

H I S T O R Y
OF THE
AMERICAN WAR.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
ORIGIN, PROGRESS, AND TERMINATION
OF THE
AMERICAN WAR.

By C. STEDMAN,

WHO SERVED UNDER SIR W. HOWE, SIR H. CLINTON, AND
THE MARQUIS CORNWALLIS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.



VOL. I.

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1794

TO
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE EARL OF MOIRA.

MY LORD,

THE pain of recording that spirit of faction, that weakness, indecision, indolence, luxury, and corruption, which disgraced our public conduct during the course of the American war, is relieved by the contemplation of those talents and virtues that were eminently displayed on the side of Great Britain, in various important, though subordinate, stations.

Although the issue of that war was unfortunate, our national character was not impaired, nor the contest, while

DEDICATION.

it was maintained, on the whole inglorious. Neither martial ardour was wanting among our countrymen, nor military enterprise, nor patriotic zeal. In that rank, and those circumstances of life which are at once a temptation and an apology for dissipation and a love of pleasure, the military spirit of Britain shone forth with undiminished lustre; and the noblest families exhibited bright examples of true courage, exalted genius, and consummate wisdom.

Whilst I indulge with exultation this general reflection, permit me to acknowledge that my attention is irresistibly drawn towards the Earl of Moira. Accept, then, my Lord, this humble effort to transmit to posterity the glorious actions of our countrymen, as a mark of personal respect for your Lordship; for that happy union of enthusiasm in the cause of virtue, of invention, intrepidity, and decision of character, with cool reflection and patient perseverance, which directs the public eye to your Lordship, as the hope and the pride of your country.

That your Lordship may long live still to sustain in a frivolous age, the dignity of true nobility, the virtue of
I chivalry

DEDICATION.

vii

chivalry without its spirit of romance, is the ardent wish
and hope of,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

And most humble Servant,

Denham, Bucks,
Jan. 1, 1794.

C. STEDMAN.

C O N T E N T S.

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	— — — —	Page I
---------------------	---------	-----------

C H A P. I.

<i>Insurrection in Rhode Island—and in New Hampshire—Consequences of shutting up Boston Harbour—Provincial Congress at Cambridge, in New England—Hostile Designs and military Preparations—Preparations in all the Colonies for holding a General Congress—Detachment of British Troops sent to destroy military Stores at Concord—harassed by the Americans—driven back by the way of Lexington to Boston—Boston invested by an American Army—Measures respecting the State of America taken by the English Cabinet—Reinforcement of Troops from Britain arrives at Boston—Battle of Bunker's Hill.</i>	— — — — —	111
--	-----------	-----

C H A P. II.

<i>Designs of Congress on Canada—Capture of Ticonderoga and Crown Point—Fort Chamblée—St. John's and Montreal—Siege of Quebec.</i>	— — — —	130
--	---------	-----

CONTENTS.

CHAP. III.

<i>Situation of Affairs in Virginia, North and South Carolina, and at Boston.—1775, 1776.</i>	Page 143
---	-------------

CHAP. IV.

<i>Proceedings of the British Government—Commissioners arrive in London from Congress—State of Commerce—Meeting of Parliament—Effect of its Resolutions in the Colonies.</i>	— 153
--	-------

CHAP. V.

<i>Blockade and Evacuation of Boston—Siege of Quebec—Defeat of Loyalists at Moore's Creek—Attack of Charlestown.—1776.</i>	166
--	-----

CHAP. VI.

<i>Proceedings of Congress—Declaration of Independence—Arrival of Lord Howe from England—Battle of Long Island—Overtures on the part of the British Commanders for Peace.—1776.</i>	— 188
---	-------

CHAP. VII.

<i>The Americans retreat, and the English Army takes possession of New York—The Americans greatly disheartened—Design to burn New York partly executed—Various Skirmishing—Battle of White Plains.</i>	— 204
--	-------

CHAP.

C O N T E N T S.

xi

C H A P. VIII.

	Page
<i>Transactions in the Jerseys—Apparent Errors of the British Commander—Despondence of the Revolvers—Vigour of Congress—Encouragement to enlist in the American Army—Congress appeal with Effect to the American People.—1776.</i>	222

C H A P. IX.

<i>Proceedings of Congress—They determine to renounce all Dependence on Great Britain—Sketch of a new American Government.</i>	244
--	-----

C H A P. X.

<i>Situation of Affairs in Canada—General Carleton sends an Armament against Crown Point and Ticonderoga—Force opposed to this by the Americans.</i>	252
--	-----

C H A P. XI.

<i>Inevitable Necessity of War in the general Opinion of the British Nation—Distress of the West Indies—Capture of American Privateers—Conduct of France and Spain—Meeting of Parliament—Debates in both Houses.</i>	258
--	-----

CONTENTS.

CHAP. XII.

	Page
<i>Proclamation issued by Lord and General Howe—Debates upon it—The American Laws proposed to be revised by Lord John Cavendish—This Motion rejected—The Propriety of a partial Secession considered—Seamen voted—Naval Affairs—Supplies for the Military and Naval Service—Recess of Parliament.—1776.</i>	264

CHAP. XIII.

<i>Letters of Marque and Reprisal Bill—Bill for securing Persons charged with High-Treason—Debates upon it—Amendment proposed by Mr. Dunning—Agreed to—The Bill carried through both Houses—Extraordinary unprovided Expences of the War voted—Motion for an Address to the Throne by the Earl of Chatham—Rejected—Prorogation of the Parliament.—1777.</i>	269
---	-----

CHAP. XIV.

<i>Opening of the Campaign—Expedition to Peck's Hill—To Danbury—Vessels and Provisions destroyed at Saggy Harbour—The Commander in Chief takes the Field—Endeavours to bring Washington to an Action—The British Troops relinquish the Jerseys—General Prescott carried off—British Army proceeds to Chesapeak Bay—Lands at the Head of the Elk—Proclamation issued—General Washington moves to the</i>	<i>North</i>
---	--------------

CONTENTS.

xiii

	Page
<i>North Side of the Brandywine River, in order to defend Philadelphia—Action at the Brandywine—General Wayne defeated—Royal Army passes the Schuylkill—Lord Cornwallis takes possession of Philadelphia.</i>	— — 276

CHAP. XV.

<i>American Batteries and other Means of Defence—Attacked—Action at German Town—At Red Bank—Mud Island and Red Bank taken—American Fleet burnt—Removal of the royal Army to White Marsh.</i>	— — — 296
--	-----------

CHAP. XVI.

<i>Canadian Operations—General Burgoyne invested with the Command of the Northern Army—General Carleton, offended with this Appointment, resigns his Government—Opinions on the Employment of the Savages—Number of Troops under General Burgoyne—Expedition under Colonel St. Leger—Burgoyne's Manifesto—Ticonderoga and Mount Independence invested—The Forts abandoned by the Americans—American Galleys destroyed near Skeneborough—Americans abandon their Works—Their Rear overtaken—General St. Clair arrives at Fort Edward—Americans repulsed by Colonel Hill—Americans abandon Fort Anne—Difficulties encountered in the March of the Royal Army to Fort Edward—Americans retire to Saratoga.</i>	— — — — 318
---	-------------

CHAP.

CONTENTS.

CHAP. XVII.

	Page
<i>Difficulties experienced at Fort Edward—Colonel St. Leger's Expedition—Detachment to Bennington—Baum and Breyman defeated—Fort Stanwix invested—Attempt to relieve it by General Harkemer—St. Leger obliged to raise the Siege of Fort Stanwix—General Gates takes the Command of the American Army in the North—Action at Still Water—Distressed Situation of General Burgoyne—Desertion of the Indians—Retreat to Saratoga—Royal Army nearly surrounded—Convention with General Gates.</i>	329

CHAP. XVIII.

<i>Expedition up the North River under Sir Henry Clinton—Reduction of the Forts Montgomery and Clinton.—Burning of Æsopus.</i>	358
--	-----

CHAP. XIX.

<i>Expedition under the Command of Lieutenant-colonel Marbood—Action at Quintin's Bridge—At Hancock's Bridge—Ingenuous Stratagem of an American Loyalist—Colonel Abercrombie's Expedition against the Americans under Lacey near Crooked Billet—Colonel Maitland's Expedition up the Delaware—Attempt on La Fayette.—1778.</i>	367
--	-----

CHAP.

C O N T E N T S.


xv

C H A P. XX.

	Page
<i>Sir William Howe resigns the Command of the Army—Festival called Mischianza, in honour of Sir William Howe—He is succeeded in the Command of the Army by Sir Henry Clinton—Returns to England—Complains of Defamation, and solicits and obtains a Parliamentary Inquiry into his Conduct.—1778.</i>	380

H I S T O R Y
OF THE
AMERICAN WAR.

I N T R O D U C T I O N .

SO natural is the love of liberty, and such the aversion of mankind to restraint, that it seems to be in the very nature of colonies, and all subordinate governments, to seize every favourable opportunity of asserting their independence; and the external aspect of nature, variegated and broken by mountains, savannahs, rivers, lakes, and seas, conspires with that noble passion to check the progress of empire, and to maintain an interesting diversity among tribes and nations. Introduction. 

But when the British colonies, now the Thirteen United States of North America, took up arms, and declared themselves free and independent, they were not encouraged by any conjuncture that could justify that measure in point of policy, or by any circumstances that could yield any reasonable hope of success in the arduous struggle that was to ensue. On the contrary, if we take a

Introduction. view of the strength and resources of Great Britain at the commencement of hostilities, and contrast these with the weakness and almost total inability of the revolting colonies, we shall have reason to conclude that the termination of the war in favour of the latter, with their final separation from the British empire, was one of those extraordinary and unexpected events, which in the course of human affairs rarely occur, and which bid defiance to all human foresight and calculation. A people, not exceeding two millions of souls, widely scattered over half the western hemisphere, in the peaceable occupations of fishing, agriculture, and commerce; divided into many distinct governments; differing from each other in manners, religion, and interests, nor entirely united in political sentiments; this people, with very little money, proverbially called the sinews of war, was yet enabled to effect a final separation from Great Britain, proud from successful and glorious war, flourishing in arts and arms beyond the example of any former period; capable of raising an annual revenue of sixteen millions of pounds; and, on the whole, the most formidable nation in the world: And all this, although the continent of North America, deeply indented and penetrated by navigable rivers and lakes, presented a fit theatre for the display of naval power, in which chiefly the strength of Great Britain consisted. It is the object of the present Work to describe with fidelity the war that involved this great event—a wonder to the present, and an example to all future ages. But I shall first run over the train of circumstances by which that war was produced.

The colonies of New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, the three lower counties on the Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, the history of whose revolt it is proposed to relate, are situated on the eastern coast of North America,

rica, where they are washed by the Atlantic Ocean, ranging from north to south, in the order in which they have been enumerated. On the west they are separated from the immense regions, not fully explored, of Canada and Louisiana, by the Apalachian or Allegany mountains. The countries situated to the west of that magnificent barrier, and at a vast though unknown distance from the Pacific Ocean, are watered by mediterranean seas, called the Lakes of Canada, which not only communicate with each other, but send forth several great rivers, among which the Mississippi, and the St. Laurence, by the weight of their waters and the length of their course, are particularly distinguished.

Introduction.

