputation from four of the nations was at Philadelphia, on a peaceable mission to Congress.

On the 25th of May, 1776, the Congress resolved "that it was highly expedient to engage the Indians in the service of the United Colonies;" and they empowered the commander-in-chief to employ, in Canada and elsewhere, a number not exceeding two thousand, offering them "a reward of one hundred dollars for every commissioned officer, and thirty dollars for every private soldier of the king's troops, that they should take prisoner in the Indian country, or on the frontier of these colonies." The Congress also authorized General Washington to employ the Indians of Penobscot, St. John's, and Nova Scotia, who had proffered their services, and were to receive the same pay as the Continental soldiers.

Whether any of those Eastern Indians were ever actually engaged in the American service, is not known. In regard to the employment of the Northern Indians, Washington forthwith entered into a correspondence with General Schuyler upon the subject, and pressed him to carry the resolutions into effect. The latter, however, was averse to the measure—as much so as at the first. He disliked to employ such a force under any circumstances, contending that they were too fickle and uncertain to allow any well-founded reliance to be placed upon them at the moment of emergency. At that particular conjuncture, especially, when our troops, bro-

ken and dispersed, were flying like fugitives from Canada, he thought the chances of obtaining Indian auxiliaries exceedingly slender; and as to the number prescribed (two thousand), the general intimated, in one of his letters to the commander-in-chief that it would have been well if Congress had condescended to inform him where so many Indian warriors, not already in the service of the enemy, were to be found. In short, General Schuyler's opinion was correct from the beginning, that the colonies could expect no essential aid from the Indians; and whatever aid they might receive, would be sure to cost more than it would come to. So the event proved. But, although the British profited most by the employment of the Indians, they are not alone to blame for using them. So far, certainly, as principle and intention are concerned, the Americans are equitably entitled to a due share of the censure.

In recurring to coincident events transpiring in other parts of the country, it must be remarked, that the commander-in-chief was often placed in circumstances not the most promising. On his arrival at the camp before Boston, the preceding year, he had found only "the materials for a good army"—not the organized army itself. The troops were mostly undisciplined; and having taken arms to fight for liberty, it was no easy matter to bring them into those habits of subordination which necessarily render a soldier a mere machine to be moved at the will of his commander. The first object of General Washington, therefore, was to bring the troops into a state of discipline. But another difficulty presented itself in the fact that, owing to the short periods of enlistment, the times of service of the greater portion of the army were to expire in November and December. To which was added the embarrassing discovery that all the powder at his command was barely sufficient to supply nine rounds of cartridges per man. There was, more-

over, a general want of camp equipage and clothing, and, indeed, of everything necessary alike to the comfort and the efficiency of an army. But Heaven, in its mercy, seemed to have devolved the command upon the man of all others best calculated to meet the emergency and overcome it. His destitution of ammunition was artfully and effectually concealed from the enemy; and although, on the discharge of those of his troops who would not re-enlist, at the close of December (1775), he had no more than 9650 men left, he yet contrived to sustain himself and keep the enemy beleaguered in Boston during the whole winter. "It is not in the pages of history, perhaps," he wrote to Congress, "to furnish a case like ours. To maintain a post within musket-shot of the enemy for six months together, without *ammunition*, and at the same time to disband one army and recruit another, within that distance of twenty old British regiments, is more, probably, than was ever attempted."

The Continental Congress had been induced by the influence of the commander-in-chief to resolve upon the raising of an army of 75,000 men, to be enlisted for the term of three years, or during the war. It was not until January, however, that they could be induced to offer bounties for enlistments, and even then the ranks were not rapidly filled. At the close of February, the whole effective force of the Americans was no more than 14,000 men, exclusive of 6000 of the Massachusetts militia. An assault upon Boston had been meditated in February by General Washington; but the opinion of his principal officers, expressed in a council of war, being strongly against such a movement, the enterprise was reluctantly abandoned. Wearied by inaction, the next project of the American commander was to take possession of Dorchester Heights, a position commanding the town of Boston, the occupation of which would compel General Howe either

to attempt its dispossession by the Americans, or to evacuate the town. The enterprise was so well planned, as to be executed by General Thomas with complete and brilliant success, on the night of the 4th of March. Having diverted the attention of the enemy by a bombardment of his lines in another direction, the movement was unperceived. The weather being mild, the American troops were enabled to labour with energy in throwing up defences, which, on the following morning, struck the general of the British army with astonishment, from their sudden appearance and their magnitude. A heavy atmosphere contributed to magnify the height of the works and increase the wonder of the foe. Sir William Howe made immediate preparations to drive the Americans from their new, and, to him, dangerous position; for which purpose two thousand choice troops were embarked to cross over the same evening; but a severe tempest frustrated his design. On the following morning General Howe convened a council of war, at which it was resolved to evacuate the town as soon as possible. This determination was carried into execution on the 17th, by the embarkation of the whole British army, and the sailing of the British fleet, first to Halifax, but ultimately, as the event proved, for New-York. On the same day General Washington entered Boston in triumph, and was hailed, by the universal acclaim of the people, as their deliverer. Thus was the town which first raised the standard of rebellion the first to rejoice at the retreat of its oppressors. Nor was it the fortune of the invaders ever to set foot there again.

In the North, the operations of the Provincial army had been far less propitious. The conquest of Canada was a favourite project with Congress, and every possible effort within the slender means of the colonies was made to that end. But the fall of Montgomery had thrown a gloom over the enterprise

which was never dissipated. Colonel, now General Arnold, had maintained himself before Quebec during the winter, and until late in the spring, with but a handful of men, numbering, at one time, not more than five hundred effectives. But the re-enforcements were slow in arriving; the Canadians, from a variety of causes—the principal of which, beyond doubt, was bad treatment from an undisciplined soldiery—became less friendly to the Americans than at first, notwithstanding the mission of Messrs. Franklin, Chase, and Carroll, accompanied by a Catholic priest, to conciliate them; and on the arrival of General Wooster at his quarters, about the 1st of April, Arnold obtained leave of absence, and took the command at Montreal. General Thomas, who had been assigned to the command of the army in Canada, after the exploit of Gloucester Heights, arrived before Quebec on the 1st of May, where he found an army of nineteen hundred men, less than one thousand of whom were effective, and three hundred of these, being entitled to their discharge, refused to perform duty. They had but one hundred and fifty barrels of powder, and six days' provisions. Well knowing that with the opening of the navigation, Sir Guy Carleton's expected re-enforcements would arrive, the circumstances in which he was placed were altogether so unpromising, that General Thomas, with the concurrence of a council of war, determined to raise the siege on the 5th of May, and assume a more eligible position farther up the river. It was the intention of the American commander to remove the sick to the Three Rivers; but on the 6th, before the arrangements for retreating were all concerted, a British fleet, with re-enforcements, arrived. General Carleton immediately made a sortie at the head of one thousand men, to oppose whom General Thomas had not more than three hundred available troops. No other course remained, therefore, but a precipitate retreat to all

who could get away, leaving the sick and the military stores to the enemy. General Thomas led his little band back to the mouth of the Sorel, where he was seized with the smallpox, and died. Large re-enforcements joined the fugitive army at that place under General Sullivan. Before General Carleton moved from Quebec, an expedition was undertaken from Sorel to the Three Rivers, against General Frasier, under the direction of General Thompson and Colonel St. Clair. It was unsuccessful: from which time disaster followed disaster, until, owing to the combined causes of defeat, sickness, and insubordination, the Americans found themselves, on the 18th of June, driven entirely out of Canada; the British army following so closely upon their heels, as immediately to occupy the different posts as they were successively evacuated.

The Americans, however, still retained the control of Lake Champlain, and occupied the fortifications upon its shores, the command of which had now been assigned by Congress to General Gates, with great and manifest injustice towards General Schuyler. Gates at first established his headquarters at Crown Point, but soon afterward withdrew his forces from that post, and fell back upon Ticonderoga. This step was taken by the advice and concurrence of a board of general officers, but contrary to the wishes of the field-officers. The commander-in-chief was exceedingly dissatisfied with this movement of Gates, believing that the relinquishment of that post, in its consequences, would be equivalent to an abandonment of Lakes George and Champlain, and all the advantages to be derived therefrom. In reply to the concern that had been expressed by Washington on the occasion, General Gates contended that Crown Point was untenable with the forces then under his command, nor could it be successfully defended even with the aid of the expected re-enforcements. These re-enforcements

moreover, the general added, could not be allowed to approach nearer to Crown Point than Skenesborough, since "it would be only heaping one hospital upon another."\* The annals of disastrous war scarce present a more deplorable picture than that exhibited by the Americans escaping from Canada. In addition to the smallpox, the army had been afflicted by other diseases, generated by exposure, destitution, and laxity of discipline. Fleets of boats came up the lake freighted with the sick and dying, and even those reported from day to day fit for duty presented but the appearance of a haggard skeleton of an army. "Everything about this army," said General Gates in the letter already cited, "is infected with the pestilence; the clothes the blankets, the air, and the ground they walk upon. To put this evil from us, a general hospital is established at Fort George,† where there are now between two and three thousand sick, and where every infected person is immediately sent. But this care and caution have not effectually destroyed the disease here; it is, notwithstanding, continually breaking out."

Such was the deplorable condition in which an army, so recently victorious, had been driven back from what was in fact a conquered country, lost entirely through mismanagement, and the want of an army upon the basis of permanent enlistment. Added to which, was another difficulty lying beneath the surface. Many prisoners had fallen into the hands of the enemy at Quebec, and during the sub-

\* The smallpox, which had been so fatal to the troops in Canada, had now broken out at Crown Point and Ticonderoga, the pestilence having been purposely introduced by a villain calling himself Doctor Barker. This fact is stated in a letter from the Adjutant-general of the Northern Department to Colonel Gansevoort, dated from Ticonderoga, July 24. "The villain," says the letter, "by private inoculations in the army, has caused, in a great degree, the misery to which we are reduced by that infectious disorder." Barker was arrested and sent to Albany.—*MS. letter of Colonel Trumbull to Colonel Gansevoort.*

† At the head of Lake George.

sequent retreat. Towards all these the conduct of Sir Guy Carleton had been most politic. They had been treated with the greatest care and humanity, and so much of the subtle poison of flattery, mingled with kindness, had been poured into their ears, that their return on parole, which was presently allowed by the British commander, was regarded with apprehension. On one occasion, a large number of prisoners arriving at Crown Point from St. John's in a vessel provided by Sir Guy Carleton, were visited, before landing, by Colonel John Trumbull, the adjutant-general for the northern department. From the feelings they manifested, and the tenour of their conversation, Colonel Trumbull saw at once that it would not be prudent to allow them to land, or to hold the least intercourse with the suffering troops of the garrison. He immediately reported the fact to the general, and advised that the said prisoners should be sent directly forward to Skenesborough, and despatched to their respective homes, without allowing them to mingle with the troops at that place. The suggestion was adopted.

Nor were the difficulties enumerated, all which the officers had to encounter. The spirit of disaffection was far more extensive than those who are left to contemplate the scenes through which their fathers passed, and the discouragements against which they were compelled to struggle, have been wont to suppose. The burden of many of General Schuyler's letters, and also the letters of other officers, during the whole of this season, was the frequency of desertions to the ranks of the enemy.

Glancing for a moment at the situation of affairs at the South, the gloom of the picture is somewhat relieved. The expedition of General Clinton and Sir Peter Parker, for the reduction of Charleston, had signally failed. The defence of the fort bearing his own name, by Colonel Moultrie, was one of the most gallant exploits of the whole contest, and



served to lighten the despondency that had been produced by the disasters we have been sketching at the North. It was at this place that the celebrated Sergeant Jasper signalized himself, when the flag-staff was shot away, by leaping from the parapet of the fort upon the beach, seizing the flag, and, amid the incessant firing of the fleet, mounting, and again placing it on the rampart.

But the grand event of the year, the transactions of which are now under review, was the DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, a motion for which was submitted in Congress by Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia, on the 7th of June, and the declaration itself solemnly adopted on the 4th of July. This measure at once cut off all hope of reconciliation with the parent country, and all prospect of a termination of the war, unless by the complete triumph in arms of one party or the other. Such a declaration was an event not originally anticipated, even if desired by the mass of the people; although it had, unquestionably, and from the first, entered into the calculations of the daring master spirits of the movement in Boston. It had furthermore been greatly accelerated by the conduct of the British government itself, during the preceding session of Parliament, by act of which the Americans had been declared out of the royal protection; so widely mistaken had been the Congress of the preceding year, which had adjourned with strong hopes that the differences between the two countries would soon be adjusted to their mutual satisfaction. At the same time, the parent government was putting forth its energies to crush the colonies at a blow. For this purpose 25,000 British troops were to be employed, in addition to 17,000 German mercenaries *purchased* from the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, the Duke of Brunswick, and the Count of Hanau. These troops, with the Canadian recruits, the American Loyalists, and the Indians, it was intended should constitute an in-

vading force of 55,000 men. With such preparations in prospect against them, it was no time for inactivity on the part of the colonists; and having, by the declaration, thrown away the scabbard of the sword that had been drawn fifteen months before, there was no alternative but resistance to the end.

Recurring, for a brief space, to the history proper of the Mohawk Valley, it may be assumed, in behalf of its patriotic population, that the new attitude of the country was neither unexpected nor unwelcome. On the contrary, having been among the earliest to propose a separation, the great act of the 4th of July was nowhere more cordially received than by the Whigs of Tryon county. Nor did they falter in their purpose of sustaining the cause in which the country had embarked, amid all the disasters of the early part of the season or those that followed. In their own section of country, however, the flight of Sir John Johnson and his retainers was the only important incident occurring during that memorable year. Still there was no relaxation of vigilance, or of preparation for the worst, should the storm of war, so long muttering in the distance, actually break upon those settlements. The frontiers were at all times liable to the sudden irruptions of savages, and it was necessary to keep scouting parties continually upon the alert. Cherry Valley being the principal settlement south of the Mohawk, and lying directly in the line of communication between the Mohawk castles and the Indian post at Oghkwaga,\* was particularly exposed. Early in the present summer, therefore, a company of rangers was organized under the command of Captain Robert M'Kean. The public service requiring

\* As with most other Indian names, there is difficulty respecting the correct orthography of this place. It is spelled *Oquaga*, *Oghquaga*, and sometimes *Oneaquaga*. Brant and John Norton, however, were wont to spell it *Oghkwaga*. I have adopted the latter method, as supported by the best authorities.—*Author*.

the captain and his little corps elsewhere, the inhabitants strongly remonstrated with the Committee of Safety against the removal of that corps, but without effect. They next addressed themselves to the Provincial Congress of New-York, and, by a forcible and eloquent appeal, obtained another company of rangers to be stationed among them, under the command of Captain Winn.\* These papers were written with ability, and with the energy of men in earnest. They had even then received, through their missionaries, intimations that Sir John Johnson and Colonel John Butler were instigating the Indians to make a descent upon them; and already were the scattered settlers in other and newer locations coming in to Cherry Valley for protection. Apprehending, also, sudden irruptions of scalping parties, the aged, and such as from other causes were exempt from military service, now organized themselves into a company for the protection of the settlement.

In the course of the season, General Schuyler was directed by Congress to cause Fort Stanwix to be strengthened, and other fortifications to be erected, at proper places, along the Mohawk River. Colonels Van Schaick and Dayton had previously been stationed in Tryon county with detachments of regular troops—the former at Johnstown, and the latter at German Flatts. Upon Colonel Dayton was imposed the duty of carrying forward the works at Fort Stanwix, for which purpose the Tryon county militia were ordered to his assistance. The site of that military defence had early been improved, as one of the most important inland posts of the colonies. It was originally built early in 1758, during the French war of 1755–61, by General Stanwix, for

\* The names of the Cherry Valley Committee who took the lead in these matters were, John Moore, Samuel Clyde, Samuel Campbell, Samuel Dunlop, James Scott, Robert Wells, James Richey, and James Moore

the purpose of commanding the carrying-place between the Mohawk River and Wood Creek, leading into the Oneida Lake, and thence into Lake Ontario, by the Oswego River. There were several other fortifications at different points of the narrow strip of land between the two streams already mentioned, such as Fort Bull and Fort Newport; the former commanding the creek, about three miles distant. These were strong redoubts; but Fort Stanwix was comparatively a formidable work, having its bomb-proofs, its sally-port, and a covered way to the spring brook. Altogether these works formed an ample defence of the key from Upper Canada to the Mohawk Valley, and were likewise of signal service for the protection they afforded to the Indian trade. But, although the principal fortress had been erected at the great expense—enormous in those times—of 266,400 dollars, the commencement of the war of the Revolution found the whole in ruins. Colonel Dayton appears to have made but little progress in rebuilding the fort, since it will be found that other officers had the works in charge early in the following year, and they were far from complete when subsequently invested by the motley forces of General St. Leger. Colonel Dayton, however, thought proper to change its name in honour of the general commanding the Northern department, and it was subsequently known as Fort Schuyler during the residue of the war.\*

A rapid glance at the other warlike events of the season will close the history of the year. Anticipating, on the evacuation of Boston by General Howe, that his next point of attack would be New-York, General Lee was detached by the commander-in-

\* There was another Fort Schuyler built on the present site of Utica during the old French war, and named thus in honour of Colonel Schuyler, an uncle of General Philip Schuyler of the Revolution. The two are often confounded in history, and the change in the name of Fort Stanwix was alike unnecessary and unwise.

chief with a portion of the army to put Long Island and the harbour of New-York in a posture of defence. Washington followed soon afterward himself, and established his headquarters in the city. Having been joined by his brother, Lord Howe, as commander of the fleet at Halifax, General, afterward Sir William Howe, with his re-enforcements, arrived off Sandy Hook, the latter on the 25th of June, and the former on the 12th of July. General Clinton arriving at about the same time from the unsuccessful enterprise against Charleston, with Admiral Hotham, the combined forces of the enemy now amounted to about 24,000 men, including the Hessians.

Lord and Sir William Howe were clothed with powers, as commissioners, to treat with the colonies for a reconciliation. Their pacific errand was proclaimed before hostilities were recommenced, and promises of pardon were proffered to all who would avail themselves of the royal clemency, and return to their allegiance and duty. Their proposals, however, were considered too exceptionable, both in matter and form, to receive the least attention.

On the 22d of August the British army was landed upon Long Island, at Gravesend. The American army, at this time consisting of 15,000 men, under General Sullivan, was encamped in the neighbourhood of Brooklyn. The battle of Long Island, which was severely, though ineffectually, contested by the American forces under Sullivan and Lord Stirling, was fought on the 27th of August. In this action, the loss of the enemy was differently reported at from 300 to 450. The loss of the Americans was far more considerable. General Washington admitted it to be 1000, but is believed only to have referred to the loss of the regular troops. General Howe claimed 1097 prisoners, among whom were Generals Sullivan, Stirling, and Woodhull. On the 30th, the Americans effected a masterly re-

treat across the East River to New-York.\* The enemy made immediate dispositions for attacking New-York; and so prompt and skilful were his movements; that, in a council of general officers, an evacuation forthwith was deemed the only means of saving the army. The British fleet was divided into two squadrons, one of which entered the East and the other the North River. Under cover of the former, Sir Henry Clinton crossed from Long Island, and landed at Kipp's Bay, with such celerity that the Americans fled in disorder. Indeed, the evacuation resembled rather a flight than a retreat; all the heavy artillery, military stores, baggage, and provisions, falling into the hands of the enemy. A large portion of the American forces at that time consisted of militia, the conduct of which was scandalous beyond endurance. They deserted, not only in small numbers, but in companies and squadrons, whenever they could; and their conduct in the face of the enemy, or, rather, when running from the faces of the enemy, was most cowardly. So disorderly was their demeanour, and so like poltroons did they behave when flying from Sir Henry Clinton, that even Washington himself lost his patience, and was excited to a degree of hot exasperation. In writing from Harlaem Heights to a friend, General Greene said that two brigades of militia ran away from about fifty men, leaving the commander-in-chief on the ground within eighty yards of the enemy, so vexed with the conduct of his troops that he sought death rather than life. His attempts to stop them were fruitless. He drew his sword, and threat-

\* During the operations upon Long Island and New-York, Captain Brant contrived to pass from Canada and join the king's forces. He was with Governor Tryon at Flatbush. The late Mr. John Watts, a brother-in-law of Sir John Johnson, used to speak of taking a walk with Governor Tryon, Colonel Asgill, and Brant, through an orchard in that village. During their stroll, Brant plucked a crude crab-apple from a tree, which, on tasting it, he threw away, screwing his face, and exclaiming, "It is as bitter as a Presbyterian!"

ened to run them through, and cocked and snapped his pistols. But all his exertions were to no purpose. In a letter upon the subject of this infamous conduct of the militia to the President of Congress, the commander-in-chief declared that, were he called to give his opinion upon oath, he should say that the militia did more injury to the service than good.

General Greene had strongly urged the destruction of the city by fire—a measure afterward so effectively adopted by Count Rostopchin, governor of the ancient capital of Muscovy, to arrest the career of Napoleon—that the enemy might be deprived of the advantage of establishing their winter-quarters therein. His reasons for this measure were sound, and it ought, doubtless, to have been adopted. Washington was believed to be of the same opinion, especially as two thirds of the property which it was proposed to destroy belonged to undisguised Loyalists. But Congress would not allow the sacrifice; and on the 15th of September the city was in full possession of the enemy, General Washington having retired with the army to King's Bridge. A succession of movements, manœuvres, and engagements followed in Westchester, terminating, for the moment, in the drawn battle of White Plains on the 18th of October.\* Washington then divided his army, and crossed into New-Jersey with a portion, leaving 7500 troops at North Castle, under General Lee. The next disaster to the American arms was the fall of Fort Mifflin, on the 26th of September, after a brave defence by Colonel Mifflin, notwithstanding the refusal of a portion of his troops to man the lines. That fortress was attacked with great gallantry at four points, led by General Knyphausen, Matthews, Cornwallis, and Lord Percy. The regiment of Colonel Rawlings, on that occasion, behaved with great spirit; nor would Colonel

\* The Stockbridge Indians were engaged with the Americans in this battle. They fought bravely, and suffered severely.

Magaw have given up the post but for the conduct of the disaffected. After the fall of Fort Washington, Lord Cornwallis crossed into New-Jersey with 6000 men for the purpose of attacking Fort Lee, of which General Lee was then in command. But the means of this skilful officer were not adequate to the defence of the post against a force of such unequal strength; the people of New-Jersey were at that time intent rather to make terms with the enemy than to afford efficient assistance,\* and the garrison was saved by an evacuation. General Washington had taken post at Newark; but the fall of Forts Washington and Lee, together with the diminution of his own strength by the expiration of the term of service of his men, obliged him to retreat rapidly across New-Jersey to the other side of the Delaware, followed so closely by Lord Cornwallis, that the van of the pursuers was often engaged with the rear of the pursued.

In addition to this succession of disasters, Sir Guy Carleton had appeared upon Lake Champlain with a flotilla superior to that of the Americans under General Arnold, and which seemed to have been called into existence as if by enchantment. Two naval engagements followed, on the 11th and 13th of October, contested with undaunted bravery, but resulting in the defeat of Arnold, the annihilation of his flotilla, and the possession of the lake and Crown Point by the foe. Early in December Rhode Island also fell into his hands. The forces of the commander-in-chief, at the same time, numbered only from two to three thousand men, and scarcely a

\* "The conduct of the Jerseys has been most infamous. Instead of turning out to defend their country, and affording aid to our army, they are making submissions as fast as they can. If the Jerseys had given us any support, we might have made a stand at Hackensack, and after that at Brunswick; but the few militia that were in arms disbanded themselves, and left the poor remains of an army to make the best we could of it."—*Letter of Washington to his brother, John Augustus Washington, Nov. 18, 1776.*



new recruit supplied the place of those whose terms of service were expiring. And even those recruits that were furnished were so badly supplied with officers as almost to extinguish the hope of forming an army from which any efficient services were to be expected.

Worse than all, a spirit of disaffection was rife in the States of New-York and New-Jersey, which not only thwarted the purposes of the commander-in-chief, but threatened the most lamentable consequences to the cause. Although there were many staunch Whigs in Albany and its vicinity, there were many vigilant Loyalists in that region, who continued to keep in correspondence with the enemy during nearly the whole contest. In the summer of this year, General Schuyler had detected a dangerous plot in the neighbourhood of Albany, and apprehended some of the ringleaders. During the operations of the army in the autumn, in New-York and its neighbourhood, it was only with the utmost difficulty that large portions of the fluctuating army could be kept in the line of duty, while other large portions either went off in masses, or proved unfaithful while they remained. The conduct of the militia at Fort Washington has been noted. General Greene wrote on the 5th of November, that the New-York militia, under Colonel Hawkes Hay, actually refused to do duty. They said General Howe had promised them peace, liberty, and safety; and that was all they wanted.

These are but few of the discouragements under which the commander-in-chief was labouring. To borrow his own expressive language in the private letter to his brother cited in a preceding note, "You can form no idea of the perplexity of my situation. No man, I believe, ever had a greater choice of difficulties, and less means to extricate himself from them." Nevertheless, the last sun of that year did not sink behind so deep a cloud of gloom as had

been anticipated. In the North, General Carleton, who had occupied Crown Point after the defeat of Arnold's flotilla, had returned to Canada without attempting anything farther; and before the close of the year, the commander-in-chief had the satisfaction to announce that, instead of imitating the bad example of others, the Continental regiments from the Eastern States had agreed to remain six weeks beyond the term of their enlistment. In addition to which, were the bold return of Washington upon Trenton, and his brilliant victory over the Hessian forces at that place on the morning of the 26th of December. "This well-judged and successful enterprise revived the depressed spirits of the colonists, and produced an immediate and happy effect in recruiting the American army."

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## CHAPTER VIII.

HAVING secured his prisoners on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware, General Washington established himself at Trenton. But he was not long permitted its undisturbed possession. Collecting his forces, Cornwallis advanced rapidly on the capital of New-Jersey, where he arrived on the 2d of January. Some skirmishing ensued towards evening, but both armies encamped for the night without coming to a general engagement—being separated only by Assumpinck Creek—and apparently both expecting a battle in the morning. The force of the enemy, however, was too great to render it safe for the American commander-in-chief to hazard an action. By an adroit and masterly movement, therefore, leaving his fires burning, General Washington succeeded in getting away unperceived, and

throwing himself into the enemy's rear. The battle and victory of Princeton followed, and the American army moved to Morristown, while Cornwallis hastened back to New-Brunswick, and thence to New-York, the different detachments of British troops, which had been scattered through New-Jersey, being at all points discomfited.

Returning from this digression to the Indian relations of New-York, there is one event to be noted, the character of which cannot be explained. Among the manuscripts preserved in the family of the hero of Oriskany,\* is a speech from the Oneida chiefs to Colonel Elmore, the officer who, at the commencement of the present year, was in the command of Fort Schuyler, announcing the final extinguishment of the great council fire of the Six Nations at Onondaga. As the central nation of the confederacy, their general councils, time immemorial, had been holden at the Onondaga Castle, at which, in their own figurative language, their council fire was ever kept burning. These councils assembled annually to discuss the exterior relations, and all matters of national concernment. They were composed of chiefs delegated from each member of the federative republic, and sometimes numbered as many as eighty sachems in the assembly. By what means the event had been accomplished—whether the calamity was the result of pestilence or war—the speech of the Oneidas does not inform us; although it announces the fall of a large number of the Onondaga warriors, in connexion with the catastrophe. Still, the transaction is veiled in darkness so thick as to baffle investigation. The following is the speech:

“SPEECH OF THE ONEIDA CHIEFS TO COL. ELMORE.

“Fort Schuyler, Jan. 19th, 1777.

“BROTHER—We are sent here by the Oneida

\* Colonel, afterward General Herkimer.

chiefs, in conjunction with the Onondagas. They arrived at our village yesterday. They gave us the melancholy news that the grand council fire at Onondaga was extinguished. We have lost out of their town by death ninety, among whom are three principal sachems. We, the remaining part of the Onondagas, do now inform our brethren that there is no longer a council fire at the capital of the Six Nations. However, we are determined to use our feeble endeavours to support peace through the confederate nations. But let this be kept in mind, that the council fire is extinguished. It is of importance to our well-being that this be immediately communicated to General Schuyler, and likewise to our brothers the Mohawks. In order to effect this, we deposite this belt with Tekeyanedonhotte, Colonel Elmore, commander at Fort Schuyler, who is sent here by General Schuyler to transact all matters relative to peace. We therefore request him to forward this intelligence, in the first place, to General Herkimer, desiring him to communicate it to the Mohawk Castle near to him, and then to Major Fonda, requesting him to immediately communicate it to the Lower Castle of Mohawks. Let the belt then be forwarded to General Schuyler, that he may know that our council fire is extinguished, and can no longer burn."

This singular document is worthy of preservation, not only as the authentic, but as the only account of the occurrence recorded. It contains a mystery, however, which cannot now be solved. Still, as no belligerent events are known to have been enacted in the Onondaga country during that winter, the most plausible conjecture would attribute the mortality indicated in the speech to some pestilential disorder, which might have swept over them, as with the Schoharie canton eighteen months before.

In the county of Tryon, which now demands our

chief attention, great uneasiness was again awakened among the inhabitants towards the close of the winter, especially in the remoter settlements south of the Mohawk, by the reported gathering of the Indians at Oghkwaga. The fact that their numbers were increasing at that point having been satisfactorily ascertained, Colonel John Harper, of Harpersfield, was despatched thither by the Provincial Congress of New-York to ascertain their intentions. Taking every necessary measure of precaution to guard against surprise, and to be ready for any emergency, by having the officers of his militia regiment on the alert, Colonel Harper departed upon his mission, accompanied only by a single white man and one Indian. He arrived on the 27th of February, and was well received by the Indians, who manifested a perfectly friendly disposition towards himself, and also towards the settlements. So far from exhibiting any belligerent intentions, they expressed their sorrow for the troubles of the country, and declared their determination to take no part in the controversy. Satisfied as to the sincerity of their professions, although subsequent events proved that they must have been dissembling, Colonel Harper supplied the means of a festival, and presented them with an ox, which was roasted for the occasion.

Colonel John Harper was one of four brothers, William, John, Alexander, and Joseph Harper, who, with eighteen others, planted themselves upon a tract of country, in 1768, which was subsequently named Harpersfield. After his return from this mission, he was for a time in command of one of the little forts in Schoharie. On one occasion, in March or April of this year, he took a circuit alone from Schoharie through the woods to Harpersfield, and thence, when returning, struck farther to the westward, towards the head waters of the Susquehanna. While ascending a hill, he suddenly saw a company of Indians approaching. As they had dis-

covered him, any attempt to fly would have been in vain. They would have shot him down. Having a greatcoat over his military dress, he made no attempt to avoid a meeting, and, in passing, the colonel and the Indians exchanged salutations. In one of the Indians he recognised Peter, a Mohawk whom he had formerly seen at Oghkwaga. They did not recognise him, however, but from his manner of speech supposed him to be a Loyalist, and, under that impression, communicated to him the fact that their destination was to cut off "the Johnstone settlement," a small Scotch colony on the eastern shore of the Susquehanna, near Unadilla, or Anaquagua, as that place was sometimes called. Having obtained this information, he changed his course, and, hurrying back to Harpersfield, collected fifteen resolute men, with whom he gave chase to the marauders. In addition to their arms, the colonel caused each man of his little band to provide himself with two days' provisions and a rope. In the course of the following night, in descending the valley of the Charlotte River, they descried the fire where the Indians were encamped. Halting for a while to refresh and prepare for the contest, the colonel and his men now stole upon the foe with the utmost caution. It was almost daylight, and the Indians were in a profound slumber, their arms being stacked in the middle of their little encampment. These were carefully removed by Harper and his party, as a measure of precaution. The moment for action having arrived, the cords were made ready, and every Indian, ere he was well awake, found himself bound and in the grasp of a foe. When it became light in the morning, Peter discovered his captor. "Ugh!" he exclaimed: "Colonel Harper! why did I not know you yesterday?" The gallant colonel proceeded to Albany with his prisoners, and surrendered them to the commanding officer of the station. It was a bold

and well-executed achievement, and all the better that it was bloodless.

Although, as we have seen, Colonel Harper had parted from the Indians at Oghkwaga upon the most amicable terms, yet indications of a different temper were soon afterward manifested by this fickle people, of which the movement of Peter, so opportunely discovered and intercepted, was the first outbreak. Thayendanegea, likewise, appeared among them in the course of the spring, having separated from Guy Johnson, between whom and himself some difficulty had occurred. Intelligence of the chieftain's departure from Canada, and march across the country to Oghkwaga with a large body of warriors, was received by the Tryon County Committee early in May from Fort Schuyler, and communicated to the Provincial Congress by its chairman, Isaac Paris. Not a little additional uneasiness was also occasioned, at the same time, by the spirit discernible among the Tories. Many of those Loyalists who had taken their departure the preceding year with Sir John Johnson had, nevertheless, left their wives and children in the remote settlements, with whom they were evidently in communication; while scouting parties, both of Tories and Indians, were hovering on the northern outskirts of the county.

The presence of the crafty chieftain at Oghkwaga did not improve the pacific disposition of the natives, as will appear in the sequel, although Brant himself had not, thus far, committed any act of hostility within the province of New-York. The fact of his having borne a part in the battle of the Cedars seems, moreover, not to have been known in the Mohawk Valley, since they were yet uncertain whether it was his intention to raise the hatchet in the contest or not.

But these uncertainties were not of long duration. In the month of June, 1777, the chief of the Mohawks ascended the Susquehanna from Oghkwaga to Una-

dilla, attended by seventy or eighty of his warriors, and requested an interview with the Rev. Mr. Johnstone and the officers of the militia of the neighbourhood. He stated that the object of his visit was to procure provisions, of which his people were greatly in want. And such were their necessities, that, if peaceable means would not answer, the Indians must obtain them by force.

Advantage was taken of the interview to sound the chief as to his future intentions—whether he was for peace or for war; and his answers were far less difficult of solution than the riddle of the Sphinx. He complained of the ill-treatment which, as he alleged, some of the Mohawks, who had remained behind on the flight of the majority of the nation, had received at the hands of the Whigs. The Mohawks, he said, were as free as the air they breathed, and were determined to remain so; and they could not brook it that any of their brethren should be seized and imprisoned, as had been the case at the Castle.\* These, he demanded, should be set at liberty, and suffered to remove from the country. In regard to the question of peace or war, he said the Mohawks were always warriors; that their agreement with the king was very strong, and they were not such villains as to break their covenant.

The visit continued two days, during which time the Indians were well supplied with provisions, and on their departure permitted to take away some live cattle and sheep. The inhabitants, however, scattered and few, and quite remote from any considerable settlement, no longer feeling themselves safe in their houses, sought protection in places of greater security—principally in Cherry Valley, the place of their first location, whence they had removed, a few years before, into the vale of the Susquehanna.

\* Probably on suspicion of maintaining correspondence with the en-



Some of the scattered settlers in the Unadilla region fled to the German Flatts, and others, probably, to the older towns upon the Hudson.

The Indian forces of Captain Brant continuing to increase at Oghkwaga, and the anxiety of the people becoming greater with every report from that quarter, General Herkimer determined to repair thither and obtain an interview. For this purpose the general despatched a messenger to that place, and invited the chief to meet him at Unadilla; moving forward himself, at the same time, at the head of about three hundred of the local militia, from the regiments of Colonels Cox, Klock, and Isenlord, well armed and provided. The precise object of the general in seeking this interview with Brant remains to this day more a matter of conjecture than of certainty. The few scattered fragments of Herkimer's correspondence which have fallen into the hands of the writer show that it was no sudden movement; but, on the contrary, that General Schuyler, Colonel Van Schaick, Colonel Harper, and others, were consulted upon the subject. On the application of Herkimer, Colonel Van Schaick was detached to his assistance, on the 15th of June, with one hundred and fifty men, with which force he repaired to Cherry Valley, but could proceed no farther, for want of provisions. General Schuyler was also to repair thither in person, in the event of his presence being deemed necessary. Ostensibly, the expedition was one of peace; but the extent of the preparations, and the physical strength of the expedition, imparted an equivocal character to the movement; not more so, however, than was the conduct of Brant luring the whole spring, since his proceedings were such as to keep the minds of the people in a state of feverish excitement and uncertainty. Thus, on the 10th of June, Colonel Harper wrote urgently to General Herkimer for a supply of ammunition, in the expectation of an immediate hostile irruption of

Brant into the valley of the Schoharie Kill. On the 13th, the Cherry Valley Committee wrote to the general a still more alarming letter. Brant, according to this statement, in connexion with some of the Loyalists of Unadilla, had marked a path directly through the forest to *Æsopus*, by which route the Tories of Ulster and Orange counties were to join his forces at Oghkwaga; at which place the chief had vaunted that shortly he would not fear the approach of three thousand men. On the other hand, Major Fonda wrote, on the 19th of June, that an embassy of chiefs and sachems of the Cayuga and Seneca nations, having repaired to Oghkwaga to remonstrate with *Thayendanega* against farther hostilities, the latter had determined to listen to their councils, and withdraw into the Cayuga country. In pursuance of this policy, it was added, on what was esteemed good authority, that the Mohawk chief had released a prisoner with his own hands, telling the captors that they had acted wrong.

Such was the uncertain condition of things when the expedition under consideration was commenced. Brant and Herkimer had been near neighbours and personal friends before the troubles came on, and it is possible the general still cherished a belief that he might yet detach the dusky warrior from the cause he had embraced, but, nevertheless, might not be disinclined to relinquish. Perhaps he designed nothing more than to drive him from his equivocal position. Perhaps, also, should opportunity be presented, it was his intention to seize his person. But be these suppositions as they may, it will be seen that there was at least one moment in which he contemplated a more decisive course.

It was a full week after the arrival of General Herkimer at Unadilla before Captain Brant made his appearance. He came to the neighbourhood of the general's encampment, accompanied by five hundred warriors. Having halted, he despatched a

runner to General Herkimer with a message, desiring to be informed of the object of his visit. General Herkimer replied that he had merely come to see and converse with his brother, Captain Brant. The quick-witted messenger inquired if all those men wished to talk to his chief too. However, he said to the general that he would carry his talk back to his chief; but he charged him that he must not cross the field upon the margin of which they were standing, and departed. But an arrangement was soon made, through the agency of messengers, by which a meeting was effected. The scene exhibited at this interview, as related by those who were present at it, was novel and imposing. The hostile parties were now encamped within the distance of two miles from each other. About midway between their encampments a temporary shed was erected, sufficiently extensive to allow some two hundred persons to be seated. By mutual stipulation, their arms were to be left in their respective encampments. Soon after the adjustment of the preliminaries and the completion of the fixtures above mentioned, the chief of the Mohawks appeared in the edge of the distant forest and approached the place designated, already in the occupation of Herkimer, somewhat warily, accompanied by Captain Bull (a Tory), William Johnson (son of Sir William, by Brant's sister Mary), a subordinate chief of the Mohawks, an Indian woman, and about forty warriors. After some little parleying, a circle was formed by General Herkimer, into which Brant and the general entered, together with the other Indian chief and two of Herkimer's officers. After the interchange of a few remarks, the chieftain, keeping an eagle eye upon his visitor, inquired the reason of his being thus honoured. General Herkimer replied as he had done to the *avant-courier*, that he had come to see him on a friendly visit. "And all these have come on a friendly visit too?" replied the chief.

"All want to see the poor Indians, it is very kind," he added, with a sarcastic curl of the lip. General Herkimer expressed a desire to go forward to the village, but the chief told him he was quite near enough, and that he must not proceed any farther.

The general next endeavoured to enter into a conversation with the Mohawk touching the difficulties with England, in order to ascertain his feelings and intentions. The conference now became earnest and animated, although the chief at first gave Herkimer evasive answers. To a question, however, put to him directly, he finally replied, "That the Indians were in concert with the king, as their fathers had been; that the king's belts were yet lodged with them, and they could not violate their pledge; that General Herkimer and his followers had joined the Boston people against their sovereign; that, although the Boston people were resolute, the king would humble them; that General Schuyler was very smart on the Indians at the treaty of German Flatts, but, at the same time, was not able to afford the smallest article of clothing; and, finally, that the Indians had formerly made war on the white people when they were all united; and, as they were now divided, the Indians were not frightened."

Colonel Cox, who was in the suite of General Herkimer, then made a few remarks, the substance of which was, that if such was the fixed determination of the Indians, nothing farther need be said. But his manner, or some of the expressions uttered by the colonel, which have not been preserved, gave offence to the chief. He was exceedingly irritated; and, by a signal to the warriors attending him at a short distance, they ran back to their encampment, and soon afterward appeared again with their rifles, several of which were discharged, while the shrill war-whoop rang through the forest. Meantime, however, by explanations or otherwise, the chief

was soothed and his warriors were kept at a proper distance, although the demand of General Herkimer for the surrender of sundry Tories was peremptorily refused. The conference ended by an agreement between the parties to meet again at 9 o'clock the following morning. General Herkimer and his forces, forbidden to advance any farther, encamped as before.

The next morning General Herkimer called one of his most trusty men aside, Joseph Waggoner by name, for the purpose of communicating to him a matter of great importance, respecting which the most profound secrecy was enjoined. He then informed Waggoner that he had selected him and three others to perform a high and important duty, requiring promptness, courage, and decision. His design, the general said, was to take the lives of Brant and his three attendants on the renewal of their visit that morning. For this purpose, he should rely upon Waggoner and his three associates, on the arrival of the chief and his friends within the circle as on the preceding day, each to select his man, and, at a concerted signal, shoot them down upon the spot. There is something so revolting—so rank and foul—in this project of meditated treachery, that it is difficult to reconcile it with the known character of General Herkimer. And yet it is given on the written authority of Waggoner himself, whose character was equally respectable. The patriotic veteran, in devising such a scheme, had probably reasoned himself into the belief that the intended victims were *only* Indians, and that in the emergency of the country it would be justifiable to do evil that good might come. It was, however, a most reprehensible scheme. Indian that he was, there is no known act of perfidy chargeable upon Brant; and he had met Herkimer on his own invitation. A betrayal of his confidence, under those circumstances, would have brought a stain upon the

character of the Provincials, which all the waters of the Mohawk could not have washed away.

Fortunately, however, the design was not carried into execution. Whether the wary chieftain entertained any suspicions of foul play, is not known. But certain it is, that his precaution and his bearing, when he arrived at Herkimer's quarters, were such as to frustrate the purpose. As he entered the circle, attended as before, he drew himself up with dignity, and addressed General Herkimer as follows: "I have five hundred warriors with me, armed and ready for battle. You are in my power; but as we have been friends and neighbours, I will not take the advantage of you." At a signal, a host of his armed warriors darted forth from the contiguous forest, all painted and ready for the onslaught, as the well-known war-whoop but too clearly proclaimed. The chief continued the discourse by advising the general to go back to his own home; thanked him for his civility in coming thus far to see him, and told him that perhaps he might one day return the compliment. Meantime, he said he would go back to his village, and for the present, the general might rest assured that no hostilities should be committed by the Indians. He then requested that the Rev. Mr. Stuart, the English missionary at Fort Hunter, might be permitted to retire into Canada, as also the wife of Colonel Butler. To these requests General Herkimer assented, although the latter was not complied with. He then presented the Indians with ten or a dozen heads of cattle, which they fell upon and slaughtered incontinently. Brant himself turned proudly away, and buried himself in the forest; while General Herkimer struck his tents, and retraced his steps to the valley of the Mohawk.

This was the last conference held with the hostile Mohawks. Their chief very soon afterward drew off his warriors from the Susquehanna, and

united them to the forces of Sir John Johnson and Colonel John Butler, who were concentrating the Tories and refugees at Oswego. It was at about the same period that the officers of the British Indian department had summoned a general council of the Six Nations, to be held at that place; and it is probable that Brant arrived at the post with his warriors for that occasion. According to Ramsay, the invitations to this council were sent forth by Guy Johnson, the Indians being requested to assemble "to eat the flesh and drink the blood of a Bostonian." This language was understood figuratively, however—the roasting of an ox and a banquet being intended.

The discussions were protracted, nor were the entreaties of the commissioners of any avail against the resolution of the Indians to maintain their good faith, until they addressed their avarice, "by telling them that the people of the colonies were few in number, and would be easily subdued; and that, on account of their disobedience to the king, they justly merited all the punishment that it was possible for white men and Indians to inflict upon them. The king," they said, "was rich and powerful, both in money and subjects. His rum was as plenty as the water in Lake Ontario, and his men as numerous as the sands upon its shore; and the Indians were assured that, if they would assist in the war, and persevere in their friendship for the king until its close, they should never want for goods or money." Overcome by their persevering importunities, and by more direct and palpable appeals to their senses, in a rich display of tawdry articles calculated to please their fancies, the Indians proved recreant to their plighted faith to the colonies, and concluded a treaty of alliance with Great Britain, binding themselves to take up the hatchet against the rebels, and continue in his majesty's service until they were subdued.

At the close of the treaty, each Indian was presented with a suit of clothes, a brass kettle, a gun, a tomahawk and scalping-knife, a quantity of ammunition, a piece of gold, and the promise of a bounty upon every scalp they should bring in. "Thus richly clad and equipped, the Indians returned to their respective homes, after an absence of about two weeks, full of the fire of war, and anxious to encounter their (new-made) enemies."

From that day Thayendanegea was the acknowledged chief of the Six Nations, and soon became one of the master-spirits of the motley forces employed by Great Britain in her attempts to recover the Mohawk Valley, and to annoy the other settlements of what then constituted the Northwestern frontier. Whether in the conduct of a campaign or of a scouting-party, in the pitched battle or the foray, this crafty and dauntless chieftain was sure to be one of the most efficient—as he was one of the bravest—of those who were engaged. Combining with the native hardihood and sagacity of his race the advantages of education and of civilized life—in acquiring which, he had lost nothing of his activity or his power of endurance—he became the most formidable border foe with whom the Provincials had to contend, and his name was a terror to the land. His movements were at once so secret and so rapid, that he seemed almost to be clothed with the power of ubiquity.

The first of his hostile demonstrations within the colony of New-York is believed to have been made in the month of May preceding the interview with General Herkimer; although, from the semi-pacific intercourse maintained with him for several weeks longer, the fact was not then certainly known. The settlement of Cherry Valley was commenced in 1739; and, in consequence of some threatened Indian troubles, a detachment of troops had been stationed there as early as 1763. But no military



works were erected, and the breaking out of the war of the Revolution found the place defenceless. While Brant was collecting his warriors at Oghkwaga, however, the inhabitants bethought themselves of the necessity of defences. But not having the means to undertake the erection of any formidable work, the house of Colonel Samuel Campbell was selected as the largest, strongest, and most eligibly situated for military purposes. A rude embankment of logs and earth was thrown up around this building, so extended in its dimensions as likewise to include two large barns. These buildings were all strengthened, and provided with doors and window-shutters bullet-proof. Small block houses were also erected within the enclosure; and to this place, in moments of peril and alarm, the inhabitants fled for protection. Martial law was proclaimed, and no persons were allowed either to enter or leave the settlement without permission.