The Mississippi, running in a winding course near five thousand miles from north to south, and receiving in its progress the Illinois, the Miafures, the Ohio, and other tributary rivers, scarcely inferior to the Rhine or the Danube, discharges itself in the Gulf of Mexico. The St. Laurence, on the contrary, stretching in a north-easterly direction from the Lakes of Canada, falls into the ocean near Newfoundland. All these, with the Hudson, Delaware, Susquehannah, Chesapeak, Potowmack, and other noble rivers on the eastern side of North America, being navigable, for the most part, to their very heads, encourage and stimulate commerce in times of peace; but, in those of war, expose the colonies to the attacks of a superior naval force, as already mentioned.

The North American provinces lie between the thirtieth and fiftieth degrees of northern latitude, having about twelve hundred miles of sea-coast. As such a situation would denote a great degree of temperature, it is necessary to observe, that within those bounds they experience much vicissitude of weather, and higher degrees of heat and cold than are to be found in European climates similarly situated.

The northern, commonly called the New England provinces, comprehending New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island,

Introduction.

and Connecticut, are the least fertile in point of soil; but their land produces excellent timber, and their seas abound with fish. The inhabitants here, as elsewhere, led by the hand of nature, employ themselves in those occupations which are suitable to the productions of their climate. Fishing is the business of some, ship-building of others; and the bulk of the people are more or less engaged in trade or navigation.

The soil of the New England province of Connecticut being richer than that of the others, its inhabitants are occupied in agriculture and raising of cattle; of which, and also of grain, considerable quantities are annually exported.

The productions of the colonies of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the three lower counties on the Delaware, usually called the Middle Colonies, resemble those of Connecticut; and their inhabitants are engaged in similar occupations. Their most common articles of exportation are wheat and flour, with furs from New York.

As you proceed from Pennsylvania to the southward, the heat of summer becomes excessive; and the African alone can endure the labour of working in the fields. Hence it is, that in the southern colonies the number of white inhabitants bears only a small proportion to that of the negroes; whereas in the middle colonies very few, and in the northern scarcely any, Africans are to be found.

The provinces to the southward of Pennsylvania have been usually called the Southern Colonies. In those, almost all the white inhabitants are proprietors of lands, which they keep in their own possession, and cultivate by means of slaves. These land-owners, or planters, as they have been called, lead easy and luxurious lives, are fond of amusements of all sorts, and to labour and fatigue utter strangers. The business of their plantations, and the management of the African cultivators, are committed to the care
of

AMERICAN WAR.

5

of persons called Overseers; a sort of middle men between proprietors of lands and the slaves who cultivate them. In the southern provinces are raised the most valuable articles of commerce exported from North America: Tobacco in Virginia, Maryland, and a great part of North Carolina; and rice and indigo in South Carolina and Georgia.

Introduction.

The philosopher, in travelling through those regions, which were all originally peopled from Great Britain, the middle colonies excepted, will find amusement in contemplating the effect which is produced upon the human frame and constitution, by the influence of climate, of soil, and of the course of employment in which the inhabitants are engaged.

In the provinces of New England, where nature has been less bountiful in the productions of the earth, he will find a race of men, healthy, strong, and vigorous; keen, penetrating, active, and enterprising, with a degree of dexterity and management in all the common affairs of life, which approaches to cunning and artifice, and such as the habits and pursuits, not of a liberal and enlarged, but of a detailed and minute trade, are accustomed to form.

In the middle colonies, he will see farmers robust, frugal, persevering, and industrious; plain and honest in their dealings, but of rude and unpliant manners; with little penetration and less knowledge.

And, in most of the southern colonies, he will meet with a people of pallid complexion and swarthy hue, of form rather tall and slender, unfit and unaccustomed to labour, with an aversion to business, and a fondness for pleasure and dissipation; luxurious, shewy, and expensive; yet sensible, shrewd, and intelligent; of open and friendly dispositions, and in their houses hospitable even to extremity. But this must be understood only of the sea-coast and interior parts of the southern colonies. For the frontiers of these, reaching far to the

Introduction.

the westward, extending over various ridges of high mountains, and bordering upon the Indian country, are inhabited by a people unacquainted with luxury and refinement, active and vigorous, with minds fierce and intractable, and, in habits, bearing some resemblance to their savage neighbours.

The inhabitants of Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina, more than any others of the colonists, imitated, in dress, equipage, furniture, and modes and habits of life, the manners and customs of the people of England; and these circumstances will account for the vast sums due from thence to Britain.

The bulk of the natives of North Carolina are hardy and robust. Their chief employment consists in hunting and rearing cattle; and their principal amusement in shooting, for wagers, with rifles at a mark.

The natives of Georgia, from the influence of climate, were a poor, emaciated, debilitated, indolent, and death-like people; and like the inhabitants of South Carolina, ignorant, idle, and inactive.

But these are not the only differences that merit attention. There are others which are to be ascribed, not to climate, soil, or employment, but to the principles and tenets, whether civil or religious, of the primary settlers, which, being handed down from father to son, may maintain their influence for many ages.

The colony of Virginia, which is the most ancient, was established in the early part of the peaceable reign of James the First, about the beginning of the seventeenth century. And, as the colonists by whom it was settled removed from their native country, not from any cause of uneasiness or dissatisfaction with government, but urged merely by the spirit of adventure, propagated at that period from Portugal and Spain into other parts of Europe, it may reasonably be supposed that they carried with them the prevailing notions and

AMERICAN WAR.

7

opinions of the times, which were peculiarly favourable to monarchy and high church government. So inveterate were those principles amongst this people, that Virginia was the last of all the British dominions that yielded to the successful arms of Cromwell, and the first, too, that renounced obedience to his usurped authority by proclaiming the restoration of King Charles the Second. And so uniform were the inhabitants in religious matters, that, until the middle of the present century, not a single place of worship either for Roman Catholics or Protestant Dissenters was any-where to be found within the colony.

Introduction.

The northern colonies were planted about the end of the same reign, but not till England began to be torn with internal feuds and dissensions. Those who planned and carried into execution the settlement of Massachusetts Bay, which was the first of the New England colonies, were men who had either suffered, or expected to suffer, persecution during the intolerant administration of archbishop Laud; puritans in religion, republicans in their notions of government, and of the same party and principles with those who afterwards overturned the government of England in both church and state, and brought their sovereign to the block. To these settlers a charter was granted, empowering them to chuse whatever form of government should be most agreeable to themselves, with only one reservation, that their laws should not be repugnant to those of Great Britain. What motive could induce the king to grant a charter with powers so extraordinary and extensive to a people so little favoured in that reign as the Puritans, it is not now easy to discover; unless it was meant as an enticement to encourage the emigration of those restless spirits whose refractory conduct, machinations, and plots, had begun to give so much disturbance to government. But, whatever was the motive, the measure produced a greater effect than had been foreseen. Such numbers in a short time withdrew to New England, that government,
in

Introduction.

in the following reign, was obliged to interpose, by forbidding all persons to emigrate, except such as were specially licensed.

The settlements at Massachusetts Bay, reinforced by such numbers from England, soon began to flourish. But scarcely had the new inhabitants taken entire possession of the country which they were to occupy, when they fell into internal dissensions. The majority of the colony being Puritans, the presbyterian mode of worship was declared to be the established religion, to which all were required to conform. Having just escaped from persecution themselves, they, in their turn, became intolerant. A strict compliance with religious ordinances was rigorously exacted; and the persecution that followed, at length became so intolerable as to produce fresh emigrations from this infantine settlement. One class withdrew to New Hampshire, another to Rhode Island, and a third to Connecticut, where they formed establishments, and laid the foundations of their respective governments.

The tract of country which contains the provinces of New York, New Jersey, with the three lower counties on the Delaware, was anciently called the New Netherlands; for the original settlers were Dutch and Swedes, in whose possession it remained until it was conquered by the English in the reign of king Charles the Second, to whom the sovereignty of it was finally ceded, and confirmed by the treaty of Breda in 1667. A grant of a great part of this tract of country, with full powers of sovereignty, was made by Charles to his brother James duke of York, who afterwards sold that district since called New Jersey, to lord Berkely and sir George Carteret, reserving to himself only the province of New York; which province, on the accession of that prince, reverted of course to the crown.

The remaining part of this ceded territory was granted by Charles the Second, towards the end of his reign, to William Penn, the celebrated Quaker, who gave it the name of Pennsylvania. By Penn it

was

was originally planted with a colony, consisting of persons of his own religion, who fled from England to avoid the persecutions to which they, though a quiet and inoffensive people, in common with other sectaries, were subjected. For his new settlement he composed a code of laws, of so equitable and liberal a spirit, and in all respects so well adapted to the situation of the colonists, that his name has deservedly been transmitted to posterity with those of the most eminent legislators; and, under the influence of his wise institutions, the colony prospered greatly, and soon became one of the most flourishing of the British settlements.

Introduction.

The counties of Newcastle, Kent, and Suffex, usually called the three lower counties on the Delaware, forming a separate establishment, and electing an assembly for themselves, are attached to the government of Pennsylvania, by having the same governor.

Adjoining to Pennsylvania, on the south, is the province of Maryland; which, like its neighbouring state, though at a different period, took its rise from religious persecution.

In the reign of Charles the First, when, in consequence of repeated addresses from both houses of parliament, the king was obliged to enforce against the Roman Catholics the execution of those penal and sanguinary laws, which a more enlightened and liberal age has thought fit to repeal, Charles lord Baltimore, a Roman Catholic, and a favourite at court, obtained a grant of that part of Virginia which has since been called Maryland, as a place of refuge for himself, and his persecuted brethren of the Roman religion. And, to the everlasting disgrace of that narrow-minded and intolerant age, it is recorded, that when he embarked for his new settlement, he was accompanied by no fewer than two hundred popish families, and many of these of distinction, who chose to encounter the dangers of the sea, the fury of savages, and all the multiplied inconveniences, evils, and hardships of a new, unexplored, and unsheltered country,

Introduction. rather than longer remain exposed to the cruel oppression of their unrelenting persecutors. And in this manner was Maryland settled about the year 1635.

The first settlements in the provinces of North and South Carolina, originally comprised in the same grant, under the general name of Carolina, were begun a few years after the restoration of king Charles the Second. A grant of them was made to several noblemen and persons of rank, who employed the celebrated Mr. Locke to form a system of government and code of laws for their new colony. But, however wise in theory those institutions might have been, it is nevertheless certain, that the settlement did not thrive under them, although supported by the wealth and influence of its rich and powerful proprietors: Nor did it even begin to prosper until government, many years afterwards, resumed the grants, took the colony under its own immediate protection, laid aside the institutions of Mr. Locke, and gave the inhabitants a constitution similar to that of Virginia; and from that period its advances in improvement were as rapid as they had been before slow and unpromising. So complicated are human affairs, and so intricate the chain that unites the cause with the effect, that it is very unsafe, in the formation of political systems, to go far beyond the line of experience. The more exalted and refined our ideas of liberty and government, the wider they are apt to lead us astray; if, in opposition to facts and circumstances, we obstinately persevere in endeavouring to reduce them to practice.

1763. At the end of the war with France, which concluded in 1763, there was, and there had been for near a century past, a small revenue collected in the American colonies, which was subject to the disposition of parliament. This revenue arose from duties imposed by two acts of parliament, one in the 25th year of the reign of king Charles the Second, and the other in the sixth year of the reign

reign of king George the Second ; in the first instance on goods exported from, and in the second, on goods imported into, the colonies.

Introduction.
1763.

By the act of navigation, certain enumerated goods, *viz.* sugar, tobacco, cotton wool, indigo, ginger, fustic, and other dying wood, the produce of the plantations, were restrained from being carried from thence to any other place than to some of the other British plantations, or to Great Britain ; and by the 25 Car. II. duties were imposed upon these articles when carried to any other place than Great Britain, and consequently upon such of them as were exported to any of the other colonies ; and these duties were to be paid before the goods were laden on board any ship for exportation.

At the time when this act passed, only one of these articles was produced on the continent of North America, which was tobacco ; and upon the exportation of it to any of the other colonies, this duty was regularly paid and collected from that period down to the time of the separation of the colonies from the mother-country ; as was also the duty upon indigo, after it was introduced as an article of produce and exportation in the southern colonies. The other enumerated articles upon which the duties were laid, were all of the produce of the West India islands ; and upon such of them as the inhabitants of the North American colonies imported into their own country, the duties were regularly paid in the West Indies, before they were laden on board the vessels.

The duties imposed by the 6 Geo. II. are those which have been already mentioned payable on the importation of foreign rum, sugar, and molasses, into the colonies. To those the colonies also submitted, except so far as they were eluded by clandestine importation.

Introduction.

1763.

But this illicit importation, either from the remissness of the custom-house officers in the colonies, or their inability to prevent it, was carried on, in the course of time, to such an extent as not only to alarm the West India planters, by its tendency to lessen the demand for their produce, and to lower its price, but also to attract the attention of the British ministry, who, notwithstanding the extent to which this trade was carried on, found the revenue arising from it very unproductive; and who were also given to understand, that through the same channel some of the manufactures of Europe, and many of the productions and manufactures of the East Indies, were introduced into the colonies, in breach of the act of navigation, and to the manifest injury of the trade of the mother-country.

Smuggling was carried on, not only upon the American, but upon the British and Irish coasts also, to such an extent, that the parliament, in this year, thought fit to pass a new act for more effectually suppressing it; and the British ministry, seconding the views and intentions of the parliament, adopted a new plan for carrying the act into execution, and for checking the evil which it was intended to remedy, by calling in the aid of the officers of the navy. For this purpose a number of the smaller ships of war, with cutters and tenders, were put into commission, and stationed in different quarters of the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland; and to the officers who commanded them similar powers were delegated with those usually granted to revenue officers, and they were also required to take an oath for the due performance of this part of their duty.

This regulation having taken place in Great Britain, it was also thought expedient to extend it to North America and the West India islands; for, as the minister had it in contemplation to impose further taxes in the colonies, it was undoubtedly a primary duty to

endeavour

endeavour to make those taxes which had been already imposed more productive. And if this regulation was found useful on the British shores, it was thought it would be still more useful on the American coast, where opportunities for smuggling were more abundant, by the numerous inlets with which that coast abounds, some of them unsettled, and many others but thinly inhabited; and in consequence of the great extent of their ports, and of the very limited number of custom-house officers who were appointed to do duty in those ports.

Introduction.
1763.

The new plan for enforcing the laws of trade produced no murmuring or disquiet amongst the people of Great Britain. It was directed only against the illicit trader, a character as distinct from the British merchant as darkness is from light.

But in the northern colonies of America, many of their principal merchants were engaged in clandestine trade, and in those colonies it was no disparagement to be so: On the contrary, whenever a seizure was made, the displeasure and resentment of the people were directed against the officer who had done his duty, and not against the party who had offended against the law. And hence, the custom-house officers, finding it impossible to live happily with their neighbours, if they exerted themselves vigorously in the discharge of their duty, became remiss, and seldom made seizures, except in cases of such palpable breaches of the law as came so openly under their own observation that it was impossible to overlook them.

The reception which this regulation met with in America was such as might have been expected, from a people habituated to those illicit practices in trade which it was intended to repress. In the northern colonies it produced universal alarm, discontent, and dissatisfaction. As the navy officers were not stationary, nor their residence on shore, it was foreseen that they would not be influenced by motives of friendship, fellowship, or neighbourhood; neither could they be over-

Introduction.
1763.

overawed or intimidated from doing their duty. The merchants in those colonies could, therefore, no longer depend, or, to speak in mercantile language, they could no longer value themselves, as formerly, upon the profits of their illicit traffic. But these causes of discontent, however aggravating and mortifying to themselves, were not to be urged to the ministry and parliament; they were by no means calculated to procure that redress which they wished, because, instead of shewing the impropriety, they justified the expediency, of the measure. Their ostensible complaints were founded on different grounds; they complained, that the fair and the clandestine trader were equally exposed to the operation of this indiscriminating regulation, inasmuch as the ships and vessels of both were equally liable to be searched, and consequently to detention upon their voyages: They also objected, that the officers of the navy were, of all others, the most improper to be appointed to such a service, since, by the former course and habits of their life, they could not be supposed to be acquainted with the revenue laws, and were of themselves prone enough to fall into irregularities, without being put into such a station of executive authority as to render those irregularities almost unavoidable.

It has been already observed that this new regulation to prevent smuggling extended not only to the colonies upon the continent of America, but to the West India islands also; and there it produced an effect which probably was not foreseen, otherwise some means would have been devised to prevent it. Between the British islands and the Spanish settlements in America a considerable clandestine trade had been carried on for many years, which was beneficial, not only to those islands, but to Great Britain also; because, through this channel, British manufactures were introduced into the Spanish settlements, and the returns were principally, though not entirely, in gold and silver; and if any inconveniences arose from this commerce,

merce, they were greatly overbalanced by the profits which were derived from it. But this trade, beneficial as it was, for want of proper instructions to the officers of the navy, fell a sacrifice, for a time, to the new regulation.

Introduction.
1763.

The enterprising spirit of the inhabitants of the northern colonies had, notwithstanding the remoteness of their situation, induced them to take a share in this lucrative trade; and when they found themselves cut off from it by the new regulation, their chagrin, vexation, and disappointment rose to a pitch scarcely to be described. Nevertheless this incidental effect of the new regulation raised up advocates for them in quarters where their complaints, heretofore, had been very little attended to.

The inhabitants of the middle colonies were not themselves engaged in the Spanish trade to any great extent; but had an interest in the continuance of it*. The stock of grain and other provisions, raised in the northern colonies, was not sufficient for the consumption of their inhabitants, and the deficiency was supplied from some of the southern and some of the middle colonies. The rum and salted fish of New England were received in exchange for those provisions, but some part of the price was always paid in specie; and by means of this coasting trade carried on by the people of New England, the gold and silver which they received in their traffic with the Spaniards, or at least part of it, was in time circulated through the other colonies. A very considerable trade was carried on from New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, to Lisbon, and the ports up the Straits, in flour, wheat, &c. The returns were mostly made in specie, half-johannes's, the remainder in port wine; and it was not until after the late peace that the court of Lisbon forbade the Americans to carry away more than a certain sum in specie on board each vessel, the remainder of the barter to be in the produce of the country. But

* Vide Chalmers's late publication.

another

Introduction.

1763.

another very important branch of their illicit trade was carried on through the West India islands, who smuggled from the French and Spanish islands; and then the West Indians bartered their smuggled commodities with the Americans for provisions; for South Carolina in particular sent great quantities of maize, or Indian corn, and live stock, to the British West Indies. The inhabitants, therefore, of the southern as well as the middle colonies, saw with extreme concern one of the channels through which they had been supplied with gold and silver in danger of being shut up, especially at a time when the scarcity of specie was felt as a general evil throughout the British part of the American continent; and they were the more ready to join in censuring the measure by which this trade was likely to be suppressed, as they thought it apparent that the continuance of the trade would not only be beneficial to the colonies, but also to the mother-country.

And thus it happened, that this new regulation was the cause of more or less uneasiness throughout the British colonies, whether on the continent of America, or in the West Indies; and certain it is, that it excited much more ill-humour amongst the people of the northern colonies than any other measure of the British ministry or legislature ever had produced. When their trade with the foreign islands had been burthened by the imposition of duties, it is true, a ferment arose; but, after the first ebullition of resentment had subsided, they considered the operation of the act of parliament as unavoidable, and quietly submitted; hoping, perhaps, to elude its effect by clandestine importation. But these hopes were now either cut off, or rendered precarious, by the new regulation; and as it operated by intervals, every seizure was a fresh cause of discontent, and not only kept alive, but added to the general mass of ill-humour. Their newspapers were, for several successive years, filled with complaints of the detention and seizure of their vessels, and with abusive, contemptuous,

temptuous, and provoking paragraphs against the officers of the navy: And these vehicles of clamour being circulated through the continent, excited not only a spirit of hatred and resentment against those officers, but of opposition to the ordinances of the mother-country amongst the people of the colonies in general, which made a strong impression upon their minds, and prepared them for adopting more easily those violent measures which a few years afterwards ended in open revolt.

Introduction.
1763.

The minister, in pursuance of the plan which he had laid down for obliging the inhabitants of the colonies to bear a share in the expence which might be necessary for their future protection, introduced a bill into the house of commons for imposing duties on certain kinds of merchandize, when imported into the colonies, requiring the payment of those duties to be made in gold and silver, and containing the usual clause in the revenue bills for ordering them, when collected, to be paid into the exchequer, where they were to be set apart as a separate fund, together with the future produce of all the former parliamentary duties and taxes which had been heretofore collected in America; and this fund was to be applied, under the disposition of parliament, for defraying the future charges of protecting, defending, and securing the colonies. The bill having passed through both houses, received the royal assent on the 5th of April in this year.

1764.

The minister, by procuring the act to be passed, had a two-fold object in view; the first, to regulate the commerce of the colonies; and the second, to raise a revenue. So far as duties were imposed by it on the importation of foreign sugars, indigo and coffee, East India wroug htfilks and calicoes, foreign cambricks and French lawns, the intention seems to have been to discourage the use and consumption of those articles, and thereby to encourage and promote the use and

Introduction.

1764.

consumption of British manufactures, and of British West India produce of the like kinds; but if, notwithstanding the imposition of the duties, those articles of foreign manufacture and produce should still continue to be imported into America, then the act produced its secondary effect of raising a revenue. The other duties imposed by this act; those, namely, on Madeira wine, on port and Spanish wines, and on coffee and pimento of the growth of the British West India islands, were for the sole purpose of raising a revenue; and in fixing the rates and proportions of these, the minister seems to have been abundantly cautious of avoiding any just imputation of dealing hardly by the colonies. On the contrary, it would appear that he wished to impress them most strongly with the idea, that although they were now to be called upon to bear some part of the burthens of the state, still their proportion should be far, very far, below what was borne by the inhabitants of the mother-country. Thus the duty imposed by this act on British coffee imported into the colonies was only seven shillings per cwt. or three farthings per pound; whereas the people of Great Britain paid an inland excise duty of one shilling and six-pence upon every pound of coffee which they consumed, besides a farther duty payable at the custom-house on importation.