Towards the close of May, and soon after these precautionary measures had been executed, Brant conceived the idea of making a descent upon the settlement, for the purpose of either killing or making captive the principal inhabitants, especially the vigilant members of the committee. It has been stated in a former page that, among the precautionary measures adopted the preceding year, the exempts from military duty had organized themselves into a volunteer company. The martial fever, of course, descended from sire to son; and as the population had been considerably augmented by the arrival of distant settlers for safety, a goodly number of boys were collected, who formed a corps of cadets, with no better armour than wooden swords and guns. These juvenile soldiers happened to be parading upon the esplanade in front of Colonel Campbell's house at the very hour, one bright sunny morning, when Brant and his party of warriors, who had secretly arrived from Oghkwaga, were recon-

noitring the post under shelter of a tangled thicket skirting the brow of a hill about a mile distant. His vision being somewhat obstructed by the intercepting shrubbery, the chief mistook the lads for *bona fide* soldiers. Observing the semblance of a fortification before described, Captain Brant moved his party to a convenient lurking-place near the road leading to the Mohawk River, and there lay in ambush for the purpose of obtaining such information as might chance to come in his way. A short distance from where the chief lay ensconced behind a large rock, "the road wound along near the edge of a cliff, overhanging a rocky glen of one hundred and fifty feet deep. This chasm was shaded by evergreens, and the whole scene was shadowy, and almost dark, even at midday. The wildness of the place was increased by the dashing of a mountain torrent into the gloomy abyss, called by the Indians the Falls of Tekaharawa."

It chanced that, on the morning of that day, Lieutenant Wormwood, a promising young officer from Palatine, of an opulent family, had been despatched to Cherry Valley, with information to the authorities that a detachment from Colonel Klock's regiment of militia was to march to their defence on the following day. It was towards evening that Lieutenant Wormwood started on his return to the Mohawk, accompanied by the bearer of some despatches, named Peter Sitz. As he mounted his horse in the village, he threw down his portmanteau, remarking that he need not to take it, as he should return on the next morning with his company. He was well mounted, and richly dressed "in a suit of ash-coloured velvet, which attracted much attention during his stay;" and many persons remained at the door, looking at the noble bearing of the young patriot, until he disappeared behind the crest of the hill in the direction of the Tekaharawa. Scarcely, however, had the clattering of hoofs died away

upon their ears, before a discharge of musketry resounded from the glen, the startling report being speedily followed by the soldier's horse returning at full speed, the saddle crimsoned with blood. Suspicions of the most painful description at once flashed upon the minds of the people, and a party was immediately despatched to investigate the circumstances. They returned without success that night, but on the following morning the body of Wormwood was found behind the rock heretofore described, scalped and lifeless. It afterward appeared that, as Wormwood and Sitz approached the rock, they were hailed, but instead of answering, they put spurs to their horses and endeavoured to pass. Being fired upon, Lieutenant Wormwood fell wounded, as did the horse of Sitz. The Indians rushed forth from their ambuscade, and Sitz was made prisoner, while the gallant officer was scalped by Brant's own hand. The chief is said to have lamented the death of this young man. They were not only acquaintances, but friends; and he had been fired upon under the supposition that he was an officer of the Continental army. The despatches carried by Sitz were double, and it was fortunate that he had sufficient presence of mind to destroy the genuine, and deliver the delusive papers to his savage captors. Deceived thereby as to the real strength at Cherry Valley, Brant retired without committing any farther act of hostility. Colonel Klock arrived at Cherry Valley on the following morning, accompanied by the afflicted father of the slaughtered officer, who was mourned and wept by all who knew him.

Another coincident event, forming an appropriate conclusion to the present chapter, was the tragic death of the great Shawanese chief, *Cornstock*, with his gallant son, *Ellinipsico*; both of whom will be remembered as among the brave Indian leaders at the battle of the Kanhawa, the last action of the

Cresap war, in 1774; and both of whom were now as basely murdered by white men as were the family of Logan. Cornstock, after the defeat of his warriors at Point Pleasant, and his subsequent treaty of peace with Lord Dunmore, had become sincerely and truly the friend of the colonies; and while the Indians of the Northwest, generally, were preparing to take up arms with the English, he exerted himself to the utmost to prevent his own nation from any participation in the contest. But the influence of the British agents, and the example of the surrounding Indian nations, were so powerful upon the minds of the Shawanese, that Cornstock perceived his pacific efforts were likely to prove futile. Thus circumstanced, he repaired to the fort which had been erected at Point Pleasant after the battle of the Kanhawa, to lay the matter before the officer in command—Captain Arbuckle—and take his advice. He was accompanied on this mission by a young Delaware chief named *Redhawk*, who had also fought by his side in the Cresap war. Having made a full development of the state of Indian affairs in the Northwest, and frankly admitted that, from the causes already indicated, he should be unable to prevent the Shawanese from taking up the hatchet in the cause of the crown, the commander of the fort deemed it expedient to detain the old chief, with his Delaware companion, as hostages for the good conduct of their people. Nor did they remain unwillingly, little anticipating the fate that awaited them, and giving all the information respecting the Indians and their country, that could be desired by the Americans.

Uneasy at the protracted absence of his father, Ellinipsico, his son, went in pursuit, and traced him to the fort, where they had an affectionate meeting. Unfortunately, the day after the arrival of the young warrior at Point Pleasant, two white men having crossed the Kanhawa on a hunting expedition, were

fired upon by some straggling Indians, and one of them, whose name was Gilmore, was killed. The other escaped. No sooner was the event of Gilmore's death known, than the cry of revenge was raised, and a party of ruffians assembled, under the command of a Captain Hall, not to pursue and punish the perpetrators of the murder, but to fall upon the friendly and peaceable Indians in the fort. Arming themselves, and cocking their rifles, they proceeded directly to the little garrison, menacing death to any or all who should oppose their nefarious designs. Some friend of the hostage-chiefs attempted to apprise them in advance of the approaching danger; but the savage mob were probably too close upon the heels of the messenger to allow of their escape. At the sound of the clamour without, Ellinipsico is said to have been somewhat agitated. Not so the veteran Cornstock. He had too often grappled with death on the war-path to fear his approaches now. Perceiving the emotion of his son, he calmly observed, "*My son, the Great Spirit has seen fit that we should die together, and has sent you to that end. It is his will, and let us submit.*" The infuriated mob had now gained the apartment of the victims; Cornstock fell, perforated with seven bullets, and died without a struggle. The son, after the exhortation of his father, met his fate with composure, and was shot on the seat upon which he was sitting. Redhawk, the young Delaware, died with less fortitude. He hid himself away, but was discovered and slain. Another friendly Indian, in the fort at the time, was likewise killed, and his body mangled by the barbarians in a manner that would have disgraced savages of any other complexion.

It argues a sad deficiency of military discipline, that such a foul transaction could occur at any regularly-established post. The command of Arbuckle, however, must have been small, inasmuch as he was not only opposed to the commission of the outrage,

but sallied forth, in company with another captain, named Stuart, for the purpose of intercepting the ruffians, and preventing the execution of their purpose. But all remonstrance was vain. The enraged assailants, pale, and quivering with fury, presented their rifles to the breasts of those officers, threatening them with instant death if they stood in their way.

The Indian biography of our country supplies but few additional facts concerning the life of this brave and just man. He had a son, known among the whites as *The Wolf*, whose name was somewhat conspicuously associated with the earlier events of the Revolution. The Wolf, with three others, was a hostage at Williamsburg, Virginia, at the time of Lord Dunmore's embarkation on board of the British fleet. After the escape of his lordship, he solicited and obtained an interview with The Wolf and his associates on board of his ship; during which he explained to them the causes of his flight, and urged them to flee also, as the only means of escaping the fury of the revolutionists. Adopting this council, they took to the woods on returning to the shore. The night following came on excessively dark. One of The Wolf's companions separated from his fellows and was lost. The others soon after returned to Williamsburg, where they were well received by the inhabitants. What farther befell The Wolf, or the house of Cornstock, is not known.

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#### CHAPTER IX.

HAVING failed in their efforts to extinguish the rebellion during the preceding year, the government of the parent country resolved to put forth still greater energies during the present. For this pur-

pose, a powerful force was organized in Canada, the command of which was transferred from Sir Guy Carleton—the ablest British general, by-the-way, at that time or subsequently in America—and conferred upon General Burgoyne, an officer, also, of unquestioned merit, whose spirit of enterprise and thirst for military glory could not be exceeded. It was the aim of this Northern army to open a communication between Canada and New-York, thus cutting off New-England, which the ministry justly considered the hotbed of the Revolution, from all communication with the Middle States; while Sir William Howe, with an army of 16,000 men, was to withdraw from New-Jersey, and move round simultaneously to the Chesapeake, and take possession of the Middle States; and thus, as it was hoped compel the whole to return to their allegiance.

Doubts, however, for several months hung over the intentions of the enemy, whose designs were so skilfully veiled as for a long time almost to paralyze the exertions of the Americans. The retreat of Carleton from Lake Champlain, the preceding autumn, even after the lake was in his power and Crown Point in his possession, suggested a doubt whether a serious invasion was meditated from that quarter. On the contrary, the impression was general that the expedition of Burgoyne was destined against Boston; and that Sir William Howe, whose movements in New-Jersey were enigmatical to perplexity, was to co-operate in an effort to resubjugate New-England. The British government itself, as it is believed, contributed to the distractions of Congress and the American commander, by causing reports to be circulated that Boston was to be the next point of attack. Arthur Lee, being then in France, was thus confidentially advised, and lost no time in communicating such supposed intention to the Secret Committee of Congress, who, in turn, gave the like information to the commander-in-chief, and also

to the Legislature of Massachusetts. The consequence of these distractions was unfortunate for the Americans. Less attention was paid to preparations for the defence of the North than otherwise would have been given; while Massachusetts, apprehending that all her strength would be required for her own defence, set about raising troops for her own protection, at the expense of the main army, from which its quota of recruits was withheld.

Before the close of June, however, the designs of the enemy in regard to the North became obvious. A person from Canada, arrested as a spy, and brought before General Schuyler, stated, on his examination, "that the British forces were approaching St. John's, and were to advance through Lake Champlain under General Burgoyne; and also that a detachment of British troops, Canadians, and Indians, was to penetrate the country by the way of Oswego and the Valley of the Mohawk. He added many particulars respecting the strength and arrangements of the British army, which turned out in the end to be nearly accurate, but of which no intelligence had before been obtained, or by many anticipated."

The movements of General Howe were still equivocal, even after Burgoyne had commenced his descent upon the North, thus adding to the embarrassments of Washington. And in order the more certainly to mislead the American commander as to his real intentions, General Howe wrote a feigned despatch to Burgoyne on the subject of ascending the Hudson to join him, the bearer of which fell purposely into the hands of the Americans, while pretending to be on his way to Canada. Unable, therefore, to determine whether such might not be his design (although the intercepted despatch was regarded with strong suspicion), or whether, on the other hand, it might not be the purpose of Howe to pass round to the Chesapeake and thence strike at Philadelphia, the American general was compelled



to remain inactively watching his motions, strengthening, in the mean time, to the utmost of his power, his positions in the Highlands, without being able to detach any large number of troops to the assistance of General Schuyler, then commanding the Northern department. And even after General Howe had embarked his troops and dropped down to Sandy Hook—having evacuated New-Jersey on the 30th of June—Washington was still in doubt whether it might not yet be his intention to return with the tide, and pass up the river in the night. Such, however, was no part of the plan of the British commander. His destination, on leaving the harbour of New-York, was the Chesapeake and Philadelphia; and the latter branch of the campaign, indicated in the opening of the present chapter, was so far successful, that, after a series of victories over the forces of General Washington, commencing at Brandywine and ending at Germantown, General Howe took possession of, and established himself in, the capital of Pennsylvania.

But a far different fortune attended the arms of Burgoyne. The regular troops of his command, English and German, amounted to above seven thousand men, added to which were large numbers of American and Canadian Loyalists, together with many hundred Indians: a species of force which, it has been held by British historians, Sir Guy Carleton was reluctant to employ, while General Burgoyne it has been alleged, entertained no such scruples.

Never, probably, at the time, had there been an army of equal numbers better appointed than that of Burgoyne. The train of brass artillery, in particular, was perhaps the finest that had ever been allotted to an army not far exceeding the present in numerical strength, and for a time victory seemed to perch upon his ensigns.

General Carleton, it will be remembered, had made himself master of Lake Champlain, and the

fortifications at Crown Point, the autumn before. The first object for attack presenting itself to General Burgoyne, therefore, was Ticonderoga, situated in the mountain gap through which the waters of Lake George fall into Lake Champlain. This fortress was then in command of General St. Clair, and was supposed by the Americans to be a post of great security. The principal fortress, the ruins of which are yet standing in frowning and rugged strength, was situated on an angle of land surrounded on three sides by water filled with rocks. A great part of the south side was covered by a deep morass; and where that failed, in the northwest quarter, the old French lines served as a defence. These lines had been strengthened by additional works and a blockhouse. The Americans had other defences and blockhouses in the direction of Lake George, together with two new blockhouses and some other works, to the right of the French lines. Still greater pains had been taken in fortifying the high circular hill on the eastern shore of the inlet opposite, known as Mount Independence. On the summit of this mountain, which is tableland, the Americans had erected a star-fort, enclosing a large square of barracks, well fortified, and supplied with artillery. The foot of the mountain, on the west side projecting into the water, was strongly intrenched to its edge, and the intrenchment lined with heavy artillery. These lower works were sustained and covered by a battery about half way up the side of the mountain, and were connected by a bridge across the inlet, which had been constructed at great labour and expense. These, and other works of defence, had been judged sufficient to render the post secure. The commander-in-chief himself, although, indeed, the works had not fallen under his own inspection, had formed a very erroneous opinion of their strength, or perhaps, to speak more correctly, of the natural advan-

tages of the position, and of the defensibility of the works. Such, in fact, was his confidence in the post, that the idea of its loss seems, from his correspondence, scarce to have entered his mind.

But in all their labours the American engineers had overlooked the high peak or mountain called Sugar Hill, situated south of the bridge, on the point of land at the confluence of the waters of Lakes George and Champlain. Originally it had been supposed and taken for granted that the crest of Sugar Hill was not only inaccessible, but too distant to be of any avail in covering the main fortress. This opinion was an error, to which the attention of the officers had been called the preceding year by Colonel John Trumbull, then adjutant-general for the Northern department. When Colonel Trumbull made the suggestion, he was laughed at by the mess; but he soon proved the greater accuracy of his own vision by throwing a cannon-shot to the summit; and subsequently clambered up to the top, accompanied by Colonels Wayne and Arnold. It was a criminal neglect on the part of the Americans that the oversight was not at once corrected by the construction of a work upon that point, which would have commanded the whole post.

General Burgoyne arrived at Crown Point on the 21st of June; and after meeting and feasting the Indians, and attempting to instruct them in the rules and principles of civilized war, and making other necessary preparations—not forgetting to send forth a manifesto which he supposed would spread terror through the Northern colonies—he advanced with great caution to the investment of Ticonderoga where he arrived on the 2d of July. Most unaccountably, the Americans immediately abandoned all their works in the direction of Lake George, setting fire to the blockhouses and sawmills; and, without sally or other interruption, permitted the enemy, under Major-general Philips, to take pos-

session of the very advantageous post of Mount Hope, which, besides commanding their lines in a dangerous degree, totally cut off their communication with Lake George. The only excuse for such an early abandonment of this important point, was found in the fact that General St. Clair had not force enough to man all his defences.

One of the first objects that attracted the attention of the British commander was the unoccupied point of Sugar Hill. It was forthwith examined, and its advantages were found to be so great, that immediate dispositions were made for its occupation. A winding road was cut to its summit, a battery commenced, and cannon to serve it transported thither. Under these circumstances, finding himself invested on all sides, and batteries ready to be opened upon him not only from around, but above; and having, moreover, not half troops enough to man his works, St. Clair hastily convened a council of war on the 5th of July, and an evacuation was unanimously decided upon as the only alternative for the emergency.

Following up such a promising advantage, the British commander pushed forward upon the retiring army with such a degree of vigour, that the retreat became almost a rout. The Americans, however, made a stand between Skenesborough and Fort Anne in a well-contested battle, but, after much hard fighting, were again compelled to retreat. Another engagement ensued at Fort Anne with a like result; and the victorious Briton entered the valley of the Hudson, and took possession of Fort Edward, which, weak and unprovided, had likewise been evacuated on his approach by General Schuyler.

These movements by the British commander had been made with equal vigour and celerity; and such was the confusion of the Americans in their flight, that no advices of the disaster were forward-

ed by express to General Schuyler to prepare him for the approach of the victors. Indeed, that officer was suffered to remain several days without intelligence from St. Clair of any description, excepting some vague flying rumours of the evacuation. During this suspense, General Schuyler wrote to the commander-in-chief upon the subject, who, in turn, expressed his amazement at the mystery which seemed to hang over the affairs of the fortress. At one moment Washington was led to believe that St. Clair and the whole garrison had been made prisoners, and at another that the rumour of the evacuation was wholly untrue; and that the silence, for which it baffled conjecture to account, arose from the circumstance that the Americans were shut up in their works. But this doubt did not continue long. Notwithstanding that the advance of the enemy was repulsed at Fort Anne, Colonel Long, who was in command of that post, immediately evacuated it, contrary to the express orders of General Schuyler; and Schuyler himself, at the head of only fifteen hundred men at Fort Edward, "without provision, with little ammunition, not above five rounds to a man, having neither balls nor lead to make any, and the country in the deepest consternation," was obliged also to fall back in the direction of Albany. The blow was a severe one, but the commander-in-chief possessed a soul equal to every crisis. No undue elevation of spirit followed his successes; neither did the clouds of adverse fortune, so frequently darkening the prospect of the American arms, sink him into despondency. Indeed, each succeeding calamity was but another test of his moral greatness, for he rose above them all.

Nothing, however, could exceed the terror which these events diffused among the inhabitants, not only of Northern New-York, but of the New-England States. The consternation was, moreover, increased by the reported murders and the cruelties of

the savages, since all the efforts of General Burgoyne to dissuade them from the perpetration of their cruel enormities were ineffectual. Restrain them he could not; and it was admitted by the British writers of that day, that the friends of the royal cause, as well as its enemies, were equally victims to their indiscriminate rage. It was even ascertained that the British officers were deceived by their treacherous allies into the purchase of the scalps of their own comrades.

Among other instances of cruelty, the well-known murder of Miss Jane M'Crea, which happened in the early part of the campaign, filled the public mind with horror. Every circumstance of this unnatural and bloody transaction—around which there lingers a melancholy interest to this day—served to heighten alike its interest and its enormity. Many have been the versions of this bloody tale. General Gates, who had at this juncture been directed to supersede General Schuyler in the command of the Northern department, assailed General Burgoyne in the newspapers with great virulence upon the subject of these outrages. After charging the British commander with encouraging the murder of prisoners, and the massacre of women and children, by paying the Indians a stipulated price for scalps, Gates, in a letter addressed to General Burgoyne, thus spoke of the case now specially under consideration: "Miss M'Crea, a young lady lovely to the sight, of virtuous character and amiable disposition, engaged to an officer of your army, was, with other women and children, taken out of a house near Fort Edward, carried into the woods, and there scalped and mangled in the most horrid manner. Two parents, with their six children, were treated with the same inhumanity, while quietly resting in their own happy and peaceful dwelling. The miserable fate of Miss M'Crea was particularly aggravated by being dressed to receive her promised hus-

band, but met her murderer, employed by you. Upward of one hundred men, women, and children have perished by the hands of the ruffians to whom, it is asserted, you have paid the price of blood."

General Burgoyne replied, and repelled with indignation the charge of encouraging, in any respect, the outrages of the Indians. He asserted that from the first he had refused to pay for scalps, and had so informed the Indians at their council. The only rewards he gave them were for prisoners brought in, and by the adoption of this course he hoped to encourage a more humane mode of warfare on their part. In this letter Burgoyne said, "I would not be conscious of the acts you presume to impute to me for the whole Continent of America, though the wealth of worlds were in its bowels, and a paradise upon its surface." In regard to the hapless fate of Miss M'Crea, General Burgoyne remarked, "Her fall wanted not the tragic display you have laboured to give it to make it as sincerely abhorred and lamented by me as it can be by the tenderest of her friends. The act was no premeditated barbarity. On the contrary, two chiefs, who had brought her off for the purpose of security, not of violence to her person, disputed which should be her guard, and in a fit of savage passion in one, from whose hands she was snatched, the unhappy woman became the victim. Upon the first intelligence of this event, I obliged the Indians to deliver the murderer into my hands; and though to have punished him by our laws, or principles of justice, would have been perhaps unprecedented, he certainly should have suffered an ignominious death, had I not been convinced, from my circumstances and observations, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that a pardon under the terms which I presented and they accepted, would be more efficacious than an execution, to prevent similar mischiefs. The above instance excepted, your intelligence respecting the cruelty of the Indians is false."

The British commander doubtless laboured to make the best of his case, and in respect to Miss M'Crea, his statement was much nearer to the truth than that of General Gates. The actual circumstances of the case, stripped of its romance, were these: Miss M'Crea belonged to a family of Loyalists, and had engaged her hand in marriage to a young refugee named Jones, a subordinate officer in the British service, who was advancing with Burgoyne. Anxious to possess himself of his bride, he despatched a small party of Indians to bring her to the British camp. Her family and friends were strongly opposed to her going with such an escort; but her affection overcame her prudence, and she determined upon the hazardous adventure. She set forward with her dusky attendants on horseback. The family resided at the village of Fort Edward, whence they had not proceeded more than half a mile before her conductors stopped to drink at a spring. Meantime, the impatient lover, who deserved not her embrace for confiding her protection to such hands, instead of going himself, had despatched a second party of Indians upon the same errand. The Indians met at the spring; and before the march was resumed, they were attacked by a party of the Provincials. At the close of the skirmish, the body of Miss M'Crea was found among the slain, tomahawked, scalped, and tied to a pine-tree, yet standing by the side of the spring, as a monument of the bloody transaction. The name of the young lady is inscribed on the tree, the trunk of which is thickly scarred with the bullets it received in the skirmish. It also bears the date 1777. "Tradition reports that the Indians divided the scalp, and that each party carried half of it to the agonized lover." The ascertained cause of the murder was this: The promised reward for bringing her in safety to her betrothed was a barrel of rum. The chiefs of the two parties sent for her by Mr. Jones quarrelled



respecting the anticipated compensation. Each claimed it, and, in a moment of passion, to end the controversy, one of them struck her down with his hatchet.

As the invader advanced, the inhabitants fled in the wildest consternation. The horrors of war, however mitigated by the laws and usages of civilization, are at all times sufficiently terrific; but when to these the fierce cruelties of a cloud of savages are superadded, those only who have been familiar with an American border warfare can form an adequate opinion of its atrocities. Among the fugitives driven from their peaceful abodes on the present occasion was Mrs. Ann Eliza Bleecker, a lady who has been somewhat celebrated as one of the early poets of our country. She was the daughter of Mr. Brandt Schuyler, of the city of New-York, and the wife of John J. Bleecker, Esq., of New-Rochelle, whose enterprise, together with his lady's love for the wild scenery of the forest, had induced him to exchange a residence among the busy haunts of men for a solitary plantation in the vale of the Tomhanc, a mountain stream flowing into the Hoosic River, about twenty miles from Albany. Mr. Bleecker's residence lay directly in the march of Burgoyne, on whose approach he hastened to Albany to provide accommodations for his family. But a few hours after his departure, Mrs. Bleecker, as she sat at the table, received intelligence that the enemy, with tomahawk and brand, was within two miles of her residence. Instant flight was the only alternative. Taking one of her children in her arms, and seizing the other by the hand, she started off on foot, attended only by a young mulatto girl, and leaving her house and all its contents a prey to the Indians. The roads were encumbered by carriages, loaded with women and children, each intent upon his or her own safety; so that no assistance could be obtained, and her only recourse was to

mingle in the fugitive throng, and participate in the common panic and common distress. Having travelled about five miles on foot, however, she succeeded in obtaining a seat for the children in a wagon, which served to facilitate her march. On the following morning she was met by her husband, who conducted her to Albany, and thence down the Hudson as far as Red Hook, one of her children dying by the way.

Amid this scene of desolation and affright, there was yet one woman whose proud spirit was undaunted. It was the lady of General Schuyler. The general's country-seat was upon his estate in Saratoga, standing upon the margin of the river. On the approach of Burgoyne, Mrs. Schuyler went up to Saratoga, in order to remove their furniture. Her carriage was attended by only a single armed man on horseback. When within two miles of her house, she encountered a crowd of panic-stricken people, who recited to her the tragic fate of Miss M'Crea, and, representing to her the danger of proceeding farther in the face of the enemy, urged her to return. She had yet to pass through a dense forest, within which even then some of the savage troops might be lurking for prey. But to these prudential counsels she would not listen. "The general's wife," she exclaimed, "must not be afraid!" And, pushing forward, she accomplished her purpose.

Before the mansion was evacuated, however, the general himself had a narrow escape from assassination by the hand of a savage, who had insinuated himself into the house for that purpose. It was at the hour of bedtime in the evening, and while the general was preparing to retire for the night, that a female servant, in coming in from the hall, saw a gleam of light reflected from the blade of a knife, in the hand of some person whose dark outline she discerned behind the door. The servant was a

black slave, who had sufficient presence of mind not to appear to have made the discovery. Passing directly through the door into the apartment where the general was yet standing near the fireplace, with an air of unconcern she pretended to arrange such articles as were disposed upon the mantelpiece, while in an under-tone she informed her master of her discovery, and said, aloud, "I will call the guard." The general instantly seized his arms, while the faithful servant hurried out by another door into a long hall, upon the floor of which lay a loose board which creaked beneath the tread. By the noise she made in tramping rapidly upon the board, the Indian—for such he proved—was led to suppose that the Philistines were upon him in numbers, sprang from his concealment and fled. He was pursued, however, by the guard and a few friendly Indians attached to the person of General Schuyler, overtaken, and made prisoner. Exasperated at his treachery, the friendly Indians were resolved to put him to death, and it was with much difficulty that they were diverted from their purpose by the general.

The effect of the incidents we have been detailing, and other recitals of savage cruelties, not all, as General Burgoyne represented, without foundation, was extensive and powerful. The cry of vengeance was universal, and a spirit was aroused which proved of speedy and great advantage to the American arms.

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## CHAPTER X.

CONTEMPORANEOUSLY with the descent of Burgoyne upon Northern New-York, Colonel Barry St. Leger

had been despatched from Montreal, by the way of the St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario, to Oswego, there to form a junction with the Indians and Loyalists under Sir John Johnson and Captain Brant. From Oswego, St. Leger was to penetrate by the way of Oneida Lake and Wood Creek to the Mohawk River, with a view of forming a junction with Burgoyne, on his arrival in Albany. The alarm everywhere felt on the approach of Burgoyne from the North was greatly increased in Tryon county on receiving intelligence of the contemplated invasion by the Indians and Loyalists from the West. The news of this movement was first brought to the inhabitants by an Oneida half-breed sachem named Thomas Spencer, who came therewith direct from Canada, whither he had gone as a secret emissary to obtain information. Spencer stated that he had been present at a council held at the Indian castle of Cassassenny, at which Colonel Claus presided.\* According to Thomas's relation, Colonel Claus strongly urged the Indians to join the expedition into the Mohawk Valley, by the western approach; boasting of the strength of the army under Burgoyne, which had gone against Ticonderoga, and the number of Indians with them, before whom he assured them Ticonderoga would fall. The Oneida sachem farther informed the people that Sir John Johnson and Colonel Claus were then at Oswego with their families, with seven hundred Indians and four hundred regular troops. There were also six hundred Tories on one of the islands above Oswegatchie preparing to join them; and Colonel Butler was to arrive at Oswego on the 14th of July from Niagara, to hold a council with the Six Nations, to all of whom he would offer the hatchet to join them and strike the Americans. Thomas thereupon con-

\* Colonel Daniel Claus, a brother-in-law of Sir John Johnson, had either superseded Guy Johnson as Indian superintendent in Canada, or been appointed a deputy.

cluded his communication by urging an immediate march to the assistance of Fort Schuyler, representing, among other things, that the successful advance of the enemy would compel the friendly Indians either to fly or to join the ranks of the invaders.

The counsel of the faithful Oneida was neither early enough, nor was it seconded with sufficient promptitude on the part of the inhabitants. Indeed, it must be confessed that, as the storm of war rolled onward, gathering at once from different directions, and threatening daily to break upon them with increasing fury, many of the yeomen who had hitherto born themselves nobly began to falter. A spirit of disaffection had also been more widely diffused among the settlements than could have been supposed from the previous patriotic conduct of the people, while treason lurked in many places where least suspected.

As early as the 10th of April, Colonel Robert Van Rensselaer wrote to a friend that the chairman of the County Committee had applied to him for the assistance of his militia to quell an insurrection of the Loyalists in Ballston; but such was the condition of his own regiment, that he was obliged to decline the request. The spirit of disaffection had become so prevalent among his men, that numbers of them had taken the oath of secrecy and allegiance to Great Britain. However, he added that seventeen of the villains had been arrested by the vigilance of the officers, and were then in confinement; and a hope was indulged of being able to detect the whole. Early in the following month the residue of the Roman Catholic Scotch settlers in the neighbourhood of Johnstown ran off to Canada, together with some of the loyalist Germans, all headed by two men named M'Donald, who had been permitted by General Schuyler to visit their families. The fact that the wives and families of the absconding Loyalists were holding communication with them, and

administering to their subsistence on the outskirts of the settlements, had suggested their arrest, and removal to a place of safety, to the number of four hundred—a measure that was approved by General Herkimer and his officers. Alarming reports of various descriptions were continually in circulation, and the inhabitants were harassed beyond measure by the necessity of performing frequent tours of military duty, acting as scouts and reconnoitring parties, and standing, some of them as sentinels, around their fields, while others did the labour. No neighbourhood felt secure, and all were apprehensive that the whole country would be ravaged by the Indians; while parties of the disaffected were continually stealing away to augment the ranks of the enemy. Thus circumstanced, and at the very moment when they were called upon to re-enforce Fort Schuyler, the committees both of Palatine and Schoharie, feeling that they were not strong enough even for self-defence, were calling upon the Council of Safety at Albany to send additional forces for their protection. On the 18th of July, General Schuyler wrote to the Hon. Pierre Van Courtlandt, from Saratoga, and again on the 21st from Fort Edward, to the same effect. "I am exceedingly chagrined," he says, "at the pusillanimous spirit which prevails in the county of Tryon. I apprehend much of it is to be attributed to the infidelity of the leading persons of that quarter. If I had one thousand regular troops, in addition to those now above and on the march, I should venture to keep only every third man of the militia, and would send them down."

The complaints of General Schuyler were not without just foundation, as the reader has already seen. Indeed, both regulars and militia in Tryon county seemed, for the moment, to have lost all the high qualities of soldiers or citizens. Of two hundred militiamen ordered to muster and join the gar-

rison of Fort Schuyler, only a part obeyed ; while two companies of regular troops, receiving the like orders, entered upon the service with great reluctance, and not without urging various excuses, complaining that service in scouting parties had unfitted them for garrison duty. Under circumstances of such discouragement, it was a time of peculiar trial to the officers and committees of safety. Tryon county had early espoused the cause of freedom, and apparently with greater unanimity than any other county in the state ; and the extensive defection, or criminal apathy, which we have just been contemplating, was altogether unexpected. But a crisis was approaching which necessity soon obliged them to meet. Accordingly, on the 17th of July, General Herkimer issued a patriotic proclamation to the inhabitants of the county, announcing the gathering of the enemy at Oswego, "Christians and savages," to the number of two thousand strong, with the intention of invading the frontier, and calling upon the people, *en masse*. to be ready at a moment's warning to repair to the field, with arms and accoutrements, on the approach of the enemy. Those in health, from 16 to 60 years of age, were designated for actual service ; while those above 60 years of age, or invalids, were directed to arm for the defence of the women and children at whatever place they might be gathered in for safety. Concerning the disaffected, and those who might refuse to obey the orders, it was directed in the proclamation that they should be arrested, their arms secured, and themselves placed under guard to join the main body. All the members of the committee, and all those who, by reason of having formerly held commissions, had become exempts from service, were invited to repair to the rendezvous, and aid in repulsing the foe : "not doubting that the Almighty Power, upon our humble prayers and sincere trust in Him, will then graciously suc-

our arms in battle for our just cause, and victory cannot fail on our side."

The Oneida Indians, who were sincerely disposed to favour the cause of the United States, but who, pursuant to the humane policy of Congress, and the advice of General Schuyler, had determined to preserve their neutrality, beheld the approaching invasion from Oswego with no small degree of apprehension. The course they had marked out for themselves, as they were well aware, was viewed with displeasure by their Mohawk brethren, while the other members of their confederacy were obviously inclined to side with their "Uncle."\* Living, moreover, in the immediate neighbourhood of Fort Schuyler, where St. Leger's first blow must be struck, they were not a little troubled in the prospect of what might happen to themselves.

The certainty that the invaders were approaching, the earnestness of the appeals of the committee to the patriotism of the people, the influence of the proclamation of the German general, who was a much better man than officer, save only in the single attribute of courage; and, above all, the positive existence of a common danger from which there was no escape, were circumstances, together, not without their effect. And although the eleventh hour had arrived, the militia, and all upon whom the call to arms had been made, now began to move with a degree of alacrity, and an exhibition of spirit that went far to atone for the unpatriotic, if not craven, symptoms already noticed.

Meantime, having completed his organization at Oswego, General St. Leger commenced his march upon Fort Schuyler, moving by the route already indicated, though with great circumspection. The name of this place of rendezvous has already recurred more than once or twice in the preceding

\* In the Six Nations, the Mohawks—the head tribe—were called "Uncle." The Oneidas were the "elder brother," &c.



pages. Its position was important, and it had been a place of renown in the earlier wars of the colony. The river bearing the same name, which here pours northwardly into Lake Ontario, is the outlet both of the Oneida and Seneca Rivers, through which, and their tributary streams, it is connected with the chain of small lakes bearing the names of Oneida, Cazenovia, Skaneateles, Owasco, Cayuga, Seneca, and Canandaigua. Its estuary, of course, forms the natural opening into the rich district of country surrounding those lakes, which, down to the period of the present history, contained the principal towns of four of the Five Nations of Indians. During the wars between the French and Five Nations, Oswego was repeatedly occupied by the armies of the former. It was here that Count Frontenac landed on his invasion of the Onondaga country in 1692; at which time, or subsequently, a considerable military work was erected on the western side of the river. During the war with France, which was closed in America by the conquest of Canada, it was in the occupancy of the Provincials and English. The expedition, destined to descend the St. Lawrence upon Montreal, was assembled at this point in 1759, after the fall of Niagara, under General Shirley and Sir William Johnson. The army was encamped here several weeks, and finally broke up without attempting its main object, owing, as Sir William Johnson intimates in his private diary, to a want of energy on the part of Shirley. After the fall of Quebec and Montreal into the hands of the English, a battalion of the 55th regiment was stationed at Oswego, under Major Duncan, a brother of the naval hero of Camperdown. A new and far more formidable work was constructed upon the eastern, or north-eastern promontory, formed by the embouchure of the river into the lake. The new position was far better chosen for a fortress than the old; and, ultimately, before the Britons were dispossessed of it

by the Americans, it became a work of somewhat formidable strength and dimensions. The situation is one of the most beautiful that can be imagined; and, during the two or three years in which Major Duncan was in command, by the cultivation of a large garden, the laying out and improving of a bowling-green, and other pleasure grounds, it was rendered a little paradise in the wilderness.

All told, the army of St. Leger consisted of seventeen hundred men, Indians included. These latter were led by Thayendanega. The advance of the main body was formed of Indians, marching in five Indian columns—that is, in single files, at large distances from each other, and four hundred and sixty paces in front of the line. From these columns of Indians, files were stretched at a distance of ten paces from each other, forming a line of communication with the advanced guard of the line, which was one hundred paces in front of the column. The right and left flanks were covered by Indians at one hundred paces, forming, likewise, lines of communication with the main body. The king's regiment moved from the left by Indian file, while the 34th moved in the same order from the right. The rear-guard was formed of regular troops; while the advance guard, composed of sixty marksmen, detached from Sir John Johnson's regiment of Royal Greens, was led by Sir John's brother-in-law, Captain Watts. Each corps was likewise directed to have ten chosen marksmen in different parts of its line, in case of attack, to be pushed forward to any given point, as circumstances might require.

From these extraordinary precautions, it may well be inferred that General St. Leger, who probably acted much under the advice of Sir John Johnson and the refugee Provincials, who must have been best acquainted with the country and the character of the enemy they were going to encounter, was not a little apprehensive of an attack by surprise while on his march.

In addition to the arrangements already indicated, a detachment from the 8th regiment, with a few Indians, was sent a day or more in advance, under the command of Lieutenant Bird. This officer pushed forward with spirit, but was somewhat annoyed by the insubordination and independent action of his allies.

On the 2d of August, Bird wrote back to his general that no savages would advance with him except Henriques, a Mohawk, and one other of the Six Nations, an old acquaintance of his. The letter continues: "Those two, sir, I hope to have the honour to present to you. A savage, who goes by the name of Commodore Bradley, was the chief cause of their not advancing to-day. Twelve Messengers came up two or three hours after my departure. Those, with the scout of fifteen I had the honour to mention to you in my last, are sufficient to invest Fort Stanwix, if you favour me so far as not to order to the contrary."

The investment of the fort was made by Lieutenant Bird forthwith, Brant arriving to his assistance at the same time. But the result of the siege that followed proved that the British commander had grievously miscalculated the spirit of the garrison of Fort Stanwix in his anticipations of a speedy capitulation. Still, his prudential order, the object of which was to prevent an unnecessary sacrifice of life at the hands of his Indian allies, calculating, of course, upon an easy victory, was not the less commendable on that account.

The situation of Fort Stanwix itself—or, rather, Fort Schuyler, as it must now be called—next demands attention. At the beginning of the year, as we have already seen, the post was commanded by Colonel Elmore, of the state service. The term of that officer expiring in April, Colonel Peter Gansevoort, also of the state troops, was designated as Colonel Elmore's successor, by an order from Gen-

eral Gates, dated the 26th of that month. Notwithstanding the labours of Colonel Drayton in repairing the works the preceding year, Colonel Gansevoort found them in such a state of dilapidation, that they were not only indefensible, but untenable. A brisk correspondence ensued between that officer and General Schuyler upon the subject, from which it is manifest that, to say nothing of the miserable condition of his defences, with the prospect of an invasion from the west before him, his situation was in other respects sufficiently deplorable. He had but a small number of men, and many of those were sick by reason of destitution. Added to all which, was the responsibility of the Indian relations confided to him by special order of General Schuyler on the 9th of June.

Colonel Marinus Willett was soon afterward directed to join the garrison at Fort Schuyler with his regiment, and most fortunate was the selection of such an officer as Willett to co-operate with such another as Gansevoort; since all the skill, and energy, and courage of both were necessary for the situation. The work itself was originally a square fort, with four bastions, surrounded by a ditch of considerable width and depth, with a covert way and glacis around three of its angles; the other being sufficiently secured by low, marshy ground. In front of the gate there had been a drawbridge, covered by a salient angle raised in front of it on the glacis. In the centre of the ditch a row of perpendicular pickets had been erected, with rows of horizontal pickets fixed around the ramparts under the embrasures. But, since the conclusion of the French war, the fort had fallen into decay; the ditch was filled up, and the pickets had rotted and fallen down;\* nor had any suitable progress been made in its reparation. Immediate exertions, ener-

\* Willett's Narrative.

getic and unremitting, were necessary to repair, or, rather, to renew and reconstruct, the works, and place them in a posture of defence, should the long-anticipated invasion ensue from that quarter. A more correct idea of the wretched condition of the post, even down to the beginning of July, may be formed from the annexed letter :\*

COLONEL GANSEVOORT TO GENERAL SCHUYLER.

“Fort Schuyler, July 4th, 1777

“SIR,

“Having taken an accurate review of the state of the garrison, I think it is incumbent on me to inform your excellency by express of our present circumstances. Every possible assistance is given to Captain Marquizee to enable him to carry on such works as are deemed absolutely necessary for the defence of the garrison. The soldiers are constantly at work; even such of them as come off guard are immediately turned out to fatigue. But I cannot conceal from your excellency the impossibility of attending fully to all the great objects pointed out in the orders issued to the commanding officer on the station, without farther assistance. Sending out sufficient parties of observation, felling the timber into Wood Creek, clearing the road from Fort Dayton, which is so embarrassed in many parts as to be impassable, and prosecuting, at the same time, the internal business of the garrison, are objects of the greatest importance, which should, if possible, be immediately considered. But while no exertions compatible with the circumstances we are in, and necessary to give your excellency satisfaction with respect to all these interesting matters, shall be omitted, I am very sensible it is not in our power to get over some capital obstructions without a re-enforcement. The enclosed return, and the difficul-

\* MS. copy, preserved among General Gansevoort's papers.

ties arising from the increasing number of hostile Indians, will show to your excellency the grounds of my opinion. One hundred and fifty men would be needed speedily and effectually to obstruct Wood Creek; an equal number will be necessary to guard the men at work in felling and hauling of timber. Such a deduction from our number, together with smaller deductions for scouting parties, would scarcely leave a man in the garrison, which might therefore be easily surprised by a contemptible party of the enemy. The number of inimical Indians increases. On the affair of last week only two made their appearance. Yesterday a party of at least forty, supposed to be Butler's emissaries, attacked Ensign Sporr with sixteen privates, who were out on fatigue, cutting turf about three quarters of a mile from the fort. One soldier was brought in dead and inhumanly mangled; two were brought in wounded, one of them slightly, and the other mortally. Six privates and Mr. Sporr are missing. Two parties were immediately sent to pursue the enemy, but they returned without being able to come up with them. This success will, no doubt, encourage them to send out a greater number; and the intelligence they may possibly acquire will probably hasten the main body destined to act against us in these parts. Our provision is greatly diminished by reason of the spoiling of the beef, and the quantities that must be given from time to time to the Indians. It will not hold out above six weeks. Your excellency will perceive, in looking over Captain Savage's return of the state of the artillery, that some essential articles are very scarce. As a great number of the gun-bullets do not suit the firelocks, some bullet-moulds of different sizes for casting others would be of great advantage to us. Our stock of powder is absolutely too little; a ton, in addition to what we have, is wanted, as the lowest proportion for the shot we have on hand. We

will, notwithstanding every difficulty, exert ourselves to the utmost of our power; and if your excellency will be pleased to order a speedy re-enforcement, with a sufficient supply of provision and ammunition to enable us to hold out a siege, we will, I hope, by the blessing of God, be able to give a good account of any force that will probably come against us."

The picture is gloomy enough; and was rendered the more so from the mistakes of the engineer, a Frenchman, who had been employed by General Schuyler, and whom it was ultimately found necessary to arrest and send back to headquarters. Colonel Willett had, from the first, doubted the capacity of Marquizee, and after his dismissal the work proceeded, for the most part, under his own immediate direction.

The garrison had likewise other difficulties to encounter. With the gathering of St. Leger's motley forces at Oswego, preparatory to his descent upon the Mohawk, the Indians, as has already been seen by Gansevoort's letter, began to appear in scouting parties in the circumjacent forests. The utmost caution was, therefore, necessary on leaving the fort even for a short distance. It was during this critical period that the familiar incident of Captain Gregg and his faithful dog occurred.

According to the narrative of President Dwight, it appears that Gregg and his companion had been seduced into a fatal disobedience of orders by the clouds of pigeons appearing in the adjoining woods. Immediately upon their fall the Indians rushed upon them for their scalps, which they took, giving each a simultaneous cut upon the head with their tomahawks. The corporal had been killed by the shot, but Captain Gregg was only wounded.\* Feigning

\* It has been asserted in history that St. Leger encouraged these iso-

death, however, he had the presence of mind, and the fortitude, to submit to the subsequent torture, without betraying himself by a groan or the quivering of a muscle. The Indians departing immediately, Captain Gregg crawled to his lifeless companion, and pillowed his head upon his body; while his faithful dog ran to a place at no great distance thence, where two men were engaged in fishing, and, by his imploring looks and significant actions, induced them to follow him to the spot where lay his wounded master. Hastening to the fort, the fisherman reported what they had seen, and a party of soldiers being forthwith despatched to the place, the bodies of the wounded and the dead were speedily brought into the garrison, as we have seen from the colonel's official account.

Captain Gregg recovered and resumed his duties, and having served to the end of the war, lived many years afterward.

Another tragic incident occurred at nearly the same time. About noon, on the third of July, the day being perfectly clear, Colonel Willett was startled from his *siesta* by the report of musketry. Hastening to the parapet of the glacis, he saw a little girl running with a basket in her hand, while the blood was trickling down her bosom. On investigating the facts, it appeared that the girl, with two others, was picking berries, not two hundred yards from the fort, when they were fired upon by a party of Indians, and two of the number killed. Happily, she who only was left to tell the tale was but slightly wounded. One of the girls killed was the daughter of an invalid who had served many years in the British artillery. He was entitled to a situ-

lated murders by large bounties for scalps. Twenty dollars is said to have been the price he paid; but his despatch to Lieutenant Bird, before cited, does not corroborate the charge of such inhumanity. That despatch was a private document, moreover, not written for the light, or for effect, and must therefore be received as true. It was found among Colonel Gansevoort's papers.



ation in Chelsea Hospital, but had preferred rather to remain in the cultivation of a small piece of ground at Fort Stanwix, than again to cross the ocean.

By the middle of July, the Indians hovering about the fort became so numerous and so bold as to occasion great annoyance. Large parties of soldiers only could venture abroad on the most pressing emergencies; and even one of these was attacked, several of its numbers being killed and wounded, and the officer in command taken prisoner. The force of the garrison, at this time, consisted of about five hundred and fifty men; ill supplied, as we have already seen, both with provisions and munitions of war. Fortunately, however, on the 2d of August, the very day of the investiture of the fort by the advance of St. Leger's army under Thayendanegea and Bird, Lieutenant-colonel Mellon, of Colonel Weston's regiment, arrived with two hundred men, and two batteaux of provisions and military stores. Not a moment was lost in conveying these opportune supplies into the fort. Delay would, indeed, have been dangerous; for at the instant the last loads arrived at the fort, the enemy appeared on the skirt of the forest, so near to the boats, that the captain who commanded them became their prisoner.