In the same session of parliament an act was passed respecting the paper currency of the colonies, the grounds and motives for the enacting of which it is necessary here to explain. During the late war, the colonial assemblies had been in the practice of issuing bills of credit to answer their present exigencies; and that these bills might more effectually supply the place of money, they were made a legal tender in the payment of all debts, as if they had been gold or silver, and were made redeemable after a certain time, either by the collection of taxes imposed by the assemblies for their redemption,

or

or by the money allotted to the respective colonies, by the votes of parliament, as a compensation for their services. The emission of so much paper money, issued perhaps in some of the colonies with more profusion than was absolutely necessary, produced one effect very injurious to the colonies, by raising the course of exchange between them and the mother-country; so that in some of them bills of exchange on Great Britain could not be procured but at a loss to the purchaser of between thirty and forty per cent.; and as British money, and indeed every kind of coin which was current in the colonies, passed only at certain rates fixed by law, whatever the course of exchange might be; it happened, that when the course of exchange rose above those rates, not only the British money, but all the other current coin in the colonies, was either withheld by individuals from circulation, or remitted to the mother-country in lieu of bills of exchange; and thus in the course of a few years the scarcity of specie was felt as a general evil in all the colonies. This scarcity of specie was also very injurious to the British merchants; because it happened not unfrequently that the paper bills of credit, which their agents in the colonies were obliged to receive in payment of their debts, for want of another medium of commerce, were depreciated in value by the rise of exchange, even whilst they remained in their possession, and before they could lay them out in the purchase of bills of exchange, or any other commodity which would serve as a remittance to Great Britain. This evil was more or less felt in all the colonies, but more especially in Virginia, where, from the misconduct of the treasurer, the bills of credit received by him from the collectors of the taxes were lent out by him to individuals for his own benefit, and thrown back into circulation, instead of being locked up and secured until they were burnt by order of the assembly. A representation on this subject had been made to the

Introduction.

1764.

Introduction.
1764.

British minister by the merchants trading to Virginia, in which the evils arising from a superabundance of paper money had been more severely felt than in any of the other colonies. But as the evil was more or less felt in all the colonies, it was necessary that the remedy to be provided should be as extensive; and thus the act of parliament above mentioned was passed, whereby the colonial assemblies were restrained from making their bills of credit a lawful tender in payment of money.

The act for imposing duties on merchandize was only a part of the plan which the minister had in contemplation. At the time when the resolutions upon which this act was founded were moved in the house of commons, he also moved another, of the following import: "That towards further defraying the expences of protecting and securing the colonies, it may be proper to charge certain stamp duties in the colonies." But he did not think fit during this session to introduce any bill for carrying this last resolution into effect; leaving it thus open, that if the inhabitants of the colonies should dislike such a mode of levying money upon them, they might have an opportunity of suggesting some other which would be more agreeable; and undoubtedly this manner of proceeding was not only a proof of the minister's candour, but of his inclination to accommodate himself to the wishes and desires of the colonies, as far as the necessities of the state would permit. The resolution which was moved, was a notice to the colonial assemblies that the British treasury stood in need of a supply; and it also pointed out to them the manner in which this supply was proposed to be raised; but as the minister declined bringing in a bill to carry the resolution into effect until the next session of parliament, it was an evidence that he did not chuse to take the colonies by surprise, or to levy money upon them in a mode to which they had not yet been

been accustomed, without giving them previous and timely notice.

Introduction:

1764.

But however tenderly the minister had dealt with the colonies in the duties already imposed, and whatever appearance of accommodation he assumed in the imposition of those which he displayed in passing the previous resolution concerning stamp duties, without following it up the same session of parliament with a bill he meditated; his general policy with respect to America, which in consequence of the regulation of last year had produced severe strictures in some and given umbrage in all the colonies, was nevertheless become the theme of general clamour.

The inhabitants of New England, rendered uneasy by the regulation of the last year, and still smarting under its effects, were not in a fit temper of mind to submit quietly to any further impositions on their commerce; and the less so, because they saw that in consequence of the vigilance and activity of the officers of the navy in the exercise of their new authority, such impositions would in future be more productive, and less easily evaded, than in times past. They thought too, that they saw in the minister's proceedings the appearance of a settled plan gradually unfolding itself, but not yet fully disclosed, which in detail and in extent might even go beyond their present apprehensions: And, instead of waiting to combat particular parts of this plan, as they should appear, they boldly resolved to controvert at once the general principle upon which the whole was founded, by questioning the right and authority of parliament to levy duties or taxes upon the colonies in any form or shape whatever; and by maintaining that the exercise of such an authority by parliament was an infraction, not only of the privileges of the colonists as British subjects, but of their rights as men. Such was the import of a resolution entered upon the journals of the lower
house

Introduction.
1764.

house of assembly of Massachusetts Bay, in the fall of the year 1764, and of a letter to Mr. Mauduit, their agent in England*; from which it appears that they founded their pretensions of being free from taxation by the British parliament upon the broadest basis that they could assume—their rights as men; a basis which, if admitted as a ground of argument against parliamentary authority, placed them at once not in the condition of colonies, or of subordinate dominions, but of independent states, unconnected with the mother-country by political compacts, and owing her no other obligations than those which nature imposed. Hence also it is manifest, that the republican principles which distinguished the earliest settlers of Massachusetts Bay were not forgotten, but were still recognized and still acted upon by their posterity, after the lapse of near a century and a half.

By another resolution of the same assembly, a new complaint was added to the list of their other grievances, “The late extension of “the powers of the court of admiralty,” on pretence that the right of trial by jury was violated. It is not certainly known upon what late proceeding of the mother-country this complaint was grounded. If it was upon the regulation of the preceding year, it was altogether unfounded, for that regulation did not enlarge the powers of the admiralty courts, it only extended the power of seizing vessels for breaches of the laws of trade to a greater number of persons than those who possessed it before. It is true, that in consequence of this regulation, a vessel seized upon the coast of New England might be carried into one of the other colonies, and might there be tried; but this effect resulted not from the regulation, but from the general powers incident to courts of admiralty, and so ancient as to be coëval with their original institution. Whatever is

Report of the Committee of the House of Lords, in 1774.

done upon the sea is subject to their jurisdiction, and they are not confined in their cognizance to things which happen within any particular district or portion of the sea, but their jurisdiction is as unlimited as the sea itself.

Introduction.

1764.

But if the complaint was founded on the clauses in the act of the last session of parliament, directing the penalties thereby inflicted on breaches of the laws of trade, to be recoverable in the courts of vice-admiralty in America, this was no new subject of complaint; for similar clauses had been inserted in former acts of parliament respecting the trade of the colonies, some of them made so long ago as the reign of William the Third*.

It appears, too, to have been the determination of the members who composed this assembly, that the other colonies should be invited to unite with that of Massachusetts Bay, in a joint opposition to the exercise of the parliamentary authority condemned by their above-mentioned resolution†; but for the present they prudently delayed such an invitation, until, by disseminating their republican notions of government, and dispersing through the continent their political pamphlets on the rights of the colonies and the encroachments of the mother-country, they should in some measure prepare the minds of the inhabitants of the other colonies for acceding to such a proposal; and, in the mean time, in behalf of themselves and their own constituents, they resolved to set forth their complaints in a petition to the king and parliament.

It has been already noticed, that, in the last session of parliament, an act was passed for restraining the paper currency of the colonies. This act, too, had the misfortune to give offence; and it was more offensive in the southern than in the northern colonies: Nevertheless its beneficial consequences were very soon experienced; for within

* 7 and 8 W. 3. c. 22. 3 Geo. 2. c. 28. 6 Geo. 2. c. 13.

† See the Report of the Committee of the House of Lords, in 1774.

Introduction.
1764.

two years after it had passed, the course of exchange between Great Britain and the colonies, which had been so injurious to the latter, was reduced to its proper level.

What proportion of paper currency should be admitted in the general circulation of a country, to supply the place of gold and silver, is a subject of so complicated a nature, that the most enlightened men have differed in their opinions about it, even in countries where experience could be brought in aid of their investigations. It cannot therefore be a matter of great surprise, that the American politicians of the southern colonies* should have been mistaken in their opinions about the effect of this act. The want of a sufficient quantity of specie to fulfil the purposes of circulation was obvious to all; and they thought that an act which had a tendency to hurt the credit of the medium which supplied the place of gold and silver, must necessarily be injurious. They looked upon themselves as the most competent judges of their own necessities, and considered the interference of the British parliament, in passing this act, as an unnecessary and wanton exertion of power, the ultimate utility of which they more than doubted, whilst they deprecated its present effects as ruinous and destructive.

The southern provinces, being but very little engaged in trade, would not, perhaps, have thought themselves so much affected by the act of the last session of parliament for imposing duties, had it not been for the clause which required the payment of those duties to be made in specie, and this money to be paid into the exchequer in England, before it was to be applied towards the expence of protecting and defending the colonies; and even with this clause, had not the act been also accompanied with the other, respecting the paper currency, it is possible that the northern and middle colonies

* In New England they had some experience on this subject, having before felt the benefit of a similar act.

might

AMERICAN WAR,

25

Introduction.

1764.

might have been suffered to murmur by themselves, as on former occasions. But the act for restraining their paper currency affected all the colonies in some degree; and, in consequence of a greater scarcity of specie, it affected the southern colonies more than any one of the rest: And when different communities, however disunited in other respects, consider themselves as suffering under the same common grievance, mutual sympathy arises, which, by a natural movement, gradually extends itself beyond the cause by which it was originally excited, and, in time, involves as well their separate as their common causes of complaint. At this juncture, too, it so happened, that those measures of the British administration which had given the greatest offence to the northern and middle colonies had some relation to that by which the southern colonies thought themselves principally aggrieved. The regulation against smuggling had put an end to the trade carried on with the Spanish settlements, and in consequence deprived the inhabitants of the colonies of the means of obtaining further supplies of specie; whilst the act of the last session of parliament for imposing duties in America, which required these duties to be paid in specie, and to be remitted to England, would, it was thought, in a short time, drain the colonies of the little of the precious metals which they now possessed; and, as the climax of their misfortunes, the act which related to their paper currency, had a tendency to destroy the only medium of commerce which remained.

By this strange accidental connection between these three different regulations, the complaints of the New England provinces, which were principally directed against the two first of them, were heard with more attention, were better received, and made a deeper impression in the southern colonies than had been usual. The people of New England were not wanting, on their part, to improve the favourable moment, for the purpose of laying the foundation of

Introduction.

1764.

a general opposition. The press was resorted to. The grievances of the colonies were painted in the most impressive language; and the British ministry were boldly charged with harbouring designs against the liberty, property, and future prosperity of the colonies: And thus a general murmur of discontent began to run through the whole extent of the British settlements on the continent of America, which was not a little increased by the resolution of the house of commons, which manifested an intention in that house, at some future period, to impose stamp duties in the colonies.

There were, in all the colonial assemblies, as indeed there are in all public assemblies, certain popular characters to whom the great body of the people looked up for advice and information in matters of difficulty. These leading men, even in the colonies which were the most sincerely attached to the mother-country, entertained, about this time, strong suspicions and apprehensions of the arbitrary designs of the British court. Such suspicions originating perhaps, at first, in the violence and animosity of party, with which the beginning of the present reign was so much distracted, had, a little before this time, been very generally diffused through Great Britain itself, and were from thence probably transplanted into America. And unfortunately for the success of Mr. Grenville's American measures, perhaps unhappily for the general interest of the British empire, and, without doubt, unfortunately for the internal peace and tranquillity both of Great Britain and America, such suspicions were countenanced by one of the greatest men * of that, or perhaps any other period, whose recent services, and the unparalleled success of whose measures, whilst he conducted the affairs of the nation, stamped an irresistible authority upon whatever opinion he thought fit to espouse. If those suspicions, however

* Mr. Pitt.

originating,

originating, were countenanced * by this great man, the American patriots, placed at such a distance, and destitute of equal means of information, may be easily excused for adopting them: But certain it is, that they prevailed very much about this time amongst the leading men in all the colonies, and were, through them, instilled into the minds of the people at large. And from thence it happened, that every act of the British government respecting America was viewed with more than common jealousy.

Introduction.

1764.

Such was the state of public opinion and sentiment in the North American colonies towards the end of the year 1764, and the beginning of the year 1765. But, notwithstanding the threatening symptoms of discontent, uneasiness, and jealousy, which had begun to appear, the minister was not deterred from prosecuting the design which he had so long meditated, of raising a revenue in the colonies by means of stamp duties. Having previously inquired of the agents for the colonies, whether they had any instructions from their constituents to propose any other method of raising money in the colonies than that of which he had given intimation the preceding year; or whether they had authority to offer a compensation for the revenue which was proposed to be raised; and receiving for answer, that they had no authority for either of these purposes; he now resolved to lay his plan before the house of commons, and, on the 29th of January, in a committee of that house, moved fifty-five resolutions for imposing stamp duties on certain papers and documents used in the colonies. These resolutions having been agreed to, a bill grounded upon them was soon afterwards introduced, which, although it met with vehement opposition, particularly from that party which has since distinguished itself by the name of the Whig party, and at the head of which was the marquis of Rock-

1765.

* Mr. Pitt's speech on the repeal of the stamp act.

Introduction.
1765.

ingham, was nevertheless carried through both houses of parliament by a considerable majority, and received the royal assent on the 22d of March.

By this act, which was to take effect in America on the 1st of November following, stamp duties were imposed on such papers and documents as are used as evidence in the common dealings and transactions of life between man and man; or on such as are used in legal proceedings, in appointments to offices, in admissions to professions, and in the entry and clearance of vessels at the custom-house; and had the authority of parliament to pass it been free from all objection, it must be confessed that the scheme of taxation proposed by this act, was perhaps one of the best which could have been devised for raising a revenue from a people spread over such an extent of the continent, and parcelled out into so many different governments, inasmuch as it was not only simple and practicable, but equitable in its operation, equally well adapted to all the colonies, and, in its nature, efficacious. It excluded all jealousy and envy, because it extended to all the colonies, and was to be raised on papers and documents which were common to them all. It must be efficacious, because these papers and documents were declared to be invalid, unless they were stamped; and the stamps could not be obtained without the payment of the duty. And it was also equitable, as the weight of it would fall chiefly upon those classes of people who were best able to bear it; and as it would be most productive in those colonies which were the most flourishing, and in which the transactions between man and man were the most frequent.

The resolutions on which the bill was founded, together with the debates which it had produced in its passage through the house of commons, were, without loss of time, transmitted to America by the agents for the colonies; so that the leading men in that quarter of

of the world had full time to deliberate on the consequences of the act, with all its attendant circumstances, before it took effect, and to prepare the minds of the great body of the people for yielding to those impressions which they wished them to receive. Prepossessed as they were with suspicions of the arbitrary designs of the British court, they now thought that those suspicions were converted into certainties; and that America, thus taxed without her consent, was destined to be the first victim to arbitrary power; and they resolved not to submit to such a melancholy fate without the most strenuous resistance. A gleam of hope arose from seeing the powerful opposition which had been made to the act in its passage through the house of commons. They were thereby encouraged to pursue the line of conduct marked out by their present feelings; and they determined to exert themselves with vigour in stirring up such a ferment as might distress, if not overturn, the administration, who were the authors of this measure, and as would certainly defeat the effect of the act for a time, and perhaps eventually produce its repeal: And this resolution seems to have been adopted by the leading men in all the colonies, without any apparent concert except what arose from a general knowledge of one another's sentiments, in consequence of the transactions of the preceding year.

With this view the arguments which had been used by the members of opposition in the British parliament were retraced, enforced, and enlarged; and in this form published in pamphlets or circulated in newspapers. These publications were adapted to all capacities. It was contended with great strength and force of reasoning, that as the inhabitants of the colonies were British subjects as much as the inhabitants of Great Britain, so were they entitled to the same constitutional rights and privileges: That it was the birth-right of every British subject to give and grant his own money for the support

Introduction.
1765.

support of government, and not to be taxed but by his own consent or that of his representative: And as the people of the colonies were not represented in the British parliament, so the British parliament could not constitutionally impose taxes upon them. And to such arguments other topics were added, not perhaps more convincing, but better calculated to draw the attention, and impress the feelings of the American colonist. The act was represented to be oppressive in its operation, by converting the plainness and simplicity of their former proceedings, whether legal or commercial, into labyrinths of doubt, difficulty, and perplexity. It was said that the act was peculiarly inapplicable to a country so extensively settled, and so thinly inhabited, as America; for it might, and frequently would happen (to give one example instead of many), that the planter or farmer, upon so common a transaction as the purchase of a horse, might be obliged to ride many miles to procure a piece of stamped paper, on which he could write a bill of sale, and even when he had performed his journey, he might be in doubt what kind of stamp was proper for his purpose. In this manner the supposed evils and inconveniences attending its operation were magnified and heightened in language suited to the apprehensions of the mass of the people; a design in the British ministry to enslave America was supposed to be discovered; and the stamp act, it was pretended, was only to be regarded as the forerunner of innumerable other oppressions which were to follow. And thus the people were taught to consider the period when the act was to take effect as the commencement of their slavery, unless they manfully resisted its execution.

Independent of all the previous means which were used to bring about an opposition, it was rather to be expected, that an act which imposed new burdens, and at the same time rendered the transactions between man and man in the common affairs of life somewhat less plain

plain and easy, and, above all, which was so open and liable to objection on constitutional grounds, would not be well received amongst some of the colonies at least, nor acquiesced in without reluctance; but it excited no small share of surprise when it was known that the first legislative opposition which it met with, took place in the ancient colony of Virginia, famed beyond all the rest for loyalty to the sovereign, and attachment to the mother-country.

Introduction.

1665.

Those to whom this event was the cause of surprise, did not reflect, that during the preceding war the importance of the colonies in the general scale of the British empire had been blazoned forth and magnified in various debates in both houses of parliament, as if the existence of Great Britain as a commercial nation had depended upon her trade with the colonies; that it had been made a favourite theme of declamation with ministers whenever they pressed for supplies to support the war; and that the colonies would at least estimate their consequence equal to what it had been represented. Neither did they reflect, that heretofore the colonies had been kept in fear by the vicinity of the French and Spaniards, whilst the former were in possession of Canada, and the latter of the two Floridas; but that now, since the cession of these provinces to Great Britain, they were relieved from all future apprehensions on account of such formidable neighbours, and saw themselves placed in a state of security which they had never before experienced. Neither did they reflect, that in proportion as the protection of Great Britain had become less necessary, so it would be less valued; and that the treaty of Paris, which gave security to the colonies, did, at the same time, weaken their dependence on the mother-country.

And this proceeding in the legislature of Virginia will still less be the cause of surprise, if to these considerations we add, that soon after the commencement of the present reign, a bold and daring spirit

Introduction.
1765.

spirit of opposition to government had broken forth and spread itself amongst the people of England; and that it must necessarily happen that some portion of this predominant spirit would be imparted to the inhabitants of the colonies in the prosecution of that close and constant intercourse which subsisted between them and the mother-country. Indeed such had been the violence of faction in England, and so bold and daring its partisans, that even the splendour of the crown could not shield the head which it adorned against the inveterate shafts of slander: And such was the perverseness of the people, that punishments inflicted by the courts of justice for the most heinous offences against government were in some instances converted into public rewards*.

That the colony of Virginia set the example in this opposition to the stamp act, was perhaps, after all, chiefly owing to accident. It happened that the general assembly of that province was sitting at the time when a copy of the act arrived in that country, together with certain intelligence that it had passed through both houses of parliament and received the royal assent. The act, it is true, was not to have any effect till the month of November, but they knew not whether they would have another opportunity of deliberating upon it as an assembly, until after that event had taken place. The leading men too were anxious to shew to their constituents, that in their legislative capacity they were not backward in avowing those sentiments which, as individuals, they had taken some trouble to promulgate. The people had been already prepared by reiterated publications in the newspapers, and it remained only for the assembly,

* The author of the North Briton, and of the Essay on Woman, is a living example of the truth of this remark. In a valuable appointment bestowed upon him by the corporation of London, he quietly enjoys the fruits of those slanders which filled his sovereign's breast with anguish, whilst every good man must execrate so nefarious a publication, and so diabolical an author.

by some expression of their will, to give a sanction to the intended opposition. Indeed, without this sanction, the resistance which they meditated would have been incomplete. The consent of the governor and council was not to be expected; whatever therefore could be done must be the act of the lower house of assembly only; and the subject was there introduced without loss of time, and gave occasion to one of the most violent and intemperate debates which had ever been known in that country. Some idea may be formed of the manner in which this debate was conducted, by the following passage, extracted from a speech of one* of the members, who afterwards made a conspicuous figure in the beginning of the rebellion. After declaiming with bitterness against the supposed arbitrary measures of the present reign, he added, "Cæsar had his Brutus, Charles the First an Oliver Cromwell, and George the Third—" But before he could proceed farther, a cry of, Treason! was heard from one quarter of the house, and the speaker soon afterwards rising up, called him to order, and declared that he would quit the chair, unless he was supported by the house in restraining such intemperate speeches.

Introduction.
1765.

This debate was concluded by proposing four resolutions of the following effect, which were agreed to by the house, and entered upon their journals on the 29th day of May. The first declared, that their ancestors brought with them from England, and transmitted to their posterity, all the rights, privileges, and immunities, enjoyed by British subjects: The second, that these were confirmed and declared by two royal charters, granted by king James the First: The third, that they have ever since enjoyed the right of being governed by their own assembly in the articles of

* Mr. Patrick Henry.

Introduction.
1765.

taxes * and internal police; which right has not been forfeited or yielded up, but has been recognized by the king and people of Great Britain: And the fourth, that the general assembly of Virginia, with his majesty or his substitute, have, in their representative capacity, the only exclusive right and power to lay taxes and impositions upon the inhabitants of that colony: And that every attempt to invest such a power in any person or persons whatsoever, other than the general assembly aforesaid, is illegal, unconstitutional, and unjust, and has a manifest tendency to destroy British as well as American freedom.

Two other resolutions were offered by the committee to whom this matter was referred, which were rejected by the house: But as they serve to characterize the kind of spirit which had begun to gain ground, and which possessed some of the members of that assembly, the substance of them is here inserted. The first amounted to a declaration that the inhabitants of Virginia are not bound to yield obedience to any law imposing taxes upon them, other than the laws of the general assembly; and the second denounced those to be enemies to the colony who should maintain, by speaking or writing, that any person or persons, other than the general assembly, had a right to impose taxes upon them.