The command of Colonel Gansevoort now consisted of seven hundred and fifty men, all told; and upon examination it was ascertained that they had provisions for six weeks, with fixed ammunition enough for the small arms. But for the cannon they were lamentably deficient, having barely enough for nine rounds per diem during the period specified. A besieging army was before the fort, and its garrison was without a flag! But as necessity is the mother of invention, they were not long thus destitute. Stripes of white were cut from ammunition shirts; blue from a camblet cloak captured from the ene-

my ; while the red was supplied from such odds and ends of clothes of that hue as were at hand.

Such was the condition of Fort Schuyler at the commencement of the memorable siege of 1777 : an event, with its attending circumstances, forming an important feature in the Northern border warfare of the Revolution. Colonel St. Leger himself arrived before the fort on the 3d of August, with his whole force, a motley collection of British regulars, Hessian auxiliaries, New-York Loyalists, usually denominated "Johnson's Greens," together with numbers of the Canadians, and the Indians under Thayendanegea. Sir John Johnson, and Colonels Claus and Butler, were also engaged with him in the expedition. A flag was sent into the fort on the morning of that day, with a copy of a rather pompous proclamation from St. Leger, which, it was probably supposed, from its vaunting threats and lavish promises, might produce a strong impression upon the garrison. The object of his address was to hold forth security, and not depredation ; he offered employment to those who would join his standard ; security to the infirm and industrious ; and payment in coin for all the supplies the people would bring to his camp.

This manifesto, however, produced no effect, then or afterward. The siege had been anticipated, and the brave garrison, officers and men, had counted the cost, and determined to defend the fortress to the last. Accordingly, hostilities commenced actively on the morning of the following day. The Indians, concealing themselves behind clumps of shrubbery and stumps of trees, annoyed the men who were employed in raising the parapets not a little with their rifles. Several were wounded ; and it was found necessary immediately to station sharpshooters at suitable points, to watch opportunities, and fire in return. The 5th was spent in much the same manner, with the addition of the throwing of a few

shells by the enemy, several of which fell within the fort, and some in the barracks. On the evening of this day, soon after it was dark, the Indians, who were at least one thousand in number, spread themselves through the woods, completely encircling the fort, and commenced a terrible yelling, which was continued at intervals the greater part of the night.

Having thus commenced his operations, Colonel St. Leger found means of conveying the intelligence to General Burgoyne, not for a moment anticipating the distressing circumstances in which the Northern commander-in-chief already found himself involved, though but midway in the career of victory. Harassed incessantly by the foes he had vanquished; unable to obtain supplies, except by sending back for them to Fort George, in which service his troops were already greatly fatigued; not one third of his horses arrived from Canada; the roads excessively bad, and rendered all but impassable by a deluge of rain; with only four days' provisions on hand, the vaunting general, who had boasted in the British capital that with ten thousand men he could march through the whole rebel country at pleasure, already found himself in an unenviable situation. But on learning the advance of General St. Leger, he instantly and justly considered that a rapid movement forward, at this critical juncture, would be of the utmost importance. If the retreating Americans should proceed up the Mohawk with a view of relieving Fort Schuyler, in the event of St. Leger's success against that place they would place themselves between two fires; or perhaps Burgoyne supposed that, were such a movement to be made on the part of the Americans, he might yet throw his army between them and Albany, and thus compel them either to stand a general engagement or to strike off to the right, and, by recrossing the Hudson higher up, secure a retreat into New-England. If, on the other hand, the Amer-

icans should abandon Fort Schuyler to its fate and themselves fall back upon Albany, he argued that the Mohawk country would, of course, be entirely laid open to him, his junction with St. Leger established, and the combined army be at liberty to select its future line of operation. But his supplies were inadequate to such an extensive operation, and his army was too weak to allow him to keep up such a chain of posts as would enable him to bring them up daily from the *depôt* at Lake George. With a view, therefore, of obtaining immediate relief, and of opening a new source of supply, especially of cattle, from the upper settlements of New-England, the expedition to Bennington, the place of deposit of provisions for the Provincial forces, was planned, and committed to a detachment of the Hessian troops, under Colonel Baum, for execution. The signal failure of this expedition was calculated still farther both to embarrass and depress the invaders while the brilliant success of the militia under General Starke on that occasion, proving, as it had done that neither English nor German troops were invincible, revived the drooping spirits of the disheartened, re-inspired the people with confidence of ultimate success, and was the source of universal exultation.

The progress of events brings us back to the lower Valley of the Mohawk. No sooner was the advance of St. Leger upon Fort Schuyler known to the committee and officers of Tryon county, than General Herkimer, in conformity with the proclamation heretofore cited, summoned the militia of his command to the field, for the purpose of marching to the succour of the garrison. Notwithstanding the despondency that had prevailed in the early part of the summer, the call was nobly responded to, not only by the militia, but by the gentlemen of the county, and most of the members of the committee, who entered the field either as officers or private

volunteers. The fears so generally and so recently indulged seemed all to have vanished with the arrival of the invader, and the general soon found himself at the head of between eight hundred and a thousand men, all eager for action and impatient of delay. Their place of rendezvous was Fort Dayton (German Flatts), in the upper section of the Mohawk Valley, and the most beautiful. The regiments were those of Colonels Klock, Visscher, Cox, and one or two others, augmented by volunteers and volunteer officers, who were pushing forward as though determined at all hazards to redeem the character of the county. Indeed, their proceedings were by far too impetuous, since they hurried forward in their march without order or precaution, without adequate flanking parties, and without reconnoitring the ground over which they were to pass. They moved from Fort Dayton on the 4th, and on the 5th reached the neighbourhood of Oriskany,\* where they encamped. From this point an express was sent forward by General Herkimer to apprise Colonel Gansevoort of his approach, and to concert measures of co-operation. The arrival of the express at the fort was to be announced by three successive discharges of cannon, the report of which, it was supposed, would be distinctly heard at Oriskany, only eight miles distant. Delays, however, intervened, so that the messengers did not reach the fort until ten or eleven o'clock on the following morning; previous to which, the camp of the enemy being uncommonly silent, a portion of their troops had been observed by the garrison to be moving along the edge of the woods down the river, in the direction of the Oriskany Creek. The concerted signals were immediately fired; and as the proposition of Herkimer was to force a passage to

\* Probably the site of Whitestown. One of the MS. narratives in the author's possession, says they crossed the river at old Fort Schuyler (now Utica).

the fort, arrangements were immediately made by Colonel Gansevoort to effect a diversion of the enemy's attention, by making a sally from the fort upon the hostile camp; for which purpose two hundred men were detailed, consisting one half of Gansevoort's and one half of the Massachusetts troops, and one fieldpiece, an iron three-pounder. The execution of the enterprise was intrusted to Colonel Willett.

It appears that on the morning of that day, which was the 6th of August, General Herkimer had misgivings as to the propriety of advancing any farther without first receiving re-enforcements. His officers, however, were eager to press forward. A consultation was held, in which some of the officers manifested much impatience at any delay, while the general still urged them to remain where they were until re-enforcements could come up, or at least until the signal of a sortie should be received from the fort. High words ensued, during which Colonels Cox and Paris, and many others, denounced their commander to his face as a Tory and a coward. The brave old man calmly replied that he considered himself placed over them as a father, and that it was not his wish to lead them to any difficulty from which he could not extricate them. Burning, as they now seemed, to meet the enemy, he told them roundly that they would run at his first appearance. But his remonstrances were unavailing. Their clamour increased, and their reproaches were repeated, until, stung by imputations of cowardice and a want of fidelity to the cause, and somewhat irritated, withal, the general immediately gave the order, "March on!" The words were no sooner heard than the troops gave a shout, and moved, or, rather, rushed forward. They marched forward in files of two deep, preceded by an advanced guard and keeping flanks upon each side.

Having, by 10 o'clock, proceeded rapidly forward

to the distance of only two or three miles, the guards, both front and flanks, were suddenly shot down, the forest rang with the war-whoops of a savage foe, and in an instant the greater part of the division found itself in the midst of a formidable ambuscade. Colonel St. Leger, it appeared, having heard of the advance of General Herkimer, in order to prevent an attack in his intrenchments, had detached a division of Sir John Johnson's regiment of Greens, under Sir John's brother-in-law, Major Watts, Colonel Butler with his rangers, and Joseph Brant with a strong body of Indians, to intercept his approach.\* With true Indian sagacity, Thayendanegea had selected a position admirably fitted for his purpose, which was to draw the Americans, whom he well knew to be approaching in no very good military array, into an ambuscade. The locality favoured his design. There was a deep ravine crossing the path which Herkimer, with his undisciplined array, was traversing, "sweeping towards the east in a semicircular form, and bearing a northern and southern direction. The bottom of this ravine was marshy, and the road crossed it by means of a causeway. The ground, thus partly enclosed by the ravine, was elevated and level. The ambuscade was laid upon the high ground west of the ravine."

The enemy had disposed himself adroitly, in a circle, leaving only a narrow segment open for the admission of the ill-starred Provincials on their approach. The stratagem was successful. Unconscious of the presence of the foe, Herkimer, with his whole army excepting the rear-guard, composed of Colonel Visscher's regiment, found himself en-

\* In every account of this battle which has fallen under the author's observation, excepting that of Colonel Willett, Sir John Johnson is made the British commander at this battle. He was not in it at all, as will appear a few pages forward. Even the cautious and inquisitive President Dwight falls into the error, and carries it through his whole account.

compassed at the first fire, the enemy closing up the gap at the instant of making himself known. By thus early completing the circle, the baggage and ammunition wagons, which had just descended into the ravine, were cut off and separated from the main body, as also was the regiment of Colonel Visscher, yet on the eastern side of the ravine; which, as their general had predicted, instantly and ingloriously fled, leaving their companions to their fate. They were pursued, however, by a portion of the Indians, and suffered more severely, probably than they would have done had they stood by their fellows in the hour of need, either to conquer or to fall.

Being thrown into irretrievable disorder by the suddenness of the surprise and the destructiveness of the fire, which was close and brisk from every side, the division was for a time threatened with annihilation. At every opportunity, the savages, concealed behind the trunks of trees, darted forward with knife and tomahawk to ensure the destruction of those who fell; and many and fierce were the conflicts that ensued hand to hand. The veteran Herkimer fell, wounded, in the early part of the action, a musket ball having passed through and killed his horse, and shattered his own leg just below the knee. The general was placed upon his saddle, however, against the trunk of a tree for his support, and thus continued to order the battle. Colonel Cox, and Captains Davis and Van Sluyck, were severally killed near the commencement of the engagement; and the slaughter of their broken ranks, from the rifles of the Tories and the spears and tomahawks of the Indians, was dreadful. But even in this deplorable situation, the wounded general, his men dropping like leaves around him, and the forest resounding with the horrid yells of the savages, ringing high and wild over the din of battle, behaved with the most perfect firmness and composure. The



action had lasted about forty-five minutes, in great disorder, before the Provincials formed themselves into circles in order to repel the attacks of the enemy, who were concentrating, and closing in upon them from all sides. From this moment the resistance of the Provincials was more effective, and the enemy attempted to charge with the bayonet. The firing ceased for a time, excepting the scattering discharges of musketry from the Indians; and as the bayonets crossed, the contest became a death struggle, hand to hand and foot to foot. Never, however, did brave men stand a charge with more dauntless courage, and the enemy for the moment seemed to recoil—just at the instant when the work of death was arrested by a heavy shower of rain, which suddenly broke upon the combatants with great fury. The storm raged for upward of an hour during which time the enemy sought such shelter as might be found among the trees at a respectful distance; for they had already suffered severely, notwithstanding the advantages in their favour.

During this suspension of the battle, both parties had time to look about, and make such new dispositions as they pleased for attack and defence, on renewing the murderous conflict. The Provincials, under the direction of their general, were so fortunate as to take possession of an advantageous piece of ground, upon which his men formed themselves into a circle, and, as the shower broke away, awaited the movements of the enemy. In the early part of the battle, the Indians, whenever they saw a gun fired by a militiaman from behind a tree, rushed upon and tomahawked him before he could reload. In order to counteract this mode of warfare, two men were stationed behind a single tree, one only to fire at a time, the other reserving his fire until the Indians ran up as before. The fight was presently renewed, and by the new arrangement, and the cool execution done by the fire of the militia forming

the main circle, the Indians were made to suffer severely; so much so, that they began to give way, when Major Watts came up with a re-enforcement, consisting of another detachment of Johnson's Greens. These men were mostly Loyalists, who had fled from Tryon county, now returned in arms against their former neighbours. As no quarrels are so bitter as those of families, so no wars are so cruel and passionate as those called civil. Many of the Provincials and Greens were known to each other; and as they advanced so near as to afford opportunities of mutual recognition, the contest became, if possible, more of a death struggle than before. Mutual resentments, and feelings of hate and revenge, raged in their bosoms. The Provincials fired upon them as they advanced, and then springing like chafed tigers from their covers, attacked them with their bayonets and the butts of their muskets, or both parties, in closer contact, throttled each other and drew their knives; stabbing, and sometimes literally dying in one another's embrace.

At length a firing was heard in the distance from the fort, a sound as welcome to the Provincials as it was astounding to the enemy. Availing themselves of the hint, however, a *ruse-de-guerre* was attempted by Colonel Butler, which had wellnigh proved fatal. It was the sending, suddenly, from the direction of the fort, a detachment of the Greens disguised as American troops, in the expectation that they might be received as a timely re-enforcement from the garrison. Lieutenant Jacob Sammons was the first to descry their approach, in the direction of a body of men commanded by Captain Jacob Gardenier, an officer who, during that memorable day, performed prodigies of valour. Perceiving that their hats were American, Sammons informed Captain Gardenier that succours from the fort were coming up. The quick eye of the captain detected the *ruse*, and he replied, "Not so: they are enemies."

don't you see their green coats!" They continued to advance until hailed by Gardenier; at which moment one of his own soldiers, observing an acquaintance, and supposing him a friend, ran to meet him, and presented his hand. It was grasped, but with no friendly gripe, as the credulous fellow was dragged into the opposing line, and informed that he was a prisoner. He did not yield without a struggle; during which Gardenier, watching the action and the result, sprang forward, and with a blow from his spear levelled the captor to the dust and liberated his man. Others of the foe instantly set upon him, of whom he slew the second and wounded a third. Three of the disguised Greens now sprang upon him, and one of his spurs becoming entangled in their clothes, he was thrown to the ground. Still contending, however, with almost superhuman strength, both of his thighs were transfixed to the earth by the bayonets of two of his assailants, while the third presented a bayonet to his breast, as if to thrust him through. Seizing this bayonet with his left hand, by a sudden wrench he brought its owner down upon himself, where he held him as a shield against the arms of the others, until one of his own men, Adam Miller, observing the struggle, flew to his rescue. As the assailants turned upon their new adversary, Gardenier rose upon his seat; and although his hand was severely lacerated by grasping the bayonet which had been drawn through it, seized his spear lying by his side, and, quick as lightning, planted it to the barb in the side of the assailant with whom he had been clinched. The man fell and expired, proving to be Lieutenant M'Donald, one of the Loyalist officers from Tryon county. All this occurred in far less time than is necessarily occupied by the relation. While engaged in the struggle, some of his own men called out to Gardenier, "For God's sake, captain, you are killing your own men!" He replied, "They are not our men—

they are the enemy—fire away!" A deadly fire from the Provincials ensued, during which about thirty of the Greens fell slain, and many Indian warriors. The parties once more rushed upon each other with bayonet and spear, grappling and fighting with terrible fury; while the shattering of shafts and the clashing of steel mingled with every dread sound of war and death, and the savage yells, more hideous than all, presented a scene which can be more easily imagined than described. The unparalleled fortitude and bravery of Captain Gardenier infused fresh spirits into his men, some of whom enacted wonders of valour likewise. It happened during the *mêlée*, in which the contending parties were mingled in great confusion, that three of Johnson's Greens rushed within the circle of the Provincials, and attempted to make prisoner of a Captain Dillenback. This officer had declared he never would be taken alive, and he was not. One of his three assailants seized his gun, but he suddenly wrenched it from him, and felled him with the butt. He shot the second dead, and thrust the third through with his bayonet. But in the moment of his triumph at an exploit of which even the mighty Hector, or either of the sons of Zeruiah might have been proud, a ball laid this brave man low in the dust.

Such a conflict as this could not be continued long; and the Indians, perceiving with what ardour the Provincials maintained the fight, and finding their own numbers sadly diminished, now raised the retreating cry of "*Oonah!*" and fled in every direction, under the shouts and hurrahs of the surviving Provincials, and a shower of bullets. Finding, moreover, from the firing at the fort, that their presence was necessary elsewhere, the Greens and Rangers now retreated precipitately, leaving the victorious militia of Tryon county masters of the field.\*

\* It is an extraordinary fact, that every historian who has written of

Thus ended one of the severest, and, for the numbers engaged, one of the most bloody battles of the Revolutionary war. Though victorious, the loss of the Provincials was very heavy; and Tryon county long had reason to mourn that day. Colonel Paris was taken prisoner by the enemy, and afterward murdered by the Indians. Several other prisoners were also killed by the savages, after they had been brought into Colonel Butler's quarters, and, as it was said, by the colonel's own tacit consent, if not permission in terms. But the general character of that officer forbids the imputation.\* Major John Frey, of Colonel Klock's regiment, was likewise wounded and taken; and, to show the more than savage fury burning in the bosoms of the men brought into conflict on this occasion, the disgraceful fact may be added, that his own brother, who was in the British service, attempted to take his life after he had arrived in Butler's camp. The major saw his brother approaching in a menacing manner, and called out, "Brother, do not kill me! do you not know me?" But the infuriated brother rushed forward, and the major was only saved by the interposition of others. The whole number of the Provincial militia killed was two hundred, exclusive of wounded and lost as prisoners. Such, at least, was the American report. The British statements

the battle of Oriskany has recorded it as a defeat of the Provincials, from Marshall and Ramsay down, to say nothing of the British chroniclers. Such was also the author's impression until he undertook the present investigation. Captain Brant himself, in conversation with Samuel Woodruff, Esq., admitted that they were the victors; and all the written statements which the author has been able to procure from the survivors of that battle bear the same testimony.

\* The late Doctor Moses Younglove, of Hudson, Columbia county, was the surgeon of General Herkimer's brigade. He was taken prisoner in this battle by a sergeant of Sir John Johnson's regiment. After his release, he made a deposition setting forth many grievous barbarities committed, both by the Indians and Tories, upon the prisoners who fell into their hands that day. They were cruelly tortured, several of them murdered; and, as the doctor had reason to believe, some of them were subsequently taken to an island in Lake Ontario, and eaten. This is scarcely to be believed.

claimed that four hundred of the Americans were killed, and two hundred taken prisoners.

Retaining possession of the field, the survivors immediately set themselves at work in constructing rude litters, upon which to bear off the wounded. Between forty and fifty of these, among whom was the commanding general, were removed in this manner. The brave old man, notwithstanding the imprudence of the meaning—imprudence in allowing a premature movement at the dictation of his subordinates—had nobly vindicated his character for courage during the day. Though wounded, as we have seen, in the onset, he had borne himself during the six hours of conflict, under the most trying circumstances, with a degree of fortitude and composure worthy of all admiration. Nor was his example without effect in sustaining his troops amid the perils by which they were environed. At one time during the battle, while sitting upon his saddle raised upon a little hillock, being advised to select a less exposed situation, he replied, "I will face the enemy." Thus, "surrounded by a few men, he continued to issue his orders with firmness. In this situation, and in the heat of the onslaught, he deliberately took his tinder-box from his pocket, lit his pipe, and smoked with great composure." At the moment the soldiers were placing him on the litter, while adjusting the blankets to the poles, three Indians approached, and were instantly shot down by the unerring rifles of three of the militia. These were the last shots fired in that battle.

The loss of the enemy in this engagement was equally, if not more severe, than that of the Americans. The Greens and Rangers of Sir John Johnson and Colonel Butler must have suffered badly, although no returns were given in the contemporaneous accounts. Major Watts was severely wounded, and left on the field, as was supposed, among the slain. His death was reported by Colonel Willett,

in his letter to Governor Trumbull, and by other authorities. But such was not the fact. Reviving from faintness produced by loss of blood, some hours after the action, he succeeded in crawling to a brook, where, by slaking his thirst, he was preserved from speedy death, and in the course of two or three days was found by some Indian scouts, and brought into St. Leger's camp.\* But the Indians were the most roughly handled, having lost nearly one hundred warriors, several of whom were sachems in great favour. Frederic Sammons, who had been detached upon a distant scout previous to the battle, returning some days after, crossed the battle-field, where, he says, "I beheld the most shocking sight I had ever witnessed. The Indians and white men were mingled with one another, just as they had been left when death had first completed his work. Many bodies had also been torn to pieces by wild beasts."

It has been affirmed that the Indians were persuaded to join in this battle only with great difficulty, and not until they had been induced to sacrifice their reason to their appetites. It was very manifest that during the action many of them were intoxicated. The consequence was, that they suffered more severely than ever before. According to the

\* This statement respecting Major Watts was derived from the late Mr. John Watts, of New-York, his brother. As mentioned in the text, St. Leger, in his official report, did not state the number of his own killed and wounded. Colonel Butler, however, wrote to Sir Guy Carleton, "Of the New-Yorkers, Captain M'Donald was killed, Captain Watts dangerously wounded, and one subaltern. Of the Rangers, Captains Wilson and Hare killed, and one private wounded. The Indians suffered much, having thirty-three killed and twenty-nine wounded; the Senecas lost seventeen, among whom were several of their chief warriors, and had sixteen wounded. During the whole action, the Indians showed the greatest zeal for his majesty's cause; and had they not been a little too precipitate, scarcely a rebel of the party would have escaped. Most of the leading rebels are cut off in the action, so that any farther attempts from that quarter are not to be expected. Captain Watts, of the Royal New-Yorkers, whose many amiable qualities deserved a better fate, lay, wounded in three places, upon the field two days before he was found."—*Parliamentary Register*.

narrative of Mary Jemison, the Indians (at least the Senecas) were deceived into the campaign. "They were sent for to see the British whip the rebels. They were told that they were not wanted to fight, but merely to sit down, smoke their pipes, and look on. The Senecas went to a man; but, contrary to their expectation, instead of smoking and looking on, they were obliged to fight for their lives; and in the end of the battle were completely beaten, with a great loss of killed and wounded."

The whole Indian force was led by Thayendanagea in person, "the great captain of the Six Nations," as he was then called; and as the Cayugas had now likewise joined the Mohawks in alliance with the arms of England—the Onondagas adopting a doubtful policy, but always, in fact, acting against the Provincials—he must have had a large force in the field. Of the Senecas alone, thirty-six were killed and a great number wounded. Captain Brant was accustomed, long years afterward, to speak of the sufferings of his "poor Mohawks" in that battle. Indeed, the severity with which they were handled on that occasion rendered them morose and intractable during the remainder of the campaign; and the unhappy prisoners were the first to minister with their blood to their resentment. "Our town," says Mary Jemison, "exhibited a scene of real sorrow and distress when our warriors returned and recounted their reverses, and stated the real loss they had sustained in the engagement. The mourning was excessive, and was expressed by the most doleful yells, shrieks, and howlings, and by inimitable gesticulations."

It was unfortunate that General Herkimer formed his line of march with so little judgment that, when attacked, his men were in no situation to support each other; and more unfortunate still, that he marched at all, so long before he could expect to hear the concerted signal for the diversion to be made in his favour by the sortie of Colonel Willett.



The heavy rainstorm, moreover, which caused a suspension of the battle, had likewise the effect of delaying the sally for nearly an hour. It was made, however, as soon as it was practicable, and was not only completely successful, but was conducted with such ability and spirit by the gallant officer to whom it was confided, as to win for him the applause of the foe himself. In addition to the two hundred men detailed for this service, under Colonel Willett's command, as before stated, fifty more were added to guard the light iron three-pounder already mentioned.

With these troops, and this his only piece of mounted ordnance, Colonel Willett lost not a moment, after the cessation of the rain, in making the sally. The enemy's sentinels being directly in sight of the fort, the most rapid movements were necessary. The sentinels were driven in, and his advanced guard attacked, before he had time to form his troops. Sir John Johnson, whose regiment was not more than two hundred yards distant from the advanced guard, it being very warm, was in his tent, divested of his coat at the moment, and had not time to put it on before his camp was assailed. Such, moreover, were the celerity of Willett's movement and the impetuosity of the attack, that Sir John could not bring his troops into order, and their only resource was in flight. The Indian encampment was next to that of Sir John, and, in turn, was carried with equal rapidity. The larger portion of the Indians, and a detachment from the regiment of Sir John, were, at the very moment of this unexpected assault upon their quarters, engaged in the battle of Oriskany. Those who were left behind now betook themselves—Sir John and his men to the river, and the Indians to their natural shelter, the woods, the troops of Colonel Willett firing briskly upon them in their flight. The amount of spoil found in the enemy's camp was so great, that

Willett was obliged to send hastily to the fort for wagons to convey it away. Seven of these vehicles were three times loaded and discharged in the fort, while the brave little Provincial band held possession of the encampments. Among the spoils thus captured, consisting of camp equipage, clothing, blankets, stores, &c., were five British standards, the baggage of Sir John Johnson, with all his papers, the baggage of a number of other officers, with memoranda, journals, and orderly-books, containing all the information desirable on the part of the besieged. While Colonel Willett was returning to the fort, Colonel St. Leger, who was on the opposite side of the river, attempted a movement to intercept him. Willett's position, however, enabled him to form his troops so as to give the enemy a full fire in front, while at the same time he was enfiladed by the fire of a small fieldpiece. The distance was not more than sixty yards between them; and although St. Leger was not backward in returning the fire, his aim was, nevertheless, so wild as to be entirely without effect. The assailants returned into the fortress in triumph, without having lost a man; the British flags were hoisted on the flagstaff under the American; and the men, ascending the parapets, gave three as hearty cheers as were ever shouted by the same number of voices. Among the prisoners brought off by the victors was Lieutenant Singleton, of Sir John Johnson's regiment. Several Indians were found dead in their camp, and others were killed in crossing the river. The loss to the enemy, particularly in stores and baggage, was great; while the affair itself was of still more importance, from the new spirit of patriotic enthusiasm with which it inspired the little garrison. For this chivalrous exploit, Congress passed a resolution of thanks, and directed the commissary-general of military stores to procure an elegant sword, and

present the same to Colonel Willett in the name of the United States.

General Herkimer did not long survive the battle. He was conveyed to his own house near the Mohawk River, a few miles below the Little Falls, where his leg, which had been shattered five or six inches below the knee, was amputated about ten days after the battle, by a young French surgeon in the army of General Arnold, and contrary to the advice of the general's own medical adviser, the late Doctor Petrie. But the operation was unskillfully performed, and it was found impossible by his attendants to stanch the blood. Colonel Willett called to see the general soon after the operation. He was sitting up in his bed, with a pipe in his mouth, smoking, and talking in excellent spirits. He died the night following that visit. His friend, Colonel John Roff, was present at the amputation, and affirmed that he bore the operation with uncommon fortitude. He was likewise with him at the time of his death. The blood continuing to flow—there being no physician in immediate attendance—and being himself satisfied that the time of his departure was nigh, the veteran directed the Holy Bible to be brought to him. He then opened it and read, in the presence of those who surrounded his bed, with all the composure which it was possible for any man to exhibit, the thirty-eighth Psalm, applying it to his own situation. He soon afterward expired; and it may well be questioned whether the annals of man furnish a more striking example of Christian heroism—calm, deliberate, and firm in the hour of death—than is presented in this remarkable instance. Of the early history of General Herkimer but little is known. It has been already stated that his family was one of the first of the Germans who planted themselves in the Mohawk Valley; and the massive stone mansion, yet standing at German Flatts, bespeaks its early opu-

lence. He was an uneducated man, with, if possible, less skill in letters even than General Putnam, which is saying much. But he was, nevertheless, a man of strong and vigorous understanding destitute of some of the essential requisites of generalship, but of the most cool and dauntless courage. These traits were all strikingly disclosed in the brief and bloody expedition to Oriskany. But he must have been well acquainted with that most important of all books—THE BIBLE. Nor could the most learned biblical scholar, lay or clerical, have selected a portion of the sacred Scriptures more exactly appropriate to the situation of the dying soldier than that to which he himself spontaneously turned. If Socrates died like a philosopher, and Rousseau like an unbelieving sentimentalist, General Herkimer died like a CHRISTIAN HERO. Congress passed a resolution requesting the Governor and Council of New-York to erect a monument, at the expense of the United States, to the memory of this brave man, of the value of five hundred dollars. This resolution was transmitted to the Governor of New-York, George Clinton, in a letter, from which the following passage is quoted: "Every mark of distinction shown to the memory of such illustrious men as offer up their lives for the liberty and happiness of their country, reflects real honour on those who pay the tribute; and, by holding up to others the prospect of fame and immortality, will animate them to tread in the same path." Governor Clinton thus wrote to the committee of Tryon county on the occasion: "Enclosed you have a letter and resolves of Congress for erecting a monument to the memory of your late gallant general. While with you I lament the cause, I am impressed with a due sense of the great and justly merited-honour the continent has, in this instance, paid to the memory of that brave man." Such were the feelings of respect for the services and memory of the deceas-

ed entertained by the great men of that day. Sixty years have since rolled away, and the journal of Congress is the only monument, and the resolution itself the only inscription, which as yet testify the gratitude of the Republic to GENERAL NICHOLAS HERKIMER.

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## CHAPTER XI.

THOUGH in fact defeated at Oriskany, the enemy claimed, as we have seen, a victory. In one sense, it is true, the achievement was theirs. They had prevented the advance of the Americans to the succour of the fort, and on their retreat the Americans were unable to pursue. Still the field was won, and retained by them. Availing himself of his questionable success, however, and well knowing that days must probably elapse before the garrison could become apprized of the whole circumstances of the engagement and its issue, St. Leger lost no time in endeavouring, by false representations, to press the besieged to a capitulation. On the same night of the battle, therefore, at nine o'clock, Colonel Bellinger and Major Frey, being in St. Leger's camp as prisoners, were compelled to address a note to Colonel Gansevoort, greatly exaggerating the disasters of the day, and strongly urging a surrender. In this letter they spoke of the defeat at Oriskany, of the impossibility of receiving any farther succour from below, of the formidable force of St. Leger, together with his train of artillery, announced the probable fact that Burgoyne and his army were then before Albany, and stated that longer resistance would only result in "inevitable ruin and destruction." The letter was transmitted

to Colonel Gansevoort by St. Leger's adjutant-general, Colonel Butler, who, in delivering it, made a verbal demand of surrender. Colonel Gansevoort replied that he would give no answer to a verbal summons, unless delivered by Colonel St. Leger himself, but at the mouth of his cannon.

On the following day a white flag approached the garrison, with a request that Colonel Butler, and two other officers, might be admitted into the fort as bearers of a message to the commanding officer. Permission being granted, those officers were conducted blindfolded into the fort, and received by Colonel Gansevoort in his dining-room. The windows of the room were shut, and candles lighted; a table was also spread, upon which were placed some slight refreshments. Colonels Willett and Mellen were present at the interview, together with as many of the American officers as could be accommodated in the quarters of their commander. After the officers were seated and the wine had been passed around, Major Ancrom, one of the messengers, addressed Colonel Gansevoort in substance as follows :

"I am directed by Colonel St. Leger, the officer commanding the army now investing this fort, to inform the commandant that the colonel has, with much difficulty, prevailed on the Indians to agree that if the fort, without farther resistance, shall be delivered up, with the public stores belonging to it, to the investing army, the officers and soldiers shall have all their baggage and private property secured to them. And in order that the garrison may have a sufficient pledge to this effect, Colonel Butler accompanies me, to assure them that not a hair of the head of any one of them shall be hurt." (Here turning to Colonel Butler, he said, "That, I think, was the expression they made use of, was it not?" to which the colonel answered, "Yes.") "I am likewise directed to remind the commandant that

the defeat of General Herkimer must deprive the garrison of all hopes of relief, especially as General Burgoyne is now in Albany; so that, sooner or later, the fort must fall into our hands. Colonel St. Leger, from an earnest desire to prevent farther bloodshed, hopes these terms will not be refused, as in this case it will be out of his power to make them again. It was with great difficulty the Indians consented to the present arrangement, as it will deprive them of that plunder which they always calculate upon on similar occasions. Should, then, the present terms be rejected, it will be out of the power of the colonel to restrain the Indians, who are very numerous, and much exasperated, not only from plundering the property, but destroying the lives, probably, of the greater part of the garrison. Indeed, the Indians are so exceedingly provoked and mortified by the losses they have sustained in the late actions, having had several of their favourite chiefs killed, that they threaten—and the colonel, if the present arrangements should not be entered into, will not be able to prevent them from executing their threats—to march down the country, and destroy the settlement, with its inhabitants. In this case, not only men, but women and children, will experience the sad effects of their vengeance. These considerations, it is ardently hoped, will produce a proper effect, and induce the commandant, by complying with the terms now offered, to save himself from future regret, when it will be too late.”

This singular oration was of course delivered extemporaneously, as also was the following reply, by Colonel Willett, with the approbation of Colonel Gansevoort:

“Do I understand you, sir? I think you say that you come from a British colonel, who is commander of the army that invests this fort; and, by your uniform, you appear to be an officer in the British service. You have made a long speech on the oc-

casation of your visit, which, stripped of all its superfluities, amounts to this : that you come from a British colonel to the commandant of this garrison, to tell him that, if he does not deliver up the fort into the hands of your colonel, he will send his Indians to murder our women and children. You will please to reflect, sir, that their blood will be on your head, not on ours. We are doing our duty ; this fort is committed to our charge, and we will take care of it. After you get out of it, you may turn round and look at its outside, but never expect to come in again, unless you come a prisoner. I consider the message you have brought a degrading one for a British officer to send, and by no means reputable for a British officer to carry. For my own part, I declare, before I would consent to deliver this fort to such a murdering set as your army, by your own account, consists of, I would suffer my body to be filled with splinters and set on fire, as you know has at times been practised by such hordes of women and children killers as belong to your army."

Colonel Willett observes, in his narrative, whence these facts are drawn, that in the delivery he looked the British major full in the face ; and that he spoke with emphasis is not doubted. The sentiments contained in this reply were received with universal applause by the Provincial officers, who, far from being intimidated by the threats of the messengers, were at once impressed with the idea that such pressing efforts to induce a capitulation could only be the effect of doubt, on the part of the enemy himself, of his ability either to sustain the siege or carry the works by assault. Before the interview was closed, Major Ancrom requested that an English surgeon who was with him might be permitted to visit the British wounded in the fort, which request was granted. Major Ancrom also proposed an armistice for three days, which was likewise agreed



to by Colonel Gansevoort—the more readily, probably, because of his scanty supply of ammunition.

On the 9th of August, Colonel Gansevoort having refused to recognise any verbal messages from the British commander, Colonel St. Leger transmitted the substance of Major Ancrom's speech in the form of a letter, protesting that no indignity was intended by the delivery of such a message—a message that had been insisted upon categorically by the Indians—and formally renewing the summons of a surrender; adding, that the Indians were becoming exceedingly impatient, and if the proposition should be rejected, the refusal would be attended with very fatal consequences, not only to the garrison, but to the whole country of the Mohawk River.

The reply of Colonel Gansevoort was written with soldierly brevity, in the following words:

COL. GASNEVOORT TO COL. ST. LEGER.

“Fort Schuyler, Aug. 9th, 1777

“SIR,

“Your letter of this day's date I have received, in answer to which I say, that it is my determined resolution, with the forces under my command, to defend this fort to the last extremity, in behalf of the United American States, who have placed me here to defend it against all their enemies.

“I have the honour to be, sir,

“Your most ob't humble serv't,

“PETER GANSEVOORT,

“*Col. commanding Fort Schuyler.*

“Gen. Barry St. Leger.”

Failing in these attempts to induce a surrender, the besiegers, four days afterward, had recourse to another expedient. It was the issuing of an appeal to the inhabitants of Tryon county, signed by Sir John Johnson, Colonel Claus, and Colonel John Butler, similar in its tenour to the verbal and written messages of St. Leger to Colonel Gansevoort. Messen-

gers were despatched with this document into Tryon county, but to no good purpose; while, as will soon appear, some of those messengers were involved in serious difficulty by their errand.

But if Colonel Willett's success in the brilliant execution of the sortie on the 6th entitled him, as it unquestionably did, to the commendations he received, a still more perilous enterprise, undertaken by him a few days afterward, was thought, alike by friends and foes, to entitle him to still greater applause. The artillery of the besiegers was not sufficiently heavy to make any impression upon the works, and there was every probability that the garrison might hold out until succours should be obtained, could their situation be made known. Colonel Willett was not only well acquainted, but exceedingly popular, in Tryon county; and it was supposed that, should he show himself personally among the militia of that district, notwithstanding the extent of their suffering in the late expedition, he might yet rally a force sufficient to raise the siege. The bold project was therefore conceived by him of passing at night, in company with another officer, through the enemy's works, and, regardless of the danger from the prowling savages, making his way through some forty or fifty miles of sunken morasses and pathless woods, in order to raise the county and bring relief. Selecting Major Stockwell for his companion, Colonel Willett undertook the expedition on the 10th, and left the fort at ten o'clock that night, each armed with nothing but a spear, and provided only with a small supply of crackers and cheese, a small canteen of spirits, and in all other respects unencumbered, even by a blanket. Having emerged from the sally-port, they crept upon their hands and knees along the edge of a morass to the river, which they crossed by crawling over upon a log, and succeeded in getting off unperceived by the sentinels of the enemy although passing very near

to them. Their first advance was into a deep-tangled forest, in which, enveloped in thick darkness, they lost their direction, and found it impossible to proceed. While in this state of uncertainty, the barking of a dog added little to their comfort, inasmuch as it apprized them that they were not far from a new Indian encampment, formed subsequent to the sortie a few days before. They were therefore compelled to stand perfectly still for several hours, and until the morning star appeared to guide their way. Striking first in a northern direction for several miles, and then eastwardly, they traced a zigzag course, occasionally adopting the Indian method of concealing their trail by walking in the channels of streams, and by stepping on stones along the river's edge. In this way they travelled the whole of the ensuing day, without making a single halt. On the approach of night they dared not to strike a light, but lay down to sleep interlocked in each other's arms. Pursuing their journey on the 12th, their little stock of provisions being exhausted, they fed upon raspberries and blackberries, of which they found abundance in an opening occasioned by a windfall. Thus refreshed, they pushed forward with renewed vigour, and at an accelerated pace, and arrived at Fort Dayton at three o'clock in the afternoon.\*

The colonel and his friend received a hearty welcome from Colonel Weston, whose regiment was then in charge of Fort Dayton, and from whom he obtained the agreeable intelligence that, on learning the news of General Herkimer's disaster, General Schuyler had ordered Generals Arnold and Larned, with the Massachusetts brigade, to march to the relief of Colonel Gansevoort. Colonel Willett thereupon took horse immediately for Albany to meet

\* "So successful was Colonel Willett in all his movements, that the Indians, believing him to be possessed of supernatural power, gave to him the name of the Devil."—*Campbell*.

General Arnold, who was to command the expedition; and in four days afterward accompanied Arnold back to Fort Dayton, where the troops were assembling. The first New-York regiment had been added to the brigade of General Larned, who was yet in the rear bringing up the heavy baggage and stores.

During Willett's brief absence to Albany, an incident occurred in the neighbourhood of Fort Dayton, showing that, if he had been active in his attempts to bring succours to the fort, the enemy, on the other hand, had not been idle. About two miles above Fort Dayton resided a Mr. Shoemaker, a disaffected gentleman, who had been in his majesty's commission of the peace. Having heard of a clandestine meeting of Tories at the house of that gentleman, Colonel Weston despatched a detachment of troops thither, which came upon the assemblage by surprise, and took them all prisoners. Among them was Lieutenant Walter N. Butler, from St. Leger's army, who, with fourteen white soldiers and the same number of Indians, had visited the German Flatts secretly, with the appeal of Sir John Johnson, Claus, and the elder Butler, referred to in a preceding page, for the purpose of persuading the timid and disaffected inhabitants to abandon the Provincial cause, and enrol themselves with the king's army before Fort Schuyler. Butler was in the midst of his harangue to the meeting at the moment of the unwelcome surprise. General Arnold ordered a court-martial, and caused him to be tried as a spy. Of this tribunal Colonel Willett officiated as judge-advocate. The lieutenant was convicted, and received sentence of death; but, at the intercession of a number of officers who had known him while a student at law in Albany, his life was spared by a reprieve. He was, however, removed to Albany, and closely imprisoned until the spring of the following year. When General the Marquis de Lafayette assumed the command of the Northern

department, the friends of the Butler family, in consequence, as it was alleged, of his ill health, interceded for a mitigated form of imprisonment. He was then removed to a private house and kept under guard, but shortly afterward effected his escape—owing, it was reported, to treachery—and was subsequently distinguished as one of the severest scourges of the beautiful valley which had given him birth.

The address of Johnson, Claus, and Butler having been thus introduced among the people of the county, Arnold issued a proclamation from Fort Dayton for the purpose of counteracting its influence. It was couched in severe language in regard to St. Leger and his heterogeneous army; denounced those of the people who might be seduced by his arts to enrol themselves under the banner of the king; but promised pardon to all, whether Americans, savages, Germans, or Britons, who might return to their duty to the states.

Meantime, Colonel St. Leger was pushing his operations before the fort with considerable vigour. Every effort to intimidate the garrison having failed, and the commander exhibiting an unsubmitting spirit, St. Leger commenced approaching by sap, and had formed two parallels, the second of which brought him near the edge of the glacis; but the fire of musketry from the covert way rendered his farther progress very difficult. The fire of his ordnance producing no effect, his only means of annoying the garrison was by throwing shells; but these proved of so little consequence as to afford a discouraging prospect of success. Having advanced, however, within one hundred and fifty yards, it is not to be denied that some uneasiness began to be manifested within the garrison. Ignorant of the fate of Colonel Willett and Major Stockwell, and entirely cut off from all communication from without, their provisions daily exhausting, and having no cer-

tain prospect of relief, some of the officers commenced speaking in whispers of the expediency of saving the garrison from a re-enactment of the Fort William Henry tragedy, by acceding to St. Leger's proffered terms of capitulation. Not so the commander. After weighing well the circumstances of the case, he came to the deliberate resolve, in the event of obtaining no succour from without, when his provisions were about exhausted, to make a sally at night, and cut his way through the encampment of the besiegers, or perish in the attempt.

Fortunately, the necessity of executing the bold determination did not arrive. The siege had continued until the 22d of August, when suddenly, without any cause within the knowledge of the garrison, the besiegers broke up their encampment, and retired in such haste and confusion as to leave their tents, together with a great part of their artillery, camp equipage, and baggage behind. What was the motive for this unexpected flight of a vaunting and all but victorious foe, was a problem they were unable to solve within the fort, although their joy was not, on that account, the less at their deliverance. It subsequently appeared that the panic which produced this welcome and unexpected change in the situation of the garrison was caused by a *ruse-de-guerre*, practised upon the forces of St. Leger by General Arnold, who had been waiting at Fort Dayton several days for the arrival of reinforcements and supplies. But, having heard that St. Leger had made his approaches to within a short distance of the fort, Arnold, on the 22d of August, determined, at all events, to push forward and hazard a battle, rather than see the garrison fall a sacrifice. With this view, on the morning of the 23d he resumed his march for Fort Schuyler, and had proceeded ten miles of the distance from Fort Dayton, when he was met by an express from Colonel Gansevoort with the gratifying intelligence that the

siege had been raised. The cause of this sudden movement was yet as great a mystery to the colonel and his garrison as was the flight of the host of Ben-hadad from before Samaria to the King of Israel, when the Syrian monarch heard the supernatural sound of chariots, and the noise of horses, in the days of Elisha the prophet. Arnold was, of course, less in the dark. The circumstances were these :

Among the party of Tories and Indians captured at Shoemaker's, under Lieutenant Butler, was a singular being named HON-YOST SCHUYLER. His place of residence was near the Little Falls, where his mother, and a brother named Nicholas, were then residing. Hon-Yost Schuyler was one of the coarsest and most ignorant men in the valley, appearing scarce half removed from idiocy ; and yet there was no small share of shrewdness in his character. Living upon the extreme border of civilization, his associations had been more with the Indians than the whites ; and tradition avers that they regarded him with that mysterious reverence and awe with which they are inspired by fools and lunatics. Thus situated, and thus constituted, Hon-Yost had partially attached himself to the Royalist cause, though probably, like the Cowboys of West Chester, he really cared little which party he served or plundered ; and had he been the captor of the unfortunate Andre, would have balanced probabilities as to the best way of turning the prize to account. Be these things, however, as they may, Hon-Yost was captured with Walter Butler, and, like him, was tried for his life, adjudged guilty, and condemned to death. His mother and brother hearing of his situation, hastened to Fort Dayton, and implored General Arnold to spare his life. The old woman strongly resembled the gipsy in her character, and the eloquence and pathos with which she pleaded for the life of her son were long remembered in the unwritten history of the Mohawk Val-

ley. Arnold was for a time inexorable, and the woman became almost frantic with grief and passion on account of her wayward son. Nicholas, likewise, exerted himself to the utmost in behalf of his brother. At length General Arnold proposed terms upon which his life should be spared. The conditions were, that Hon-Yost should hasten to Fort Schuyler, and so alarm the camp of St. Leger as to induce him to raise the siege and fly. The convict-traitor gladly accepted the proposition, and his mother offered herself as a hostage for the faithful performance of his commission. Arnold, however, declined receiving the woman as a hostage, preferring, and insisting that Nicholas should be retained for that purpose. To this the latter readily assented, declaring that he was perfectly willing to pledge his life that Hon-Yost would fulfil his engagements to the utmost. Nicholas was therefore placed in confinement, while Hon-Yost departed for the camp of Colonel St. Leger, having made an arrangement with one of the Oneida Indians, friendly to the Americans, to aid him in the enterprise. Before his departure several shots were fired through Schuyler's clothes, that he might appear to have had a narrow escape; and the Oneida Indian, by taking a circuitous route to Fort Schuyler, was to fall into the enemy's camp from another direction, and aid Hon-Yost in creating the panic desired. The emissary first presented himself among the Indians, who were in a very suitable state of mind to be wrought upon by exactly such a personage. They had been moody and dissatisfied ever since the battle of Oriskany; neither the success nor the plunder promised them had been won, and they had previously received some vague and indefinite intelligence respecting the approach of Arnold. They had likewise just been holding a pow-wow, or were actually convened in one, for the purpose of consulting the Manitto touching the dubious en-



terprise in which they were engaged when Hon-Yost arrived. Knowing their character well, he communicated his intelligence to them in the most mysterious and imposing manner. Pointing to his riddled garments, he proved to them how narrow had been his escape from the approaching army of the rebels. When asked the number of the troops that Arnold was leading against them, he shook his head mysteriously, and pointed upward to the leaves of the trees. The reports spread rapidly through the camps, and, reaching the ears of the commander, Hon-Yost was sent for to the tent of St. Leger himself. Here he was interrogated, and gave information that General Arnold, with two thousand men, was so near that he would be upon them within twenty-four hours. He gave St. Leger a pitiable narrative of his captivity, trial, and condemnation to the gallows. It was while on his way to execution, as he alleged, that, finding himself not very closely guarded, he took an opportunity to effect his escape, thinking, at the worst, that he could only die, and it would be as well to be shot as hanged. A shower of bullets had, indeed, been let fly at him, but fortunately had only wounded his clothes, as the general might see. Meantime, the Oneida messenger arrived with a belt, and confirmed to the Indians all that Schuyler had said ; adding, that the Americans had no desire to injure the Indians, and were intent only upon attacking the British troops and rangers. While making his way to the camp of the besiegers, the ingenious Oneida had fallen in with some two or three straggling Indians of his acquaintance, to whom he communicated his business, and whose assistance in furthering the design he engaged. These sagacious fellows dropped into the Indian camp at different points, and threw out alarming suggestions, shaking their heads mysteriously, and insinuating that a bird had brought them intelligence of great moment. They spoke of war

riors in great numbers advancing rapidly upon them and used every indirect method of infusing a panic into the minds of the listeners who gathered around them. The Indians presently began to give signs of decamping, and St. Leger assayed in vain to reassure them. He convened a council of their chiefs, hoping that, by the influence of Sir John Johnson and Colonels Claus and Butler, he should still be able to retain them. Other reports of a yet more terrifying tendency getting afloat, not only among the Indians, but in the other camp, the former declared that "the pow-wow said they must go;" and a portion of them took their departure before the council broke up. The result was a general and precipitate flight. It has been stated that, in the commencement of the retreat, the Indians made themselves merry at the expense of their white allies, by raising a shout that the Americans were upon them, and then laughing at the groundless terror thus created. According to the account derived by Gordon from the Rev. Mr. Kirkland, an altercation took place between Colonel St. Leger and Sir John Johnson, the former reproaching the latter with the defection of the Indians, while the baronet charged his commander with but an indifferent prosecution of the siege. It was in the gray of twilight when a couple of sachems, standing upon a little eminence not far in the rear, and overhearing the interchange of sharp words between them, put an end to the unpleasant colloquy by raising the shout "*They are coming! they are coming!*" Both St. Leger and Sir John commenced their retreat with all possible expedition upon hearing such an alarm. Their troops were equally nimble of foot on the occasion throwing away their knapsacks and arms, and disencumbering themselves of every hinderance to the quick-step; while the Indians, enjoying the panic and confusion, repeated the joke by the way until they arrived at the Oneida Lake. It is believed,

however, that it was not the Americans alone of whom St. Leger began to stand in fear, being quite as apprehensive of danger from his own dusky allies as he was of the approaching army of Arnold. There is British authority for stating that the Indians actually plundered several of the boats belonging to their own army, robbing the officers of whatsoever they liked. Within a few miles of the camp they first stripped off the arms, and afterward murdered, with their own bayonets, all those British, German, and American soldiers who were separated from the main body.\* Thus were the threats of savage vengeance sent by Colonel St. Leger to the garrison in some degree wreaked upon his own army. Hon-Yost Schuyler accompanied the flying host to the estuary of Wood Creek, where he deserted, thridding his way back to Fort Schuyler the same evening, imparting to Colonel Gansevoort his first information of the advance of Arnold. From Fort Schuyler Hon-Yost proceeded back to the German Flatts. On presenting himself at Fort Dayton, his brother was discharged, to the inexpressible joy of his mother and their relatives. But he proved a Tory in grain, and embraced the first opportunity subsequently presented, which was in October, of running away to the enemy, with several of his neighbours, and attaching himself to the forces of Sir John Johnson.

Immediately on the receipt of Colonel Gansevoort's despatch announcing St. Leger's retreat, General Arnold push forward a detachment of nine hundred men, with directions, if possible, to over-

\* St. Leger's report of this disastrous retreat, addressed to General Burgoyne from Oswego, on the 27th of August, corresponds very closely with the American accounts whence the present narrative has been drawn. He states that the Indians fell treacherously upon their friends, and became more formidable than the enemy they had to expect. He leaves no room, however, to suppose that there was any difficulty between Sir John Johnson and himself, calling him "his gallant coadjutor," &c, and commending his exertions to induce the Indians again to meet the enemy, as also those of Colonels Claus and Butler

take the fugitives, and render their flight still more disastrous. On the day following, Arnold himself arrived at the fort, where he was received with a salute of artillery and the cheers of the brave garrison. He, of course, found that Gansevoort had anticipated his design of harassing the rear of the flying enemy, and had brought in several prisoners, together with large quantities of spoil. So great was their panic, and such the precipitancy of their flight, that they left their tents standing, their provisions, artillery, ammunition, their entire camp equipage, and large quantities of other articles enhancing the value of the booty.\*

Thus ended the siege of Fort Schuyler, or Fort Stanwix, as the public have always preferred calling it. St. Leger hastened with his scattered forces back to Oswego, and thence to Montreal. From that post he proceeded to Lake Champlain, passing up the same to Ticonderoga, for the purpose of joining the army of Burgoyne. Finding that the enemy had evacuated the country between the fort and Lake Ontario, and that the post could be in no immediate danger from that direction, Colonel Gansevoort took the opportunity of visiting his friends at Albany, and at the seat of the state government, then just organized at Kingston.

As an evidence of the value placed upon the services of the colonel in the defence of Fort Schuyler, he was shortly afterward promoted in the state line to the rank of brigadier-general, while his gallantry was farther rewarded by a colonel's commission from Congress in the army of the United States.† On leaving his regiment, its officers pre-

\* Among other articles was the escritoire of St. Leger himself, containing his private papers, several of which have been used by the author in writing this and the preceding chapters.

† There seems to have been something peculiar and special in this commission. In a letter which Colonel Gansevoort wrote jointly to William Duer and Gouverneur Morris, a copy of which is preserved among his papers, he observes: "Congress have done me the honour of

sented him with an affectionate letter of congratulation on his promotion, mingled with an expression of their regret at the loss to the regiment of "so worthy a patron." To which the colonel returned an appropriate letter of thanks. The people of Tryon county were, of course, rejoiced that the blow, directed, as the enemy supposed, with unerring certainty against them, had been averted. They had suffered severely in the campaign, but there were enough of her sons yet left to swell the ranks of General Gates not a little; and they pressed ardently to join his standard, although circumstances did not then require them long to remain in the field.

In October following, when Sir Henry Clinton was ascending the Hudson for the purpose either of succouring or of co-operating with Burgoyne, Colonel Gansevoort was ordered to Albany by General Gates, to take command of the large force then concentrating at that place. Happily, as will appear in the succeeding chapters, there was no occasion to test his prowess in his new and temporary command.

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## CHAPTER XII.

THE temporary pacification of the western part of the state, resulting from the events of which we have just closed the narrative, affords an opportunity for recurring to the invasion of Burgoyne, who was

appointing me colonel commandant of Fort Schuyler. I should esteem it as a favour if you would inform me whether I am to receive any pay for that commission other than as colonel of the third regiment of New-Yorkers; and if not, I should be glad if you would endeavour to get something allowed me, as my present pay will not reimburse my table liquors, which you may well conceive to be something considerable as commanding officer. I am not solicitous to make money by my commission; but I could wish not to sink by it, as I am obliged to do now. The commission which Congress has sent me *as commandant of Fort Schuyler* subjects me as much to the command of my superior officers as my former one. If that was the intention of Congress, the appointment is nugatory. If not, I wish Congress to alter the commission."

left in the mid career of victory, checked, it is true, by unexpected and increasing difficulties, until brought to a stand by the serious affair of Bennington, heretofore incidentally disposed of. On shifting the scene, however, from the head waters of the Mohawk to the upper districts of the Hudson. General Gates is again found in command of the Northern department, General Schuyler, to whose wise measures and indefatigable exertions the country was mainly indebted for arresting the progress of Burgoyne, and during whose command the victory of Bennington had been won by General Stark, having been most unjustly superseded by express resolution of Congress. There had, during the present year, been a very unwise, unworthy, and capricious interference, on the part of Congress, with the command of this department. On the 25th of March, without a reason assigned, General Gates had superseded General Schuyler, his superior officer, by order of Congress, and on the 22d of May, without any expressed motive, General Schuyler was restored to the command of that department. Again, on the 1st of August, it was resolved by Congress that General Schuyler should repair to headquarters, while the commander-in-chief was, by the same resolution, directed to order such general officer as he should think proper to assume the command in Schuyler's place. The day after the passage of that resolution, General Washington received a letter from the New-England delegation in Congress, suggesting the name of General Gates as the officer who would be most likely to restore harmony, order, and discipline, and to relieve our affairs in that quarter.\* We have, in a former chapter, referred to the prejudices existing against General Schuyler, and the causes of them. These had now become so strong, and the Eastern

\* The original of this letter to Washington is in the handwriting of Samuel Adams, and is signed by the following names, in the order in which they here stand, viz.: John Adams, Nathaniel Folsom, Samuel Adams, Henry Marchant, Elbridge Gerry, Eliphalet Dyer, William Williams

States, in particular, were so hostile to his longer continuance in the command, that even his friends acquiesced in the expediency, though not in the justice, of his removal.\* General Schuyler himself, however, felt acutely the discredit of being recalled at the most critical and interesting period of the campaign; when the labour and activity of making preparations to repair the disasters of it had been expended by him, and when an opportunity was offered, as he observed, for that resistance and retaliation which might bring glory upon our arms.

The commander-in-chief paid no heed to the advisory epistle from the New-England delegates, but in a respectful letter to the President of Congress, declined the honour of making the selection. Had he not thus excused himself, it is not presumption to intimate, that, influenced by the peculiar attitude which Gates had even then begun to assume, and acting, as Washington ever did, under the stern behests of conscience, he would have made a different selection from that proposed to him by the Eastern representatives, and which ultimately prevailed.

General Gates, however, did not join the Northern army until the 19th of August; and as the time was not specified within which he was required to report himself at headquarters, General Schuyler was allowed to remain at the North, with the approbation both of Congress and the commander-in-chief, until after the campaign had been closed by the sur-

\* The calumnies directed against St. Clair and Schuyler, in regard to the fall of Ticonderoga, were so gross as to exceed belief in their propagation. These officers were denounced as traitors to the country, acting in concert with the enemy; and the ignorant and credulous were led to believe that they had received an immense treasure in *silver balls*, fired by Burgoyne into St. Clair's camp, and by his order picked up, and transmitted to Schuyler at Fort George. Wilkinson, who was Gates's adjutant-general, avers that respectable people questioned him with much gravity as to the fact! These slanders were, for factious purposes, countenanced by respectable men, and the consequence was general defection and desertion, in the early part of the summer; so that, at one time, the Northern army was reduced to less than three thousand, and the militia to less than thirteen hundred, and these subject to no effectual restraint.

render of the British commander and his army. Nor were his exertions the less active, or his counsels the less freely proffered, in the cause of his country, because of the injustice by which his pride had been wounded.

After the evacuation of Fort Edward,\* as mentioned in a former chapter, General Schuyler fell down the river to Stillwater, on the 3d of August, and began to intrench his camp there on the 4th. Burgoyne's ill-conceived expedition to Bennington, under Colonel Baum, deprived him of one sixth of his effective force on the 16th. It was not until near a month afterward, during which time the American army had been greatly strengthened at Stillwater, that Burgoyne was again prepared to advance. Having at length, by dint of almost incredible labour, brought up from Fort George a supply of provisions for thirty days, and thrown a bridge of boats over the Hudson, the British commander, with his army, crossed on the 13th and 14th of September, and encamped on the heights and plains of Saratoga. On the night of the 17th, Burgoyne encamped within four miles of the American army, and about noon on the 19th advanced in full force against it, the latter having, in the mean time, advanced towards the enemy three miles above Stillwater. Burgoyne commanded his right wing in person, covered by General Frazer and Colonel Breyman, with the grenadiers and light infantry, who were posted along some high grounds on the right. The front and flanks were covered by Indians, Provincials, and Canadians. The enemy's left wing and artillery were commanded by Generals Phillips and Riedesel, who proceeded along the

\* It was during a skirmish before Fort Edward, when the Americans were flying from a party of thirty or forty Indians, that the late General Matthew Clarkson, of New-York—then Major Clarkson, and aid to General Arnold—was wounded by a ball which passed through the muscular integuments of the throat. The wound was supposed to be fatal at the time, but he soon recovered.



great road. Colonel Morgan, who was detached to observe their motions, and to harass them as they advanced, soon fell in with their pickets in advance of their right wing, attacked them sharply, and drove them in. A strong corps was immediately detached by the enemy against Morgan, who, after a brisk engagement, was in turn compelled to give way. A regiment being ordered to the assistance of Morgan, whose riflemen had been sadly scattered by the vigour of the attack, the battle was renewed at about one o'clock, and was maintained with spirit, though with occasional pauses, for three hours, the commanders on both sides supporting and re-enforcing their respective parties. By four o'clock the battle became general, Arnold, with nine Continental regiments and Morgan's corps, having completely engaged the whole right wing of the enemy.\* The contest, accidentally commenced in the first instance, now assumed the most obstinate and determined character. It was maintained four hours longer, the soldiers being often engaged hand to hand. The approach of night terminated the battle, the Americans retreating to their encampment, but not from other necessity than the darkness. The enemy were provided with artillery, but the ground occupied by the Americans would not allow the use of fieldpieces. The fluctuations of the battle were frequent during the day, and although the British artillery fell into the hands of the Americans

\* Holmes, who follows Stedman. General Wilkinson denies that Arnold shared much in this battle. He says, "Not a single general officer was on the field of battle on the 19th, until evening, when General Larned was ordered out. About the same time Generals Gates and Arnold were in front of the centre of the camp, listening to the peal of small arms, when Colonel Morgan Lewis, deputy quartermaster-general, returned from the field, and being questioned by the general, he reported the undecisive progress of the action; at which Arnold exclaimed, '*By G—d, I will put an end to it.*' and clapping spurs to his horse, galloped off at full speed. Colonel Lewis immediately observed to General Gates, 'You had better order him back: the action is going well, and he may by some rash act do mischief.' I was instantly despatched, overtook, and remanded Arnold to camp."—*Memoirs*, vol. i., chap. vi.

at every alternate charge, the latter could neither turn them upon the enemy nor bring them off. The wood prevented the last, and the want of a match the first, as the lint-stock was invariably carried away, and the rapidity of the transitions did not allow the Americans time to provide one.

Both armies remained in the same positions until the beginning of October, each intrenching itself within lines and redoubts, which, in the most eligible positions, were strengthened with batteries. The engineer having the direction of the American works at Behmus's Heights was the celebrated Polish patriot, Thaddeus Kosciusko, who had also served in the same capacity at Ticonderoga.

The action of the 19th of September had again essentially diminished the strength of Burgoyne; added to which were the great and increasing difficulties of obtaining supplies, and the perpetual annoyances to which he was subjected by the American scouts, and still larger detachments, who were attacking his pickets, hanging upon his flanks, and cutting off his foraging parties. By the 4th of October his supplies were so far reduced that the soldiers were placed upon short allowance; and his position was in other respects becoming so critical, that, hearing nothing from Sir Henry Clinton, for whose co-operation from New-York he had been waiting since the battle of the 19th, the idea of advancing was relinquished, and instead thereof, discussions were held respecting the practicability of a retreat. This could only be done by first dislodging the Americans, whose forces, disciplined and undisciplined, now far outnumbered his own, from their posts on the heights. On the 4th of October, Burgoyne sent for Generals Phillips, Riedesel, and Frazer, to consult with them on the best measures to be taken. His project was to attack and attempt to turn the left wing of the Americans at once; but the other generals judged that it would be dangerous to leave their stores under so feeble a protec-

tion as eight hundred men, according to the proposition of their commander. A second consultation was held on the 5th, at which General Riedesel positively declared that the situation of the army had become so critical, that they must either attack and force the intrenchments of Gates, and thus bring about a favourable change of affairs, or recross the Hudson, and retreat upon Fort George. Frazer approved of the latter suggestion, and Phillips declined giving an opinion. General Burgoyne, to whom the idea of retreating was most unwelcome, declared that he would make, on the 7th, a reconnoissance as near as possible to the left wing of the Americans, with a view of ascertaining whether it could be attacked with any prospect of success. He would afterward either attack the army of Gates, or retreat by the route in the rear of Battenkill. This was his final determination, and dispositions were made accordingly.

Early in the afternoon of the 7th, General Burgoyne drew out fifteen hundred men for the purpose of making his proposed reconnoissance, which he headed himself, attended by Generals Phillips, Riedesel, and Frazer. They advanced in three columns towards the left wing of the American positions, entered a wheat-field, deployed into line, and then began cutting up the wheat for forage. The movement having been seasonably discovered, the centre advanced guard of the Americans beat to arms; the alarm was repeated throughout the line, and the troops repaired to the alarm posts. Colonel Wilkinson being at headquarters at the moment, was despatched to ascertain the cause of the alarm. He proceeded to within sixty or seventy rods of the enemy, ascertained their position, and returned, informing General Gates that they were foraging; attempting also to reconnoitre the American left, and likewise, in his opinion, offering battle. After a brief consultation, Gates said he would indulge them;

and Colonel Morgan, whose rifle corps was formed in front of the centre, was directed "to begin the game."\* At his own suggestion, however, Morgan was allowed to gain the enemy's right by a circuitous course, while Poor's brigade should attack his left. The movement was admirably executed: the New-York and New-Hampshire troops attacked the enemy's front and left wing with great impetuosity; while, true to his purpose, Morgan, just at the critical moment, poured down like a torrent from the hill, and attacked the enemy's right in front and flank. The attack was soon extended along the whole front of the enemy with great determination. Major Ackland, at the head of the grenadiers, sustained the attack of Poor with great firmness. But on his right the light infantry, in attempting to change front, being pressed with ardour by Colonel Dearborn, were forced to retire under a close fire, and in great disorder. They were re-formed by the Earl of Balcarras behind a fence in the rear of their first position; but, being again attacked with great audacity in front and flanks by superior numbers, resistance became vain, and the whole line, commanded by Burgoyne in person, gave way, and made a precipitate and disorderly retreat to his camp. The right of Burgoyne had given way first, the retreat of which was covered by the light infantry and a part of the 24th regiment. The left wing, in its retreat, would inevitably have been cut to pieces but for the intervention of the same troops, performing in its behalf the same service that, a few moments before, they had done for the right. This retreat took place in exactly fifty-two minutes after the first shot was fired: the enemy leaving two twelve and six six-pounders on the field, with the loss of more

\* General Burgoyne afterward stated to Wilkinson, in conversation, that his purpose on that day was only to reconnoitre and obtain forage, and that in half an hour, had his motives not been penetrated by Wilkinson and he not been attacked, he should have finished his observations and returned to his camp.

than four hundred officers and men, killed, wounded, and captured, and among them the flower of his officers, viz., General Frazer, Major Ackland,\* Sir Francis Cook, and many others.

The British troops had scarcely entered their lines, when the Americans, led by General Arnold, pressed forward, and, under a tremendous fire of grapeshot and musketry, assaulted their works throughout their whole extent from right to left. Towards the close of the day, the enemy's intrenchments were forced by the left of the Americans, led by Arnold in person, who, with a few of his men, actually entered the works; but, his horse being killed, and the general himself badly wounded in the leg, they were forced to retire, and the approach of

\* General Wilkinson gives an interesting incident respecting Major Ackland. While pursuing the flying enemy, passing over killed and wounded, he heard a voice exclaim, "Protect me, sir, against this boy!" Turning his head, he saw a lad, thirteen or fourteen years of age, deliberately aiming at a wounded officer, lying in the angle of a worm-fence. The purpose of the boy was arrested: the officer proved to be the brave Ackland, who had commanded the grenadiers, and was wounded in both legs. He was immediately sent to headquarters. The story of Major Ackland has been rendered familiar to all, even before escaping the nursery, by the interesting narrative of Lady Harriet, his wife, who was with the army, and who, two days after the battle, came to the American camp, under a flag, to join her husband. The incident, from the embellishments it received, was touching and romantic. When divested of its poetry, however, and reduced to the plain matter of fact, according to the statement of the late General Dearborn, which he authorized Wilkinson to publish in his memoirs, the affair was not so very extraordinary that it might not have been enacted by any other pretty woman, under the same circumstances, who loved her husband. Major Ackland had already been sent down to Albany, when Lady Harriet arrived at the camp of General Gates. She was treated with all possible courtesy, and permitted to follow and join him. Major Ackland was a gallant officer and a generous foe. While in New-York, on his parole, he did all in his power to favour the treatment of distinguished American prisoners. After his return to England, he sacrificed his life in defence of American honour. Having procured a regiment, at a dinner of military men, the courage of the Americans was questioned. He repelled the imputation with decision. High words ensued, in the course of which Ackland gave the lie direct to a subordinate officer named Lloyd. A meeting was the consequence, in which he was shot through the head. Lady Harriet lost her senses, and continued deranged two years; after which she married a gentleman named Brudenell, who had accompanied her from the camp of Burgoyne, at Saratoga, to that of Gates, in search of her wounded husband.

darkness induced them to desist from the attack. Meantime, on the left of Arnold's detachment, the Massachusetts troops, under Colonel Brooks, had been still more successful, having turned the enemy's right, and carried by storm the works occupied by the German reserve. Colonel Breyman, their commander, was killed, and his corps, reduced to two hundred men, and hotly pressed on all sides, was obliged to give way. This advantage was retained by the Americans, and darkness put an end to an action equally brilliant and important to the Continental arms. Great numbers of the enemy were killed, and two hundred prisoners taken. The loss of the Americans was inconsiderable.

On the morning of the 8th, before daybreak, the enemy left his position, and defiled into the plain where his provisions were; but was obliged to halt until the evening, because his hospital could not be sooner removed.\* The Americans immediately moved forward, and took possession of the abandoned camp. Burgoyne having condensed his force upon some heights which were strong by nature, and covered in front by a ravine running parallel with the intrenchment of his late camp, a random fire of artillery and small arms was kept up through the day; particularly on the part of the enemy's sharpshooters and Provincials, who were stationed in coverts of the ravine, which rendered their fire annoying to every person crossing their line of vision. It was by a shot from one of these lurking parties that General Lincoln, late in the day, received a severe wound in the leg, while riding near the line.

\* Memoirs of the Baroness de Riedesel. Of this lady General Wilkinson says, "I have more than once seen her charming blue eyes bedewed with tears at the recital of her sufferings. With two infant children, she accompanied her husband, Major-general the Baron de Riedesel, from Germany to England, from England to Canada, and from the last place to the termination of General Burgoyne's campaign, in which she suffered more than the horrors of the grave in their most frightful aspect." Her Memoirs were published in Berlin, in 1800. They are full of interest.

The gallant Frazer, who had been mortally wounded the day before, died at 8 o'clock on the morning of the 8th. On the evening of his fall, when it was rendered certain that he could not recover, he sent for General Burgoyne, and requested that he might be buried at 6 o'clock the following evening, on the crest of a hill upon which a breast-work had been constructed. It was a subject of complaint against Burgoyne, that, in order to comply with this request, he delayed his retreat, and thus contributed to the misfortunes of his army. Be that as it may, the dying soldier's request was observed to the letter. At the hour appointed, the body was borne to the hill that had been indicated, attended by the generals and their retinues; the funeral service was read by the chaplain, and the corpse interred, while the balls of the American cannon were flying around and above the assembled mourners.\*

It was evident, from the movements in the enemy's camp, that he was preparing to retreat; but the American troops having, in the delirium of joy consequent upon their victory, neglected to draw and eat their rations, being, withal, not a little fatigued with the two days' exertions, fell back to their camp, which had been left standing in the morning. Retreat was, indeed, the only alternative remaining to the British commander, since it was now quite cer-

\* The Baroness Riedesel, from whose spirited Memoirs the circumstances of this funeral are drawn, states that General Gates protested afterward that, had he known what was going on, he would have stopped the fire immediately. It must have been a solemn spectacle, and General Burgoyne himself described it with his usual eloquence and felicity of expression: "The incessant cannonade during the solemnity; the steady attitude and unaltered voice with which the chaplain officiated, though frequently covered with dust, which the shot threw up on all sides of him; the mute, but expressive mixture of sensibility and indignation upon every countenance—these objects will remain to the last of life upon the mind of every man who was present. The growing duskiness added to the scenery, and the whole marked a character of that juncture that would make one of the finest subjects for the pencil of a master that the field ever exhibited"—*State of the Expedition from Canada, &c., &c.*, p. 169.

tain that he could not cut his way through the American army, and his supplies were reduced to a short allowance for five days. He accordingly commenced his retreat that night, but lingered by the way; so that on the 10th he was yet near Saratoga, where he took up a position. During this retreat he ordered the farmhouses to be burned by the way, among which was the elegant mansion of General Schuyler, with its mills and out-buildings. This conduct on the part of the British commander was viewed as alike disreputable and unnecessary.\*

Well knowing that a farther retreat, with a view, if possible, of reaching his *depôt* at Fort George, and escaping through the lakes, was now the only movement to which Burgoyne could have recourse to save the shattered remains of his army, Gates lost no time in throwing several strong detachments of troops into his rear. A division of fourteen hundred was stationed on the heights opposite the ford at Saratoga; two thousand in his rear, to prevent his retreat upon Fort Edward; and fifteen hundred at a ford yet higher up. Apprehensive that he should be entirely penned up, Burgoyne sent forward a corps of artificers to repair the bridges; but these, though strongly guarded, were driven precipitately back. His thoughts were next directed to the opening of a passage by the way of Fort Edward; but the Americans had already repossessed themselves of that work, and were well provided with artillery. Thus environed with difficulties, which were increasing every hour, his effective force reduced to less than three thousand five hundred men—the American army increasing every moment, and now forming an almost entire circle around him—har-

\* "The cruelties which mark the retreat of your army, in burning the gentlemen's and farmers' houses as it passed along, are almost, among civilized nations, without precedent; they should not endeavour to ruin those they could not conquer; their conduct betrays more of the vindictive malice of the monk than the generosity of a soldier."—*Letter of Gates to Burgoyne, Oct. 12, 1777.*



assed at all points, especially by the sharpshooters who hovered about him—Burgoyne was driven to the necessity of entering into a convention with General Gates, which was done by the unanimous consent of a general council of his officers. The preliminaries were soon adjusted, and on the 17th of October the royal army surrendered prisoners of war. At the opening of the campaign the army of Burgoyne numbered nine thousand two hundred and thirteen men. The number that laid down their arms was five thousand seven hundred and fifty-two. His Indian allies had all, or nearly all, abandoned him several days before.

On the same day that the articles of capitulation were carried into effect, Burgoyne, with his general officers, was received in the quarters of General Gates, and entertained by him at dinner. They were received with the utmost courtesy, and with the consideration due to brave but unfortunate men. The conversation was unrestrained, affable, and free.\* Indeed, the conduct of Gates throughout, after the terms of the surrender had been adjusted, was marked with equal delicacy and magnanimity, as Burgoyne himself admitted in a letter to the Earl of Derby. In that letter the captive general particularly mentioned one circumstance, which he said exceeded all he had ever seen or read of on a like occasion. It was the fact that, when the British soldiers had marched out of their camp to the place where they were to pile their arms, *not a man of the American troops was to be seen*, General Gates having ordered his whole army out of sight, that not

\* The first meeting of Burgoyne with Gates is thus described by Wilkinson: "General Gates, advised of Burgoyne's approach, met him at the head of his camp, Burgoyne in a rich royal uniform, and Gates in a plain blue frock, when they had approached nearly within sword's length, they reined up and halted. I then named the gentlemen, and General Burgoyne, raising his hat most gracefully, said, 'The fortune of war, General Gates, has made me your prisoner;' to which the conqueror, returning a courtly salute, promptly replied, 'I shall always be ready to bear testimony that it has not been through any fault of your excellency.'"

one of them should be a spectator of the humiliation of the British troops, nor offer the smallest insult to the vanquished. This was a refinement of delicacy, and of military generosity and politeness, reflecting the highest credit upon the conqueror; and was spoken of by the officers of Burgoyne in the strongest terms of approbation.

Flushed with his fortuitous success, or, rather, with the success attending his fortuitous position, Gates did not wear his honours with any remarkable meekness. On the contrary, his bearing, even towards the commander-in-chief, was far from respectful. He did not even write to Washington on the occasion until after a considerable time had elapsed. In the first instance, Wilkinson was sent as the bearer of despatches to Congress, but did not reach the seat of that body until fifteen days after the articles of capitulation had been signed; and three days more were occupied in arranging his papers before they were presented.\* The first mention which Washington makes of the defeat of Burgoyne is contained in a letter written to his brother on the 18th of October, the news having been communicated to him by Governor Clinton. He spoke of the event again on the 19th, in a letter addressed to General Putnam. On the 25th, in a letter addressed to that officer, he acknowledges the receipt of a copy of the articles of capitulation *from him*; adding, that that was the first authentic intelligence he had received of the affair, and that he had begun to grow uneasy, and almost to suspect that the previous accounts were premature. And it was not until the 2d of November that Gates deigned to communicate to the commander-in-chief a word upon the subject, and then only incidentally, as though it were a matter of secondary importance.†

\* "It was on this occasion that one of the members made a motion in Congress that they should compliment Colonel Wilkinson with the gift of a pair of spurs."

† All that Gates said upon the subject in the letter referred to was

General Schuyler was in the camp with Gates at the time of the surrender, though without any personal command; and when Burgoyne, with his general officers, arrived in Albany, they were the guests of Schuyler, by whom they were treated with great hospitality. The Baroness de Riedesel speaks with great feeling of the kindness she received from General Schuyler on her first arrival in the camp of General Gates, and afterward at the hands of Mrs. Schuyler and her daughters in Albany. The urbanity of his manners, and the chivalric magnanimity of his character, smarting as he was under the extent and severity of his pecuniary losses, are attested by General Burgoyne himself, in his speech, in 1778, in the British House of Commons. He there declared that, by his orders, "a very good dwelling-house, exceeding large store-houses, great sawmills, and other out-buildings, to the value, altogether, perhaps of £10,000 sterling," belonging to General Schuyler, at Saratoga, were destroyed by fire a few days before the surrender. He said, farther, that one of the first persons he saw, after the convention was signed, was General Schuyler; and when expressing to him his regret at the event which had happened to his property, General Schuyler desired him "to think no more of it, and that the occasion justified it, according to the

comprised in these words: "Congress having been requested immediately to transmit copies of all my despatches to them, I am confident your excellency has long ago received all the good news from this quarter." Two days before this, in a letter directed to Gates, Washington had administered one of those mild and dignified rebukes so very like himself. In this letter, written in reference to a special mission of Colonel Hamilton to the North, the commander-in-chief said, "By this opportunity I do myself the pleasure to congratulate you on the signal success of the army under your command, in compelling General Burgoyne and his whole force to surrender themselves prisoners of war."

\* \* \* \* \* "At the same time, I cannot but regret that a matter of such magnitude, and so interesting to our general operations, should have reached me by report only, or through the channel of letters not bearing that authenticity which the importance of it required, and which it would have received by a line under your signature, stating the simple facts."

principles and rules of war. He did more," said Burgoyne; "he sent an aid de-camp\* to conduct me to Albany, in order, as he expressed it, to procure better quarters than a stranger might be able to find. That gentleman conducted me to a very elegant house, and, to my great surprise, presented me to Mrs. Schuyler and her family. In that house I remained during my whole stay in Albany, with a table of more than twenty covers for me and my friends, and every other possible demonstration of hospitality."

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### CHAPTER XIII.

SIMULTANEOUSLY with the events rapidly sketched in the preceding chapter, an expedition from New-York to the North was undertaken by Sir Henry Clinton, to which an incidental reference has already been made. The obvious intention of Sir Henry was to relieve General Burgoyne: a fact admitted by Sir Henry himself, who excused the delay by stating that he could not attempt it sooner without leaving the defences of New-York too feebly guarded. This expedition consisted of about three thousand men, convoyed by a fleet under Commodore Hotham, who proceeded up the Hudson River early in October, and was destined, in the first instance, against Forts Montgomery and Clinton, near the southern boundary of the Highlands. These fortresses had been constructed chiefly for the purpose of preventing the ships of the enemy from ascending the river, and were not defensible in the rear. They were commanded by Governor Clinton, with the assistance of General James Clinton, his brother.

\* The late Colonel Richard Varick, then the military secretary of General Schuyler.

The troops of the enemy were landed at Stoney Point, twelve miles below the forts. A small advanced party of the Americans was met and attacked at about 10 o'clock in the morning of the 6th of October, when within two and a half miles of the fort. This party was, of course, driven in, having returned the enemy's fire. When arrived within a mile of the forts, Sir Henry divided his troops into two columns; the one, consisting of nine hundred men under Lieutenant-colonel Campbell, was destined for the attack on Fort Montgomery; the other, under the immediate command of Sir Henry Clinton, was to storm the stronger post of Fort Clinton. Ascertaining that the enemy were advancing to the west side of the mountain, to attack his rear, Governor Clinton ordered a detachment of upward of one hundred men under Colonel Lamb, together with a brass fieldpiece and fifty men more, to take a strong position in advance. They were soon sharply engaged, and another detachment of an equal number was sent to their assistance. They kept their fieldpiece sharply playing upon the enemy's advancing column, and were only compelled to give way by the point of the bayonet, spiking their fieldpiece before they relinquished it. In this preliminary encounter the loss of Sir Henry was severe.

Pressing rapidly onward, both forts were in a few minutes attacked with vigour upon all sides. The fire was incessant during the afternoon until about five o'clock, when, a flag approaching, Lieutenant-colonel Livingston was ordered to receive it. The officer was the bearer of a peremptory summons to surrender, as he alleged, to prevent the effusion of blood. Nor would he treat, unless upon the basis of a surrender of the garrison as prisoners of war, in which case he was authorized to assure them of good usage. The proposition being rejected "with scorn," in about ten minutes the attack

was renewed, and kept up until after dark, when the enemy forced the American lines and redoubts at both forts, and the garrisons, determined not to surrender, undertook to fight their way out. The last attack of the enemy was desperate; but the Americans, militia as well as regulars, resisted with great spirit, and, favoured by the darkness, many of them escaped. Governor Clinton himself escaped by leaping a precipice in the dark, and jumping into a boat, in which he was conveyed away. His brother was wounded and taken prisoner. Of the British forces, Lieutenant-colonel Campbell and Count Grabouski, a Polish nobleman, engaged as a volunteer under Sir Henry, were slain. The loss of the Americans, killed, wounded, and missing, was stated at two hundred and fifty. The British loss was stated at two hundred, but was believed to have been much more than that of the Americans.

On the 7th, a summons to surrender, signed jointly by Sir Henry Clinton and Commodore Hotham, was sent to Fort Constitution;\* but the flag was fired upon, and returned. To avenge the insult, an attack was immediately determined upon; but on arriving at the fort on the following day, there was no enemy to assault, an evacuation having taken place, so precipitate as to leave considerable booty to the conqueror. Sir Henry Clinton proceeded no farther, but a strong detachment of his army, under General Vaughan, pursued the enterprise, with Commodore Hotham, as far north as Æsopus,† destroying several vessels by the way. At Æsopus Creek there were two small batteries and an armed galley, mounting, however, in all, but six or sev-

\* Situated at West Point.

† The ancient Dutch name of Kingston, the present shire town of the county of Ulster, New-York. It was a large and wealthy inland town, built almost entirely of stone, upon a rich and beautiful plain about three miles from the river. The naked walls of many of the houses destroyed by General Vaughan were standing, unrepared, until within five or six years

en guns. These were easily silenced. General Vaughan then effected a landing, marched to the town, and laid it in ashes. Large quantities of stores had been accumulated at this place, which were, of course, destroyed. Disappointed, however, by the disastrous termination of the campaign of Burgoyne, Sir Henry Clinton made an expeditious return to the city.

But the war was this year fruitful in military events in other parts of the confederation, some of the principal of which may appropriately be passed in review at this stage of the present chapter. In the month of March, after the return of the British troops from their bootless expedition through the Jerseys, to New-York, Colonel Bird was detached against Peekskill, with five hundred men, for the purpose of destroying the American stores deposited at that place. General M'Dougall, commanding a small guard at the *depôt*, on the approach of a force which he had not the power to resist, set fire to the stores and retreated. A similar expedition, for the same object, was directed against Danbury towards the close of April, consisting of two thousand men, under the conduct of Major-general Tryon. Landing at Compo Creek, between Norwalk and Fairfield, the march of Governor Tryon to the point of his destination was almost unopposed. A large quantity of provisions, beef, pork, and flour, had been collected by the Americans at that place, which were guarded only by about one hundred militia and Continental troops. Not being able to oppose the enemy, Colonel Huntington retired to a neighbouring height, and awaited re-enforcements. The town of Danbury and the stores were burned on the 26th of April.\* During the afternoon and following night, Generals Wooster, Arnold, and Silli-

\* The property destroyed consisted of eighteen houses; eight hundred barrels of pork and beef; eight hundred barrels of flour; two thousand bushels of grain, and seventeen hundred tents.

man collected such militia forces as they could, for the purpose of harassing the retreat of the enemy the next morning. With three hundred men, Wooster gallantly attacked his rear at 11 o'clock on the 27th, while Arnold, with five hundred more, awaited his arrival at Ridgeway. Wooster fell, mortally wounded, and his troops were obliged to give way. At Ridgeway, Arnold skirmished with the enemy for about an hour, but could not make a stand, or prevent them from remaining at that place over night. On the 28th, the march of the enemy was resumed, as also was the skirmishing by General Arnold, which was continued until five o'clock in the afternoon; when, as they approached their ships, the Americans charged with intrepidity, but were repulsed and broken. Embarking immediately, Governor Tryon returned to New-York, with a loss of one hundred and seventy men. The loss of the Americans was one hundred. These predatory excursions were retaliated by the Americans under Colonel Meigs, who made a brilliant expedition against Sag Harbour, where the enemy had collected a quantity of stores. The guard was taken by surprise, the place carried by the bayonet, the stores destroyed, including twelve transport vessels, and Colonel Meigs recrossed the Sound to Guilford without the loss of a man.

After the return of the British forces from New-Jersey, Sir William Howe suffered them to remain upon Staten Island until near midsummer, when, as the reader has seen in a previous chapter, he embarked with sixteen thousand men, and sailed for the Chesapeake Bay. On the 24th of August he landed at Elkton, whence, after being joined by Generals Grant and Knyphausen, he directed his march upon Philadelphia. Anticipating the design of the British commander, Washington threw himself, with his whole disposable force, between Sir William and Philadelphia, for the purpose of inter-



cepting and bringing him to a general engagement. The disastrous battle of Brandywine was fought on the 11th of September. The loss of the Americans was three hundred killed, and six hundred wounded and taken prisoners. That of the enemy was about one hundred killed and four hundred wounded. While General Washington with the main army retreated across the Schuylkill, General Wayne was left at the Paoli with fifteen hundred men, for the purpose of gaining and harassing the enemy's rear. But, notwithstanding the wonted vigilance of this officer, he was surprised in the course of the night, and routed, by General Gray, who had been detached for that purpose with two regiments of the enemy's line and a body of light troops. General Wayne had attempted to conceal himself upon an elevated piece of woodland, having an opening of a few acres upon which his troops bivouacked for the night, in perfect security, as was supposed. The approach of the enemy was so cautious as to take the Americans completely by surprise. Guided by the light of their fires, the enemy succeeded in cutting off their outposts and pickets without noise, and then rushed upon the sleeping camp without firing a gun, and depending alone upon the bayonet. Three hundred were slain, many of whom were transfixed with bayonets as they lay sleeping in their tents. But, though surprised, General Wayne was cool and self-possessed; and, as the enemy himself acknowledged, "by his prudent dispositions" in the moment of alarm, succeeded in bringing off the remainder of his troops.\*

\* Some twenty years ago the citizen soldiers of the neighbourhood of the Paoli piously collected the remains of such of the brave men who were slain on that occasion as could be found, and interred them on the field of the massacre. A small mound was raised over them, which is walled in, and surrounded by a plain marble monument, a square block, with an urn at the top, bearing inscriptions upon each of the sides, in the following words:

FIRST: "Sacred to the memory of the patriots who, on this spot, fell

General Washington had taken post on the eastern bank of the Schuylkill, about sixteen miles from Germantown. General Howe marched upon Germantown with his main army, where he arrived on the 26th of September. On the 27th, Lord Cornwallis took possession of Philadelphia without resistance. On the 4th of October, the battle of Germantown was fought, in which it was claimed by the enemy that the Americans were defeated, although it was, in fact, a drawn battle. This action was produced by an attempt of the commander-in-chief to effect something by way of surprise. Having ascertained the situation of the enemy, the Americans marched all night, and arrived at Germantown at daylight. The enemy was attacked upon two quarters, in both of which the Americans were successful. Indeed, the enemy, as it was afterward ascertained, were thrown into such a state of tumult and disorder, and so panic-stricken, that a retreat to Chester had been resolved upon. But the morning was so excessively dark and foggy, that neither the advantages gained by the Americans, nor the confusion of the enemy, could be perceived. This circumstance, by concealing from the Americans the

a sacrifice to British barbarity, during the struggle for American independence, during the night of the 20th of September, 1777."

SECOND: "Here repose the remains of fifty-three American soldiers, who were the victims of cold-blooded cruelty in the well-known massacre of the Paoli, while under the command of General Anthony Wayne, an officer whose military conduct, bravery, and humanity were equally conspicuous throughout the Revolutionary war."

THIRD: "The atrocious massacre, which this stone commemorates, was perpetrated by British troops under the immediate command of Major-general Gray."

FOURTH: "This memorial, in honour of Revolutionary patriotism, was erected September 20, 1817, by the Republican Artillerists of Chester county, aided by the contributions of their fellow-citizens."

An annual military parade is held upon this interesting field. The name—*The Paoli*—is derived from a celebrated tavern, at two miles' distance, on the great Lancaster road, which was established contemporaneously with the Corsican struggle for independence, and named in honour of the unfortunate chieftain of that enterprise. It bears the same name still

true situation of the enemy, obliged the commander-in-chief to act with more caution and less expedition than he could have wished ; and, what was still more unfortunate, it served to keep the different divisions of the Americans in ignorance of each other's movements, and preventing their acting in concert. It also occasioned them to mistake one another for the enemy. In this situation, it was considered unsafe to push too far through a strong village, while enveloped in a haze so thick as to border upon positive darkness. The consequence was a retreat by the Americans at the very instant when victory was declaring in their favour. The action lasted two hours, and the fighting was severe, the loss of the Americans being about one hundred men, killed, wounded, and missing. Among the slain was the brave General Nash, of North Carolina. Severe, however, as the action was, the enemy were rendered nothing better by the event ; while the result was regarded by Washington "as rather unfortunate than injurious."\*

But all the advantages thus gained by the enemy

\* This brief account of the battle of Germantown is drawn from Washington's letters to the President of Congress, his brother, and Governor Trumbull. General Washington attributed the successes of Sir William Howe in Pennsylvania, and his own consequent disasters, to the apathy and disaffection of the people of that state. In one of his letters upon the subject, he says, "The Northern army, before the surrender of General Burgoyne, was re-enforced by upward of twelve hundred militia, who shut the only door by which Burgoyne could retreat, and cut off all his supplies. How different our case ! The disaffection of a great part of the inhabitants of this state, the langour of others, and the internal distraction of the whole, have been among the great and insuperable difficulties which I have met with, and have contributed not a little to my embarrassments this campaign." Many other letters from the commander-in-chief, written during the winter and spring of 1778, complain of the conduct of the people of Pennsylvania in supplying the enemy in Philadelphia with provisions, particularly from Bucks county. In a letter to Major-general Armstrong, of that state, dated at Valley Forge, March 27th, he says, "The situation of matters in this state is melancholy and alarming. We have daily proof that a majority of the people in this quarter are only restrained from supplying the enemy with horses, and every kind of necessary, through fear of punishment ; and although I have made a number of severe examples, I cannot put a stop to the intercourse."

had been more than counterbalanced by the reverses of St. Leger, and the nearly simultaneous capture of Burgoyne and his well-appointed army at the North. Another circumstance, gratifying to the friends of the American arms, was the repulse of Count Donop, at Red Bank. The count, a brave and experienced officer, fell, mortally wounded, and about 400 hundred of his troops were killed. The laurels won by Colonel Christopher Greene, the American commander on that occasion, were not the less creditably worn because of the necessity which compelled him subsequently to abandon the post, on the approach of Cornwallis with a greatly superior force.

But neither the fall of Burgoyne nor the flight of St. Leger relieved the border settlements beyond Albany from their apprehensions. Though in less danger of a sweeping invasion, yet the scouts and scalping parties of the Tories and Indians were continually hovering upon their outskirts; and so crafty were the foe, and so stealthy their movements, that no neighbourhood, not even the most populous villages, felt themselves secure from those sudden and bloody irruptions which mark the annals of Indian warfare. Very soon after the capture of Burgoyne, there was an occurrence in the neighbourhood of Albany, of a highly painful description. Previous to the commencement of the war, a militia company had been organized in the town of Berne, comprising eighty-five men, commanded by Captain Ball. On the breaking out of hostilities, the captain, with sixty-three of his men, went over to the enemy. Thus deserted by their leader, the command of the residue of the company devolved upon the ensign, Peter Deitz. These all embraced the cause of the country, and for the safety of their settlement threw up a little picketed fort, at a place now called the Beaver Dam. Deitz was soon afterward commissioned a captain, and his brother, William Deitz, his lieu-

tenant. On the approach of Burgoyne they marched to Saratoga, and joined the army of Gates. Here the captain was killed by the accidental discharge of the gun of one of his own men. William Deitz immediately succeeded to the vacancy, and rendered such good service in the campaign as specially to incur the vengeance of the Tories and Indians. Availing themselves of an early opportunity to glut their hate, a party of them stole into the settlement of Berne, where they surprised and made prisoner of the captain in his own house. They next brought him forth into the court, bound him to the gate-post, and then successively brought out his father and mother, his wife and children, and deliberately murdered them all before his eyes! The captain was himself carried a prisoner to Niagara, where he ultimately fell a sacrifice to their cruelty. An instance of more cool and fiendlike barbarity does not occur in the annals of this extraordinary contest. It was only equalled by the conduct of the Tories afterward at Wyoming, and transcended by the refinement of cruelty practised by a French officer, during one of the earlier wars of the Indians, upon an unhappy prisoner among the remote tribe of the Dionondadies, as related by La Potherie.