But however intemperate the debate had been, which preceded these resolutions, and whatever heat and violence were discoverable in individual members of this assembly, there was nevertheless a manifest and striking difference between the resolutions of the Massachusetts assembly of the preceding year, and those which were

* That these resolutions may be fully understood, it is necessary to observe, that in Virginia, and indeed in all the colonies of North America, a distinction was made between taxes, and duties on the importation or exportation of merchandize; so that the former of these terms was not supposed to comprehend the latter.

now passed by the lower house of assembly in Virginia; a difference descriptive both of the particular views and of the general political character which distinguished the inhabitants of these respective colonies. The former, as if they had been already independent, resort at once to their rights as men—as a ground to exempt them from taxation by the British parliament: The latter, venerating the British constitution, sensible of its benefits, and happy in their connexion with the mother-country, found their claims wholly upon their rights as British subjects, which had been declared and confirmed by their charters. The former claim an unlimited exemption from duties as well as taxes, thereby undermining the whole fabric of the colonial system: The latter, avowing the relation in which they stand to the mother-country, confine their claim of legislative jurisdiction to taxes and internal police, thereby tacitly conceding to the British parliament the imposition of duties on merchandize, and the ordering and regulation of their commerce.

Introduction.
1765.

The assembly of Virginia having entered into these resolutions, was dissolved as soon as the governor was made acquainted with them. But it was now too late to stop the progress of the flame which had burst forth: Indeed the mischief was already done, because the resolves of the assembly were supposed to sanction whatever irregularities might ensue, in opposing the execution of an act which, by these resolves, was pronounced to be illegal, unconstitutional, and unjust; and the conflagration, which had been kindled was now destined to spread through the colony at large, by the return of the members to their respective counties.

The assemblies of the other colonies, in the course of the year, entered into resolutions, similar to those of the assembly of Virginia; and whatever differences there might be between them in other respects, there was but one opinion on the subject of the stamp act.

Introduction.

1765.

They all concurred in voting it to be an act that was unconstitutional, and an infringement of their rights.

We have seen that the assembly of Massachusetts Bay had in the preceding year entered into resolutions, and transmitted a petition to the king and parliament, complaining of a variety of grievances, and amongst the rest, of the resolution of parliament which announced an intention to impose stamp duties in the colonies. The same assembly now brought forward another measure of much more importance in its nature and consequences, as it was the first leading step towards that confederation amongst the colonies which ultimately separated them from the mother-country. It was no part of the character of the people of New England to be remiss in any thing which concerned their interest. They had not been inattentive observers of the discontent which prevailed in the other colonies on account of the stamp act, and they seized upon the present as the critical moment for reconciling the interests, consolidating the grievances, and uniting the complaints, of all the colonies; a design which we have seen they had in contemplation the preceding year.

In prosecution of this intention the assembly of Massachusetts Bay, on the sixth day of June, entered into a resolution, setting forth the expedience of holding a general congress, which should consist of deputies from all the lower houses of assembly on the American continent, to consult together, and take into consideration the common grievances under which the colonies laboured, in consequence of the late acts of parliament for imposing duties and taxes, and to frame and prepare a general petition and address to the king and parliament, in behalf of all the colonies, setting forth these grievances and praying for redress. They also resolved, that letters signed by their speaker, by order of the house, should be sent to the

the assemblies of the other colonies, communicating this resolution, and requesting such other assemblies, if they approved of the proposal, to appoint deputies to meet with those which should be appointed by the assembly of Massachusetts Bay, in a general congress to be held at New York, on the first day of October following; and they afterwards proceeded to nominate their own deputies, and to vote the sum of four hundred and fifty pounds for defraying their expences. In consequence of these resolutions letters were prepared and transmitted; and such of the other colonial assemblies as were permitted to meet before the month of October, very readily acceded to the measure recommended by the assembly of Massachusetts Bay, and nominated deputies for the proposed congress. Although the leading men in some of the colonies had not the most favourable opinion, either of the candour, sincerity, and plain dealing of the people of New England, or of the general course and tendency of their politics; yet, such is the effect of a common grievance in reconciling differences of opinion and allaying jealousies, that this proceeding of the assembly of Massachusetts Bay, which certainly had some appearance of dictating to the rest of the colonies, nevertheless met with general approbation.

Whilst such measures were pursued in America, an event took place in England which, more than all their own efforts, served the cause of the colonists, and promoted the success of their designs. This was a change of the ministry. On the 10th of July, Mr. Grenville and his adherents were dismissed from their offices, to give place to the whig party, under the marquis of Rockingham, a party which we have seen had exerted themselves strenuously in opposing the stamp act. The vehement declamations of this party against the minister within the house of parliament, and the active exertions of their friends and partisans amongst the people without; the threats of the Americans to discontinue the use of British manufactures until

Introduction.

1765.

Introduction.

1765.

the stamp act should be repealed, and the consequent alarm spread amongst the merchants, manufacturers, and ship owners; the murmurs and discontents of the lower orders of the people, from the scarcity of bread and the high price of provisions, calamities to which they were exposed during the whole of this year; all these causes combined had excited such a clamour in the nation as greatly weakened and distressed the late administration, and probably conducted to their removal. But the immediate cause of their dismissal is said to have been an affront given to the princess dowager of Wales, and through her to the king, by neglecting to insert her name in a bill introduced by the ministry into the house of lords, towards the close of the last session of parliament, for appointing a regency in case of the death of the king, during the minority of the prince of Wales; an omission which was rectified after the bill was sent to the house of commons. But, whatever was the cause, the change which ensued, by placing the whig party in power, gave to the inhabitants of the colonies a well-grounded hope, that the act for imposing stamp duties would be repealed in the next session of parliament.

In America, however threatening the appearances had been, no actual disturbances took place until the month of August; but in that month, about the time when intelligence arrived of the change of the ministry, the spirit which had been so long tumultuously gathering, broke forth into open violence, first at Boston in Massachusetts Bay, and afterwards in several of the other colonies. At Boston, the fury of the populace was directed against the chief-justice of the province, who was supposed to favour the ministerial plan for taxing the colonies; against the officer appointed to distribute the stamps, the comptroller of the customs, and the register of the court of admiralty. Previous intelligence of what was in agitation having been conveyed to them by their friends, they were fortunate

fortunate enough to be able to save their persons from insult, but their houses were pillaged, their furniture was burnt or destroyed, and the records of the admiralty, not less odious in that province than the stamp act itself, were committed to the flames. The council of the province were assembled by the governor, but they shewed no inclination to be active in suppressing the riots. The governor attempted to muster some companies of militia to assist the civil magistrate in the preservation of the peace, but they refused to obey his orders; and the stamp officer, seeing no prospect of protection, soon afterwards resigned his office.

Introduction.
1765.

In the other colonies the tumults were not so violent and outrageous as those at Boston; but in all of them they were sufficiently alarming to frighten the persons who were appointed to distribute the stamps into a resignation of their offices.

A considerable interval having been required for preparing the stamped papers in England, none of them had yet arrived in America; and the officers to whom they were to have been delivered, having been obliged to resign their appointments, the general care of these papers, upon their arrival in the months of September and October, devolved upon the governors of the respective provinces. In some of the colonies the stamped papers were seized and destroyed by the populace; in most of them, through the prudent management of the governors, they were lodged in places of security on shore, or put on board the ships of war; but in none of the thirteen colonies, after such riots, was any one found hardy enough to undertake the distribution of them.

In the month of October deputies from nine out of the thirteen colonies met at New York, to hold a general congress. The four colonies not represented in this congress were, New Hampshire, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia. From the three last of these deputies were not sent, because the letters from Massachusetts Bay arrived

Introduction.

1765.

arrived during the recess of their assemblies, which were not afterwards permitted to meet till the first of October had passed. And in New Hampshire, the assembly did not think fit to appoint deputies, although they approved of the holding of a general congress, and signified an inclination to join in any petition that should be agreed upon by the deputies of the other colonies.

The first session of these deputies was held on the seventh day of October; and twelve days having been spent in debates and deliberations, on the nineteenth they entered into thirteen resolutions, comprehending a declaration as well of the rights as of the grievances of all the colonies. In these resolutions they set forth, that the inhabitants of the colonies owe the same allegiance to the king as the people of Great Britain, and all due subordination to parliament. That they are entitled to the same rights, privileges, and immunities, as the people of Great Britain. That no taxes can be imposed on a free people but by their own consent, or that of their representatives. That the inhabitants of the colonies are not, and cannot, be represented in the house of commons of Great Britain. That the only representatives of the inhabitants of the colonies are those chosen by themselves; and that no taxes have been or can be imposed upon them but by those representatives. That all supplies to the crown are free gifts from the people; and that therefore it is unreasonable in the parliament of Great Britain to grant the property of the inhabitants of the colonies. That trial by jury is the right of a British subject. That the stamp act, by imposing taxes, and extending the jurisdiction of the courts of admiralty beyond their ancient limits, has a tendency to subvert the rights and liberties of the colonists. That the duties imposed by the late acts of parliament are grievous, and the payment of them impracticable. That, by the British manufactures which they purchase, they contribute to the supplies granted to the crown. That the restrictions on trade, imposed

AMERICAN WAR.

imposed by the late acts of parliament, will render them unable to purchase British manufactures. That the increase and prosperity of the colonies depends on the free enjoyment of their rights and liberties. And lastly, that they have a right to petition the king, or either house of parliament.

41
Introduction.

1765.

These resolutions having been entered into, and an address and petition to the king, a memorial and petition to the house of lords, and a petition to the house of commons, setting forth, more at large, the grievances mentioned in their resolutions, having been prepared and agreed to; the congress dissolved their meeting on the twenty-fifth of October, having sat about eighteen days.

From comparing the resolutions of congress with those of the assembly of Massachusetts Bay, it is evident that the leading men in the other colonies were not yet prepared to go the full length which the people of New England wished. It is true, the congress disavow the authority of parliament to impose taxes upon the inhabitants of the colonies, and to abridge the trial by jury; but they complain of the other acts of parliament, for imposing duties on merchandize, and restricting their trade, rather as grievances arising from an indiscreet and impolitic exercise of a power which they did not call in question, than as actual infractions of their constitutional rights.

These were all the proceedings of this congress which were made public. The great temper and moderation manifested in the papers which were to be transmitted to England, were probably intended to counteract the effect of the riots and tumults which had preceded the meeting of the congress. The members of this body were aware that all appearance of defiance was carefully to be suppressed. Professing loyalty to the king, and all due subordination to parliament, they endeavoured to exhibit themselves as patient sufferers,

Introduction.

1765.

and as dutiful, although oppressed, subjects, rather soliciting the compassion than braving the power of the British nation.

By the meeting of so many deputies at New York, a communication was opened, an acquaintance was formed, and a correspondence established, between the leading men of all the colonies; and a foundation was thus laid for uniting their common efforts, whenever future circumstances, and the attempts of future administrations, should render it necessary. One effect of the mutual understanding which took place amongst these leading men was indeed immediately discoverable; for, as soon as they returned to their respective homes, associations were set on foot in all the colonies against the importation of British manufactures, such importation to cease after the first of January following, until the stamp act should be repealed; a measure which was probably concerted before they left New York.