Other incidents occurred at Albany and in its neighbourhood, at about the same period, which are deemed worthy of note. At the time of Sir John Johnson's flight from Johnstown, his lady had remained behind, and was removed immediately, or soon afterward, to Albany. It was in this year that Mr. John Taylor, after having performed several important confidential services under the direction of General Schuyler, was appointed a member of the Albany Council of Safety. He was a man of great shrewdness and sagacity, deliberate in the formation of his purposes, and resolute in their execution when matured. The Whigs of Albany were greatly annoyed during the whole contest by the Loyalists

resident among them; many of whom, it was discovered from time to time, must have been in correspondence with the enemy. The duties of the Council of Safety were consequently the more arduous, requiring sleepless vigilance and unwearied activity, together with firmness and energy in some cases, and great delicacy in others. A watchful though general surveillance was necessarily enforced over the community at large, while an eye of closer scrutiny was kept upon the character and conduct of great numbers of individuals composing that community. Mr. Taylor was in every respect equal to the station, and was singularly fortunate both in detecting and defeating the evil machinations of the adherents of the crown.

Among his early discoveries was the important circumstance that Lady Johnson was in active and frequent correspondence with her husband, and that the facilities derived from confidential agents and her powerful connexions enabled her to keep the enemy on either side—in New-York and Canada—correctly advised, not only of the movements and designs of each other, but likewise of the situation of American affairs. Under these circumstances, Mr. Taylor proposed a resolution to the council, directing her removal forthwith from that part of the country. The proposition was received with disfavour, and encountered much opposition in the council. Some of the members seemed to lack the firmness necessary to adopt such a resolution, anticipating the resentment and probable vengeance of the baronet, on hearing that his lady had been treated with anything bordering upon harshness; while others, probably, thought the precaution either would be useless, or that it was scarce worth while thus to wage war upon a woman. Convinced, however, of the danger of her longer presence in that section of the country, Mr. Taylor urged her removal so strenuously as at length to prevail, taking upon himself the execution of the order.

Sir John, greatly exasperated at the measure, availed himself of a flag to admonish the mover of the resolution that, should the chances of war throw that gentleman into his possession, he should be instantly delivered over to the fury of the savages. The reply of the councillor was characteristic of the man: "If Mr. Taylor should be so fortunate as to have Sir John Johnson in his power, he should most assuredly be treated as a gentleman." Several attempts were subsequently made by the enemy, probably under the direction of Sir John, to make a captive of that gentleman. It being his custom to ride frequently on horseback for exercise, and often on the road leading towards Schenectady, in company, generally, with his intimate friend through life, Major Popham, who was then in the military family of General James Clinton, a small scout of Indians, under the direction of Captain Brant, was on one occasion planted in ambush upon that road, at a point where it was supposed he would be sure to pass. Providentially, however, and for reasons never explained, and perhaps not known to themselves, on the morning referred to the friends shortened their ride, and wheeled about without passing the ambuscade, though approaching it within striking distance. One of the Indians, afterward taken prisoner, stated that Mr. Taylor might easily have been shot, but that their orders were to take him alive.

Another, and a yet bolder scheme, was subsequently adopted to effect the capture of the sagacious committee-man, for which purpose a party of the enemy were actually introduced, not only into the city of Albany, but into the loft of Mr. Taylor's own stable, standing in the rear of his house, and upon the margin of the river. In order, moreover, to facilitate their flight with the intended captive, a canoe had been procured and moored at the water's edge. Their design was to enter the house in the night,

and seize and bear him silently away. One of the servants happening to step into the yard after the family had retired to rest, the lurking foes thought the time for a rush had arrived. But, in their preparations to spring forward, they alarmed the servant too soon, and he was enabled to get back into the house, bolt the door, and give timely warning. The insidious purpose was, of course, frustrated.

Nor were these the only hostile attempts directed, at about the same period, against individuals at Albany; General Schuyler was again selected for a victim even of assassination. Smarting under their disappointment in the overthrow of Burgoyne, to which discomfiture the energy and efforts of Schuyler had so essentially contributed, a conspiracy was formed either to capture or destroy him. For this purpose the Tories corrupted a white man, who had been patronised by the general, and who was even then in his employment, to do the foul deed, and also one of the friendly Indians, whose clan had for years been in the habit of hutting upon his premises in Saratoga, during the fishing season at Fish Creek, which ran through his farm, and in which immense quantities of fish were then taken. To effect their object, the two assassins took their station under a covert, in a valley about half a mile from the general's premises, by which they had previously ascertained he was shortly to pass. They soon descried his approach on horseback. As he advanced, they took deliberate aim; when, with a sudden movement, the Indian struck up his associate's gun, with the exclamation, "*I cannot kill him: I have eaten his bread too often!*"

Early in the autumn, the inhabitants of Unadilla and the contiguous settlements in that direction were again imploring the commander of Fort Schuyler for a detachment of troops to protect them from another expedition, which, the Oneidas had informed them, Colonels Johnson and Butler were getting



on foot at Oswego. The project, according to the news obtained from the Oneidas, contemplated a simultaneous descent of the Tories and Indians upon five different points, comprehending all the principal settlements west of Schenectady. These unpleasant tidings were in some degree confirmed by the discovery of a large scouting party of the enemy on the Sacondaga, at the north of Johnstown.

The alarm was increased, towards the close of October, by the arrival of an express at the Canajoharie Castle, announcing that within a few days Sir John Johnson would return to Oswego, with six hundred regular troops and a large body of Indians. It was stated that Sir John had succeeded in raising twenty-two Indian nations in arms against the colonists. They were about sending a belt to the Oneidas, and, in the event of their refusal to take up the hatchet with their brethren in behalf of the king, they were themselves to be attacked, as the first measure of the invasion. These facts were immediately communicated to General Schuyler by a letter dated October 25th, announcing also the flight, to the ranks of Sir John Johnson, of Hon-Yost Schuyler, and twelve or fourteen of his neighbours at Fall Hill and in that vicinity, as heretofore stated. The letter contained a strong appeal for an additional force to defend the valley, with an assurance that, in the event of receiving no farther means of security, the greater part of the inhabitants had become so discouraged that they would probably lay down their arms; in other words, throw themselves upon the protection of the king.

But, after all the alarm, nothing very serious resulted from these threatening indications during the residue of the year 1777. Still the Congress was unwilling that the year should close without making one more effort to win back the Six Nations from the British service, at least to a state of neutrality, if nothing more. With this view, on the 3d of De-

ember an eloquent and powerful address to the Indians of those nations was reported by the committee on Indian affairs, and adopted.

But the appeal produced no effect. It was one of the misfortunes incident to the poverty of the country at that crisis, that Congress was unable to conciliate the friendship of the Indians by such a liberal dispensation of presents as they had been in the habit of receiving from the superintendents of the crown, and as they were yet enabled to receive from the British government at or by the way of Montreal. Thayendanegea, early in the preceding year, had taunted General Herkimer, at Unadilla, with the poverty of the Continental government, which, he said, was not able to give the Indians a blanket. The charge was but too true; and the officers of the crown were not slow in availing themselves of it, not only by appeals to their cupidity, but by a more lavish bestowment of presents than ever. And under these circumstances, with the single exceptions of the Oneidas and the feeble band of the Tuscaroras, all the efforts of Congress to conciliate their friendship, or even to persuade them to neutrality, proved unavailing.

Thus ended the military operations of the year 1777. At the close of the Pennsylvania campaign, the British army went into winter-quarters in Philadelphia, and the American at Valley Forge. On the 15th day of November, what are now called the *old* "Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union" between the thirteen colonies were adopted by Congress; and on the 22d of the same month it was resolved that all proposals for a treaty between the United States and Great Britain inconsistent with the independence of the former should be rejected. It was likewise farther resolved that no conference should be held with any commissioners on the part of Great Britain, unless, as a measure preliminary, the fleets and armies of that power were withdrawn.

## CHAPTER XIV.

THE opening of the year 1778 was marked by an event that diffused universal joy among the people. It had been rightly judged by American statesmen, that, smarting under the loss which France had experienced by the war ending in 1763, of her broad North American possessions, the government of that country would be nothing loth to aid in the infliction of a like dismemberment of territory upon Great Britain. With a view, therefore, of cultivating friendly relations with France, and deriving assistance from her if possible, commissioners had been despatched to the court of Versailles, in 1776, with the plan of a treaty of amity and commerce to be submitted to that government. Still, more than a year had elapsed, during which the commissioners\* had been exerting themselves to the utmost to obtain a recognition of the independence of the United States, without success. It was evident that France looked upon the revolt of the American colonies with secret satisfaction; but she had been so much weakened by the former contest, that time was needed for repose and recovery of her strength. Hence, from the arrival of the commissioners in the French capital, in December, 1776, to the close of 1777, they had been living upon "hope deferred." It is true that the Americans received great assistance from the French in supplies of arms and ammunition; and although not openly allowed, yet means were found by the American privateers secretly to dispose of their prizes in French ports.

\* The commissioners were Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee. Mr. Jefferson had been originally designated as one of the commissioners; but, declining the appointment, Mr. Lee was selected in his stead.

Still, the government was lavish in its professions of friendship for England, even though confidentially giving the Americans strong assurances of sympathy and ultimate assistance. The untoward result of Burgoyne's campaign, intelligence of which was received in Paris early in December, was the opportune means of ending this vacillating policy on the part of the court of Versailles. The feelings of the French people towards England could no longer be disguised, since the news occasioned as much general joy as though the victory had been achieved by their own arms. The consequence was, that, on the 6th of February, the French government entered into treaties of amity, commerce, and alliance with the United States, on principles of the most perfect reciprocity and equality. The French cabinet clearly foresaw that this measure would soon produce a war between themselves and England, and acted in the expectation of such a consequence. Indeed, M. Girard, one of the French secretaries of state, in his conferences with the American commissioners, had the frankness to avow that they were not acting wholly for the sake of the United States, but because they thought the moment a favourable one for humbling their haughty rival, by aiding in the dismemberment of her empire. Hence, the king had not only determined to acknowledge the independence of the United States, but to support it, without the expectation of compensation.

The news of the treaty with France was not received in the United States until late in the spring.\*

\* The event was commemorated in the American camp, on the 7th of May, in a style corresponding with its importance, a general order for the celebration having been issued by the commander-in-chief. It began as follows: "It having pleased the Almighty Ruler of the Universe to defend the cause of the United American States, and finally to raise us up a powerful friend among the princes of the earth to establish our liberty and independence upon a lasting foundation, it becomes us to set apart a day for gratefully acknowledging the Divine goodness, and celebrating the important event, which we owe to his divine interposition."

Meantime other circumstances occurred during the winter, in the northern part of New-York, deserving of note in the present narrative. First among these was the notable project of General Gates for a second descent, in mid-winter, upon Canada. In November following the defeat of Burgoyne, on the reorganization of the Board of War, Gates, in the first flush of his popularity, was placed at its head as president. He had not been long at Yorktown, where Congress was then in session, before he conceived the project of directing an irruption into Canada across the ice upon Lake Champlain, for the purpose of destroying the stores and shipping of the enemy at St. John's, and, possibly, of striking a sudden blow upon Montreal. It was subsequently but too well ascertained that the condition of the Northern army, with which Gates certainly ought to have been acquainted, was by no means such as to warrant the undertaking of any offensive enterprise. Still, the victorious commander of the North had the address to obtain a vote of Congress directing the expedition, the conduct of which was intrusted to the Marquis de Lafayette. This gallant young nobleman had been burning with a desire to distinguish himself in a separate command, and this project opened to him the prospect of realizing the object dearest to his heart.

But neither in the inception nor in the maturing of the enterprise had the commander-in-chief been consulted; and the first knowledge he possessed of the project was derived from a letter from General Gates, enclosing another to the marquis, informing him of his appointment to the command. The dis-

The pageant was strictly military, and is described by the letters of that day as exceedingly brilliant. The joy manifested was unfeigned and unspeakable. The commander-in-chief dined in public with all the officers of his army. "When his excellency took his leave, there was a universal clap, with loud huzzas, which continued until he had proceeded a quarter of a mile, during which time there were a thousand hats tossed in the air. His excellency turned round with his retinue, and huzzaed several times."—*Letter of an officer.*

respect to the commander-in-chief, to whom the youthful soldier was bound by the strongest ties of friendship and respect, was so manifest, that the marquis at first hesitated in accepting the command. Nor was his reluctance lessened by the suspicious circumstance that General Conway, the base instrument of the Gates faction in the conspiracy against Washington, had been assigned as his second in command. Soaring above all selfish considerations, however, Washington advised the marquis to accept the trust confided to him by Congress. Lafayette, therefore, repaired from the camp at Valley Forge to Yorktown, to be more particularly advised as to the object and the details of the enterprise. The plan of organizing a light but efficient force, to make a sudden dash upon St. John's, and destroy the flotilla which gave the enemy the command of Lake Champlain, and to inflict such farther injury as might be effected in a rapid campaign, was fully unfolded to him. Ample supplies of men and means were promised by Gates; and, after securing the services of the Baron de Kalb to the expedition—an officer older in rank than Conway, who would necessarily be his second in command—the marquis accepted the appointment.

Full of high hopes, a brilliant enterprise before him, and panting for an opportunity to signalize himself in a separate command, the marquis pushed forward to Albany, amid all the rigours of winter, to enter at once upon the service, and apparently with as much confidence as though he had achieved the exploit. Sad, however, was his disappointment at the posture of affairs on his arrival at Albany. Conway, who had arrived there three days before him, at once assured him that the expedition was quite impossible. Such, likewise, was the opinion of Generals Schuyler, Lincoln, and Arnold, the latter two of whom were detained at Albany by the unhealed wounds received upon the fields of Saratoga. Indeed, he was no

long in ascertaining, from the quartermaster, commissary, and clothier-generals, that there was a lamentable deficiency of almost every necessary of which he had been led to expect an abundant supply. The number of troops was altogether inadequate. Three thousand effective men were believed to be the smallest force that would suffice, and that number was promised. But scarcely twelve hundred could be mustered fit for duty, and the greater part of these were too naked even for a summer campaign. Their pay was greatly in arrear, and officers and men were alike indisposed to the service.\* Originally it had been intended to confide the proposed expedition to General Stark, whose prowess at the battle of Bennington had rendered him exceedingly popular with the people; and it was supposed that he could at once bring into the field a sufficient number of his mountaineers to strike the blow with success. Stark was invited to Albany, and James Duane was sent thither from Congress to confer with him upon the subject. But the inducement offered by Congress being in the form of a bounty, contingent only upon success, was thought not sufficient; and when a representation of the circumstances was made by Mr. Duane to that body, the scheme was changed and enlarged, at the suggestion of General Gates, according to the plan which the marquis was to execute.

Having attentively examined the situation of affairs and the means within his control, and consult-

\* On the 19th of February, James Duane wrote to Governor Clinton respecting the impracticability of the enterprise, since the marquis could find neither the troops nor the preparations. In the course of his letter, Mr. Duane said of the marquis, "His zeal for this country, of which he has given marks even to enthusiasm, and his ardent desire of glory, lead him to wish the expedition practicable; but he is too considerate to pursue it rashly, or without probable grounds of a successful issue. I must mention to your excellency a circumstance which shows the liberality of his disposition. He determined, on his entering into Canada, to supply his army through his own private bills on France to the amount of five or six thousand guineas, and to present that sum to Congress as a proof of his love to America and the rights of human nature."

ed with the several able captains at Albany, the young soldier saw with inexpressible chagrin that the obstacles were insuperable. In the language of another, amounting to a bitter satire, whether thus intended or not, "the generals only were got in readiness;" and the gallant marquis was compelled to relinquish the enterprise, without even the poor privilege of making an attempt. He certainly had great reason, not only for vexation, but disgust: advised, as he had been, to announce to his court the degree of confidence reposed in him by Congress, in thus confiding to him a separate command of such importance; not, of course, suspecting, for a moment, that General Gates could be so ignorant of the actual situation of the department from which he had been so recently transferred.

The true position of affairs at Albany having been made known to Congress, it was resolved to instruct the marquis to suspend the expedition, and, at the same time, to assure him "that Congress entertained a high sense of his prudence, activity, and zeal; and that they were fully persuaded nothing would have been wanting on his own part, or on the part of the officers who accompanied him, to give the expedition the utmost possible effect."

But to return to the Indian affairs of the Mohawk Valley. Early in the year, various unpleasant symptoms were perceptible, indicating the design of a renewed and more extensive Indian war than had been anticipated at any previous moment. Information was received from the remote West of a general disposition among the nations in the region of the great lakes, and the Upper Mississippi, to join the Mohawks, Cayugas, Onondagas, and Senecas, against the United States. The master-spirit of those threatened movements was Joseph Brant, whose winter-quarters were at the central and convenient point of Niagara. Nor were Sir John Johnson and his associates, Claus and Butler, inactive; while the Brit-



ish commander at Detroit. Colonel Hamilton, was at the same time exercising a powerful influence over the surrounding nations of the forest. On the opening of the year, therefore, great fears were entertained for the security of the frontiers from the Mohawk to the Ohio. Still, with the Six Nations Congress resolved to make yet another effort of conciliation—to secure their neutrality, if nothing farther. Accordingly, on the 2d of February, resolutions were passed directing a council to be held with these nations at Johnstown, in the county of Tryon. General Schuyler and Volkert P. Douw were appointed commissioners for that purpose, and Governor Clinton was requested to designate a special commissioner, to be present on the occasion. In pursuance of this solicitation, James Duane was appointed for that duty. The resolutions of Congress instructed the commissioners “to speak to the Indians in language becoming the representatives of free, sovereign, and independent states, and in such a tone as would convince them that they felt themselves to be so.” It was left to the discretion of the commissioners to determine whether it would be prudent to insist upon their taking up arms in behalf of the States, or to content themselves with efforts to secure their neutrality.

The directions were, that the council should be holden between the 15th and 20th of February; but so slow or reluctant were the Indians in assembling, that the proceedings were not commenced until the 9th of March. Whether General Schuyler attended is not known. The Marquis de Lafayette, who was then temporarily in command of the Northern Department, accompanied Mr. Duane to Johnstown, and was present at the council. More than seven hundred Indians were collected at the treaty, consisting of Oneidas, Tuscaroras, Onondagas, a few Mohawks, and three or four Cayugas; but not a single Seneca, which was by far the most power-

ful nation. On the contrary, they had the boldness to send a message, affecting great surprise, "that while our tomahawks were sticking in their heads, their wounds bleeding, and their eyes streaming with tears for the loss of their friends at German Flatts, the commissioners should think of inviting them to a treaty!"

The proceedings were opened by an address from Congress, framed in accordance with the spirit of the resolutions already cited, asserting the power of the United States, and their magnanimous conduct towards the Six Nations; and charging them distinctly with the ingratitude, cruelty, and treachery with which their pacific advances had been requited, and for which reparation was demanded. From this charge of treachery the Oneidas and Tuscaroras were not only honourably excepted, but, on the contrary, were applauded for their firmness and integrity, and assured of friendship and protection.

An Onondaga chief spoke in behalf of the guilty tribes. He exculpated himself and his brother sachems, casting the blame on the young and headstrong warriors, who, he said, would not listen to prudent councils, illustrating their own internal difficulties by those occasionally existing among the people of the States, which it was, at times, found impossible to repress. He also spoke of the difficulty they were obliged to encounter in withstanding the influence of Butler and others in the service of the crown, acquired by bribery and other kindred artifices.

An Oneida chief answered for his own nation and the Tuscaroras, with a spirit and dignity which would not have disgraced a Roman senator. He pathetically lamented the degeneracy of the unfriendly tribes; predicted their final destruction; and declared the fixed and unalterable resolution of the tribes which he represented, at every hazard, to hold fast the covenant chain with the United States,

and be buried with them in the same grave, or with them to enjoy the fruits of victory and peace. He fully evinced the sincerity of these professions, by desiring that the United States would erect a fortress in their country, and station a small garrison within it for their defence. A promise to this effect having been given, the Oneida concluded with a solemn assurance that the two nations for whom he spoke would at all times be ready to co-operate with the United States against all their enemies.

In a private interview afterward, the Oneidas warned the commissioners against trusting to the Onondagas, whom they considered as enemies to the United States, notwithstanding their seeming contrition for the past. The Oneidas declared that they had not the least doubt that the Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas would renew their hostilities early in the spring; that Colonel Butler would again be in possession of Oswego, which he would more strongly fortify; and for these events they entreated the commissioners to be prepared.

The inhabitants of Tryon county, many of whom were spectators at the council, were highly gratified with the proceedings; and it was supposed that the moral effect would be good, not only in regard to the Oneidas, but also upon the Onondagas, those tribes being closely connected by intermarriages; but the commissioners left the council under the full persuasion that from the Senecas, Cayugas, and the greater part of the Mohawks, nothing but revenge for their lost friends and tarnished glory at Oriskany and Fort Schuyler was to be anticipated; more especially since the enemy was so plentifully supplied with the means of corruption, while it was not in the power of the United States so much as to furnish their best friends with the necessaries of life, even in the course of trade. Still, in order, as far as possible, to regain some of their lost ascendancy over the Indians, by means of traffic, the commis-

sioners of that department were shortly afterward authorized by Congress to open a trading establishment at Fort Schuyler. But the inadequacy of the provision must be evident, from the fact that the slender exchequer of the government allowed an appropriation of no greater sum for that important object than ten thousand dollars.

While at Johnstown during this visit, the Marquis de Lafayette was waited upon by Colonel Campbell and others, for the purpose of calling his attention to the exposed situation of Cherry Valley. The consequence was an order for the erection of a fort at that place. An engineer was detailed upon that duty, and detachments of troops were ordered both to that place and Schoharie. Three slight fortifications had been built in the valley of the Schoharie Kill during the preceding year, called the Upper, Middle, and Lower Forts. These works were merely circumvallations of earth and wood, thrown up around some strong dwelling-houses constructed of stone, within which the women and children were placed in moments of peculiar danger. The church was the citadel of the Lower Fort, and all were manned by small companies of soldiers, having each a single brass fieldpiece. The marquis likewise directed the erection of a fort in the Oneida country, pursuant to the request of the Indians of that nation.

It was but too evident, from the reports borne upon every western breeze, that all these measures of precaution in that direction were necessary. To the Johnsons and their adherents the recovery of the Valley of the Mohawk was an object of the first importance; and they watched every opportunity of moving in that quarter which promised even a possible chance of success. Even while the marquis was present with the Indian commissioners at Johnstown, no less a personage than a British colonel, a nephew of Sir Guy Carleton, and bearing the

same honourable name, was well understood to be lurking in that vicinity as a spy. Every effort was made for his arrest; and, as an inducement to the militia and Indians to be on the alert, the marquis offered a reward of fifty guineas from his own purse.

But the search was fruitless. Carleton was an active and efficient partisan officer, and was never taken. The marquis retained the command at the North only until the middle of April, when he was ordered to headquarters, and Gates again assumed the command of the department.

In the month of June, the Loyalists who had fled to Canada with Sir John Johnson, to the number of one hundred and upward, performed an exploit equally bold and remarkable, which naturally suggests the inquiry, Where were the Whigs of Tryon county at that time; and in what were they engaged? The incident to which reference is had was the return of those selfsame Loyalists for their families, whom they were permitted to collect together, and with whom they were suffered to depart into the country, and the active service of the enemy. Nor was this all. Not only was no opposition made to their proceedings, but on their way they actually committed acts of flagrant hostility, destroyed property, and took several prisoners. Having completed their arrangements, they moved northward from Fort Hunter, through Fonda's Bush, making four prisoners on their way thither, and at Fonda's Bush five others. From this place they proceeded across the great marsh to Sir William Johnson's fish-house, on the Sacondaga, capturing a man named Martin, and another named Harris, on the way, and at the fish-house taking a brave fellow named Solomon Woodworth, and four others. They burned the house and out-buildings of Godfrey Shew at this place, and departed with their prisoners, leaving the women and children houseless. Embarking on the Sacondaga in light canoes, previous-

ly moored at that place for the purpose, they descended twenty-five miles to the Hudson, and thence, by the way of Lakes George and Champlain, proceeded to St. John's in safety. The day after his capture, Woodworth succeeded in making his escape. At St. John's, John Shew and four others were given up to the Indians, by whom they were taken to their village in Canada. They were neither considered nor treated exactly as prisoners of war; and Shew, with three of his companions, soon afterward escaped and returned home.\* From St. John's the loyal party proceeded down the St. Lawrence to Quebec, where the residue of the prisoners were kept in close confinement about four months. Some of the number died, and the remainder were sent to Halifax, and thence exchanged by the way of Boston. This movement of the Tories back in a body to their deserted homes, and its success, form one of the most extraordinary incidents, though in itself comparatively unimportant, which transpired during the wars of the Mohawk country.

With the opening of the season for active operations—though he was himself never inactive—Thayendanegea had again returned to his former haunts on the Susquehanna, Oghkwaga and Unadilla. He soon proved himself an active and dreaded partisan. No matter for the difficulties or the distance, wherever a blow could be struck to any advantage, Joseph Brant was sure to be there. Frequent, moreover, were the instances in which individuals, and even whole families in the outskirts of the settlements, disappeared, without any knowledge on the part of those who were left that an enemy had been near them. "The smoking ruins of their

\* In the autumn of 1780, young Shew was again captured by a scouting party of Indians and Tories, in the woods in the neighbourhood of Ballston, and, at the instigation of one of the latter, named John Parker, was immediately murdered. Parker was himself soon afterward taken as a spy by Captain Bennett of the militia, carried to Albany, tried, convicted, and executed.

dwellings, the charred bones of the dead," and the slaughtered carcasses of the domestic animals, were the only testimonials of the cause of the catastrophe, until the return of a captive, or the disclosures of some prisoner taken from the foe, furnished more definite information. But there is no good evidence that Brant was himself a participator in secret murders, or attacks upon isolated individuals or families; and there is much reason to believe that the bad feelings of many of the Loyalists induced them to perpetrate greater enormities themselves, and prompt the parties of Indians whom they often led to commit greater barbarities than the savages would have done had they been left to themselves.

In support of the foregoing opinion of Captain Brant, the following incident, occurring in the summer of the present year, may be adduced. A lad in Albany county, named William M'Kown, while engaged in raking hay alone in a meadow, happening to turn round, perceived an Indian very near him. Startled at his perilous situation, he raised his rake for defence, but his fears were instantly dissipated by the savage, who said, "Do not be afraid, young man; I shall not hurt you." He then inquired of the youth for the residence of a Loyalist named Foster. The lad gave him the proper direction, and inquired of the Indian whether he knew Mr. Foster. "I am partially acquainted with him," was the reply, "having once seen him at the Half-way Creek." The Indian then inquired the lad's name; and having been informed, he added, "You are a son of Captain M'Kown who lives in the northeast part of the town, I suppose: I know your father very well: he lives neighbour to Captain M'Kean: I know M'Kean very well, and a very fine fellow he is, too." emboldened by the familiar discourse of the Indian, the lad ventured to ask his name in turn. Hesitating for a moment, his rather unwelcome visiter replied "My name is Brant!"

"What! Captain Brant?" eagerly demanded the youth. "No: I am a cousin of his," was the rejoinder; but accompanied by a smile and a look that plainly disclosed the transparent deception. It was none other than the terrible Thayendanegea himself.

On the other hand, the following tragic circumstance sustains the assertion that the Tories were oftentimes more cruel than their savage associates. While a party of hostiles were prowling about the borders of Schoharie, the Indians killed and scalped a mother, and a large family of children. "They had just completed the work of death, when some Loyalists of the party came up, and discovered an infant breathing sweetly in its cradle. An Indian warrior, noted for his barbarity, approached the cradle with his uplifted hatchet. The babe looked up in his face, and smiled; the feelings of nature triumphed over the ferocity of the savage; the hatchet fell with his arm, and he was about stooping down to take the innocent in his arms, when one of the Loyalists, cursing him for his humanity, thrust it through with his bayonet; and, thus transfixed, held it up struggling in the agonies of death, as he exclaimed, '*This, too, is a rebel!*'"

To guard against these painful transactions, nothing short of the most exemplary watchfulness would suffice. Not only their habitations, but those who laboured in the fields, were guarded, being themselves armed at their ploughs, like the labourers of the prophet in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Nor was this vigilance confined to any particular location. The inhabitants around the whole border, from Saratoga, north of Johnstown, and west to the German Flatts, thence south stretching down to Unadilla, and thence eastwardly crossing the Susquehanna, along the Charlotte River to Harpersfield, and thence back to Albany, were necessarily an armed yeomanry, watching for themselves,



and standing sentinels for each other in turn; harassed daily by conflicting rumours; now admonished of the approach of the foe in the night by the glaring flames of a neighbour's house; or compelled suddenly to escape from his approach, at a time and in a direction the least expected. Such was the tenure of human existence around the confines of this whole district of country, from the spring of 1777 to the end of the contest in 1782.

The first movement of Brant himself, this season (1778), was upon the settlement of Springfield, a small town at the head of Otsego Lake, lying directly west of Cherry Valley, about ten miles. Those of the men who did not fly were taken prisoners. The chieftain then burned the entire settlement, with the exception of a single house, into which he collected all the women and children, and left them uninjured.

It was reported in the month of June that Brant, whose forces were increasing at Unadilla, was fortifying that post; and Captain M'Kean was despatched with a small patrol in that direction, by the people of Cherry Valley, to make observation. Arriving at a house about twenty-five miles from that place, Captain M'Kean was informed that Brant had been there with fifty men that day, and would probably return in the evening. M'Kean was at first disposed to take possession of the house, and attempt its defence, his force consisting of but five men, exclusive of himself. But, ultimately forming a more prudent resolution, he withdrew "his forces" before nightfall, and returned home without having reconnoitred the chieftain's position at Unadilla. In the course of his journey, he wrote a letter to Brant, upbraiding him for the predatory system of warfare in which he was engaged, and challenging him either to single combat, or to meet him with an equal number of men and have a pitched battle; adding, that if he would come to Cherry

Valley, they would change him from a *Brant* to a "goose." This chivalrous missive was fastened to a stick, and placed in an Indian path. No modern postoffice could have transmitted the letter with greater speed or safety. The "contents" were "noted" by Brant in a letter addressed to Mr. Par-cifer Carr, a Loyalist living some fifteen or twenty miles north, upon the Unadilla settlement, to whom the chief wrote for provisions. He also solicited Mr. Carr to allow two or three of his men to join him, and likewise to send him a few guns, with some ammunition; adding, "I mean now to fight the cruel rebels as well as I can." In a postscript, he intimated that the people of Cherry Valley, though very bold in words, would find themselves mistaken in calling him a "goose." Whether the challenge of Captain M'Kean, and the pun upon the chieftain's name, had any influence upon his subsequent conduct in that section of the country, is not known.

On the 2d of July a smart engagement took place, on the upper branch of the Cobleskill, between a party of regular troops and Schoharie militia under Captain Christian Brown, and a large body of Indians. There were twenty-two militiamen and thirty regulars, the latter under charge of a lieutenant whose name has not been preserved. The Indians, by their own account, were four hundred and fifty strong. They were victorious, the Americans retreating with a loss of fourteen killed, eight wounded, and two missing. The Indians burned several houses, killed and destroyed all the horses and cattle which they could not drive away, and took considerable plunder besides. They remained in the woods adjoining the battle-ground one day and two nights, dressing the wounded, and packing up their booty, with which they retired unmolested.

Thenceforward, until the close of the war, the settlements of Schoharie were perpetually harassed

by the strolling bands of the enemy, until at length they were entirely laid waste by a formidable invasion. The principal of these settlements was the vale of the Schoharie Kill—doubly inviting from the beauty of its scenery and the fertility of its soil—which was even then thickly inhabited. But although frequently doomed to suffer from the savage tomahawk, justice, nevertheless, demands the admission, that the first blood was drawn in that valley, and the first act of barbarity committed, by the white man, upon the body of an Indian sachem.

The circumstances leading to the outrage were these: At an early stage of the contest, the officers of the crown made a very strenuous effort to control the popular feeling, and preserve the loyalty of the people of Schoharie. For this purpose, not only the regular militia of the settlements, but all the male population capable of bearing arms, were required to meet the king's commissioners at the house of Captain George Mann, a Loyalist of great wealth and influence, to take the oath of allegiance. They assembled in arms, and were kept on parade, day after day, as they slowly gathered at the place of rendezvous in obedience to the requisition. Those who were Loyalists at heart readily took the oath; but great reluctance was manifested on the part of those whose predilections ran with the Whigs. These, however, were threatened with the pains and penalties of arrest, confiscation, and death, in case of refusal; so that for the most part they complied with the demand of the commissioners, and took the oath of fidelity to the crown. Immediately on taking the oath, the hat of the subject was decorated with a piece of scarlet cloth; while some of those most strongly desirous of manifesting their loyalty wore scarlet caps. Prominent among the latter class were Lodwig Snyder, of the Danesburg settlement, and a Mohawk sachem named Peter Nickus, who gave offence to the Whigs by

brandishing his tomahawk and occasionally sounding the war-whoop.

But there were a few bold spirits upon whom neither the threats of his majesty's officers nor the menaces of the Indians in their company had any effect. They refused peremptorily to take the oath. Chief among these were Nicholas Sternberg and William Deitz, who left the parade on the evening of the first or second day, and returned to their homes, bitterly denounced as rebels and traitors by the Royalists, and threatened with a visit of Tories and Indians during the night. To avoid an arrest, Sternberg took to the woods at evening, leaving his family in great anxiety, although the slaves, of whom he possessed a large number, volunteered to defend their mistress and the children. But there was no pursuit, and the recusants both returned to the parade on the following day, determined, of course, to render all proper obedience to the laws yet in force, but equally determined not to take the oath of allegiance; although Mrs. Sternberg besought her husband, with tears, not to jeopard his own safety, and the lives of his family, by longer refusal. Nay, she went farther; and appealing to the Bible, the good woman showed him the passage in which all men are enjoined "to fear God and honour the king." But it was with Sternberg as with the Puritans. He believed that "opposition to tyrants was obedience to God," as implicitly as did the regicides who engraved that immortal sentiment upon the New-Haven rock; and he was inflexible in his purpose.

Fortunately, however, in the course of the day affairs took quite a different turn. It was at about the middle of the afternoon that Captain Mann mustered those who had taken the oath and received the red badge. They numbered one hundred and upward, and were paraded before the captain's own house to perform their martial exercise, when their attention

was arrested by the sound of steeds trampling in the distance. A moment longer, and a cloud of horsemen came galloping along the highway from the direction of Albany, with drawn swords flashing brightly in the sun. These unexpected visitors proved to be Captain Woodbake and two hundred cavalry, the object of whose approach was to disperse the royal gathering, and proclaim the government of the Republic. Their arrival was exceedingly inopportune for Captain Mann, who was cut short in the midst of a loyal oration, in which he was commending his citizen-soldiers for their loyalty, and threatening those who refused the badge of their sovereign with vengeance, swift and inevitable. As the cavalry approached, Captain Mann took to his heels and fled; while his loyal followers, many of whom had assumed the before-mentioned insignia, and signed the royal muster-roll on compulsion, either followed his example, or threw away their red caps, and tore off the scarlet patches from their hats, with the utmost possible expedition. Orders were immediately issued by Captain Woodbake that Mann should be taken and brought to him, alive, if possible, but if not—not. Numbers started in pursuit, while those who remained upon the ground were collected into line, and a proclamation was read to them by Captain Woodbake, declaring the royal authority at an end, pronouncing the acts of the king's commissioners null and void, and absolving the people from the oath of allegiance just taken, upon the ground that, by the laws neither of God nor man, are oaths binding which have been taken upon compulsion. Commending those who had refused to take the oath for their patriotism, he informed them that a committee of safety must be appointed, who would temporarily be invested with the civil and military authority of the district, and until, by elections and otherwise, the government could be organized in a more regular manner. Nich-

olas Sternberg and William Deitz were thereupon nominated by Woodbake to serve as said committee, and invested orally with all necessary power for the government of the district : and the people were enjoined to obedience.

The affairs of the government having thus been settled, all hands were ordered in pursuit of Captain Mann, and sentinels were posted at different points of observation. Among these was Mr. Sternberg's eldest son, Lambert, who was stationed by the side of a wheat-stack, sheltered by a roof of thatch upon four posts. The orders were strict, that, if Mann would not surrender, he must be shot. Towards evening, on the approach of a thunder-gust, young Sternberg, who was a lad of only sixteen years, climbed to the top of the wheat-stack for shelter, where, to his great surprise, he stumbled upon the loyal captain. The youth informed him at once that he must surrender or be shot. The captain implored for mercy, declaring that he dared not to surrender himself to Woodbake, because his life would be taken. The youth repeated that his orders were explicit, and he must surrender or be shot. But Mann had lived a neighbour to his father, had ever been kind to him, and his heart failed at the thought of taking his life. He then proposed to the captain to fire his musket by way of alarm, that others might come and take him. But this was objected to by Mann with equal earnestness. It now thundered and lightened fearfully, while the rain descended in torrents. Watching his opportunity, therefore, and availing himself of the conflict of the elements, and that, also, which was working in the bosom of his young neighbour, so suddenly placed in hostile array against him, Mann contrived to spring from his hiding-place, and, by sliding down upon one of the barrack-posts, effected his escape into a corn-field, and thence into the woods. The stripling soldier fired, as in duty bound, but doubtless rejoiced that the shot was without effect.

On the next day, information having been received that a body of Indians were lurking in the neighbourhood of Middleburg, a few miles farther up the valley, Captain Woodbake proceeded thither with his squadron of horse. The only Indian seen was the before-mentioned sachem, Peter Nickus, who was discovered in a thicket of hazel bushes, and immediately brought to the ground by a shot that broke his thigh. Several pistols were simultaneously snapped at him, but without effect; the troops then dismounted, and, running upon the wounded Indian, inhumanly hacked him to pieces with their swords. Peter Nickus was therefore the first victim of the Revolution in the Valley of the Schoharie Kill, nor does it appear that he had himself been guilty of any act of positive hostility.

All search for Captain Mann was, for the time, fruitless. He succeeded in escaping to the mountains, where he remained fifteen days; but at length was induced to surrender through the intervention of friends, on condition that he should receive no personal injury. He was thereupon taken to Albany, and kept in confinement to the end of the war

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## CHAPTER XV.

THE melancholy story of Wyoming stands next in chronological order. It does not, indeed, appertain directly to the history of the Mohawk Valley, but it is, nevertheless, connected intimately with that history, while it has ever been regarded as one of the most prominent events in the border history of the Revolutionary contest. Its importance, moreover, as a section of the *Indian* portion of that contest, is such as to warrant the episode, if such it

must be called. Many were the battles during that struggle, of far greater importance than the affair of Wyoming, both in regard to their magnitude and their results; and many were the scenes characterized by equal, if not greater atrocity. But, from a variety of circumstances, as well antecedent as subsequent to the battle, it has happened that no event connected with the aboriginal wars of our country stands out in bolder relief than that. Sixty years have elapsed since the tragedy of Wyoming was enacted; the actors themselves are no more; and yet the very mention of the event sends a chill current to every youthful heart, while the theatre of the action itself has been rendered classic, as well as consecrated, by the undying numbers of one of the most gifted bards of the age. So long as English poetry exists, will the imaginary tale of GERTRUDE OF WYOMING be read, admired, and wept; and thousands, in every generation to come, will receive the beautiful fiction for truth, while the details of fact by the faithful historian, rejecting the exaggerations of Ramsay and Gordon, and their associate writers of the Revolutionary era, together with compilers more modern, who have taken no pains to inquire for the truth, may be regarded as too commonplace and unimportant for attention.

Wyoming is the name of a beautiful section of the vale of the Susquehanna, situated in the north-eastern part of the State of Pennsylvania. It is twenty-five miles in length by about three in breadth, lying deep between two parallel ranges of mountains, crested with oak and pine. The scenery around is wild and picturesque, while the valley itself might be chosen for another paradise.

The possession of this valley has not been an object of the white man's ambition or cupidity alone. It has been the subject of controversy, and the fierce battle-ground of various Indian tribes, within the white man's time, but before his possession; and



from the remains of fortifications discovered there, so ancient that the largest oaks and pines have struck root upon the ramparts and in the intrenchments, it must once have been the seat of power, and perhaps of a splendid court, thronged by chivalry, and taste, and beauty: of a race of men far different from the Indians, known to us since the discovery of Columbus. It was here that the benevolent Count Zinzendorf pitched his tent on commencing his Christian labours among the Shawanese, and where he was saved from assassination by the providential intervention of a poisonous reptile.

The first movement towards the planting of a white colony in the Wyoming Valley was made by Connecticut in 1753. It was justly held that this section of country belonged originally to the grant of James I., in 1620, to the old Plymouth Company. The Earl of Warwick and his associates having purchased the right of the Plymouth Company to the territory of Connecticut and the lands beyond New-Jersey, west, "from sea to sea," within certain limits, Connecticut claimed under that grant. But no sooner was a company formed to plant a colony in Wyoming, called the *Susquehanna Company*, than Pennsylvania preferred a claim to the same territory, under a grant from Charles II. to William Penn, in 1681, covering the whole claim of Connecticut; and a rival association, under a lease from Pennsylvania, granted to Charles Stewart, Amos Ogden, and John Jennings, was organized in like manner to settle it. The strife of each, at first, was to circumvent the other in purchasing the Indian title. At this time it was conceded that the aboriginal proprietaries were the Six Nations; and, though beset on all sides, King Hendric refused, for a time, to dispose of the territory to either party. Ultimately, however, the Six Nations sold to the *Susquehanna Company*; and in 1755 the Connecticut Colony was commenced. But, by reason of the French and

Indian wars, their settlers were compelled to return to Connecticut, and the obstacles became so numerous, that it was not until 1762 that they were enabled to obtain a foothold.

The Pennsylvanians immediately prepared to oppose the settlers from Connecticut. A case was made up and transmitted to England, on which Mr. Pratt, the attorney-general (afterward Lord Camden), gave an opinion in favour of the successors of Penn. Connecticut likewise sent over a case, and on her part obtained a like favourable opinion from eminent counsel. In this position of the controversy, a catastrophe befell the infant settlement which put an end to the enterprise for several years. Thus far the relations between the colonists and the Indians had been of the most pacific character. The old Delaware chief, Tadeuskund, who had embraced the Christian religion, was, with his people, their friend. But he had given offence to some of the Six Nations in 1758, a party of whom came among the Delawares, under the guise of friendship, in April, 1763, and murdered the venerable chief by setting fire to his dwelling, in which he was consumed.\* The murder was charged by the Indians upon the adventurers from Connecticut. But the emigrants, unconscious that a storm was rising against them, remained in fancied security. They had given no offence; and, in order to allay any suspicions that might otherwise be awakened among the Indians, they had even neglected to provide themselves with weapons for self-protection. The consequence was the sudden destruction of their

\* Tadeuskund was a Delaware chief of note. Previous to the year 1750, he was known among the English by the name of *Honest John*. He was baptized by the Moravians, but was wavering and inconstant. He was too fond of the war-path to become a consistent follower of the pacific Moravians. When he saw opportunities of signaling himself as a warrior, therefore, he left his faith, to re-embrace it as might suit his policy. He inclined to the French in the war, but assisted in concluding a peace among several Indian nations in 1758, which gave umbrage to the Six Nations.

settlement by a party of Delaware Indians, on the 15th of October. The descent was made upon the town while the men were at work in the fields. About twenty persons were killed, and several were taken prisoners. Those who could, men, women, and children, fled to the woods and the mountains, whence they were compelled to behold the sad spectacle of their dwellings in flames, and the Indians making off with the remains of their little property. Their flight through a trackless forest to the Delaware, unprovided with food, and unprotected by suitable clothing against the searching weather of autumn, was very painful. But even then their journey was not ended, as they had yet to proceed back to Connecticut, destitute, and on foot.

In 1668 the Pennsylvania lessees, afterward most commonly called the Ogden Land Company, took advantage of a treaty holden at Fort Stanwix, and purchased of the same Six Nations, who had sold to the Connecticut Company, the same territory of Wyoming. The Pennsylvanians entered upon immediate possession; and when, on the opening of the ensuing spring, the Connecticut colonists returned with recruits, they found others in the occupancy of the lands, with a blockhouse erected, and armed for defence, under the direction of Amos Ogden and Charles Stewart. Here was a new and unexpected state of things. Some of the leading men of the Connecticut colony were decoyed into the blockhouse, arrested, and sent off to a distant prison. But recruits coming on from Connecticut, they, in turn, built works of defence, and proceeded with their colonial labours.

In the summer of 1769, the Governor of Pennsylvania made preparations to dispossess the intruders, as they considered the Connecticut people, by force; and a detachment of armed men, to the number of two hundred, was sent into the territory. The colonists prepared for a siege; but one of their leaders

having been taken prisoner and sent to jail in Philadelphia, after a show of resistance, and having no weapons of defence but small arms, they capitulated, and agreed to leave the territory, with the exception of seventeen families, who were to remain and secure the crops. But no sooner had the colonists departed, than the Pennsylvanians, led by Ogden, plundered the whole colony, destroying their fields of grain, killing their cattle, and laying the whole settlement in ruin; so that the seventeen families were compelled to fly from starvation.

In the month of February, 1770, the Connecticut colonists rallied, and marched upon Wyoming, under a man named Lazarus Stewart. They took Ogden's house and his piece of artillery, during his absence. But, on his return, he collected his friends, and hostilities ensued between the two parties, which were prosecuted with varying success for several weeks. During this time, an engagement occurred, in which several were killed and wounded on both sides. Ogden's house, which had been fortified, was besieged, and finally taken, after several days' cannonading, and the destruction of one of his blockhouses, containing his supplies, by fire. In the terms of capitulation, the Connecticut party allowed Ogden to leave six men in charge of his remaining property. But the conduct of Ogden the preceding year had not been forgotten, and the *lex talionis* was rigidly and speedily executed.

In September following, a force of one hundred and fifty men was sent against the Connecticut settlers, under the command of Captain Ogden, as he was now called. He took the settlement entirely by surprise, while the labourers were in the fields at work, and the women and children in the fort. Many of the men, nevertheless, reached the fort, and prepared to defend it; but it was carried by assault in the night; the women and children were barbarously trampled under foot, and the whole set-

tlement plundered and destroyed the following day, with more than Indian rapacity. The colonists were made prisoners, and sent off to distant jails. Thus was the settlement again broken up. But the triumph of Ogden was brief. In December the fort was again surprised and carried by Captain Stewart, at the head of some Lancastrians united with the late colonists. A few of the men fled naked to the woods; but the greater portion, together with the women and children, residing for security in houses built within the ramparts, were taken prisoners. These, having been deprived of their property, were driven from the valley.

The parties to these controversies, which could not but engender all the bitterest passions in the nature of man, rendering what might have been a second Eden a theatre of strife, discord, and "hell-born hate," fought, of course, as they pretended, under the jurisdiction of the respective states to which they assumed to belong. The civil authorities of Pennsylvania frequently interposed; and after the burning of Ogden's blockhouse, attempts were made to arrest several of the Connecticut party for arson. Stewart was apprehended, but was soon afterward rescued.

After the capture of the fort in December, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania once more issued a writ for his arrest, and the sheriff was sent with the posse at his heels; but the garrison would not admit him. The fort was fired upon by the posse, under the direction of the sheriff, and in returning the fire, one of the Ogdens (Nathan) was killed. The sheriff thereupon drew off his forces for the night. But it was no sooner dark, than Stewart and forty of his men withdrew from the fortress, leaving a garrison of only twelve persons, who capitulated on the following morning. Three hundred pounds reward was offered by the Governor of Pennsylvania for the arrest of Stewart. The fort was left in charge

of Amos Ogden, who induced most of his former associates to return with him.

In July following, this important post was again doomed to change hands. The colony was invaded by Captain Zebulon Butler, with upward of seventy men. These being joined by Lazarus Stewart and his party, they immediately took possession of the lands, while Ogden with his people, to the number of eighty-two, retired into the new fort of Wyoming, which they had just built, and prepared for resistance. The contest was now assuming greater importance than ever. Butler and Stewart at once invested the fortress, and, recruits arriving from Connecticut, they were enabled to throw up redoubts, and open intrenchments for a regular siege. This new fort was planted directly upon the bank of the river. Perceiving himself thus completely shut in, Ogden formed the bold design of leaving his garrison in the night, and floating down the river, past the works and the sentinels of the enemy, in order to repair to Philadelphia for succours. For the purpose of better securing his escape, by means of a cord he caused a bundle to be floated along in the river following him, which, being the most perceptible object, would naturally attract the attention and receive the fire of the enemy, if discovered. The *ruse* was completely successful. The deceptive object did attract the attention of the besiegers, and received their fire; although Ogden himself was in immediate peril, since his hat and clothes were riddled with bullets. He nevertheless escaped to Philadelphia, and is entitled to the credit of performing one of the boldest and most difficult individual exploits on record.

In consequence of these tidings, the government ordered a force of one hundred men to be sent to the relief of Fort Wyoming, commanded by Colonel Asher Clayton. These were to be separated into two divisions, and marched to the fort from differ-

ent directions. Captain Dick, with one division, proceeded towards the fort with pack-horses of provisions for one hundred men. When in its neighbourhood, however, he was ambuscaded by the troops of Butler and Stewart, and thrown into confusion by the fire. Twenty-two of the party succeeded in getting into the fort, and the remainder, with four pack-horses of provisions, fell into the hands of Butler. The siege continued, and was prosecuted with great vigour until the 14th of August, when, his supplies being exhausted, Colonel Clayton, the assailant, capitulated, stipulating that his troops, together with Ogden and his party, should withdraw from Wyoming. Ogden was wounded during the siege, and a second shot killed another officer, named William Ridyard, upon whom the former was leaning, being faint from loss of blood.

The president of the Pennsylvania proprietaries complained of the conduct of the Connecticut people in these hostilities, and Governor Trumbull disclaimed any connexion with the affairs of Wyoming on the part of the state over which he presided. But as the Connecticut people continued to pour re-enforcements into the settlement, the Pennsylvanians withdrew their forces, and, for a season, made no farther attempts upon the territory.

The settlers now claimed the protection of Connecticut, the government of which attempted a mediation between the people of Wyoming and the government of Pennsylvania, but without success. Meantime, the people of the colony proceeded to organize a government, and to exercise almost all the attributes of sovereignty. The general laws of Connecticut were declared to be in force; but for their local legislation, they organized a pure democracy; the people of all their towns and settlements meeting in a body, as in Athens of old, and making their laws for themselves. The Legislature of Connecticut extended its broad ægis over them framed

a new county, called Westmoreland, and attached it to the county of Litchfield in the parent state. Zebulon Butler and Nathan Denniston were appointed justices of the peace, and the people sent one representative to the Legislature of Connecticut. The governments of Connecticut and Pennsylvania kept up a war of proclamations and edicts upon the subject, while the settlement advanced in population and extent with unexampled rapidity.

Thus matters proceeded until the year 1775, when, just after hostilities had been commenced between the colonies and the British troops at Lexington, the old feuds between the settlers of the rival companies suddenly broke forth again. A new settlement of the one was attacked by the militia of the other, one man was killed, several were wounded, and others made prisoners, and carried off to a distant jail. Other outrages were committed elsewhere, and of course all the angry passions, all the bitter feelings of hatred and revenge, between the rival parties claiming the soil and the jurisdiction, broke out afresh. The settlements of each had become extended during the five years of peace, which, of course, had multiplied the parties to the contest; so that, as the men of Wyoming flew to arms, a more formidable civil war than ever was in prospect, at the moment when every arm should have been nerved in the common cause of the whole country.\*

Congress being now in session, interposed its authority by way of mediatorial resolutions; but to no purpose. The interposition was repeated, and again disregarded. In the mean time, the Pennsylvanians brought seven hundred men into the field, who were marched against Wyoming under the direction

\* At this time the settlements consisted of eight townships, viz.: Lackawana, Exeter, Kingston, Wilksbarré, Plymouth, Nanticoke, Huntington, and Salem, each containing five miles square. The six townships were pretty full of inhabitants; the two upper ones had comparatively few, thinly scattered



of Colonel Plunkett. But in ascending the west bank of the Susquehanna, on coming to a narrow defile, naturally defended by a rocky buttress, their march was suddenly arrested by a volley of musketry. An instant afterward the invaders discerned that the rocky parapets were covered with men bristling in arms, prepared for a Tyrolese defence of tumbling rocks down upon the foe, should their fire-arms prove insufficient to repel him. Taken thus suddenly and effectively by surprise, Plunkett retreated with his forces behind a point of rocks, for consultation. He next attempted to cross the river, and resume his march on the other side. But here, too, the people of Wyoming had been too quick for him. The invaders were so hotly received by a detachment in ambuscade on the other side, that they were constrained to retreat, nor did they attempt to rally again.

Thus terminated the last military demonstration of the provincial government of Pennsylvania against the Valley of Wyoming, previous to the war of the Revolution. Never, however, had a civil war raged with more cordial hatred between the parties, not even during the bloody conflicts between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, than was felt between the adherents of the respective land companies, in the collisions just passed under review. Most unfortunate was it, therefore, that the quarrel broke out afresh at the precise moment when the services of all were alike wanted for the common defence, especially on a border exposed to the daily irruptions of the Indians.

Nor was this the only evil. There being a wide difference of opinion between the people in almost every section of the country on the great question at issue between the parent country and the colonies, it was natural to anticipate that such of these contending parties as adhered to the Royalist cause, would cherish a twofold enmity towards those Re-

publicans who had been previously in arms against them. These feelings of hostility were of course mutual; and, as many of the adherents of the Delaware Company, and perhaps some from both factions, early escaped to the enemy, and enrolled themselves under the banners of Sir John Johnson and Colonel John Butler, there can be no difficulty in accounting for the peculiar ferocity which marked the conduct of such of the refugees as returned in arms against their former belligerent neighbours.

The population of the Wyoming settlements, at the commencement of the war, numbered five thousand souls. Three companies of regular troops were enlisted among them for the service of the United States. Their militia, regularly enrolled, amounted to eleven hundred men capable of bearing arms, and of this force three hundred entered the army; so prolific was their soil, and so industrious were the people, that they were enabled to furnish large supplies of provisions for the army. Three thousand bushels of grain were sent in the spring of the present year. The same plan of watchfulness against the scouts and scalping parties of the enemy was adopted as in other frontier settlements, and the utmost vigilance was observed; while regular garrison duty was, in successive turns, performed by the citizen soldiers in the several fortifications which defended their valley.

Some faint demonstrations were made by straggling parties of Tories and Indians, who prowled about the settlements during the summer of the preceding year, while St. Leger was besieging Fort Schuyler; but after a few skirmishes with the inhabitants they dispersed, and the latter remained undisturbed during the rest of the year. Still, an impression that some of the Tories who had been in arms against them, or who had been instrumental in bringing the Indians upon them, were yet lurking in the vicinity, and bent upon mischief, left the peo-

ple not altogether at ease; and in the month of January, 1778, twenty-seven suspected inhabitants were arrested. Nine of these were discharged, on examination, for want of sufficient evidence to warrant their detention; while the remaining eighteen were sent to Hartford in Connecticut, and imprisoned. The nine who were first discharged immediately fled to the enemy, and were followed thither by such of their suspected associates as were subsequently set at liberty in Connecticut. It was but natural that these proceedings still more embittered the feelings of these Loyalists against the Whigs, and the effect was soon perceptible in the behaviour of the Tories and Indians occasionally patrolling their borders.

For a time, however, the apprehensions thus excited were allayed by several pacific messages from the Indian nations deeper in the interior, who sent parties of runners with assurances of a desire for peace. But these assurances were deceptive. Instead of being messengers of peace, it was ascertained in March, from one of them while in a state of intoxication, that their business was to amuse the people and allay their fears while preparations were making to attack them. This Indian, with his associate warriors, was immediately arrested and placed in confinement, while the women of the party were sent back with a flag. The alarm was likewise given to the scattered and remote settlers, some of them living thirty miles up the river, who thereupon immediately sought for greater security in the more populous towns. During the months of April and May, the settlements began to be more considerably annoyed by larger parties of Tories and Indians, who hung upon their borders, and made frequent incursions among them for purposes of plunder, robbing the people, as opportunity afforded, of live-stock, grain, and other articles of provisions. Waxing yet more audacious in June, sev-

eral murders were committed. Six of these victims were a mother and her five children, who were doubtless killed under a misapprehension as to her character, since the woman was the wife of one of the Tories who had been arrested in January. The houses and plantations of the slain were, of course, plundered of everything of value which the marauders could carry away.

Towards the close of June, the British officers in command at Niagara determined to strike a blow upon these settlements; for which purpose about three hundred white men, consisting in part of regular troops, but principally of refugee Loyalists, under the command of Colonel John Butler, together with about five hundred Indians, chiefly Senecas, under a celebrated war chief named Gi-en-gwah-toh (He-who-goes-in-the-smoke), marched in that direction. Arriving at Tioga Point, Butler and the Indian leaders procured floats and rafts, upon which they embarked their forces; and, descending the Susquehanna, landed at a place called the Three Islands, whence they marched about twenty miles, and, crossing a wilderness, entered the Valley of Wyoming through a gap of the mountain near its northern extremity. They took possession of two small forts, without opposition, on the 2d of July, the first of which was called the Exeter Fort. It was said the garrison consisted chiefly of Tories, who treacherously surrendered it to the enemy. The other was the fort of Lackawana, where the enemy encountered some resistance. But it was soon carried, a magistrate named Jenkins being killed, together with his family, and several others, mostly women and children, made prisoners. One of these forts was burned. In the other, the proper name of which was Fort Wintermoot, Colonel John Butler established his headquarters.

The inhabitants, on receiving intelligence of the approach of the invaders, assembled within a forti-

fication four miles below, called Fort Forty, from the circumstance of its having been occupied by forty men at some period of the antecedent troubles of the colony. Colonel Zebulon Butler, whose name has occurred several times in the preceding summary of the history of Wyoming, was in command of about sixty regular troops, and he now made every exertion to muster the militia of the settlements. But in his official despatch he complained that, as the women and children had fled to the several forts, of which there were seven within the distance of ten miles along the valley, the men, too many of them, would remain behind to take care of *them*. Still, he succeeded in collecting about three hundred of the militia, and commenced his march to meet the enemy on the 1st of July, in connexion with the regular troops before mentioned, commanded by Captain Hewett. On their first advance, they fell in with a scout of Indians, of whom they killed two. These savages had just murdered nine men engaged at work in a corn-field. Not being supplied with provisions, Colonel Zebulon Butler was obliged to fall back upon Fort Forty, while his militia procured supplies. They mustered again on the 3d, and a council of war was convened. Messengers having been despatched to the headquarters of General Washington for assistance, immediately after the enemy's movements were known at Wyoming, Colonel Z. Butler was desirous of waiting for re-enforcements. But his officers and men were impatient for a trial of strength. The messengers had already been gone so long, that it was supposed they had been cut off, and, consequently, that General Washington was ignorant of their situation. In that case no re-enforcements could reach them in season to save their valley from being ravaged; and as the enemy's forces were daily increasing, it was held to be the part of wisdom to attack him at once.

While the question was under debate, five officers arrived from the Continental army, who, on hearing the tidings of the meditated invasion, had thrown up their commissions and hastened home to protect their families. They had heard nothing of the messengers, and intimated that there was no prospect of speedy assistance. The discussions were animated; but the apprehension that, in the event of longer delay, the enemy would become too powerful for them, and thus be enabled to sweep through their valley and destroy their harvest, was so strong, and the militia were so sanguine of being able to meet and vanquish the enemy, that Colonel Butler yielded, and set forward at the head of nearly four hundred men, Colonel Denniston, his former associate in the commission of the peace, being his second in command.

It was intended to make a quick movement, and take the enemy by surprise. Having approached within two miles of Fort Wintermoot,\* a small reconnoitring party was sent forward for observation. They ascertained that the enemy were carousing in their huts in perfect security; but on their return they were so unfortunate as to fall in with an Indian scout, who immediately fired and gave the alarm. The Provincials pushed rapidly forward; but the British and Indians were prepared to receive them, their line being formed a small distance in front of their camp, in a plain thinly

\* The fort was thus called after the proprietor of the land whereon it was built, and the adjacent territory, a distinguished Tory named Wintermoot. He was active in bringing destruction upon the valley; and, after doing all the mischief he could to the settlement, removed to Canada. During the war with England in 1812-15, while the British were investing Fort Erie, a son of old Mr. Wintermoot, a lieutenant in the enemy's service, was killed by a volunteer from the neighbourhood of Wyoming. Young Wintermoot was reconnoitring one of the American pickets, when he was shot down by the said volunteer, who was engaged in the same service against a picket of the enemy. The volunteer returned into the fort, bringing in the arms and commission of the officer he had slain as a trophy.

covered with pine, shrub-oaks, and undergrowth, and extending from the river to a marsh at the foot of the mountain. On coming in view of the enemy, the Americans, who had previously marched in a single column, instantly displayed into a line of equal extent, and attacked from right to left at the same time. The right of the Americans was commanded by Colonel Zebulon Butler, opposed to Colonel John Butler, commanding the enemy's left. Colonel Denniston commanded the left of the Americans, and was opposed by Indians forming the enemy's right. The battle commenced at about forty rods' distance, without much execution at the onset, as the brushwood interposed obstacles to the sight. The militia stood the fire well for a short time, and as they pressed forward there was some giving way on the enemy's right. Unluckily, just at this moment the appalling war-whoop of the Indians rang in the rear of the American left, the Indian leader having conducted a large party of his warriors through the marsh, and succeeded in turning Denniston's flank. A heavy and destructive fire was simultaneously poured into the American ranks; and amid the confusion, Colonel Denniston directed his men to "*fall back*," to avoid being surrounded, and to gain time to bring his men into order again. This direction was mistaken for an order to "*retreat*," whereupon the whole line broke, and every effort of their officers to restore order was unavailing. At this stage of the battle, and while thus engaged, the American officers mostly fell. The flight was general. The Indians, throwing away their rifles, rushed forward with their tomahawks, making dreadful havoc, answering the cries for mercy with the hatchet, and adding to the universal consternation those terrific yells which invest savage warfare with tenfold horror. So alert was the foe in this bloody pursuit, that less than sixty of the Americans escaped either the rifle or the

tomahawk. Of the militia officers, there fell one lieutenant-colonel, one major, and ten captains, six lieutenants, and two ensigns. Colonel Durkee and Captains Hewett and Ransom were likewise killed. Some of the fugitives escaped by swimming the river, and others by flying to the mountains. As the news of the defeat spread down the valley, the greater part of the women and children, and those who had remained behind to protect them, likewise ran to the woods and the mountains; while those who could not escape thus, sought refuge in Fort Wyoming. The Indians, apparently wearied with pursuit and slaughter, desisted, and betook themselves to secure the spoils of the vanquished.

On the morning of the 4th, the day after the battle, Colonel John Butler, with the combined British and Indian forces, appeared before Fort Wyoming, and demanded its surrender. The inhabitants, both within and without the fort, did not, on that emergency, sustain a character for courage becoming men of spirit in adversity. They were so intimidated as to give up without fighting; great numbers ran off; and those who remained all but betrayed Colonel Zebulon Butler, their commander. The British Colonel Butler sent several flags, requiring an unconditional surrender of his opposing namesake and the few Continental troops yet remaining, but offering to spare the inhabitants their property and effects. But with the American colonel the victor would not treat on any terms; and the people thereupon compelled Colonel Denniston to comply with conditions which his commander had refused. The consequence was, that Colonel Zebulon Butler contrived to escape from the fort with the remains of Captain Hewett's company of regulars, and Colonel Denniston entered into articles of capitulation. By these it was stipulated that the settlers should be disarmed, and their garrison demolished; that all the prisoners and public stores should be



given up; that the property of "the people called Tories" should be made good, and they be permitted to remain peaceably upon their farms. In behalf of the settlers, it was stipulated that their lives and property should be preserved, and that they should be left in the unmolested occupancy of their farms.

Unhappily, however, the British commander either could not or would not enforce the terms of the capitulation, which were, to a great extent, disregarded as well by the Tories as Indians. Instead of finding protection, the valley was again laid waste; the houses and improvements were destroyed by fire, and the country plundered. Families were broken up and dispersed, men and their wives separated, mothers torn from their children, and some of them carried into captivity, while far the greater number fled to the mountains, and wandered through the wilderness to the older settlements. Some died of their wounds, others from want and fatigue, while others still were lost in the wilderness, or were heard of no more. Several perished in a great swamp in the neighbourhood, which, from that circumstance, acquired the name of "*The Shades of Death*," and retains it to this day.

These were painful scenes. But it does not appear that anything like a massacre followed the capitulation.\* Nor, in the events of the preceding day, is there good evidence of the perpetration of any specific acts of cruelty, other than such as are usual in the general rout of a battle-field, save only the unexampled atrocities of the Tories, thirsting, probably, for revenge in regard to other questions than that of allegiance to the king.

There seems, from the first, to have been an un-

\* It will be seen, a few pages forward, by a letter from Walter Butler, writing on behalf of his father, Colonel John Butler, that a solemn denial is made of any massacre whatever, save the killing of men in arms in the open field. This letter, in vindication of the refugee Butlers, would have been introduced here, but for its connexion with the affair of Cherry Valley.

commonly large proportion of Loyalists in the Wyoming settlements, whose notions of legal restraint, from the previous collisions of the inhabitants, were of course latitudinarian; nor were their antecedent asperities softened by the attempts of the Whigs to keep them within proper control, after hostilities had commenced. The greater number of these, as we have already seen, together with those who were arrested, had joined themselves to the enemy. But these were not all the defections. After the arrival of the enemy upon the confines of the settlement, and before the battle, a considerable number of the inhabitants joined his ranks, and exhibited instances of the most savage barbarity against their former neighbours and friends. Nor has it ever been denied, in regard to the battle of Wyoming, that none were more ferocious and cruel, more destitute of the unstrained quality of mercy, than those same Loyalists or Tories. An example of the spirit by which they were actuated is found in the following occurrence, which, on account of its Cainlike barbarity, is worthy of repetition. Not far from the battle-ground was an island in the Susquehanna, called Monockonock, to which several of the fugitive militiamen fled for security, throwing away their arms, and swimming the river. Here they concealed themselves as they could among the brushwood. Their place of retreat being discovered, several Tories followed them; and, though obliged to swim, yet so intent were they upon the work of death, that they succeeded in taking their guns with them. Arriving upon the island, they deliberately wiped their gunlocks, recharged their pieces, and commenced searching for the fugitives. Two of these were concealed in sight of each other, but one of them escaped. But it was, nevertheless, his lot to behold a scene painful enough to make the most hardened offender weep, and "blush to own himself a man." One of the pursuers came upon

his companion in partial concealment, who proved to be his own brother. His salutation was, "So, it is you, is it?" The unarmed and defenceless man, thus observed, came forward and fell upon his knees before his brother, begging for mercy; promising to live with him, and serve him forever, if he would but spare his life. "All this is mighty fine," replied the unrelenting traitor; "but you are a d—d rebel!" saying which, he deliberately levelled his rifle, and shot him dead upon the spot. In a domestic war marked by such atrocity, even among those claiming to be civilized, it becomes us to pause before we brand the untutored savage, who fights according to the usages of his own people, with *all* that is revolting and cruel.\*

There is still another important correction to be made in reference to every written history of this

\* Doctor Thatcher, in his Military Journal, records still greater barbarities as having been perpetrated on this bloody occasion. He says, "One of the prisoners, a Captain Badlock, was committed to torture, by having his body stuck full of splinters of pine knots, and a fire of dry wood made around him, when his two companions, Captains Ransom and Durkee, were thrown into the same fire, and held down with pitchforks till consumed. One Partial Terry, the son of a man of respectable character, having joined the Indian party, several times sent his father word that he hoped to wash his hands in his heart's blood. The monster, with his own hands, murdered his father, mother, brothers, and sisters, stripped off their scalps, and cut off his father's head!! Thomas Terry, with his own hands, butchered his own mother, his father-in-law, his sisters and their infant children, and exterminated the whole family!" Upon which the worthy doctor remarks, "It is only in the infernal regions that we can look for a parallel instance of unnatural wickedness." It is doubtful whether so great an atrocity was ever committed even there. Certainly no such were perpetrated at Wyoming. Dr. Thatcher also states, that when Colonel Z. Butler sent a flag to propose terms of capitulation, the reply of Colonel John Butler was in two words—"*The Hatchet.*" He also remarks, in regard to the moral and social condition of Wyoming, that but for the dissensions produced by the war of the Revolution, "the inhabitants of this secluded spot might have lived in the enjoyment of all the happiness which results from harmony and the purest natural affection." Witness the ten years of civil wars sketched in the preceding pages. It was also reported that a man named Thomas Hill with his own hands killed his own mother, his father-in-law, his sisters and their families! And such is history! These monstrous exaggerations were the reports of the battle first published at Poughkeepsie, on the 20th of July, as derived from the lips of the terrified fugitives who were wending their way back to Connecticut.

battle extant, not even excepting the last revised edition of the *Life of Washington*, by Chief-justice Marshall. This correction regards the name, and the just fame, of Joseph Brant, whose character has been blackened with all the infamy, both real and imaginary, connected with this bloody expedition. The Indian leader, as already stated, was a brave and popular Seneca warrior, named Gi-en-gwah-toh; and the Indians engaged in the affair were almost exclusively Senecas. There were few, if any, Mohawks among them. Captain Brant was at no time in company with this expedition; and it is certain, in the face of every historical authority, British and American, that, so far from being engaged in the battle, he was many miles distant at the time of its occurrence. Such has been the uniform testimony of the British officers engaged in that expedition, such was always the word of Thayendanegea himself, and such is the statement that has been made to the author by Captain Pollard, a Seneca chief of renown, who was himself in the battle. It will, moreover, be seen, towards the close of the present work, that after the publication of Campbell's "Gertrude of Wyoming," in which poem the Mohawk chieftain was denounced as "the Monster Brant," his son repaired to England, and, in a correspondence with the poet, successfully vindicated his father's memory from the calumny.

It is related in the unwritten history of this battle, that the celebrated Catharine Montour was present, with her two sons; and that she ranged the field of blood like a chafed tigress, stimulating the warriors of her adopted race to the onslaught, even in the hottest of the fight. But, from the antecedent character of that remarkable woman, the story can hardly be credited. She was a native of Canada, a half-breed, her father having been one of the early French governors, probably Count Frontenac, as he must have been in the government of that country

at about the time of her birth. During the wars between the Six Nations and the French and Hurons, Catharine, when about ten years of age, was made a captive, taken into the Seneca country, adopted, and reared as one of their own children. When arrived at a suitable age, she was married to one of the distinguished chiefs of her tribe, who signalized himself in the wars of the Six Nations against the Catawbas, then a great nation living southwestward of Virginia. She had several children by this chieftain, who fell in battle about the year 1730, after which she did not again marry. She is said to have been a handsome woman when young, genteel, and of polite address, notwithstanding her Indian associations. It was frequently her lot to accompany the chiefs of the Six Nations to Philadelphia, and other places in Pennsylvania, where treaties were holden; and from her character and manners she was greatly caressed by the American ladies, particularly in Philadelphia, where she was invited by the ladies of the best circles, and entertained at their houses. Her residence was at the head of the Seneca Lake.

Some of the flying fugitives from Wyoming had not proceeded many miles from their desolate homes before they met a detachment of Continental troops on their way to assist the colony. It was now too late. But the detachment, nevertheless, remained at Stroudsburg three or four weeks; by which time Colonel Zebulon Butler had collected a force consisting of straggling settlers and others, with whom, and the regular troops just mentioned, he returned, and repossessed himself of Wyoming, the enemy having retired shortly after the battle, Colonel John Butler to Niagara, and the Indians to their homes; while Thayendanegea moved as he had occasion, from his old haunts higher up the Susquehanna, at Oghkwaga and Unadilla.

Immediately on the reception of the disastrous

tidings from Wyoming at the Continental headquarters, Colonel Hartley's regiment was ordered thither, with instructions from Congress to remain on that frontier until the crops were secured and the enemy should have retreated. He was joined by several militia companies, and, among other officers, by Colonel Dennison, who, in the capitulation of Wyoming, had stipulated not again to serve against the king's troops. He accompanied Colonel Hartley in an expedition against some of the Indian towns up the Susquehanna, in the direction of Oghkwaga, several of which were destroyed. A few prisoners were also taken. It appearing, however, that the enemy were gathering in too much force for him to remain long within their territory, Colonel Hartley was constrained to retreat. An attack was made upon his rear, but the assailants were repulsed. Colonel Dennison doubtless felt himself warranted in breaking the stipulations of Fort Wyoming, by the fact that those stipulations were not strictly observed by the Tories and Indians. But the enemy made no such allowance; and this expedition, or, rather, the conduct of Colonel Dennison, was subsequently used as a pretext for some of the incidents connected with the attack upon Cherry Valley.

Colonel Zebulon Butler built another fort at Wyoming, which he continued to occupy until the next year, when the command of that region devolved upon General Sullivan. In the mean time, the outskirts of the settlements were frequently harassed by straggling parties of Tories and Indians, who occasionally committed an assassination, or carried off a few prisoners. The Americans, in turn, despatched every Indian who fell in their way. In March following, the fort was surrounded by a force of two hundred and fifty Indians, and Tories disguised as such. They attacked the fortress, but fled on the discharge of a single piece of artillery, burn-

ing whatever buildings had either been re-erected or left standing at the former invasion. The garrison was too weak to allow of a pursuit. A few weeks afterward, as a company of Continental troops were approaching the fort, under the command of Major Powell, they were fired upon by a party of Indians in ambush, while passing along a single track through a difficult swamp. In this attack, Captain Davis, Lieutenant Jones, and four privates, were killed. The detachment formed for action with all possible despatch, but the Indians fled after two or three discharges. Nor did they reappear afterward, in that immediate neighbourhood, in any subsequent stage of the Revolutionary contest, although other sections of the Pennsylvania frontier, farther south and west, suffered occasionally from their depredations, particularly in the following year, while Sullivan was preparing to advance into the Seneca country.\*

\* Thus ends the Revolutionary history of Wyoming. But from what has been given in the preceding pages, touching the history of this valley and its feuds before the Revolution, the reader may possibly feel some desire to learn the subsequent progress of the long-pending land quarrel. After the Indians had been chastised, the settlers returned, and the valley and its precincts once more began to flourish. Pennsylvania again interposed her claims; and a commission was appointed by Congress, which met in New Jersey, to hear the case and decide the question. It was unanimously decided in favour of Pennsylvania. The people held that this decision was one of jurisdiction merely, and with this understanding cheerfully acquiesced in it. But fresh troubles arose. A company of Continental troops was stationed there in 1783, to keep the peace, and this only made matters worse; the soldiers became licentious and overbearing, and the people were exceedingly annoyed thereat. In the spring of 1784, by a succession of ice-dams which accumulated in the river, the valley was overflowed, and the inhabitants were compelled to fly to the mountains for safety. When the ice gave way, the floods swept off everything, leaving the whole valley a scene of greater desolation than ever. Presently afterward the old troubles broke out afresh. The inhabitants refused to obey their new masters. The Connecticut settlers flew to arms; the Pennsylvanians sent troops thither; the Connecticut settlers laid siege to the fort; there were riots and skirmishings, and some killed and wounded. The Connecticut people were taken prisoners by treachery, and sent off to prison. They escaped. Reinforcements of troops were sent by Pennsylvania; there was more blood shed. Various attempts were made to settle the difficulties. Commissioners were appointed upon the subject, one of whom was Timothy

## CHAPTER XVI.

No sooner had Great Britain been apprized of the alliance between France and her revolted colonies, than it was determined to evacuate Philadelphia, and concentrate the royal army at New-York. Accordingly, on the 18th of June, the British troops crossed the Delaware into New-Jersey, and commenced their march for New-York, ascending the east bank of the river to Allentown, and thence taking the lower road leading through Monmouth to Sandy Hook. General Washington, anticipating this movement, had previously detached a division of the army, under General Maxwell, to impede the enemy's march. It was known that General Gates was approaching with the army from the North, and the enemy's motions were no sooner ascertained, than General Wayne was despatched, with one thousand chosen men, to strengthen the lines. The Marquis de Lafayette was directed to take command of the whole force thus sent in advance, while Washington himself moved rapidly forward with the main army. It was his design to bring on a general, and, if possible, a decisive engagement. The result of his movements for that object was the battle of Monmouth, fought on the 28th of June. The dispositions for this engagement were admirably arranged on the night of the 27th, the position of the enemy being such as to afford the best advantages for an attack upon his rear the moment he should get in

Pickering. He was forcibly seized, and carried into captivity. His story has been written by himself, and is full of interest. These difficulties continued, with feelings of the bitterest contention, ten years, before matters were compromised between the parties so that they settled down in peace. It is now a rich and flourishing county, and may be called the Paradise of Pennsylvania.



motion. Such being the intentions of the commander-in-chief, they were communicated to General Lee, who was ordered to make his dispositions accordingly, and to keep his troops lying upon their arms to be in readiness at the shortest notice. At five in the morning of the 28th, the front of the enemy was observed to be in motion, and orders were instantly despatched to General Lee to move on and attack, "unless there should be very powerful reasons to the contrary." Lee was also advised that Washington was himself advancing to support him. After marching about five miles, to the great surprise and mortification of the commander-in-chief, he met the whole advanced corps retreating, by the orders of Lee, without having made any opposition, except one fire given by a party under Colonel Butler, on their being charged by the enemy's cavalry, who were repulsed. Lee was sharply rebuked, and placed in arrest. Hurrying to the rear of the retreating corps, which the commander-in-chief found closely pressed by the enemy, he arrested their flight, re-formed them, and with the aid of some well-served pieces of artillery, at once checked the enemy's advance, and gained time for making such dispositions as the unexpected emergency required. The battle soon became general, and was obstinately contested at various points through the whole day, until dark, Sir Henry Clinton and General Washington heading their respective armies in person. By the misconduct of Lee, however, and an error of General Scott in the morning, advantages had been lost which entirely disconcerted the views of the commander-in-chief, and deprived the American arms of a victory which was all but certain. Still, the fortunes of the day were so far recovered, that, from being the pursued, the Americans drove the enemy back over the ground they had followed, and recovered the field of battle, and possessed themselves of their dead. But as they

retreated behind a morass very difficult to pass, and had both flanks secured with thick woods, it was found impracticable for the Americans, fainting with fatigue, heat, and want of water, to do anything more that night.

Both armies encamped in the field, and lay upon their arms, Washington himself sleeping in his cloak, under a tree, in the midst of his soldiers. His intention was to renew and end the battle on the following morning, not doubting as to the issue. Indeed, the result of that day's fight was justly considered a victory by the American officers; and but for the conduct of Lee in the morning, it would, almost beyond question, have been decisive. But the purpose of the commander-in-chief to renew the engagement was frustrated by a silent midnight retreat of the enemy—so silent, indeed, that his departure was not known until the morning. A variety of circumstances concurred to render a pursuit by the Americans unadvisable; among the principal of which were, the extreme heat of the weather, the fatigue of the army from its march through a deep sandy country, almost entirely destitute of water, and the distance the enemy had gained by his midnight march. A pursuit, it was believed, would answer no valuable purpose, and would certainly be fatal to numbers of the men, several of whom had perished of heat on the preceding day. The American commander thereupon drew off his army to the Hudson, crossed over, and once more established his headquarters at White Plains. Meantime, Sir Henry Clinton proceeded to Sandy Hook and thence passed his troops over to New-York. The loss of the Americans in this battle was eight officers and sixty-one privates killed, and one hundred and sixty wounded. That of the enemy was three hundred and sixty-eight in killed, wounded, and missing, and about one hundred taken prisoners. One thousand of their men deserted on their march. Both parties

claimed the victory, which was, in fact, won by neither. The advantages, in the earlier part of the day, were in favour of the British; in the after part, of the Americans. The stealthy retreat of the former, moreover, covered by the darkness, left no doubt as to which army was best prepared to renew the conflict with the return of daylight.

The French fleet, under the Count d'Estaing, consisting of twelve ships of the line and six frigates, having on board four thousand troops, arrived on the coast of Virginia about the 1st of July. The design of the French commander was to engage the British squadron in the Chesapeake. But, unfortunately, the latter had sailed for New-York a few days before. Thither the count followed the British admiral, but the bar of the New-York harbour would not allow the entrance of his heavy ships. An attack upon New-York thus proving to be impracticable, by the advice of General Washington it was determined to make an attempt upon Rhode Island, then occupied by six thousand British troops, commanded by Major-general Sir Robert Pigott. General Sullivan, with an army of ten thousand men, was lying in the neighbourhood of Providence. Count d'Estaing arrived off Newport on the 25th of July, and arrangements were soon adjusted between General Sullivan and himself for a combined attack upon the town of Newport, by land and sea. The assault was to be made on the 9th of August, for which purpose Sullivan moved down to Tiverton, where he was joined by General Green, and the ships of war entered the channel. But the militia not having joined the regular troops so promptly as was expected, General Sullivan judged it necessary to postpone the attack for a day or two. Meantime, Lord Howe appeared off the harbour with the British fleet, and the Count d'Estaing immediately put to sea to engage him. The French fleet having the weather gage, the British admiral weighed anchor

and put to sea, followed by the count. A storm separated the fleets, so that no engagement took place; and on his return to port on the 19th, Count d'Estaing found it necessary to repair to Boston to refit. During the absence of the count, however, while in chase of Lord Howe, General Sullivan had crossed over to the island, and on the 15th laid siege to the town of Newport. But when the French admiral departed for Boston, the militia, disappointed and disheartened at being thus abandoned by their allies, left the service in such numbers, that Sullivan was compelled to raise the siege and retire. He was pursued to the distance of a mile north of Quaker Hill, where, on the 29th of August, was fought the battle of Rhode Island. It was a sharp and obstinate engagement of half an hour, at the end of which the enemy gave way and retreated. The loss of the Americans was two hundred and eleven; that of the enemy two hundred and sixty. Ascertaining, soon afterward, that strong re-enforcements were coming from New-York to the aid of General Pigott, a resolution was immediately adopted by Sullivan to evacuate the island. This determination was executed on the night of the 30th—most luckily, as the event proved; for on the very next day Sir Henry Clinton arrived at Newport with four thousand troops, which re-enforcement would doubtless have enabled the enemy to cut off the retreat of the Americans.

In September, after the return of the British troops to New-York, strong divisions moved northward on each side of the Hudson River. By a detachment of one of these, under General Gray, a regiment of American cavalry, commanded by Colonel Baylor, was surprised while asleep at Tappan, and almost entirely cut off. The enemy rushed upon the sleeping troopers, numbering one hundred and four privates, with their bayonets. The loss, killed, wounded, and taken, was sixty-four. This

exploit was very similar to that of the Paoli, under the same general, the preceding year.

In consequence of the hostile spirit very generally and extensively manifested by the Indians—the great Western tribes becoming more and more res-tiff—early in June, immediately preceding the affair of Wyoming, Congress had determined upon a more enlarged and decisive campaign against them. This had, indeed, become the more necessary from the belligerent indications among the Delawares and Shawanese, inhabiting the territory now forming the State of Ohio. At the commencement of the war, *Koquethagaeehlon*, the Delaware chief usually known as Captain *White-Eyes*, a firm friend of the colonies, had succeeded in preventing his people from taking up the hatchet against them, in opposition to the views of his rival chief, Captain *Pipe*. But in the spring of the present year, the policy of the latter had wellnigh prevailed, through the revengeful machinations of three celebrated Loyalists, named *McKee*, *Elliot*, and *Simon Girty*, who had been confined at Pittsburgh as Tories; but who, effecting their escape, traversed the Indian country to Detroit, proclaiming, as they went, that the Americans had resolved upon their destruction, and that their only chance of safety was to espouse the cause of the crown, and fight. Availing himself of the excitement created by those fugitives, Captain *Pipe* assembled a large number of his warriors, and proclaimed “every one an enemy to his country who should endeavour to persuade them against fighting the Americans, and declared that all such ought surely to be put to death.” But *White-Eyes* was by no means inactive in his efforts to preserve peace. Collecting the people of his tribe, he addressed them with great earnestness and pathos. Observing that some of his warriors were preparing to take up the hatchet, he admonished them strong-

ly against such a course, which, in the end, could only bring upon them sure destruction.

The counsel of White-Eyes, supported by a conciliatory message, which was received just in good time, from the Americans, prevailed for the moment, and the Delawares came to the unanimous determination to follow his advice, and his alone.

But the hostile action of these people was only suspended for a short time, and it became necessary for more extended and efficient operations against nearly the whole race.\* In the project of Congress already adverted to, it was intended that one expedition should move upon Detroit, while General Gates was instructed by resolution to co-operate

\* Indeed, the Shawanese had not been remarkably quiet antecedent to the visitation of M'Kee, Elliot, and Girty, since they had for several years been engaged in a system of predatory warfare against the celebrated Colonel Daniel Boon and his adventurous companions, almost from the day they made their appearance upon the banks of the Ohio, with their families, in 1773, when the settlement of the present State of Kentucky was commenced. Boon had been engaged with Lord Dunmore in his war against the Shawanese in 1774. In the following year he was attacked in Boonsborough, his principal settlement; and through the entire years of 1776 and 1777, hostilities were actively prosecuted by the savages against the advancing colonists. In one of the earlier battles Boon had lost a son. A second son fell afterward, and his daughter was taken a captive, but bravely rescued by the chivalrous father. In April, 1777, the Indians so divided their forces as to fall upon all the infant settlements at once, and their little forts only saved the people from destruction. On the 15th of April, Boonsborough was attacked by one hundred Indians, at which time the inhabitants suffered severely. On the 19th, Colonel Logan's fort was attacked by a force of two hundred Indians, but they were repulsed by the garrison, consisting of only thirteen men, two of whom were killed. Re-enforcements arriving from Virginia, the skirmishes became almost daily. In February of the present year (1778) Boonsborough was again attacked, and the gallant colonel himself taken prisoner. He was taken first to Chillicothe, and thence to Detroit, where he was treated with humanity by Colonel Hamilton, the governor, who offered the Indians £100 if they would surrender him into his hands, that he might liberate him on his parole. But having imbibed a strong affection for their most subtle and successful enemy, the Indians declined the offer. Taking him back to Chillicothe, the colonel was duly adopted into one of the Shawanese families as a son, to whom his new parents became strongly attached. He soon acquired their confidence to such an extent, that they allowed him to wander off and hunt by himself. Ascertaining, however, that they were meditating another descent upon Boonsborough, he absconded, and, eluding pursuit, reached his home on the 30th of June.

with that expedition by carrying the war into the Seneca country, and also to dispossess the enemy of Oswego, should he be found in the occupancy of that post. It appears that, at the very moment of the invasion of Wyoming, there was a delegation of Seneca chiefs at Philadelphia; but having taken their departure without communicating with the government, a resolution was passed by Congress, immediately upon the receipt of Colonel Z. Butler's despatches, instructing the board of war to send after the chiefs, and ascertain from them in what character, and for what purpose, they had made the said visit; and also to inquire whether the Seneca warriors had not been engaged in hostilities against the United States. On the 16th of July information was received that the chiefs refused to return, and instructions to General Schuyler were proposed, directing him to intercept and detain them at Albany. The motion was negatived; but on the 25th of July, Congress having ascertained that the Senecas were actually engaged in the invasion of Wyoming, "aided by Tories and other banditti from the frontiers of New-York, New-Jersey, and Pennsylvania," it was resolved that the expedition against the hostiles of the Six Nations should be forwarded with all possible despatch. In the mean time, however, from the expensiveness of the undertaking, the expedition against Detroit was reluctantly abandoned; but, in lieu thereof, General M'Intosh, commanding the Western Department, was ordered to proceed from Pittsburgh against those of the Indian towns the destruction of which, in his opinion, would tend most effectually to intimidate and chastise them. M'Intosh had been stationed at Pittsburgh early in the spring, and, with a small party of regulars and militia, had descended the Ohio about thirty miles, and erected a fort, which was called by his own name, at Beavertown. It was a small work, built of strong stockades, and furnished with bastions

mounting one six-pounder each. The situation was well chosen, as a point affording the best facilities for intercepting the war parties of the Western Indians in their frequent hostile incursions the present year.

This expedition was doubtless judged the more important from the increasing audacity of the Indians on the Ohio border of Virginia, now forming the State of Kentucky. In August, Colonel Boon had led a small band of nineteen men against one of the Indian towns on the Scioto, before reaching which he fell in with and dispersed a party of forty Indians then on their way to Boonsborough. The colonel found the town at Point Creek deserted, and learned that their whole force had gone against his own settlement, to the defence of which he was, consequently, compelled to hasten back. Fortunately, he anticipated their arrival by a few hours, and was enabled to prepare his little garrison for defence. On the 8th of August, the Indians, to the number of about four hundred and fifty, arrived before the fort, led, in addition to their own chiefs, by Captain Duquesne, and eleven other Canadian Frenchmen. The garrison was formally summoned to surrender, which summons was peremptorily refused. A treaty was then proposed by the besiegers, and acceded to, the Indians requiring that nine men should be sent out to them as negotiators. But this movement proved to be an artifice, by means of which they hoped to gain access to the fort. An attempt to grapple with and carry off the nine negotiators, though happily unsuccessful, disclosed their treacherous design. The besiegers then attempted a regular approach from the river's brink by mining; but finding that the garrison had discovered their purpose, and were engaged in countermining them, the siege was abandoned on the 20th of August. The loss of the enemy was thirty-seven killed, and a much larger number wounded. The



loss of the garrison was only two men killed and four wounded.

But, as we have seen, the expedition of General M'Intosh, as authorized by the vote of Congress recently cited, was specially destined against the Sandusky towns. It was commanded by the general himself, and consisted of one thousand men; but such were the delays in getting it on foot, that the officers, on arriving at Tuscarawa, judged it imprudent to proceed farther at such an advanced season of the year. They therefore halted at that place, and built Fort Laurens, in which M'Intosh left a garrison of one hundred and fifty men, under the command of Colonel John Gibson, and returned himself to Fort Pitt for the winter.

Connected with these distant Indian operations of the summer of 1778, was one equally distinguished by the boldness of its conception and the brilliancy of its execution. The increasing hostility of the remote tribes upon the waters of the Mississippi and its tributaries had induced a belief that a powerful influence must have been exerted upon their minds by the settlements planted long before at Kaskaskias, and in the country of the Upper Mississippi, by the French, in connexion with Canada. For the purpose of striking at once at the root of the evil, an expedition was organized early in the season, the object of which was to invade and take possession of those settlements. The command was intrusted to Colonel George Rogers Clarke, of Virginia, a bold and experienced border officer; and his whole force, destined to penetrate twelve hundred miles through a wilderness, which was, in fact, the enemy's country, did not exceed two hundred men. The rendezvous of this little army was at the Great Kanhawa, where they were attacked by a superior Indian force before their embarkation. But, finding they were not able to make any impression upon the fort, the assailants drew off.

having killed but one man and wounded one or two more. Descending to the falls of the Ohio, a small fort was erected at that place, in which a garrison was left of ten or twelve families. Arriving within about sixty miles of the mouth of the Ohio, the troops were landed, and, with only four days' provisions, marched for the Illinois. They reached the precincts of Kaskaskias at midnight on the sixth day, having marched two days without food and determined forthwith, and unanimously, to take the town or die in the attempt. The town was strongly fortified, and contained about two hundred and fifty well-built houses; but the approach of the invaders was unknown; the people and the garrison were alike slumbering in security; and both town and fort were taken, the latter being carried by surprise, although the defences were sufficiently strong to resist a thousand men. The commanding officer, Philip Rocheblave, was made prisoner; and among his papers, falling into the hands of Colonel Clarke, were the instructions which he had from time to time received from the British governors of Quebec, Detroit, and Michilimackinack, urging him to stimulate the Indians to war by the proffer of large bounties for scalps. Rocheblave was sent a prisoner to Williamsburg, in Virginia, and with him were sent the papers taken from his portfolio.

On the day after the fall of Kaskaskias, Captain Joseph Bowman, at the head of thirty mounted men, was sent to attack three other towns upon the Mississippi, the first of which, called Parraderuski, distant fifteen miles from Kaskaskias, was surprised, and taken without opposition, the inhabitants at once assenting to the terms of the conqueror. The next town was St. Philip's, distant nine miles farther up. The force of Captain Bowman was so small, that he wisely determined to make a descent upon St. Philip's in the night, that his strength, or

rather, his weakness, might be concealed. The precaution ensured success: and the inhabitants, with whom the whole negotiation was conducted in the night, acceded to the terms prescribed. From St. Philip's, Captain Bowman directed his course upon the yet more considerable town of Cauhow, distant between forty and fifty miles. This town contained about one hundred families, and was also approached secretly, and entered in the night. Captain Bowman, with his troop, rode directly to the quarters of the commander, and demanded the surrender of himself and the whole town, which was immediately complied with. Taking possession of a large stone house, well fortified, the "bold dragoon" immediately established his quarters therein, and awaited the morning's dawn, which would disclose to the people the diminutive force to which they had surrendered. Enraged at the discovery, one of the enemy threatened to bring a body of one hundred and fifty Indians against the little American squadron, and cut them off. But he was secured, and in the course of ten days upward of three hundred of the inhabitants became so reconciled to their change of masters as to take the oath of allegiance to the United States. Leaving a small guard at Cauhow, Captain Bowman returned to Kaskaskias.