When the first of November arrived, the day on which the stamp act was to take effect, neither stamps were to be had nor officers to distribute them. The former had been lodged in places of security, to save them from destruction by the populace; and the latter had been either terrified into resignation, or driven away by ill usage. The courts of law were unable to proceed for want of those papers which the act had rendered necessary; and a total stop was put to the administration of justice, except in criminal cases, in which stamps were not required. Commerce too was at a stand, because stamps were made necessary in the entry and clearance of vessels at the custom-houses. Some of the merchants ventured to send their ships to sea with certificates from the governors that stamps could not be procured; and in the province of Massachusetts Bay the council and assembly were daring enough to enter into a formal resolution, declaring it to be lawful to transact business, as formerly, without the use of stamps.

Such

Introduction.
1765.

Such were the measures pursued and the steps taken in America, during the year 1765, for opposing the stamp act and procuring its repeal; and the inhabitants of the colonies were not more active and strenuous in resisting, than the new ministry were remiss and backward in issuing, orders for enforcing its execution. Although the resolutions of the assembly of Virginia were laid before them not long after they came into office, and although, upon the twenty-seventh of August, the board of trade reported these resolutions to contain a daring attack upon the constitution of Great Britain, and to require immediate attention; and although that board recommended orders to be forthwith sent to the executive power, and to all the officers of government in Virginia, to exert themselves vigorously in support of the authority of parliament, and to exact a due obedience to all the laws of the land; yet this report of the board of trade, so urgent in its nature, was not taken into consideration by the privy council until the third of October. On that day indeed, in a very full council, at which lord chancellor Camden assisted, it was determined, that the subject of the report from the board of trade was of too high a nature for the decision of the king in council, and that it was proper only for the consideration of parliament: As if it had not been the duty of the executive power to require a prompt obedience to all the acts of the legislature, and as if that power had a right to deliberate whether an act of parliament should be carried into execution or not.

Such was the indecision of the new ministry respecting American affairs; and so indefinite, and even inexplicable*, was the nature of their dispatches to the American governors, that the last blow was now given to the little energy which remained in the executive part of the colonial governments. Those governors undoubtedly

* See Secretary Conway's letters to Governor Fauquier, of Virginia, dated Sept. 14, 1765.

Introduction.
1765.

thought that it was their duty to exact obedience to an act of parliament which extended to America ; but being informed in their government dispatches that this was a subject * under the consideration of the privy council, a doubt might arise where there was none before ; and with such information before them, they could not be certain whether a strenuous exertion in compelling submission to the stamp act might not expose them to the displeasure of those who now conducted the affairs of government.

In the party writings published about this time, and in certain parliamentary speeches of a later date, which, from their brilliancy, gave the tone to public opinion, the stamp act has been considered as the introduction of a new system in the government of the colonies. But whoever will take the trouble of examining the proceedings of former parliaments, and the various acts which they passed, without consulting the inhabitants of the colonies, for confining and restricting their trade so as to make it serviceable to the mother-country ; for regulating even their domestic concerns and pursuits, and for subjecting both their exports and imports, in certain cases, to the payment of duties and taxes, which, when collected, were a part of the revenue of the kingdom, and applicable to such purposes as the parliament thought fit to direct † ; will see that the stamp act was not the introduction of a new, but the continuation and extension of the old system under which they had always been governed. It was an application, not of a new, but of the old, principle upon which former parliaments had acted to the new and improved state of the colonies, which enabled them to contribute more largely than

* Secretary Conway's letter to Lieutenant Governor Fauquier, dated 14th Sept. 1765.

† See the following statutes :—

12 Car. II. c. 18.	7 and 8 W. III. c. 22.	9 Ann, c. 17.	5 Geo. II. c. 22.
15 Car. II. c. 7.	3 and 4 Ann, c. 5.	8 Geo. I. c. 15.	6 Geo. II. c. 13.
25 Car. II. c. 7.	6 Ann, c. 30.	5 Geo. II. c. 15.	23 Geo. II. c. 29.

formerly towards raising a revenue for their own support, defence, and protection. Introduction.

But whatever force there may be in these remarks, a clamour had been now raised in Great Britain as well as America; the mercantile and manufacturing interests were alarmed; petitions against the stamp act, said to be encouraged by the ministry*, were transmitted from some of the principal sea-port and manufacturing towns; and in the next session of parliament, as had been foreseen, a bill was introduced and supported by the whole weight and influence of the new administration for repealing the stamp act. The disturbances in America were by them spoken of with some degree of tenderness. The inhabitants of the colonies were represented as an injured people; and the acts of violence which had been committed, were supposed to proceed from their despair. Mr. Grenville and his party strongly opposed the bill, and charged the present ministry with creating the disobedience and resistance which had arisen in America, by their intemperate and inconsiderate speeches whilst they were in opposition; but it was at length carried and passed through the house by a considerable majority. The ministry seem to have wished to give satisfaction to all parties, as well those who favoured, as those who opposed, the stamp act, by introducing at the same time a declaratory bill, which censured and condemned the resolutions of the American assemblies, and contained a formal declaration, that the British parliament had authority to make laws for binding the colonies in all cases whatsoever. These two bills accompanied each other through the two houses of parliament, and received the royal assent on the eighteenth of March.

In the bill for repealing the stamp act, that act was declared to be repealed; not because it was illegal, unconstitutional, or unjust;

* Mr. Grenville's speech on the repeal of the stamp act.

Introduction.
1766.

nor because it was arbitrary or oppressive; but simply because it was inexpedient: And it was repealed absolutely, and free from all terms or conditions.

The principle of the repeal, and the policy of the ministry in proceeding thus hastily upon it, have been much questioned, and not without a strong appearance of reason. If the objections of the colonial assemblies were deemed of no force or validity, it was the duty of the British parliament, for the preservation of their own authority, instead of repealing, to have taken measures for enforcing the execution of the stamp act: On the other hand; if these objections were unanswerable and irresistible, it would have been wise, it would have been magnanimous and worthy of the representatives of a great nation, not only to have repealed the stamp act, but by an open declaration to have renounced for ever the exercise of such an unconstitutional authority; and at the same time to have devised some other expedient for accomplishing the end proposed by the stamp act by less exceptionable means. Such a declaration would have quieted the minds of the colonists, and removed all future apprehensions. But the British parliament pursued neither of these courses. It is true they repealed the stamp act, but they at the same time passed the declaratory act, more arbitrary and more alarming than the other; and by this preposterous policy kept alive the jealousy which the stamp act had excited, whilst they abandoned all the benefits which it was designed to produce.

The inhabitants of the American colonies had resisted the execution of the stamp act, because they thought it unconstitutional: The inexpediency of it made no part of their legislative complaints. They denied the right of parliament to impose taxes upon them; but they never pretended that the taxes imposed by the stamp act were greater than they were able to pay.

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Here then a favourable occasion presented itself for the exercise of ministerial wisdom, which could not be better employed than in moderating the pretensions of the colonial assemblies, settling the mode of their future contributions, and devising some permanent system or arrangement for reconciling such of their claims as were admissible, with that general and superintending authority which the parliament ought to possess for preserving an union of councils and of interests amongst all the members of an extensive empire. For such a purpose no interval could be more proper than that which passed between the time when the execution of the stamp act was resisted in America, and the time of its repeal; whilst the inhabitants of the colonies remained under the apprehension incident to a consciousness of having for the first time refused obedience to an act of the supreme power of the mother-country—but this opportunity was neglected. It was now become necessary for the ministry, by removing the cause, to allay, as speedily as possible, the storm which they themselves, when in opposition, had assisted to raise. Their credit as a party depended upon it: For after the opposition which they had made to the stamp act, had they proceeded to enforce the execution of it by the power of the mother-country, which was now in their hands, the battery which they had raised against the former administration might have been turned with double effect against themselves. The stamp act was therefore to be repealed at all events; and by this premature and unqualified repeal it has been thought that the interest of the mother-country and the future tranquillity of the colonies were both sacrificed to the convenience of party.

If, in the opinion of the ministry, the stamp act was accounted to be a bold, daring, and rash measure, their opponents thought themselves entitled to say that the act which repealed it was not less marked with the opposite qualities. It is not wise wantonly to provoke a quarrel: But when once a quarrel is begun, from whatever cause it might have originated, the grounds of difference on
both

Introduction.
1766.

both sides should be inquired into, and such a settlement should be made as might prevent future jealousies and disagreements: To end it in such a manner as to leave the pretensions on both sides open, is weak and dastardly policy;—it is a temporary expedient pregnant with future mischief.

The repeal of the stamp act occasioned very general rejoicings in America. The mass of the people are in all countries led by the few: Looking only at the outside of things, they easily take the impression which is meant to be given: They had been taught to consider the stamp act as the greatest of all evils, and upon receiving intelligence of its repeal, gave themselves up to unbounded joy. In this sensation, even the leading men very cordially joined; they saw in the repeal of the stamp act, a victory gained by the colonies over the mother-country, and in that victory the first dawn of future independence. They had experienced the benefits resulting from an union of councils, and a general co-operation in the same cause; and considered the declaratory act, however formidable and offensive in appearance, as a measure which was calculated to do them more service than harm. They viewed it as a weak and impolitic bravado on the part of the British parliament, which would defeat its own purpose, by continuing the alarm which had been excited, and by cementing the union which had taken place amongst the colonies.

The courts of justice now resumed their functions; the assemblies in the different provinces were called; and mutual congratulations passed between them and their governors. Their late ill-humour gave a poignancy to their present enjoyments; and all past animosities seemed for a time to be forgotten.

But even during this season of festivity, there were not wanting some, who by publications in the newspapers cautioned their countrymen against giving way to intemperate joy; they reminded them, that although the stamp act was repealed, its principle had not been given
up:

up: That the British parliament persevered in maintaining their right of taxation, and by passing the declaratory act affected to possess a still higher and more arbitrary power than the authors of the stamp act had ventured to exercise: That the repeal of the stamp act had rather been extorted than freely granted, and that for this boon they were more indebted to their own wisdom and firmness, than to the generosity of the British nation: That future administrations and future parliaments might again attempt to impose taxes upon them; and that it was therefore incumbent upon the inhabitants of the colonies to be vigilant and attentive, and not suffer themselves to be lulled into a state of thoughtless security: That it was their duty, whilst it was in their power, to provide against the worst that might happen: That with this view they ought to encourage the breeding of sheep, for the purpose of acquiring a stock of wool, the culture of flax, hemp, and cotton, and the fabrication of such of the coarser British manufactures as are most essentially necessary for the common purposes of life; by which means they might with less inconvenience to themselves, when future occasions should require it, enter into non-importation agreements, and abstain from the use and consumption of British manufactures, which they saw was likely to be the most effectual mode of opposition to the illegal exertions of power on the part of the mother-country. By such publications, attempts were made to keep alive and nourish that spirit of jealousy and distrust, which the declaratory act was so well calculated to inspire.

The secretary of state, in the dispatches sent to the American governors upon the repeal of the stamp act, took occasion to set forth the grace and condescension of the king and parliament in listening to the complaints of the inhabitants of the colonies; and their lenity, tenderness, moderation, and forbearance, manifested in the repeal of that act, notwithstanding the provocation which they had received.