But the enemy on the New-York frontiers were by no means inactive. In addition to the severe affair in the Cobleskill settlement, in which Captain Christian Brown was the leader of the American militia and a small band of regulars, as noted in the last preceding chapter but one, a large band of Indians and Tories, under the conduct of Brant and Barent Frey, broke into the same district at the close of May, and inflicted no small degree of damage, by the destruction of both life and property. They were met by Captain Patrick, belonging to Colonel Alden's regiment, and a handful of troops, who were entirely cut to pieces. Captain Patrick

fell early in the engagement. His lieutenant, a corporal, and nineteen men, were also killed. The command then devolved upon a sergeant, who fought bravely, as all had done. But they were surrounded by a force greatly superior in numbers, and but four men, exclusive of the sergeant, escaped, all wounded. The bodies of Patrick and his lieutenant were shockingly mutilated. A portion of the settlement was burned, and the settlement of Turlock, in the same vicinity, was also ravaged.

Nor was this all. In the course of the summer, and probably at about the time of Colonel Hartley's expedition into the country above Wyoming, one of the M'Donalds, who had fled from Johnstown, a Loyalist officer, distinguished for his activity, made a sudden irruption into the Schoharie settlements, at the head of about three hundred Tories and Indians, burning houses, and killing and making prisoners such of the inhabitants as came in his way, and were not able to make their escape. The little fortress of Schoharie was occupied by a small garrison, commanded by Colonel Vrooman, one of that class of men who, though officers, are certain never to be called soldiers. They saw the ravages of the enemy—the conflagrations by night rendering visible the acts of outrage committed by day—but, from their own weakness, dared not to venture forth, or make a show of opposition. The brave Colonel Harper was in the fort with Vrooman, and was little satisfied with the course of that officer. Leaving the fort, therefore, himself, he succeeded in making his way through the enemy, mounted his horse, and started express for Albany. His movement was discovered, and several Tories and Indians were despatched in pursuit. They overtook him in the night, at an inn at Fox's Creek, after he had retired to bed. Hearing the noise below, the colonel sprang up in full panoply, and as they broke open the door, which he had locked, he presented his arms with

such earnestness that they recoiled. Standing upon the watch until the dawn of morning, he again succeeded in getting to horse, and rode off. One of the Indians followed him almost to Albany, the colonel being obliged frequently to turn upon his dusky pursuer, who as often took to his heels as his pursuit was discovered. Having communicated the situation of affairs in the Schoharie Valley to Colonel Gansevoort, a squadron of cavalry was forthwith detached to their assistance. The detachment rode all night, and early on the following morning, to the great joy of the terrified inhabitants who remained, the tramp of hoofs announced the approach of succours. The spirited light-horsemen had no sooner sounded a charge and made a dash upon the besiegers, led on by Harper, than the troops sallied out from the fort, and a precipitate retreat of the enemy was the consequence.

The people of Schoharie had suffered severely from the scouts and scalping parties of the enemy during the summer, but their bravery in individual contests had amply avenged their wrongs. On one occasion a party of seven Indians made prisoner of a Mr. Sawyer, whom they bound and marched off into the wilderness. Having proceeded eight or ten miles, they laid themselves down to sleep for the night. But their prisoner had been less effectually secured than they supposed. In the course of the night he succeeded in disengaging his hands, and cautiously taking a hatchet from the girdle of one of the Indians, he despatched six of them in rapid succession, and wounded the seventh, who made his escape. Having thus relieved himself of his keepers, Sawyer returned home in safety, and at his leisure.

Soon after the battle of Monmouth, Lieutenant-colonel William Butler, with one of the Pennsylvania regiments and a detachment of Morgan's riflemen, was ordered to the North, and stationed at

Schoharie. Butler was a brave and experienced officer, especially qualified for the service upon which he was appointed. His arrival in Schoharie had a salutary effect, by discouraging the disaffected, and, by the presence of a stronger force than had yet been among them, establishing the confidence and reviving the spirits of the people. Several of his scouting parties also returned with good success. Attached to the rifle corps, under Captain Long, were several bold spirits, who signalized themselves so greatly in the partisan warfare in which they were engaged, that many of their exploits are freshly remembered among the inhabitants of Schoharie to this day. Of this number were David Elerson and a Virginian named Murphy. The first expedition of Captain Long was directed to the valley of the Charlotte River, one of the upper tributaries of the Susquehanna, flowing from the mountains south of Schoharie. The object was to arrest and bring to the fort a conspicuous Tory living upon that stream, named Service. His house being a point of rendezvous and supply for the Tory and Indian scouts, it was desirable that it should be broken up. While on his way to the place of destination, it was the good fortune of Captain Long to intercept a company of Tories, enlisted for the king's service, in the neighbourhood of Catskill, by a Captain Smith, who were then on their way to join Sir John Johnson at Niagara. Smith was killed by the simultaneous shots of Elerson and his captain, they being a few rods in advance at the moment when the Tory leader emerged at the head of his men from a thicket. His followers fled in every direction. They had intended to lodge that night with Service, but that unfortunate man had guests of quite another character. While unapprized of danger, his house was surrounded by the troops of Long, when in an instant Murphy and Elerson rushed in, and made him a prisoner. Having been in-

formed that he must accompany them to Schoharie, on leaving his house he seized an axe standing by the door, which he poised, and directed for a blow at the head of Murphy. The latter was too quick-sighted to receive it; but as he sprang aside to avoid the descending weapon, Service fell dead from the rifle of Elerson.

After his term of enlistment had expired, Murphy remained in Schoharie, and made war on his own account. He was as remarkable for his fleetness as for his courage and great precision in firing. He used a double-barrelled rifle, and the fact of his frequently firing twice in succession without stopping to load, and always bringing down his man, rendered him a terror to the Indians. Not knowing the peculiar construction of his rifle, they were impressed with the belief that it was a charmed weapon, and supposed he could continue firing as long and as often as he pleased without loading at all. He fought the savages after their own fashion; was more than their equal in stratagem or with his heels; and, the greater the apparent danger he was encountering, the greater was his delight. When he had opportunity, he took pattern of the Indians in scalping those who fell by his unerring aim; and it was said that he killed forty of their warriors with his own hands.

Colonel Gansevoort yet remained in the command of Fort Schuyler, and was continued there during nearly the whole year, although, wearied by inaction, Willett and others of his officers made a strong and formal effort to be relieved, that their regiment might have an opportunity to distinguish themselves in the field with the main army. At Fort Schuyler they could have little else to do than observe the motions of the enemy on the lakes and the St. Lawrence, and to watch, and occasionally cut off, a hostile party when venturing too near the garrison. But, from the correspondence of the officers, it

would appear that the troops of the garrison must have been the severest sufferers from this petty mode of warfare, since the enemy seemed ever to be hovering in the precincts, ready to bring down or carry into captivity such straggling soldiers as ventured beyond musket-shot from the fort.\*

Early in July, Lieutenant M'Clellan, an active and efficient officer, was sent with a small party to destroy the buildings and public works at Oswego, which it was ascertained were not at that moment in the occupation of the enemy. The object of the expedition was accomplished, and the buildings were burned to the ground, together with a quantity of ammunition, provisions, and other public stores. It seems unaccountable that this post was left thus wholly unprotected; the only occupants found by the American party being a woman and her children, and a lad fourteen years old. The woman and her family, together with her furniture and a suitable supply of provisions, were placed in an out-building, and left without farther molestation. The boy was brought off as a prisoner, and furnished some important information touching the movements of the

\* As an example of these individual murders, the following passage is copied from a MS. letter from Major Robert Cochran to Colonel Gansevoort, dated September 8, 1778. During the occasional absences of Colonel Gansevoort, Major Cochran was in command of the post: "This morning Benjamin Acker, of Captain De Witt's company, who was out in the meadow, was killed and scalped by a party of Indians, who were seen and fired at by the sentinel near Brodack's house. I heard the firing in my room, and ran to the officer of the guard to know what was the matter. I was informed that a party of Indians had fired upon one of our men who had gone to catch a horse, and that he had either been killed or taken prisoner. I ordered Captain Bleecker to go out immediately, with the guard just parading, to see if he could find him dead or alive. They found Acker lying dead. He was scalped, and a weapon about two feet and a half long, like this"—[here Major Cochran gave a drawing of the instrument—a war club, with a blade like the spear of a lance inserted in the side, near the upper end of it]—"lying near him. This lance-head had been stuck several times in his body. It is supposed to have been left behind on purpose, as there were several marks on it, denoting the number of persons killed and scalps taken by the means of it." [Captain Bleecker, mentioned in the foregoing extract, is the venerable Leonard Bleecker, yet living at Sing Sing. He was a very active and efficient officer at Fort Schuyler for a long time.]



enemy between their island rendezvous in the St. Lawrence and Niagara.

But Colonel Gansevoort had some serious troubles to encounter within the garrison, and some painful duties to execute. Notwithstanding the high character which the forces constituting the garrison had acquired, and the sound patriotism of his officers, the spirit of disaffection appeared among them in the spring, and the early part of the summer, to an alarming extent. Distant as was the post of Fort Schuyler from New-York, Sir Henry Clinton had succeeded in the introduction of an emissary within the fort, in the character of a recruit. His name was Samuel Geake. He was an American soldier, and had been corrupted while a prisoner in New-York, whence he was sent forth, in company with Major Hammell, also an American prisoner, whose virtue yielded to the all-subduing power of gold. Geake accompanied Hammell to Poughkeepsie, where, in furtherance of his iniquitous designs, he enlisted in Captain Abraham Swartwout's company, and was transferred to Fort Schuyler, to join Colonel Gansevoort's regiment; into which place, for specific objects, he was instructed to insinuate himself by an aid-de-camp of Sir Henry Clinton. After Hammell's arrest, Colonel Varick wrote to Gansevoort, putting him on his guard as to the character of Geake. A sergeant named Kartele was employed by Colonel Gansevoort to ingratiate himself in Geake's confidence, and, if possible, ascertain his true character, and penetrate his designs. The commission was successfully executed by the sergeant, and the whole circumstances of Hammell's employment by the enemy, and his own, were elicited. Geake was thereupon arrested, but not until he had made great progress in his designs, and was on the eve of desertion, for the purpose of joining the British army in Philadelphia. He was tried by a court-martial, made a full confession, and, with his

confederates, was sentenced to death. The sentence was not carried into execution against Geake, not only because the constitution of the court was irregular, but because of the desire of the commander-in-chief to spare him as a witness against Ham-mell.

The position of Fort Schuyler was of the first importance, as the key to the western entrance of the Mohawk country; but it was, nevertheless, too remote from the upper German settlements of the valley to afford them protection from sudden irruptions of the enemy, avoiding that fortress in their approach. The consequence was, that the work of destruction was actively prosecuted among the settlements referred to during the summer of this year. The first blow was struck upon a small and rather secluded hamlet, called Andrus-town, situated about six miles southeast of the German Flatts, on the 18th of July, by a small party of Indians led by Brant in person. This settlement consisted of seven families, planted upon a lot of one thousand acres. They were in affluent circumstances for borderers, and the object of the invasion was plunder. The settlement was utterly destroyed—everything of value that could be removed was carried away—the houses and other buildings were reduced to ashes—an aged man named Bell, with his son and two others, was killed—one other inhabitant perished in the flames of his own house—and the remainder of the little colony were carried into captivity. Advices of this catastrophe had no sooner reached the Flatts than a party of resolute Whigs determined to pursue the marauders, among whom was John Frank, one of the Committee of Safety. Arriving at the scene of desolation, they hastily buried the dead, and continued their march, accompanied by six or seven friendly Indians, to the Little Lakes, where, also, was a small white colony known as “Young’s Settlement,” from the name

of its founder. Here it was discovered that the enemy was so far in advance, that the chase was relinquished. But as Young, the head man of the settlement, was a Tory, as also was his next neighbour, a man named Collyer, the exasperated Whigs avenged, to a small extent, the destruction of Andrus-town, by plundering and burning their habitations.

But the most considerable event of the season in that vicinity was the entire destruction of the comparatively extensive and populous settlement of the German Flatts. This settlement, originally called Burnetsfield, from the circumstance that the patent had been granted by Governor Burnet, extended over the richest and most beautiful section of the Mohawk Valley, comprehending the broad alluvial lands directly beyond the junction of the West Canada Creek and the river, and including about ten miles of the valley from east to west. Midway of the settlement, on the south side of the river, yet stands the ancient stone church, the westernmost of the line of those structures built under the auspices of Sir William Johnson. A short distance east of the church stood the large and massive-built stone mansion of the Herkimer family, which, like the church itself, was used as a fort. Hence it was called Fort Herkimer. On the north side of the river, upon a gravelly plain, elevated some ten or fifteen feet above the surrounding flatts, stood Fort Dayton.\*

At the time of which we are writing, the settle-

\* The present site of the village of Herkimer, in the town of the same name, and one of the most beautiful localities in America. The name of German Flatts was designed for this town, which would have been the most appropriate, as Herkimer would have been for the town on the south side of the river, now called German Flatts, where the flatts are far less extensive, and where the Herkimer family resided. The mistake was made by the Legislature when the towns were named. This explanation, together with the geographical description in the text, is necessary, to prevent confusion in regard to the localities of Forts Dayton and Herkimer, in the record of subsequent events.

ment on the south side of the river numbered thirty-four dwelling-houses, and there were about an equal number upon the north side, together with as many barns and other out-buildings, and several mills. The population, for the number of houses, was numerous. The lands, rich by nature, and well cultivated, had that year brought forth by handfuls; so that the barns were amply stored with their products.

It was at the close of August, or early in the month of September, that this fine district was laid waste by the Indians under the direction of Brant. Most providentially, however, the invasion was attended with the loss of but two lives; one man being killed outright, and another, named M'Ginnis, perished in the flames. The particulars of this hostile irruption were these: Entertaining some suspicions of Brant, who was at Unadilla, a scout of four men had been despatched into that vicinity for observation. Three of these men were killed at the Edmeston settlement. The fourth, John Helmer, succeeded in making his escape, and returned to the flats at half an hour before sundown, just in time to announce that Brant, with a large body of Indians, was advancing, and would, in a few hours, be upon them. All was, of course, terror and alarm through the settlement; and the inhabitants, men, women, and children, were gathered into Forts Dayton and Herkimer for security. In flying to those defences, they gathered up the most valuable of their stuff, and, by means of boats and canoes upon the river, succeeded, in the course of the evening, in collecting a large portion of their best articles of furniture. But they had no time to look after their flocks and herds.

Early in the evening, Brant arrived at the edge of the settlement, but as the night came on excessively dark and rainy, he halted with his forces in a ravine, near the house of his Tory friend, Shoe

maker, where the younger Butler and his party were captured the preceding year. Here the chieftain lay with his warriors until the storm broke away towards morning, unconscious that his approach had been notified to the people by the scout in season to enable them to escape the blow of his uplifted arm. Before the dawn he was on foot, and his warriors were sweeping through the settlement; so that the torch might be almost simultaneously applied to every building it contained. Just as the day was breaking in the east, the fires were kindled, and the whole section of the valley was speedily illuminated by the flames of houses and barns, and all things else combustible. The spectacle, to the people in the forts, was one of melancholy grandeur. Every family saw the flames and smoke of its own domicil ascending to the skies, and every farmer the whole product of his labour for the season dissolving into ashes.

Having no fire-arms larger than their rifles, the Indians avoided even a demonstration against the forts, notwithstanding their chagrin that neither scalps nor prisoners were to grace their triumph. But as the light of day advanced, their warriors were seen singly, or in small groups, scouring the fields, and driving away all the horses, sheep, and black cattle that could be found. Nothing upon which they could lay their hands was left; and the settlement, which, but the day before, for ten miles, had smiled in plenty and in beauty, was now houseless and destitute. Happily, however, of human life there was no greater sacrifice than has already been mentioned. After the Indians had decamped with their booty, a force of between three and four hundred militiamen collected, and went in pursuit, following as far as Edmeston's plantation on the Unadilla River, where the bodies of the three scouts were found and buried. Put no other results attended this expedition. A party of the Oneida In-

dians was more successful. They penetrated into one of the Unadilla settlements burned several houses, retook some of the cattle driven from the German Flatts, and brought off a number of prisoners.

The Oneidas, with very few exceptions, were ever faithful to the cause of the Whigs, and sometimes fought with great personal bravery. The Oriskany clan of that nation joined General Herkimer on the morning of his disastrous battle, under their chiefs Cornelius and Colonel Honyerry, and sustained themselves valiantly in that murderous conflict.

But the acquisitions of booty by the Indians at the German Flatts were more than counterbalanced, a few days afterward, by their losses in their own chief towns, Unadilla and Oghkwaga, which were invaded, and in turn laid waste, by Colonel William Butler, with the 4th Pennsylvania regiment, a detachment of Colonel Morgan's riflemen, then recently stationed at Schoharie, as we have already seen, and a corps of twenty rangers. Having marched from Schoharie to the head waters of the Delaware, and descended that stream two days' march, Colonel Butler struck off thence to the Susquehanna, upon which he emerged in the neighbourhood of Unadilla. He approached the settlement with great caution, but the enemy had left the place several days before. Two of the white settlers, Tories, were made prisoners, however, one of whom was compelled to guide the forces of Butler to Oghkwaga, which service he performed. The town was taken possession of without interruption, the Indians having fled the day before in the greatest confusion, leaving behind a large quantity of corn, their dogs, some cattle, and a great part of their household goods. The march of Butler's troops had been fatiguing, and the vegetables and poultry, which they found here in great

abundance, enabled them to fare sumptuously during their stay. The town was uncommonly well built for an Indian settlement, there being a considerable number of good farmhouses on either side of the river. These were all destroyed, together with the Indian castle three miles farther down the river, as also large quantities of provisions, intended for their winter's supply. They saw nothing of the enemy, and lost only one man at that place, who was shot by an Indian straggler lurking in ambush. Returning to Unadilla, that settlement, upon both sides of the river, was burned, as also a gristmill and sawmill, the only ones in the Susquehanna Valley.

But although, so far as fighting was concerned, it was an easy campaign, still the difficulties encountered by the expedition were very great, and such as could not have been undergone but by men possessing a large share of hardiness, both of body and mind. They were obliged to carry their provisions on their backs, and, thus loaded, frequently to ford creeks and rivers. After the toils of hard marches, they were obliged to camp down during wet and chilly nights without covering, or even the means of keeping their arms dry. They completed their work in sixteen days, and returned to Schoharie. But the Indians were not slow in taking their revenge for this destruction of their towns. An Indian's vengeance slumbers no longer than until an opportunity is afforded for sating it, as will appear in the ensuing chapter.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

THE arrest of Walter N. Butler at the German Flatts, in the summer of 1777, his trial, and condemnation to death, his reprieve, as also his sub-

sequent imprisonment in Albany, and his escape, are facts with which the reader has already been made acquainted. Although his execution would have been perfectly justifiable under the *code militaire*, taken, as he had been within the American lines, in the very act of inviting the people to treason, yet the respectability of his family, and the associations he had himself formed in Albany, where he had been educated to the profession of the law, were the causes, through the interposition of those who had been his personal friends before the war, of saving his life. Still the reprieve granted by General Arnold was followed by rigorous confinement in the jail at Albany until the spring of the present year, when, being either sick in reality, or feigning to be so, through the clemency of General Lafayette his quarters were changed to a private house, where he was guarded by a single sentinel. The family with whom he lodged were Tories, and having succeeded in making the sentinel drunk, through their assistance Butler was enabled to effect his escape. A horse having been provided for him, he succeeded in joining his father at Niagara soon after the affair at Wyoming. His temper was severe and irascible, but he was, nevertheless, not without his good qualities, and was a young man of fair promise; "a pretty able young lawyer," to use an expression from the lips of one who knew him well. It is believed, however, that he took mortal offence at his treatment while in Albany, and re-entered the service of the crown, burning with resentment and thirsting for revenge.

This recapitulation, in part, of a portion of the younger Butler's history, is deemed essential in connexion with the events to be recorded in the present chapter.

There was with General Washington, during most of the summer, a Seneca chief, called *The Great Tree*, who, on leaving the headquarters of the com



mander-in-chief, professed the strongest friendship for the American cause, and his first object, after his return to his own people, was to inspire them with his own friendly sentiments. While passing through the Oneida nation on his way home, he professed the strongest confidence in his ability to keep his own tribe bound in the chain of friendship, and pledged himself, in the event of his failure, to come down with his friends and adherents, and join the Oneidas. But, on his arrival in his own country, The Great Tree found his tribe all in arms. The warriors had been collected from the remotest of their lodges, and were then thronging the two principal towns, Kanadaseago and Jennesee. Having heard that the Americans were preparing an expedition against their country, they had seized their hatchets; and The Great Tree was himself determined to chastise the enemy who should dare to penetrate his country. All the Indians west of their own tribe, including, of course, the Onondagas, together with the Indian settlements on the Susquehanna and its branches, were to join them; to rendezvous on the Tioga, and make a descent either upon the Pennsylvania or New-Jersey frontier.

The Mohawk chief, Thayendanega, was not among the Senecas at this time, and it is believed that the fermentation had been wrought by Butler after his return to Niagara. Be that as it may, he obtained the command of a detachment of his father's rangers, with permission to employ the forces of Captain Brant. Though late in the season, young Walter determined to undertake an expedition into Tryon county, and avenge his imprisonment. It has been asserted that, while on his way from Niagara with his rangers, Butler met Brant returning from the Susquehanna country to his old winter-quarters at Niagara, and that the proud Mohawk was not a little displeased at the idea of being assigned to a subordinate station under a man whom

he cordially disliked. But the difficulty was adjusted, and the sachem was prevailed upon to turn back upon the white settlements, with five hundred of his warriors. The united force comprised seven hundred men.

The point selected by the enemy was Cherry Valley, a settlement as remarkable for the respectability of its inhabitants as its location was for its beauty. Unlike the generality of border settlements, the people were intelligent, and exemplary for their morals. So scrupulous were they in regard to observing the precepts of Christianity, that their Committee of Safety declined sitting with the Tryon County Committee on the Sabbath day, unless in the event of such alarming circumstances as would necessarily "super-exceed the duties to be performed in attending the public worship of God," which they said did not then appear to be the case.

It has already been stated that, in consequence of their exposed situation, the Marquis de Lafayette had directed the erection of a fortification at that place early the preceding spring. Colonel Gansevoort at once solicited the command of the post, with the regiment which had so greatly distinguished itself the preceding year in the defence of Fort Schuyler; but it was given to Colonel Ichabod Alden, at the head of an eastern regiment, unfortunately but little accustomed to Indian warfare.

On the 8th of November, Colonel Alden received a despatch from Fort Schuyler by express, advising him that his post was to be attacked by the Tories and Indians. In consequence of the lateness of the season, the inhabitants, not anticipating any farther hostilities before spring, had removed their effects from the fortification, where, during the summer, they had been deposited for safety, back to their own dwellings. On the receipt of this intelligence, they requested permission to remove once more into the fort, or at least to be allowed again to depos-

ite their most valuable property within its walls. But Colonel Alden, discrediting the intelligence as an idle Indian rumour, denied their solicitations, assuring the people that he would use all diligence against surprise, and, by means of vigilant scouts, be at all times prepared to warn them of approaching danger. Accordingly, scouts were despatched in various directions on the 9th. The party proceeding down the Susquehanna, as it were in the very face of the enemy, very wisely kindled a fire in the evening, by the side of which they laid themselves down to sleep. The result might have been foreseen. They were all prisoners when they awoke!

Extorting all necessary information from the prisoners so opportunely taken, the enemy moved forward on the 10th—Butler with his rangers, and Thayendanegea with his Indians—encamping for the night on the top of a hill thickly covered with evergreens, about a mile southwest of the fort and village of Cherry Valley. The snow fell several inches during the night, the storm turning to rain in the morning, with a thick and cloudy atmosphere. The officers of the garrison were accustomed to lodge about among the families near the fort; and from the assurances of Colonel Alden, the apprehensions of the people were so much allayed that they were reposing in perfect security. Colonel Alden himself, with Stacia, his lieutenant-colonel, lodged with Mr. Robert Wells, a gentleman of great respectability, recently a judge of the county, who was, moreover, an intimate friend of Colonel John Butler, as he had also been of Sir William Johnson.\* Having ascertained the localities in which the officers lodged, the enemy approached the unsuspecting village in the greatest security, veiled by the haze which hung in the atmosphere. An alarm was, however, given before the enemy had actually

\* Robert Wells was the father of the late distinguished counsellor, Col. N. Wells, of New-York.

arrived in the village, by the firing of an Indian upon a settler from the outskirts, who was riding thither on horseback. He was wounded, but, nevertheless, pushed forward, and gave instant information to the vigilant colonel. Strange as it may seem, this officer still disbelieved the approach of an enemy in force, supposing the shot to have proceeded from a straggler. But he was soon convinced of his error; for, even before the guards could be called in, the Indians were upon them. Unfortunately, probably, for the inhabitants, the rangers had halted just before entering the village to examine their arms, the rain having damaged their powder. During this pause the Indians sprang forward; and the Senecas, being at that period the most ferocious of the Six Nations, were in the van. The house of Mr. Wells was instantly surrounded by the warriors of that tribe, and several Tories of no less ferocity, who rushed in and massacred the whole family, consisting at that time of himself, his mother, his wife, his brother and sister, John and Jane, three of his sons, Samuel, Robert, and William, and his daughter Eleanor. The only survivor of the family was John, who was then at school in Schenectady. His father had taken his family to that place for safety some months before, but his fears having subsided, they had just removed back to their home. Colonel Alden having escaped from the house, was pursued some distance down a hill by an Indian, who repeatedly demanded of him to surrender. This, however, he refused to do, turning upon his pursuer repeatedly, and snapping his pistol, but without effect. The Indian ultimately hurled his tomahawk with unerring direction at his head, and, rushing forward, tore his scalp from him in the same instant. Thus, in the very outset of the battle, fell the commander, who, had he been as prudent as he was brave, might have averted the tragic scenes of that hapless day. Lieutenant-colo

nel Stacia was made prisoner, and the American guards stationed at the house of Mr. Wells were all either killed or taken.

The destruction of the family of Mr. Wells was marked by circumstances of peculiar barbarity. It was boasted by one of the Tories that he had killed Mr. Wells while engaged in prayer—certainly a happy moment for a soul to wing its flight to another state of existence; but what the degree of hardihood that could boast of compassing the death of an unarmed man at such a moment! His sister Jane was distinguished alike for her beauty, her accomplishments, and her virtues. As the savages rushed into the house, she fled to a pile of wood on the premises, and endeavoured to conceal herself. She was pursued and arrested by an Indian, who, with perfect composure, wiped and sheathed his dripping knife, and took his tomahawk from his girdle. At this instant a Tory, who had formerly been a domestic in the family, sprang forward and interposed in her behalf, claiming her as a sister. The maiden, too, who understood somewhat of the Indian language, implored for mercy. But in vain. With one hand the Indian pushed the Tory from him, and with the other planted his hatchet deep into her temple!

The fort was repeatedly assaulted during the day, and at times with spirit; but the Indians being received by a brisk fire of grape and musketry from the garrison, avoided the fort, and directed their attention chiefly to plundering and laying waste the village, having sated themselves in the onset with blood.

Among the families which suffered from the tomahawks of the Indians and Tories—for the latter, as at Wyoming, were not to be outdone by their uncivilized allies—were those of the Rev. Samuel Dunlop and a Mr. Mitchell. Mrs. Dunlop was killed outright, and thus shared the fate of Mrs. Wells, her daughter. Mr. Dunlop and another daughter

would likewise have been murdered but for the interposition of Little Aaron, a chief of the Oghkwaga branch of the Mohawks, who led the old gentleman, tottering beneath the weight of years, to the door, and stood beside him for his protection. The Indians attempted to plunder him of some of his attire, but the sachem compelled them to relinquish that portion of their spoil. The venerable servant of God, shocked by the events of that day beyond the strength of his nerves, died within a year afterward.

The case of Mr. Mitchell was still more painful. He was in the field at work when he beheld the Indians approaching, and, being already cut off from his house, his only course was to the woods. Returning, after the enemy had retired, he found his house on fire, and within its plundered walls the murdered bodies of his wife and three of his children. The fourth, a little girl of ten or twelve years of age, had been left for dead. But signs of life appearing, the parent, having extinguished the fire, which had not yet made much progress, brought his little mangled daughter forth to the door, and, while bending over her, discovered a straggling party of the enemy approaching. He had but just time to conceal himself, before a Tory sergeant, named Newberry, rushed forward, and, by a blow of his hatchet, extinguished what little growing hope of life had been left by a darker though less savage enemy than himself. It is some consolation, while recording this deed of blood, to be able to anticipate the course of events so far as to announce that this brutal fellow paid the forfeit of his life on the gallows, by order of General James Clinton, at Canajoharie, in the summer of the following year. On the next day Mr. Mitchell removed his dead to the fort with his own arms, and the soldiers assisted in their interment. Several other families were cut off, the whole number of the inhabitants slain being thirty-

two, mostly women and children. In addition to these, sixteen soldiers were killed. Some of the inhabitants escaped, but the greater proportion were taken prisoners. Among the former were Mrs. Clyde, the wife of Colonel Clyde, who was absent, and her family. She succeeded in reaching the woods with her children, excepting her eldest daughter, whom she could not find at the moment; and although the savages were frequently prowling around her, she yet lay secure in her concealment until the next day. The eldest daughter, likewise, had made a successful flight, and returned in safety. Colonel Campbell was also absent; but hastening home on hearing the alarm, he arrived only in time to behold the destruction of his property by the conflagration of the village, and to ascertain that his wife and children had been carried into captivity. The torch was applied indiscriminately to every dwelling-house, and, in fact, to every building in the village. The barns, being filled with the combustible products of husbandry, served to render the conflagration more fierce and terrific, especially to the fugitive inhabitants who had escaped to the woods for shelter, and whose sufferings were aggravated by the consciousness that their retreating footsteps were lighted by the flames of their own households.

The prisoners taken numbered between thirty and forty. They were marched, on the evening of the massacre, down the valley about two miles south of the fort, where the enemy encamped for the night. Large fires were kindled round about the camp, into the centre of which the prisoners, of all ages and sexes, were promiscuously huddled, and there compelled to pass the hours till morning, many of them half naked, shivering from the inclemency of the weather, with no shelter but the frowning heavens, and no bed but the cold ground. It was a dismal night for the hapless group, rendered,

if possible, still more painful by the savage yells of exultation, the wild, half-frantic revelry, and other manifestations of joy on the part of the victors, at the success of their bloody enterprise. In the course of the night a division of the spoil was made among the Indians.

The retiring enemy had not proceeded far on their way before the prisoners, with few exceptions, experienced a change in their circumstances, as happy as it was unexpected. They had been separated, for the convenience of travelling, into small groups, in charge of different parties of the enemy. On coming to a halt, they were collected together, and informed that it had been determined to release all the women and children excepting Mrs. Campbell and her four children, and Mrs. Moore and her children. These it was resolved to detain in captivity as a punishment to their husbands, for the activity they had displayed in the border wars. With these exceptions, the women and their little ones were immediately sent back, bearing a letter from the commander of the rangers to General Schuyler. A key, perhaps, to the motives of Captain Butler in this act of humanity is found in the circumstance that, on the flight of his father and himself to Canada, his mother and the younger children had been left behind. Mrs. Butler and her children were detained by the Committee of Safety, and permission to follow the husband and son to Canada had been refused, as has been stated in a former chapter.

Having thus, in a great measure, disencumbered themselves of their prisoners, the enemy proceeded on their journey, by their usual route at that period, down the Susquehanna to its confluence with the Tioga, thence up that river into the Seneca country, and thence to Niagara. Mrs. Cannon, an aged lady, and the mother of Mrs. Campbell, was likewise held in captivity; but being unfitted for travelling by reason of her years, the Indian having both in charge



despatched the mother with his hatchet, by the side of the daughter, on the second day of their march. Mrs. Campbell was driven along by the uplifted hatchet, having a child in her arms eighteen months old, with barbarous rapidity, until the next day, when she was favoured with a more humane master. In the course of the march, a straggling party of the Indians massacred an English family, named Buxton, residing on the Butternut Creek, and reduced their buildings to ashes.

Thus terminated the expedition of Walter N. Butler and Joseph Brant to Cherry Valley. Nothing could exhibit an aspect of more entire desolation than did the site of that village on the following day, when the militia from the Mohawk arrived, too late to afford assistance. The inhabitants who escaped the massacre, and those who returned from captivity, abandoned the settlement, until the return of peace should enable them to plant themselves down once more in safety, and, in the succeeding summer, the garrison was withdrawn, and the post abandoned.

Next to the destruction of Wyoming, that of Cherry Valley stands out in history as having been the most conspicuous for its atrocity. And, as in the case of Wyoming, both in history and popular tradition, Joseph Brant has been held up as the foul fiend of the barbarians, and, of all others, deserving the deepest execration. Even the learned and estimable counsellor, who so long reported the adjudicated law of the State of New-York, in the tribute to the memory of the late John Wells, with which he closed the last volume of his juridical labours, has fallen into the same popular error, and applies the second stanza in the striking passage of "Gertrude of Wyoming," which called forth the younger Brant in vindication of his father's memory, to the case of his departed and eminent friend. It was, indeed, most true, as applied to the melancholy case of Mr.

Wells, of whose kindred "nor man, nor child, nor thing of living birth," had been left by the Indians. But it may be fearlessly asserted that it was not true as coupled with the name of Joseph Brant. His conduct on that fatal day was neither barbarous nor ungenerous. On the contrary, he did all in his power to prevent the shedding of innocent blood; and had it not been for a circumstance beyond his control, it is more than probable that the distinguished counsellor referred to would not have been left "alone of all his race." Captain Brant asserted, and there is no reason to question his veracity, that on the morning of the attack he left the main body of the Indians, and endeavoured to anticipate their arrival at the house of Mr. Wells, for the purpose of affording protection to the family. On his way it was necessary to cross a ploughed field, the yielding of the earth in which, beneath his tread, so retarded his progress, that he arrived too late.

But this is not all. On entering one of the dwellings, he found a woman employed in household matters. "Are you thus engaged," inquired the chief, "while all your neighbours are murdered around you?" The woman replied that they were in favour of the king. "That plea will not avail you to-day," replied the warrior. "They have murdered Mr. Wells's family, who were as dear to me as my own." "But," continued the woman, "there is one Joseph Brant; if he is with the Indians, he will save us." "I am Joseph Brant!" was the quick response, "but I have not the command, and I know not that I can save you; but I will do what is in my power." At the moment of uttering these words, he observed the Senecas approaching. "Get into bed quick," he commanded her, "and feign yourself sick." The woman obeyed, and when the Indians came up, he put them off with that pretext. Instantly, as they departed, he rallied a few of his Mohawks by a shrill signal, and directed them to

paint his mark upon the woman and her children. "You are now probably safe," he remarked, and departed.

Another instance will serve farther to illustrate the conduct and bearing of this distinguished Indian leader on that occasion: After the battle was over, he inquired of one of the captives for Captain M Kean, who had retired to the Mohawk Valley with his family. "He sent me a challenge once," said the chief; "I have now come to accept it. He is a fine soldier thus to retreat!" It was said, in reply, "Captain M'Kean would not turn his back upon an enemy where there was a probability of success." "I know it," rejoined Brant: "he is a brave man, and I would have given more to take him than any other man in Cherry Valley; but I would not have hurt a hair of his head."

These were generous sentiments, worthy of a generous soldier. Indeed, the whole conduct of the Mohawk chief on that melancholy day was anything rather than characteristic of the "monster" Brant has been represented to be. Of the conduct of the leader of the expedition, Captain Walter N. Butler, a less charitable judgment must be formed, not so much, perhaps, on account of the atrocities committed—because these, too, may have been beyond his control, or suddenly perpetrated without his knowledge—but because the expedition was entirely one of his own undertaking. It was said that Colonel John Butler was grieved at the conduct of his son at this place; remarking, on one occasion, in regard to the murder of Mr. Wells and family, "I would have gone miles on my hands and knees to save that family, and why my son did not do it, God only knows." It has also been asserted that the colonel accused Brant of having incited the Indians secretly to commit the excesses in question, in order to bring odium upon his son, under whose command, as the reader has already been informed, he had

been placed, strongly in opposition to his own wishes. But the Mohawk repelled the charge, and appealed to his former conduct, particularly in the case of Springfield, as a vindication of his character from the imputation of wanton cruelty.

These things may, or they may not, be true; but in either case the Loyalist Butlers, father and son, should be justly dealt by, although they have not been as yet. At least the world has never heard what they might possibly have said in their own defence—nay, what they did say—in regard to the affairs of Wyoming and Cherry Valley; and candour requires the admission, that the narratives of those events which have descended to us were written too soon after their occurrence to warrant a belief in the entire impartiality of the writers. But as truth constitutes the great excellence of history, and as a just opinion can rarely be formed upon testimony altogether *ex-parte* after fifty-eight years of silence, it may be allowed to the Butlers, though dead, to speak a word for themselves. The elder Butler lived at Niagara many years after the close of the contest; and, though employed in the British Indian Department, his conduct was such, both in public and private life, as to command the respect of those who knew him.

The letter of Captain Butler to General Schuyler, written the day after the affair at Cherry Valley, was delivered by the gentleman who, of all others, felt the greatest interest in facilitating the arrangement proposed—Colonel Campbell himself. It was not answered by General Schuyler, for the reason that he was not then in command of the district; and for the still farther reason that, from the circumstances of the case, it took a different direction. On the 1st of January, however, a letter upon the subject was addressed to Captain Butler by Brigadier-general James Clinton, which called forth the following reply:

## CAPTAIN BUTLER TO GENERAL CLINTON.

"Niagara, 18th February, 1779.

"SIR,

"I have received a letter dated the 1st of January last, signed by you, in answer to mine of the 12th of November.

"Its contents I communicated to Lieutenant-colonel Bolton, the commanding officer of this garrison, &c., by whom I am directed to acquaint you that he had no objection that an exchange of prisoners, as mentioned in your letter, should take place; but not being fully empowered by his Excellency General Haldimand to order the same immediately to be put in execution, has thought proper I should go down to the commander-in-chief for his direction in the matter.

"In the mean time, Colonel Butler, as he ever has done on every other occasion, will make every effort in his power to have all the prisoners, as well those belonging to your troops as the women and children in captivity among the different Indian nations, collected and sent in to this post, to be forwarded to Crown Point, should the exchange take place by the way of Canada, or to Oswego, if settled there. In either case, Colonel Bolton desires me to inform you that the prisoners shall receive from him what assistance their wants may require, which prisoners have at all times received at this post.

"The disagreeable situation of your people in the Indian villages, as well as ours among you, will induce me to make all the expedition in my power to Canada (Quebec), in order that the exchange may be settled as soon as possible. For the good of both, I make no doubt that his Excellency General Haldimand will acquiesce in the proper exchange. The season of the year renders it impossible that it should take place before the 10th or 15th of May next. However, I shall write you, by the way of

Crown Point, General Haldimand's determination, and when and where the exchange will be most agreeable to him to be made. I could wish Mrs. Butler and her family, including Mrs. Scheehan and son, and Mrs. Wall, were permitted to go to Canada in the spring, even should the exchange be fixed at Ontario.

"It is not our present business, sir, to enter into an altercation, or to reflect on the conduct of either the British or the Continental forces, or on that of each other; but since you have charged (on report, I must suppose) the British officers in general with inhumanity, and Colonel Butler and myself in particular, in justice to them, and in vindication of his and my own honour and character, I am under the disagreeable necessity to declare the charge unjust and void of truth, and which can only tend to deceive the world, though a favourite cry of the Congress on every occasion, whether in truth or not.

"We deny any *cruelties* to have been committed at Wyoming, either by whites or Indians; so far to the contrary, that not a man, woman, or child was hurt after the capitulation, or a woman or child before it, and none taken into captivity. Though, should you call it *inhumanity*, the killing *men in arms in the field*, we, in that case, plead guilty. The inhabitants killed at Cherry Valley do not lay at my door: my conscience acquits. If any are guilty (as accessories) it's yourselves; at least, the conduct of some of your officers. First, Colonel Hartley, of your forces, sent to the Indians the enclosed, being a copy of his letter charging them with crimes they never committed, and threatening them and their villages with fire and sword, and no quarters. The burning of one of their villages, then inhabited only by a few families—your friends—who imagined they might remain in peace and friendship with you, till assured, a few hours before the arrival of your troops, that they should not even receive quarters.

took to the woods; and, to complete the matter, Colonel Denniston and his people appearing again in arms with Colonel Hartley, after a solemn capitulation and engagement not to bear arms during the war, and Colonel Denniston not performing a promise to release a number of soldiers belonging to Colonel Butler's corps of rangers, then prisoners among you, were the reasons assigned by the Indians to me, after the destruction of Cherry Valley, for their not acting in the same manner as at Wyoming. They added, that, being charged by their enemies with what they never had done, and threatened by them, they had determined to convince you it was not fear which had prevented them from committing the one, and that they did not want spirit to put your threats against them in force against yourselves.

"The prisoners sent back by me, or any now in our or the Indians' hands, must declare I did everything in my power to prevent the Indians killing the prisoners, or taking women and children captive, or in anywise injuring them. Colonel Stacey and several other officers of yours, when exchanged, will acquit me; and must farther declare, that they have received every assistance, before and since their arrival at this post, that could be got to relieve their wants. I must, however, beg leave, by-the-by, to observe, that I experienced no humanity, or even common justice, during my imprisonment among you.

"I enclose you a list of officers and privates whom I should be glad were exchanged likewise. The list of the families we expect for those as well sent back as others in our hands, you have likewise enclosed.

"Colonel Stacey and several officers, and others, your people, are at this post, and have leave to write. I am your very humble serv't,

"WALTER N. BUTLER, *Capt. Corps of Rangers.*  
"Brigadier-general Clinton, of the Continental Forces"

This is a straightforward, manly letter; and when the impartial reader is weighing the testimony in regard to the transactions of which it speaks, it certainly deserves consideration. It is, moreover, believed to be the first time that the accused have been permitted to relate their own side of the case. There were, no doubt, bloody outrages committed, probably on both sides, because in such a contest, waged by borderers, many of whom, as has been seen, were previously burning with indignation against each other, it is hardly to be expected that individual combatants would always contend hand to hand with all the courtesy which characterized gallant knights in the days of chivalry. In justice to Colonel John Butler, moreover, it must be admitted that his conduct towards his prisoners at Niagara, and among the Indians in that country, was uniformly characterized by humanity. One proof of this disposition was afforded in the case of Colonel Stacia, whose destruction had, for some reason or other, been determined upon by Molly Brant, the Indian wife of Sir William Johnson, who, in her widowhood, had been taken from Johnstown to Niagara.\*

The few prisoners from Cherry Valley were marched, by the route already indicated, to the

\* Molly Brant's descendants from Sir William Johnson compose some of the most respectable and intelligent families of Upper Canada at this day. The traditions of the Mohawk Valley state that the acquaintance of Sir William with Molly had a rather wild and romantic commencement. The story runs, that she was a very sprightly and beautiful Indian girl of about sixteen when he first saw her. It was at a regimental militia muster, where Molly was one of a multitude of spectators. One of the field-officers coming near her upon a prancing steed, by way of banter she asked permission to mount behind him. Not supposing she could perform the exploit, he said she might. At the word she leaped upon the crupper with the agility of a gazelle. The horse sprang off at full speed, and, clinging to the officer, her blanket flying, and her dark tresses streaming in the wind, she flew about the parade-ground swift as an arrow, to the infinite merriment of the collected multitude. The baronet, who was a witness of the spectacle, admiring the spirit of the young squaw, and becoming enamoured of her person, took her home as his wife.



Seneca country. Mrs. Campbell was carried to the Seneca Castle at Kanadaseaga, where she was presented to a family to fill a place made vacant by the death of one of its members. Her children, the infant included, were separated from her, and distributed among different Indian families. Being skilful with her needle, and rendering herself useful to those with whom she lived, she was treated with indulgence. Among other little civilities, perceiving that she wore caps, an Indian presented her one, which was cut and spotted with blood. On a closer scrutiny, her feelings were shocked by the discovery, from the mark, that it had belonged to the lovely companion of her youth, the hapless Jane Wells!

After returning from a successful expedition, a dance of *Thanksgiving* is performed by the Iroquois, which partakes of the character of a religious ceremony, and Mrs. Campbell had the opportunity, soon after her arrival at Kanadaseaga, of seeing the festival in honour of their recent victory, of which she herself was one of the trophies. A grand council was convoked for this purpose, and preparations were made for the observance of the festival, upon a scale corresponding with the importance of the achievements they were to celebrate. The arrangements having been completed, the warriors came forth to the centre of the village, where the great fire had been kindled, horribly disfigured by black and red paint, and commenced their savage rites by singing of their own exploits, and those of their ancestors; by degrees working themselves up into a tempest of passion; whooping, yelling, and uttering every hideous cry; brandishing their knives and war-clubs, and throwing themselves into the most menacing attitudes, in a manner terrific to the unpracticed beholder. There was no prisoner put to the torture, or attired with the raven death-cap on this occasion; but the prisoners were paraded, and

the scalps borne in procession, as would have been the standards taken in civilized warfare in the celebration of a triumph. For every scalp, and for every prisoner taken, the *scalp-yell*, or, as it is sometimes called, the *death-halloo*, was raised in all its mingled tones of triumph and terror. The white dog for the sacrifice was then killed; the offerings collected were thrown into the fire; whereupon the dog was laid upon the pile and thoroughly roasted. The flesh was then eaten, and the wild festival closed.

From an account of the ceremonies at one of the festivals, of which Mrs. Campbell was a spectator during her captivity, she must have been present at the great annual feast of thanksgiving and remission of sin, which is held by the Senecas and other tribes of the confederacy. This is their greatest national and most solemn sacrifice. It is invariably held at the time of the old moon in January, and is celebrated with great parade; the ceremonies being conducted with the utmost order, harmony, and decorum, under the direction of a large committee appointed for that purpose.

The festivities continued nine days, on the first of which two white dogs, without spot or blemish, if such could be found, were strangled and hung up before the door of the council-house, at the height of twenty feet. Not a drop of blood was allowed to be shed in compassing their death, as the victims would thereby be rendered unfit for the sacrifice. After the animals were killed, and before their suspension, their faces were painted red, as also the edges of their ears and other parts of their bodies. They were then fantastically decorated with ribands and feathers, rendering them as beautiful, in the eye of an Indian, as possible. Their fancy dress being completed, the dogs were hung up, and the ceremonies of the frolic commenced. In the course of the first day every lodge in the town was visited by the committee, each member being provided with

a shovel, with which he removed the ashes and coals from every hearth, and scattered them to the winds. In this manner the fire of every lodge was extinguished, to be re-kindled only by striking virgin sparks from the flint. The discharge of a gun at every lodge announced that the work of purification, even of fire itself, had been performed; and with this ceremony ended the labours of the first day.

The ceremonies of the second day were opened with a dance by the committee, after which, dressed in bear-skins, the members visited every lodge, with baskets to take up alms, receiving whatever was bestowed, but particularly tobacco, and other articles used for incense in the sacrifice. Two or three days were occupied in receiving these grateful donations, during which time the people at the council-house were engaged in dances and other recreations. On the fifth day masks were added to the bear-skin dresses of the masters of the festival, some ludicrous and others frightful, in which they ran about the village, smearing themselves with dirt, and bedaubing all such as refused to add to the contents of their baskets of incense. While thus engaged, the collectors were supposed to receive into their own bodies all the sins of their tribe, however numerous or heinous, committed within the preceding year.

On the ninth day of the feast, by some magical process, the sins of the nation thus collected were transfused from the several members of the committee into one of their number. The dogs were then taken down, and the whole weight of the nation's iniquity, by another magical process, was transfused into their lifeless carcasses. The bodies of the dogs were next laid upon an altar of wood, to which fire was applied, and the whole consumed: the masters of the sacrifice throwing the tobacco and other odoriferous articles into the flames, the incense ascending from which was supposed to be acceptable to the Great Spirit. The sacrifice ended,

the people all partook of a bountiful feast, the chief article of which was succatash. Then followed the war and peace dances, and the smoking of the calumet. Thus refreshed, and relieved from the burden of sin—at peace with the Great Spirit, and with each other—the warriors, with their families, returned, each to his own house, prepared to enter upon the business and duties of another year; the chiefs, during the festival, having carefully reviewed the past, and adjusted their policy for the future.

Captain Butler having returned from his visit to General Haldimand, with permission for the proposed exchange of prisoners, the colonel, his father, proceeded to the Seneca castle to negotiate for the release of Mrs. Campbell. The family by whom she had been adopted were very reluctant to part with her; but after the holding of a council, the strong appeals of Colonel Butler, who was anxious for the release of his own wife and family, prevailed, and Mrs. Campbell reached Niagara in June, 1779. While residing there, among others she had an opportunity of seeing the celebrated Catharine Montour, whose name occurs in the preceding pages in connexion with the battle of Wyoming. One of her two sons, who had signalized themselves at Wyoming, was also in the affair at Cherry Valley.

It was not until June of the following year that Mrs. Campbell was sent from Niagara to Montreal, on her way home. While residing at the former post, the Indians having been driven into the fort, she was enabled to recover three of her children. On her arrival at Montreal, she met with Mrs. Butler and her family, who had been previously released. Here, also, and in charge of that lady, Mrs. Campbell found her fourth child, a little son who had been torn from her in the Cherry Valley massacre. He was dressed in the green uniform of Butler's rangers; but had forgotten the English language, speaking nothing but Indian. From Mon

trear Mrs. Campbell was sent to Albany by the way of Lake Champlain, where she was shortly afterward joined by her husband, who had been stationed at Fort Schuyler most of the time during her captivity.

The destruction of Cherry Valley closed the warlike operations of both nations in the North for that year. A formidable campaign had, indeed, been projected early in the season, as has been already stated, not only against the hostiles of the Six Nations, but likewise against the nations more remote, for whom Detroit was the common centre. But the larger half of this enterprise had been abandoned after the irruption into Wyoming, and the next project contemplated the invasion of the Seneca country by way of the Tioga and Chemung Rivers. In October this branch of the project was likewise deferred, at the suggestion of Generals Gates and Schuyler. Thus closed the Northern campaigns of 1778. The British, Tories, and Indians went into winter-quarters, and the frontier inhabitants disposed of themselves as best they could.

Much has been said in the traditions of Tryon county, and somewhat, also, in the courts of law, in cases involving titles to real estate formerly in the family of Sir William Johnson, respecting the burial of an iron chest, by his son, Sir John, previous to his flight to Canada, containing the most valuable of his own and his father's papers. Late in the autumn of the present year, General Haldimand, at the request of Sir John, sent a party of between forty and fifty men privately to Johnstown, to dig up and carry the chest away. The expedition was successful; but the chest not being sufficiently tight to prevent the influence of dampness from the earth, the papers had become mouldy, rotten, and illegible, when taken up. The information respecting this expedition was derived, in the spring following, from a man named Helmer, who composed one of the party, and assisted in disinterring the chest. Hel-

mer had fled to Canada with Sir John. While retiring from Johnstown with the chest, he injured his ankle; and by reason of his lameness, went back to his father's house, where he remained concealed until spring, when he was arrested. He was tried as a spy by a court-martial, at Johnstown, April 15, 1779, and sentenced to death, chiefly on his own admissions to the court. A considerable number of rather summary executions, by the Whigs of Tryon county, took place in the course of the contest.

The leading military events occurring in other parts of the country, during the year 1778, have already been incidentally adverted to, with the exception of those at the South. In the course of the summer, two incursions of British regulars and American refugees had been made from Florida into Georgia. Both expeditions met with such disheartening obstacles as to induce their retreat without accomplishing more than the destruction of the church, dwelling-houses, and rice fields of Midway. In return for these visitations, General Robert Howe led an expedition of about two thousand men, mostly militia, into Florida. He captured the British posts on the St. Mary's River, and was proceeding successfully, when his march was arrested by sickness so fatal to his army as to compel a relinquishment of the enterprise. Towards the close of the year, the British commander-in-chief determined to strike a signal blow against the South. For this purpose, an expedition of two thousand men, under the command of Colonel Campbell, an officer of courage and ability, embarked at New-York on the 27th of November, destined against Savannah. General Howe, to whom the defence of Georgia had been confided, had but six hundred regular troops and a few hundred militia to oppose the invaders. This officer had taken a position between the landing and the town, where a bat-

tle was fought on the 29th of December. He was outnumbered, outgeneralled, and beaten, with a loss of one hundred killed. The town and fort of Savannah, thirty-eight officers, four hundred and fifteen privates, twenty-three mortars, together with the shipping in the river, and a large quantity of ammunition and provisions, fell into the hands of the conquerors. It was an easy victory to the enemy, whose loss was but seven killed and nineteen wounded.

From these glimpses of the events of the year 1778, occurring elsewhere than in the Indian country, it seems, after the battle of Monmouth, to have been a season of comparative inactivity on both sides. Still, having repossessed themselves of the strong pass of the Highlands, immediately after the return of Sir Henry Clinton and Commodore Hotham to New-York, towards the close of the preceding year, no lack of industry was exhibited on the part of the Americans in strengthening and multiplying its defences, from which neither force nor treachery ever again dislodged them.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

THE erection of an advanced post, called Fort Laurens, on the Tuscarawa, by General M'Intosh, who was directed to advance upon the Indian towns of Sandusky, has been mentioned in a preceding chapter. Colonel Gibson, who had been left in command of the fort, with a garrison of one hundred and fifty men, soon found his position rather uncomfortable, by reason of the swarms of Indians hovering about the precincts, who soon became so numerous as completely to invest the little fortress.

The first hostile demonstration of the forest warriors was executed with equal cunning and success. The horses of the garrison were allowed to forage for themselves upon the herbage, among the dried prairie-grass immediately in the vicinity of the fort, wearing bells, that they might be the more easily found, if straying too far. It happened, one morning in January, that the horses had all disappeared, but the bells were heard, seemingly at no great distance. They had, in truth, been stolen by the Indians, and conveyed away. The bells, however, were taken off, and used for another purpose. Availing themselves of the tall prairie-grass, the Indians formed an ambuscade, at the farthest extremity of which they caused the bells to jingle as a decoy. The artifice was successful. A party of sixteen men was sent in pursuit of the straggling steeds, who fell into the snare. Fourteen were killed upon the spot, and the remaining two taken prisoners, one of whom returned at the close of the war, and of the other nothing was ever heard.

Towards evening of the same day, the whole force of the Indians, painted, and in the full costume of war, presented themselves in full view of the garrison, by marching in single files, though at a respectful distance, across the prairie. Their number, according to a count from one of the bastions, was eight hundred and forty-seven; altogether too great to be encountered in the field by so small a garrison. After this display of their strength, the Indians took a position upon an elevated piece of ground at no great distance from the fort, though on the opposite side of the river. In this situation they remained several weeks, in a state rather of armed neutrality than of active hostility. Some of them would frequently approach the fort sufficiently near to hold conversations with those upon the walls. They uniformly professed a desire for peace, but protested against the encroachments of the



white people upon their lands ; more especially was the erection of a fort so far within the territory claimed by them as exclusively their own, a cause of complaint, nay, of admitted exasperation. There was with the Americans in the fort an aged friendly Indian, named John Thompson, who seemed to be in equal favour with both parties, visiting the Indian encampment at pleasure, and coming and going as he chose. They informed Thompson that they deplored the continuance of hostilities, and finally sent word by him to Colonel Gibson that they were desirous of peace, and if he would present them with a barrel of flour, they would send in their proposals the next day. The flour was sent, but the Indians, instead of fulfilling their part of the stipulation, withdrew, and entirely disappeared. They had, indeed, continued the siege as long as they could obtain subsistence, and raised it only because of the lack of supplies. Still, as the beleaguering was begun in stratagem, so was it ended. Colonel Gibson's provisions were also running short, and, as he supposed the Indians had entirely gone off, he directed Colonel Clark, of the Pennsylvania line, with a detachment of fifteen men, to escort the invalids of the garrison, amounting to ten or a dozen men, back to Fort M'Intosh. But the Indians had left a strong party of observation lurking in the neighbourhood of the fort, and the escort had proceeded only two miles before it was fallen upon, and the whole number killed with the exception of four, one of whom, a captain, escaped back to the fort. The bodies of the slain were interred by the garrison, on the same day, with the honours of war. A party was likewise sent out to collect the remains of the fourteen who had first fallen by the ambuscade, and bury them.

The situation of the garrison was now becoming deplorable. For two weeks the men had been reduced to half a pound of sour flour, and a like quan-

ity of offensive meat, per diem; and for a week longer they were compelled to subsist only upon raw hides, and such roots as they could find in the circumjacent woods and prairies, when General M'Intosh most opportunely arrived to their relief, with supplies, and a re-enforcement of seven hundred men. But still they came near being immediately reduced to short allowance again, by an untoward accident causing the loss of a great portion of their fresh supplies. These supplies were transported through the wilderness upon pack-horses. The garrison, overjoyed at the arrival of succours on their approach to within about a hundred yards of the fort manned the parapets and fired a salute of musketry. But the horses, young in the service, were affrighted at the detonation of the guns, and broke from their guides. The example was contagious, and in a moment more the whole cavalcade of pack-horses were bounding into the woods at full gallop, dashing their burdens to the ground, and scattering them over many a rood in all directions, the greater portion of which could never be recovered. But there was yet enough of provisions saved to cause the mingling of evil with the good. Very incautiously, the officers dealt out two days' rations per man, the whole of which was devoured by the famishing soldiers, to the imminent hazard of the lives of all, and resulting in the severe sickness of many. Leaving the fort again, General M'Intosh assigned the command to Major Vernon, who remained upon the station several months. He, in turn, was left to endure the horrors of famine, until longer to endure was death; whereupon the fort was evacuated and the position abandoned, its occupation and maintenance, at the cost of great fatigue and suffering, and the expense of many lives having been not of the least service to the country.

But, notwithstanding the untoward result of General M'Intosh's expedition, the Indian branch of the

service opened auspiciously the present year elsewhere, and first in a region yet deeper in the West than Fort Laurens. Colonel Hamilton, the British lieutenant-governor of Detroit, a rough, bad-tempered, and cruel officer, who had signalized himself by the exertion of a malignant influence over the Indians, and had provoked them to take up the hatchet against the Americans by every possible means—instigating them to deeds of blood by large rewards—had projected a powerful Indian expedition against the Virginia frontier, to be executed early in the spring. With this design, at the close of the preceding autumn Hamilton left Detroit, and took post at St. Vincent's, on the Wabash, in order to act earlier and more efficiently immediately after the breaking up of winter. But his purpose was most happily defeated by a blow from a direction which he did not anticipate. Colonel Clarke, who was yet with a small force in command of Kaskaskias, having learned in February that Hamilton had weakened himself by despatching many of his Indians in different directions to annoy the frontiers of the states, formed the bold resolution of attacking him in his quarters. After a difficult movement by land and water, at the head of one hundred and thirty men, Clarke suddenly arrived before St. Vincent's. The town at once submitted, and on the following day Colonel Hamilton and the garrison surrendered themselves prisoners of war. It was the good fortune of Colonel Clarke, also, to intercept and capture a valuable convoy of provisions and stores coming to St. Vincent's from Detroit. Hamilton was transferred to Virginia, where the Council of the Commonwealth instituted an inquiry into the inhuman conduct imputed to him, and his confinement in irons, on a diet of bread and water, was recommended. The plans of the enemy were not a little disconcerted by this small, though brilliant affair; and peace with several of the Indian

tribes in that direction was the immediate consequence.

In the mean time, and before this disaster befell the Detroit expedition, some bold winter emprise was projected by Joseph Brant, which, in consequence, probably, of the capture of Hamilton, miscarried, or, rather, was not attempted to be put in execution. There is reason to suppose that a part of his project was to strike a blow upon the Oneidas themselves, unless they could be seduced from their neutrality, amounting, as it did, almost to an alliance with the United States.\* But this faithful tribe were neither to be coaxed nor driven from the stand they had maintained since the beginning of the controversy. On the 16th and 17th of January, the Oneidas and Tuscaroras held a council, to deliberate upon the invitations of the Quiquogas and Captain Brant, the result of which they communicated to Colonel Van Dyck on the following day. They informed that efficient officer that, after giving permission to any of their tribe who desired to join the enemy to withdraw, there was a unanimous resolution of the council "to stand by each other in defence of their lives and liberty, against any enemy that might be disposed to attack them."

Seven of the principal Onondaga chiefs, who had hitherto been considered as neutrals, being at the time in Oneida, on their way to Fort Schuyler, it was determined to call them in to the council, and acquaint them with the above resolution. It was

\* On the 9th of April, 1779, Congress passed a resolution granting the commission of captain to four of the Oneida and Tuscarora Indians, and eight commissions of lieutenants. Subsequently, the then principal Oneida chief, Louis Atayataroughta, was commissioned a lieutenant-colonel. Louis, or "Colonel Louis," as he was afterward called, was the representative of three races, being part Indian, part negro, and part white man. A few other commissions were issued to those Indians in the course of the war. The greater number served faithfully. Some were killed, and three of the lieutenants deserted to the enemy, and exchanged their commissions for the same rank in the British service.

accordingly done, by the transmission of a large black belt of wampum. The Onondagas replied, "That they were very glad to hear the resolution which their children, the Oneidas and Tuscaroras, had made, and were determined to join them to oppose any invader."

The Onondagas farther engaged, upon their return home, to effect a final separation in their tribe, and insist that every one should declare for one side or the other. The conduct of most of the Onondagas had been from the first equivocal, often openly hostile. But those present at this council manifested a better feeling, and joined in the request of the Oneidas for troops to aid in their protection. The Oneidas, on this occasion, placed great confidence in the professions of their Onondaga brethren, and were in high spirits at the result of the council.

There was other evidence, not only of the intention of Thayendanegea to make a powerful Indian descent upon the Mohawk during this winter, but of the supposed fidelity of these Onondagas to the United States. About the middle of February, General Clinton having, through various channels, and by several expresses, received information at Albany of such a design, marched to Schenectady with Colonel Van Schaick's regiment, ordering the latter as far up the Mohawk as Caughnawaga, there to await the event. On the 26th of February, Captain Copp, of Fort Van Dyck, wrote to Captain Graham, then in charge of Fort Schuyler, announcing that two of the Oneida messengers, of distinguished (Indian) families, had just returned from Niagara, where they had obtained positive evidence of Brant's purpose. The Mohawk chief had received expresses announcing that the Shawanese and Delawares were to strike a simultaneous blow upon the frontier of Virginia;\* and Brant himself was *as* lead

\* The project of Colonel Hamilton, frustrated by his capture

the main expedition direct to the Mohawks, & while another diversion was to be created by sending a smaller force round by the Unadilla, to fall upon the settlements of Schoharie. In regard to the fidelity of the Onondagas, it was stated by the Oneida chiefs that fourteen of that nation had been despatched to Niagara by the chiefs of the tribe, to persuade their brethren, who had taken up the hatchet with the Mohawks, to return. But these fourteen messengers had not been permitted to come back themselves, and the Onondagas were apprehensive that they and all their people at Niagara had been made prisoners. The uneasiness in Tryon county was greatly increased under these circumstances. Major Jelles Fonda wrote to General Clinton that there were yet three hundred Tory families in the northern part of that settlement, affording aid and comfort to the hostile refugees, who kept up a continual intercourse with them, across through the woods, or by Lake Champlain to Canada. For greater security, therefore, he urged permission to build a strong blockhouse, and station fifty rangers within it, on the Sacandaga River, directly north of Johnstown.

Captain Brant, however, either abandoned or deferred the threatened invasion. The winter, consequently, passed away without any serious disturbance in that region. But, notwithstanding all the fair professions of the Onondagas, their treachery had become alike so manifest and so injurious as to render it expedient, immediately on the opening of the spring, to make them a signal example to their red brethren. Accordingly, early in April an expedition was detailed upon this service by General Clinton, with the approbation of the commander-in-chief, consisting of detachments from the regiments of Colonels Van Schaick and Gansevoort, to the number of five hundred men, under the conduct of the former. The troops were moved as expedi

tiously as possible to Fort Schuyler, and thirty batteaux were simultaneously ordered thither to transport them down Wood Creek, and through the Oneida Lake to Three Rivers. Colonel Van Schaick's instructions were very full and explicit upon every point. The design was to proceed as rapidly and cautiously as possible, in order to take the Indians by surprise; for which purpose, on the morning of the departure of the expedition, it was to be announced that its destination was against Oswego. Colonel Van Schaick was directed to burn and utterly destroy the village and castle of the Onondagas, together with all their cattle and effects; but he was strictly enjoined to make as many prisoners as possible, and put none to death who could be taken alive. The following passage occurs in the instructions of General Clinton on this occasion, which is worthy of preservation: "Bad as the savages are, they never violate the chastity of any women, their prisoners. Although I have very little apprehension that any of the soldiers will so far forget their character as to attempt such a crime on the Indian women who may fall into their hands, yet it will be well to take measures to prevent such a stain upon our army." This injunction speaks volumes in praise of the soldier who wrote it.

The orders to Colonel Van Schaick were issued on the 9th of April, and so rapidly were the necessary arrangements expedited, that everything was in readiness for the departure from Fort Schuyler on the 18th. During the evening of that day, the batteaux, with the necessary stores, were silently removed across the carrying-place to Wood Creek, and all things there placed in order. The troops were early in motion on the morning of the 19th, and a thick mist contributed essentially in covering the movement, had there been any spies lurking about to make observation. The number of men embarked, including officers, was five hundred and

fifty-eight. Their progress to the Oneida Lake was considerably impeded, by reason of trees which had fallen across the creek, so that much of the first day's journey was performed by the troops on foot. The passage of the Oneida Lake was effected as expeditiously as possible ; and although they encountered a strong and excessively disagreeable headwind, they nevertheless reached the Onondaga Landing, opposite to old Fort Brewington, with the whole flotilla, by three o'clock in the afternoon of the 20th. Leaving a suitable guard with the boats, the little army pushed immediately forward, and, despite the obstacles in traversing a deep-tangled forest, the soil resembling a morass, they marched nine miles without halting. The night was dark, wet, and cold ; but knowing well the wariness of the enemy and the celerity of their movements, and how frequently they were prepared to strike when least expected, the troops were necessarily precluded from kindling fires, and obliged to sleep on their arms. The march was resumed very early on the morning of the 21st, and, in order to save time, they were obliged to ford an arm of the Onondaga Lake, about two hundred yards wide and four feet in depth. Arriving at the estuary of Onondaga Creek, at the head of the lake, Captain Graham, commanding the advanced guard, captured one of the warriors of the tribe ; and although they were now within two or three miles of the village and castle, this was the first Indian seen, or who was apprized of the approach of the expedition. Captain Graham was now directed again to advance with all possible rapidity and caution, for the purpose of surrounding the lower castle, while the residue of the main force was divided into small detachments, and hurried forward for the purpose of falling upon the other towns in such rapid succession as, if possible, to take all the villages by surprise. This chain of villages extended through the valley of the Onondaga Creek for the distance



of ten miles. The tribe had once been among the most powerful of the Aganuschioni, or confederated people of the Five Nations. Situated in the centre of the confederacy, to the Onondagas, time immemorial, had been committed the keeping of the great council fire. This fire had been extinguished in 1692 by Count Frontenac, who then came against it at the head of a powerful expedition from Montreal, and utterly destroyed the village. It had again been put out in the spring of 1777, and was now doomed to a third extinction, equally summary and complete with the former. But although the expedition of Colonel Van Schaick had been thus far, and was throughout, admirably conducted, the surprise was not as complete as had been intended. While Captain Graham's company was securing a few prisoners taken in the outskirts of the village, near the principal castle, means were found by the wily adversary to give the alarm in advance. The tidings, of course, flew from village to village with greater rapidity than the several detachments of troops could equal, and the Indians scattered off to the woods in all directions. But such was the precipitancy of their flight, that they carried nothing with them, not even their arms. Still, thirty-three of their number were taken prisoners, and twelve killed. Three villages, consisting of about fifty houses, were burned to the ground, and a large quantity of provisions, consisting chiefly of beans and corn, destroyed. Nearly one hundred muskets were taken among the booty, and several rifles, together with a considerable quantity of ammunition. Their swivel at the council-house was rendered useless, and their cattle and horses were destroyed. The work of destruction having been completed, the detachment immediately commenced its return to Fort Schuyler. It was fired upon in the afternoon by a small party of Indians in the woods, but without injury, while one of the enemy fell by the

return fire. On Saturday, the 24th, the troops were all back again at Fort Schuyler, having performed a journey, going and returning, of one hundred and eighty miles, and effected their object without the loss of a single man.

At this distance of time, from the very imperfect data afforded by written history, this expedition against the Onondagas appears like a harsh, if not an unnecessary measure. But, notwithstanding the professions of this nation, those in the direction of public affairs at that period unquestionably felt its chastisement to be a work of stern necessity. General Schuyler had written that, unless some exemplary blow should be inflicted upon the hostiles of the Six Nations, Schenectady would shortly become the boundary of the American settlements in that direction. The enterprise had, moreover, the sanction of the commander-in-chief; while nothing could be more humane, in regard to a warlike expedition, than the instructions of General Clinton.

It is, perhaps, a coincidence worth noting, that on the very day on which Colonel Van Schaick departed from Fort Schuyler for Onondaga, the lower section of the Mohawk Valley was thrown into alarm by the sudden appearance of an Indian force simultaneously on both sides of the river, in the vicinity of Palatine. On the south side, a party rushed down upon the settlement, took three prisoners, together with several horses, and drove the inhabitants into Fort Plank. At the very same hour, another division of the savages made a descent upon the back part of Stone-Arabia, where, in the onset, they burned two houses and murdered one man. The next house in their course belonged to Captain Richer. The occupants were Richer, his wife and two sons, and an old man. The captain and his two boys, being armed, on the near approach of the Indians gave them a warm reception. A sharp action ensued. The old man, being unarmed, was killed;

as also was one of the brave boys, a lad seventeen years of age. Captain Richer was severely wounded, and his arm was broken; his other son was also wounded in the elbow, and his wife in one of her legs. And yet, notwithstanding that the whole garrison was either killed or wounded, the Indians retreated on the loss of two of their number.

On the same day, a party of Senecas appeared in Schoharie, made prisoners of Mr. Lawyer and Mr. Cowley, and plundered their houses. The panic was again general; the people flying to the forts for safety, and the Committee of Palatine writing immediately to General Clinton, at Albany, for assistance. The general was an officer of great activity, and so rapidly did he move in cases of alarm, that he traversed the Mohawk Valley with Colonel Gansevoort's regiment and the Schenectady militia, and was back at Albany again on the 28th. The Indians who appeared on the south side were from the West; those on the north side were Mohawks from Canada. General Clinton, in his despatches to the governor, his brother, expressed an opinion that, but for his timely movement on that occasion, the enemy would have driven the settlements all in upon Schenectady.

On the 30th of April, Lieutenants M'Clellan and Hardenburgh returned to Fort Schuyler from an unsuccessful expedition, at the head of a body of Indians, against the small British garrison at Oswegatchie. It was their intention to take the fort by surprise; but, falling in prematurely with some straggling Indians, several shots were imprudently exchanged, by reason of which their approach became known to the garrison. They then attempted by stratagem to draw the enemy from the fort, and partly succeeded, but could not induce them to venture far enough from their works to cut them off; and on approaching the fort themselves, the assailants were so warmly received by cannister and

grape as to be compelled to retreat without unnecessary delay. The only service performed was to send a Caughnawaga Indian into Canada with a letter in French, by "a French general," probably the Marquis de Lafayette, addressed to the Canadians, and written in the preceding autumn. This expedition was despatched from Fort Schuyler on the day before Colonel Van Schaick moved upon Onondaga; and, from a letter addressed by General Clinton, six weeks afterward, to General Sullivan, there is reason to believe one object was to get clear of the Oneida Indians then in the fort, until Colonel Van Schaick should have proceeded so far upon his expedition that they or their people would not be able to give the Onondagas notice of his approach. All the Indians still remaining in Fort Schuyler on the 17th were detained expressly for that object of precaution. General Clinton conceded their usefulness as scouts and spies upon the British forces; but, he observed, "Their attachment to one another is too strong to admit of their being of any service when employed against their fellows." This testimony is certainly not discreditable to the Indian character as such.

The Onondagas, fired with indignation at the destruction of their villages and castle, and the putting out of the great council-fire which they had so long kept burning at their national altar, resolved upon summary vengeance. To this end, three hundred of their warriors were speedily upon the war-path, bending their steps to the valley of the Schoharie Kill. The settlement of Cobleskill, which had suffered so severely the preceding year, situated about ten miles west of the Schoharie Kill, and yet comprising nineteen German families, was the first object of attack. But they were prevented from taking the place by surprise, in consequence of two of their number straggling a considerable distance in advance of the main body, who were discovered

by a scout of two of the Cobleskill militia. One of the Indians was shot, and the other fled; and the scouts hastened home to give the alarm. Intelligence of the enemy's approach was immediately despatched to Schoharie, with a request for assistance. A captain of the Continental army was thereupon sent to Cobleskill with a detachment of regular troops. On the following morning a party of Indians sallied out of the woods, and after approaching the settlement, suddenly returned. They were pursued by a small detachment of troops to the edge of the forest, where their reception was so sharp as to compel a retreat. The captain himself immediately marched to the scene of action with the whole of his little band, together with fifteen volunteers of the militia. The Indians receded before the whites for a time, and continued the deception by showing themselves at first in small numbers on the skirt of the forest, until they had accomplished the identical purpose they had in view. The captain and his men pursued, without any knowledge of the disparity of numbers they had to encounter, until the Indians had drawn them sufficiently within their toils to make a stand. Their numbers now multiplied rapidly, and the battle became animated. The captain fell wounded, and was soon afterward killed. His men, panic-stricken, instantly fled; but in the twinkling of an eye, a cloud of several hundred savages, until then in concealment, rose up on all sides of them, pouring in a deadly shower of rifle balls, and making the forest ring with their appalling yells. The inhabitants of the settlement, on perceiving the disaster which had befallen the troops, fled in the direction of Schoharie with a portion of the fugitive soldiers. Their flight was facilitated, or, rather, they were prevented from being overtaken, by seven of the captain's brave fellows, who took possession of a deserted house, and made a resolute defence. From the windows

of their castle they fired briskly upon the Indians, and, bringing them to a pause, detained them until the inhabitants had made good their flight to Schoharie. Unable to drive the soldiers from the house, the Indians at length applied the brand, and the brave fellows were burned to death within its walls. The whole settlement was then plundered and burned by the Indians. But they did not proceed farther towards Schoharie. The loss of the whites was twenty-two killed and two taken prisoners. The bodies of the slain were found the next day, sadly mutilated; and in the hand of one of them the Indians had placed a roll of Continental bills, a severe satire upon the description of money for which the soldiers were serving. The great fact, however, that it was the CAUSE, and not the PAY, which kept the Americans in the field, could scarcely be appreciated by the forest warriors. They were led in this battle by a Tory, who was subsequently killed by the celebrated Murphy. Their loss was severe, but to what extent was not known. Thus was amply avenged the destruction of Onondaga.

During the month of April, the inhabitants of Monongalia, on the northwestern Virginia border and the western part of Pennsylvania, in the vicinity of Fort Pitt, had been severely harassed by the Indians, and numbers of the people murdered. These individual murders were the more cruel, inasmuch as they could have no effect upon the result of the pending contest. The snatching away of prisoners by these petty expeditions was a different affair; and often served a twofold purpose, enabling the enemy frequently to extort information, and, by a silent operation, continually increasing the number of prisoners in their hands for exchange. But, whether murdered outright or carried into captivity, the trials of the inhabitants upon a frontier, thus hourly exposed to dangers of the most appalling description, can scarcely be appreciated by those who have not been placed in similar peril

The frontier towns of the county of Ulster were likewise not a little annoyed, in the early part of May, by a detachment of thirty or forty of Butler's rangers, who, from their knowledge of the country, were supposed to have fled to the royal standard from that neighbourhood. On the 4th of May, four dwelling-houses and five barns were burned by them in Fantine Kill. Six of the inhabitants were murdered, besides three or four more who were supposed to be burned in their houses. Colonel Philip Van Courtlandt, stationed at that time with one of the New-York regiments at Warwasing, went in pursuit of the traitors; but although he twice came in sight of them upon the crest of a mountain, they were too dexterous in thridding the forests to allow him to overtake them; and the colonel had scarcely turned back from the pursuit before they fell upon the town of Woodstock, in the neighbourhood of Kingston, where they burned several houses and committed other depredations. They made a few prisoners, some of whom were carried away; while others were compelled, by the upraised hatchet, to take an oath not to serve in arms against the king.

In order to preserve unbroken a narrative of the principal Indian campaign of the present year, it is necessary somewhat to anticipate the progress of events, by recording in this place the particulars of the celebrated invasion of Minisink, and the bloody battle that immediately ensued near the Delaware.\* The brave Count Pulaski, with his battalion of cavalry, had been stationed at Minisink during the preceding winter; but in the month of February he was ordered to South Carolina, to join the army of Gen-

\* Minisink, for an inland American town, is very ancient. It is situated about ten miles west of Goshen, in the county of Orange (N. Y.), on the Navisink River, and among what are called the Shawangunk Mountains. It is bordered on the southwest by both the States of New-Jersey and Pennsylvania. The Walkill also rises in this town. Its history, previous to the war of the Revolution, is full of interest. A severe battle was fought with the Indians in Minisink, July 22. 1669, the bloody horrors of which yet live in the traditions of that neighbourhood.

eral Lincoln. Left thus wholly unprotected, save by its own people, Captain Brant determined to make a descent upon it, for the purpose of taking both plunder and prisoners. Accordingly, on the 20th of July, or, rather, during the night of the 19th, the crafty Mohawk stole upon the slumbering town, at the head of sixty Indians and twenty-seven Tory warriors disguised as Indians, which was a very common practice with the Loyalists when acting with the savages. This was only a detachment of a much larger force which Brant had left among the mountains between Minisink and the Delaware. Such was the silence of their approach, that several houses were already in flames when the inhabitants awoke to their situation. Thus surprised, and wholly unprepared, all who could escape fled in consternation, leaving the invaders to riot upon the spoil. Ten houses and twelve barns were burned, together with a small stockade fort and two mills. Several persons were killed, and others taken prisoners. The farms of the settlement were laid waste, the cattle driven away, and all the booty carried off which the invaders could remove. Having thus succeeded in his immediate object, Brant lost no time in leading his party back to the main body of his warriors, whom he had left at Grassy Brook.

No sooner had the fugitives from Minisink arrived at Goshen with the intelligence, than Dr. Tusten, the colonel of the local militia, issued orders to the officers of his command to meet him at Minisink on the following day, with as many volunteers as they could raise. The order was promptly obeyed, and a body of one hundred and forty-nine men met their colonel at the designated rendezvous at the time appointed, including many of the principal gentlemen of the county. A council of war was held to determine upon the expediency of a pursuit. Colonel Tusten was himself opposed to the proposition, with so feeble a command, and with the certainty, if they



overtook the enemy, of being obliged to encounter an officer combining, with his acknowledged prowess, so much of subtlety as characterized the movements of the Mohawk chief. His force, moreover, was believed to be greatly superior to theirs in numbers, and to include many Tories as well acquainted with the country as themselves. The colonel, therefore, preferred waiting for the re-enforcements which would be sure soon to arrive, the more especially as the volunteers already with him were but ill provided with arms and ammunition. Others, however, were for immediate pursuit. They affected to hold the Indians in contempt, insisted that they would not fight, and maintained that a recapture of the plunder they had taken would be an easy achievement. Town-meeting counsels in the conduct of war are not usually the wisest, as will appear in the sequel. The majority of Tusten's command were evidently determined to pursue the enemy; but their deliberations were cut short by Major Meeker, who mounted his horse, flourished his sword, and vauntingly called out, "Let the brave men follow me, the cowards may stay behind!" It may readily be supposed that such an appeal to an excited multitude would decide the question, as it did. The line of march was immediately taken up, and after proceeding seventeen miles the same evening, they encamped for the night. On the morning of the 22d they were joined by a small re-enforcement under Colonel Hathorn, of the Warwick regiment, who, as the senior of Colonel Tusten, took the command. When they had advanced a few miles, to Halfway Brook, they came upon the Indian encampment of the preceding night, and another council was held there. Colonels Hathorn, Tusten, and others, whose valour was governed by prudence, were opposed to advancing farther, as the number of Indian fires, and the extent of ground they had occupied, removed all doubt as to the superiority of their numbers. A

scene similar to that which had broken up the former council was acted at this place, and with the same result. The voice of prudence was compelled to yield to that of bravado.

Captain Tyler, who had some knowledge of the woods, was sent forward at the head of a small scouting party, to follow the trail of the Indians, and to ascertain, if possible, their movements, since it was evident that they could not be far in advance. The captain had proceeded but a short distance before he fell from the fire of an unseen enemy. This circumstance occasioned considerable alarm; but the volunteers, nevertheless, pressed eagerly forward, and it was not long before they emerged upon the hills of the Delaware, in full view of that river, upon the eastern bank of which, at the distance of three fourths of a mile, the Indians were seen deliberately marching in the direction of a fording-place near the mouth of the Lackawaxen. This discovery was made at about 9 o'clock in the morning. The intention of Brant to cross at the fording-place was evident; and it was afterward ascertained that his booty had already been sent thither in advance.

The determination was immediately formed by Colonel Hathorn to intercept the enemy at the fording-place, for which purpose instant dispositions were made. But, owing to intervening woods and hills, the opposing bodies soon lost sight of each other, and an adroit movement on the part of Brant gave him an advantage which it was impossible for the Americans to regain. Anticipating the design of Hathorn, the moment the Americans were out of sight Brant wheeled to the right, and, by thridding a ravine across which Hathorn had passed, threw himself into his rear, by which means he was enabled deliberately to select his ground for a battle and form an ambuscade. Disappointed in not finding the enemy, the Americans were brought to a stand,

when the enemy disclosed himself partially, in a quarter altogether unexpected. According to the American account, the first shot was fired upon an Indian, who was known, and who was mounted upon a horse stolen at Minisink. The Indian fell, and the firing soon became general: the enemy contriving, in the early part of the engagement, to cut off from the main body of Hathorn's troops a detachment comprising one third of his whole number. The conflict was long and obstinate. The number of the enemy being several times greater than that of the Goshen militia, the latter were surrounded, and ultimately hemmed within the circumference of an acre of ground. Being short of ammunition, Hathorn's orders were strict that no man should fire until very sure that his powder would not be lost. The battle commenced about 11 o'clock in the morning, and was maintained until the going down of the sun; both parties fighting after the Indian fashion, every man for himself, and the whole keeping up an irregular fire from behind rocks and trees as best they could. About sunset the ammunition of the militia was expended, and the survivors attempted to retreat, but many of them were cut down. Doctor Tusten was engaged behind a cliff of rocks in dressing the wounded when the retreat commenced. There were seventeen disabled men under his care at the moment, whose cries for protection and mercy were of the most moving description. The Indians fell upon them, however, and they all, together with the doctor, perished under the tomahawk. Among the slain were many of the first citizens of Goshen; and of the whole number that went forth, only about thirty returned to tell the melancholy story.\* Sev-

\* Among the slain were Jones, Little, Duncan, Wisner, Vail, Townsend, and Knapp. In 1822 the people of Orange county collected the bones, which until then had been left to bleach on the battle-field, and caused them to be buried. The funeral procession numbered twelve thousand people, among whom was Major Poppino, one of the survivors of the battle, then nearly one hundred years old

eral of the fugitives were shot while attempting to escape by swimming the Delaware.

Brant has been severely censured for the cruelties perpetrated, or alleged to have been perpetrated, in this battle. He always maintained that he had been unjustly blamed, and that his conduct had been the subject of unjust reproach. He stated that, having ascertained that the Goshen militia were in pursuit of him, determined to give him battle, he, of course, prepared himself for the reception. Still, having obtained the supplies he needed, his own object was accomplished. He also stated, that on the near approach of the Americans, he rose, and presented himself openly and fairly to their view, addressed himself to their commanding officer, and demanded their surrender, promising, at the same time, to treat them kindly as prisoners of war. He assured them, frankly, that his force in ambush was sufficient to overpower and destroy them; that then, before any blood had been shed, he could control his warriors; but should the battle commence, he could not answer for the consequences. But, he said, while he was thus parleying with them, he was fired upon, and narrowly escaped being shot down, the ball piercing the outer fold of his belt. Immediately upon receiving the shot, he retired, and secreted himself among his warriors. The militia, imboldened by his disappearance, seeing no other enemy, and disbelieving what he had told them, rushed forward heedlessly until they were completely within his power. In crossing a creek they had broken their order, and before they could form again on the other side, Brant gave the well-known signal of the war-whoop. Quick as the lightning's flash, his dark cloud of warriors were upon their feet. Having fired once, they sprang forward, tomahawk in hand. The conflict was fierce and bloody. Few escaped, and several of the prisoners were killed. There was one who, during the battle, saved

himself by means which Brant said were dishonourable. By some process or other, though not a Freemason, he had acquired a knowledge of the master mason's grand hailing signal of distress; and having been informed that Brant was a member of the brotherhood, he gave the mystic sign. Faithful to his pledge, the chieftain interposed and saved his life. Discovering the imposture afterward, he was very indignant. Still, he spared his life, and the prisoner ultimately returned to his friends after a long captivity.

There was another occurrence of deep and thrilling interest connected with this battle, the particulars of which were related in after years by Brant himself, while on a visit to the city of New-York. Among those who were grievously wounded was Lieutenant-colonel Gabriel Wisner, a gentleman of great respectability, a magistrate, serving among the Goshen volunteers. In surveying the battlefield, the situation of Wisner arrested the attention of the Indian commander, who examined his condition. The chief saw that he was wounded past hope of recovery; but he was, nevertheless, in the full possession of his faculties, and was even able to converse. Believing his case to be altogether beyond the power of medical and surgical skill, and having no means of carrying him away, Brant reflected a moment upon his own course of duty. He was disposed to save his life if he could, and yet felt that it was impossible. To leave him thus helpless and alone upon the field, in the possession of his senses to a degree enabling him to appreciate all the horrors of his situation, would be the height of cruelty. Added to which was the moral certainty that the wolves abounding in the forest, guided by the scent of blood, would soon be gorging themselves alike upon the wounded and the dead. The thought, therefore, that Wisner might be torn in pieces while yet alive, seemed to him even more

than savage cruelty. Under these distressing circumstances and considerations, the chief argued with himself that true humanity required a speedy termination of his sufferings. Having formed this conclusion, the next point was to compass his death without inflicting additional torture upon his feelings. With this view, he engaged Wisner in conversation, and, while diverting his attention, struck him dead in an instant, and unperceived, with his hatchet. It was but a savage exhibition of humanity; but there was benevolence in the intention, however strangely reasoned; and the motive of the final blow is to be applauded, notwithstanding the shudder caused by its contemplation.

From Minisink, by a rapid movement, Brant fell upon a settlement on the south side of the Mohawk, where, on the 2d of August, he made a few prisoners, the name of one of whom was House. This man, with his companions, was carried back into the woods, and left in charge of the Indians, while Brant, with four or five of his warriors, went off upon some secret enterprise. On the fourth day after his absence, he returned, attended by his four warriors, but on horseback himself, having been wounded in the foot by a musket-shot. The wound, however, was not like that of Achilles, in the heel, but by a buckshot in the ball of the great toe, and therefore in a place less equivocal for a soldier's honour. They then commenced their march in the direction of Tioga; but as House became too lame by walking to continue the journey on foot, the Indians proposed killing him. To this Brant objected; and having been acquainted with House before the war, he released him on condition of his taking an oath of neutrality, which was written by the chief in the Indian language. House signed the oath, and Brant witnessed it. He was then released, and being somewhere in the vicinity of Otsego Lake, where General Clinton was then making preparations for his

celebrated descent of the Susquehanna, House came into Clinton's camp on the 8th of August, the day previous to his embarkation.

Contemporaneously with these occurrences, and while, as will subsequently appear, the attention of the American officers was directed to more important movements, the Indians and Tories once more broke in upon the Pennsylvania border, in Northampton, Lyconia, and the neighbourhood of Sunbury. In a succession of petty affairs between the 1st and 21st of July, several neighbourhoods were destroyed and mills burned. On the 17th, all the principal houses in the township of Munsey were burned. Two persons were killed on that day, and four had been killed a few days previous, besides several taken prisoners. On the 20th, three men were killed by a small party hovering about Freeland's Fort, situated on the west branch of the Susquehanna, seventeen miles from Sunbury. On the 28th, five days after the affair of Minisink, this little defence, which was garrisoned by only thirty men, and about fifty women and children, who had sought refuge within its walls, was invested by one of the M'Donalds, at the head of two hundred Indians, and one hundred troops, calling themselves regulars. But, although wearing the British uniform, it was believed that they were American Loyalists. The enemy met with less resistance during this irruption than would have been the case, but for the circumstance that the greater part of the men had been draughted for the boat service of General Sullivan, who was then at Wyoming, preparing to enter the Seneca country. Fort Freeland was too weak of itself, and too weakly garrisoned, to hold out long against such a disparity of force. Captain Hawkins Boone, a brave officer, stationed with thirty men at a distance of some miles, marched to the relief of the fort immediately on hearing of the investment. The garrison had surrendered before his arrival.

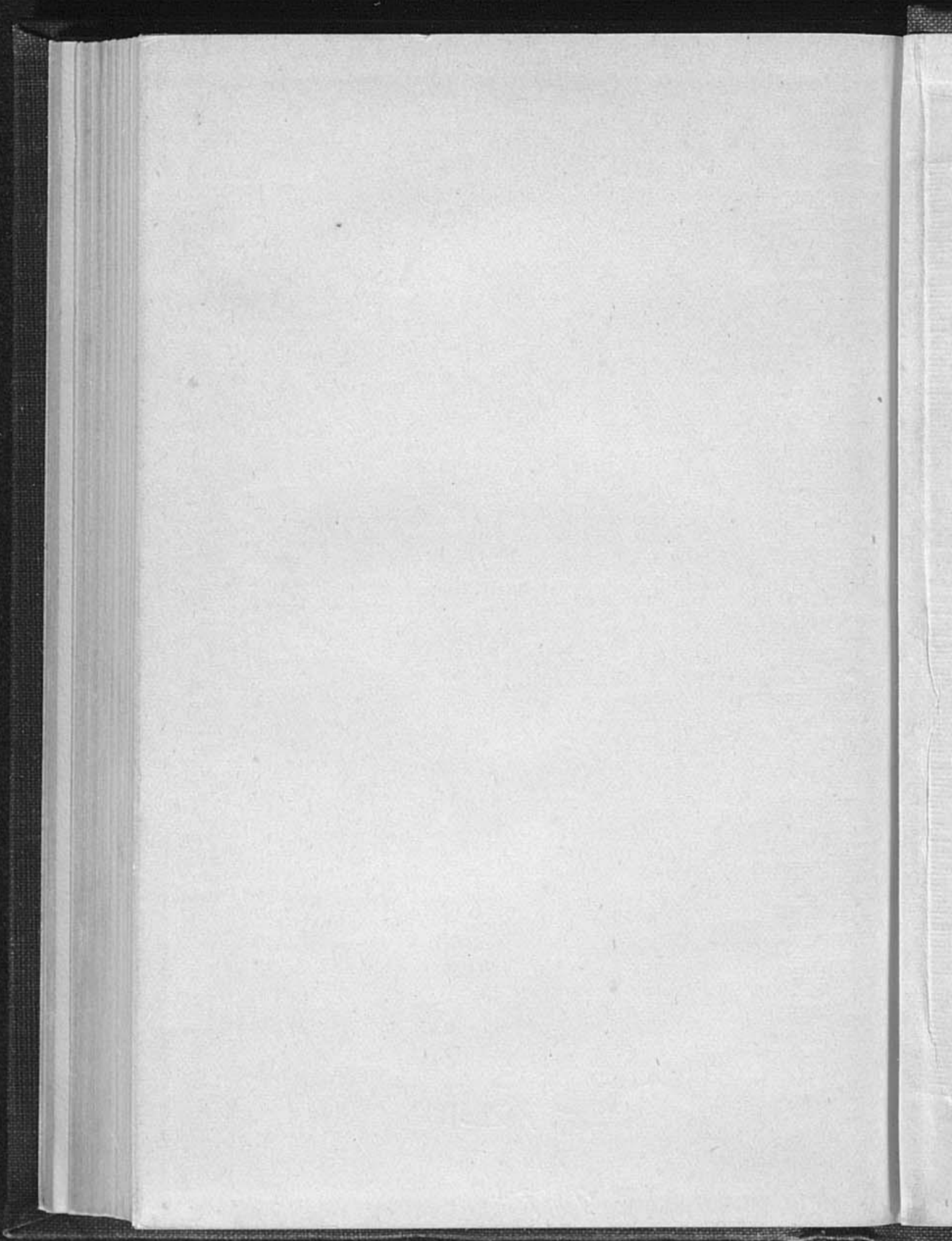
Boone, nevertheless, gave battle to the enemy ; but, overpowered by numbers, he was slain, together with eighteen of his men, whose scalps were carried as trophies into the fort. Two other officers, Captains Dougherty and Hamilton, were also killed. By the terms of capitulation, M'Donald stipulated to spare the women and children, and allow them to depart. The fort, and the houses in its vicinity, were then burned.

Meantime, the Shawanese were continuing their depredations upon the Ohio border of Virginia, with results certainly not unfavourable to the former.

With these incidents closes the present volume. The second will open with a narrative of the most formidable Indian campaign undertaken during the contest for American Independence.



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