Introduction.
1766.

by the forcible resistance that had been made to the execution of it; and intimated that suitable returns of gratitude, duty, affection, and submission, would be expected on the part of the colonies. These were held forth as themes for the governors to enlarge upon in their speeches to the assemblies. And it must be confessed that those assemblies were not backward in voting addresses of thanks, nor did they fall short of the secretary's expectations in professions of loyalty, duty, and affection to the king; but in what regarded the parliament they were far from being explicit: And it very soon appeared that some of them, instead of being eager to give substantial proofs of subordination to the British parliament, were studious to avoid even the appearance of it.

At the time of repealing the stamp act, the parliament also voted an address to be presented to his majesty, requesting that he would be pleased to instruct the governors in America to make requisitions to the colonial assemblies for granting compensation to such individuals as had suffered in their private property in consequence of the tumults. These requisitions were accordingly made in such of the colonies where any loss of private property had been sustained, and particularly in the province of Massachusetts Bay, where the tumults had been the most outrageous. But the assembly of that province, instead of laying hold of this opportunity to shew their respect to the British parliament, and at the same time to do an act of justice, quarrelled with their governor, under a pretence that he had set forth the requisition in stronger and more peremptory terms than he was warranted to do by the secretary of state's letter; and in an address presented to him on this occasion, after censuring the manner in which he had communicated the requisition, they coldly tell him, "That they will embrace the first convenient opportunity to consider and act upon secretary Conway's recommendation," without taking the least notice of the resolution of parliament. The governor made repeated

repeated applications to them, but from various pretences they delayed passing an act to compensate the sufferers for more than six months; nor was it done until the inhabitants of the town of Boston instructed their representatives to vote for it, and informed them that the lords of the treasury in England had refused to pay the colony the money voted by parliament in the year 1763, until compensation was first made to these sufferers: And when the act was at last passed, it contained a clause of indemnity to the offenders in the riots, which shewed that these were not less the objects of that assembly's care and attention, than the unfortunate sufferers. A similar backwardness appeared in the colonies of Rhode Island and New York; but in the province of Maryland the assembly were eager to testify their respect for the recommendation of parliament, and without delay voted compensation to the only individual who had suffered in that province: And in the other colonies no losses were sustained.

Introduction.
1766.

In the same session of parliament in which the stamp act had been repealed, an act was passed for amending the annual mutiny act, which it had been usual to pass, for the government of the troops in America. The intention of the amendment was to provide for the more comfortable subsistence of those troops by supplying them with salt, vinegar, and beer or cyder; and the act directed that the expence incurred by the supply of these articles should be raised by the assemblies of the respective colonies in which the troops were quartered. It so happened, by the accidental march of some troops into the province of New York, that the governor of that province had occasion, on the day after he had communicated to the assembly the repeal of the stamp act, to apply to them for quarters for these troops, and in his message he specified the additional articles of salt, vinegar, beer or cyder, which were required to be furnished under the

Introduction.

1766.

amended mutiny act of the last session of parliament. He also informed them that the troops were upon their march, and were daily expected at New York. The assembly however was in no haste to take his message into consideration, nor did they present an address in answer to it until after the arrival of the troops, who in the mean time were put to some inconvenience for want of quarters. In their address, the assembly avoided noticing the act of parliament: They affected to consider the requisition as coming solely from the king; and agreed to furnish quarters for the troops with such necessaries only as they had been formerly accustomed to furnish. This answer not proving satisfactory to the governor, another message was sent; and after various messages and addresses, the assembly at last positively refused to supply the troops with the additional articles required by the amendment made to the mutiny act, seeming to consider it as not differing in principle from the stamp act, so far as it imposed a new burthen upon them. A disinclination to comply with this act of parliament appeared in several of the other colonies where troops were stationed; and in no one of them was the act specifically carried into execution. Means, it is true, were fallen upon to satisfy the troops: But the British parliament was not to be gratified, even at the small expence of furnishing the inconsiderable articles of salt, vinegar, and small beer.

Such were the returns made in America to the grace and condescension of the king and parliament in repealing the stamp act. But the Rockingham administration did not continue long enough in power to receive official accounts of the effect of their measures for restoring peace and tranquillity to the colonies. In the month of July of the present year, they were dismissed from their employments, and a new administration was formed, at the head of which was the duke of Grafton, aided by the splendid talents, the popular virtues,

virtues, and energetic powers of Mr. Pitt, now created earl of Chatham, who accepted the office of lord privy seal, and with whose advice the new arrangements were said to have been made.

Introduction.

1766.

The first act of this new administration which related to America serves to shew, that although many of the members of it had voted for the repeal of the stamp act, yet in reality they differed not much in principle from those who were the authors of it. In the debates which that act had occasioned in parliament, in some of the political pamphlets published in America, and in the resolutions of some of the colonial assemblies, a distinction had been taken between external and internal taxation, that is, between raising money from the colonies by the imposition of duties on the importation or exportation of merchandize, and raising it internally in the way proposed by the stamp act: And on these occasions it had been said, that although the colonies never would agree to the latter, they had already submitted to the former, which was necessary for the regulation of trade; and that the British parliament ought to be contented with the exercise of this acknowledged right, leaving to the colonial assemblies the powers of internal taxation, and of regulating the domestic policy of the respective provinces, which seemed to be the objects for which such assemblies were originally instituted, and of the due exercise of which powers, their local information enabled them to be more competent judges than the British parliament could pretend to be.

1767.

The new ministry laying hold of this distinction, and availing themselves of the supposed concession, procured an act of parliament to be passed for imposing certain duties on glass, paper, pasteboard, white and red lead, painter's colours, and tea, payable upon the importation of these articles into the American colonies; which duties, when collected, were made applicable, in the first place, to making provision for the administration of justice, and the support

Introduction.

1767.

of civil government, in such of the colonies where it should be necessary, and the residue to be paid into the exchequer in England, and to be applicable to the same uses as the former duties imposed in the year 1764. The act also contained a clause for discontinuing the drawback payable on the exportation of china-ware to America, and made some new provisions for preventing the clandestine running of goods in the colonies. And at the same time another act was passed for putting these, and all the other customs and duties payable in America by any former act of parliament, under the management of commissioners, who were to be resident in that country.

In the same session too, the dispatches of the governor of New York, which announced the refusal of the assembly of that province to comply with the mutiny act, were laid before the parliament: And timidly indulgent as the members of this parliament had heretofore shewed themselves, in overlooking the rebellious outrages which had been committed, and the daring insurrections which had appeared in America, in opposition to the stamp act, they now seemed determined that the assembly of New York should feel the weight of their displeasure for this recent act of disobedience; and an act was accordingly passed for suspending them from the exercise of all their legislative functions, until they should yield obedience to the act of parliament for quartering the troops. The Rockingham party, now out of office, could not in decency oppose this coercive measure, the object of which was to enforce obedience to an act of parliament which they, when in power, had procured to be passed.

These acts were all introduced and supported by the influence of the new ministry. They, like the ministry which had patronized the stamp act, were conscious that the mother-country, bending under the weight and pressure of accumulated taxes, with the sinews of her strength stretched to the utmost possible extent, stood in need of

every assistance. Like them too they were convinced that the American colonies were the least burthened of all the British dominions; and that it was the duty of those who were entrusted with the administration of government to require them to furnish a due proportion towards the general expence. It was also thought highly probable, that as the colonies had been so lately gratified with the repeal of the obnoxious stamp act, they would the more readily submit to an act which required their contribution in a shape and form accommodated in some degree to the political speculations of the time, and to the ideas of some of those friends of the colonies who had espoused their cause in the British parliament. Perhaps too it was thought that the colonies would have been more easily induced to yield to this mode of taxation, as this would tend to refute the aspersions of their enemies, who charged them with ingratitude, and reproached them with an inclination to avail themselves of the protection of the mother-country, and of all the benefits which they enjoyed under the British government, without contributing towards its support. Such, it may be supposed, were some of the motives which influenced the British ministry about this period.

But the leading men in the colonies, and their political writers, thought very differently. In the course of their speculations on the subject of the stamp act, they had been led into a train of thought and consequent reasoning that were applicable not only to the act which was the immediate object of their speculation, but to all the other acts of the British parliament which extended to America. Some of these had existed for more than a century, and had been sanctioned by time and by constant and uninterrupted acquiescence. To have questioned their validity would have been offering violence to public opinion. These writers therefore were prudent enough for the present to avoid pushing their arguments to such a length; but they were not the less anxious to guard their countrymen against submitting

Introduction.

1767.

Introduction.

1767.

submitting to any farther extension of the like authority. For this purpose, the passing of the stamp act was to be held out as a new æra in their political history, and as the commencement of a new system on the part of Great Britain. That act had been condemned as illegal and unconstitutional. Those which preceded it, although upon their grounds of argument not less liable to objection, yet having been consecrated by time, were to be thrown into the back ground, and the stamp act alone was to be put forward as the prominent figure, by a comparison with which the legality or illegality of every subsequent act of parliament for laying duties or taxes on America was to be estimated.

It required no great reach of thought to perceive that the late act which imposed duties on certain articles of merchandize imported from Great Britain into the colonies, differed not in principle from the stamp act. The object of both was to raise a revenue from the colonies; in the raising of which, and in the disposal of it when raised, the colonial assemblies were to have no concern: The articles upon which the duties were imposed, were become so necessary that they could not be dispensed with without great inconvenience to the inhabitants of the colonies; and they were such as either could not be raised in America, or in the raising and manufacture of which it was not the interest of the colonists to be employed.

On this ground their political writers set to work. They maintained that the new act was a branch of the same system which had been introduced in Mr. Grenville's administration for enslaving America: That it was in every respect as unconstitutional as the stamp act: That the mother-country, guided by such councils and pursuing such arbitrary measures, was rather to be considered as a malignant step-mother than an indulgent parent: That she envied the prosperity of the colonies, and seemed determined to crush and keep them down: And that it was therefore a duty which the inhabitants

habitants of the colonies owed not only to themselves but to their posterity, to withstand such illegal exactions; because, if they submitted to one, it would afford a precedent for another, and that to a third; until, by the continued renewal and extension of such impositions, they would be drained of the little wealth they possessed, and be at last reduced to poverty and distress. Such were the arguments used to excite an opposition to the new act of parliament amongst the people of the colonies; and meeting with no contradiction, the effect which they would have upon the public mind may be easily conceived.

Introduction.
1767.

The inattention of government to these publications was one great cause of hastening the American revolution. For whilst the colonial newspapers were filled with inflammatory publications, tending to excite jealousy and promote discontent, to throw suspicions on every act of the British government extending to America, and by degrees to lessen that veneration for the mother-country with which the inhabitants of, at least a part of, the British colonies were once impressed; only one or two writers were employed on the other side to counteract the effects of such seditious publications, to support the cause of the mother-country, and for a time to keep the course of public opinion suspended, until the matters in dispute could be fairly and dispassionately considered.

It is to the province of Massachusetts Bay that we are henceforward to look for those causes which had a more immediate influence in accelerating the American revolution. The foundation of this revolution was indeed laid in the meeting of the first congress; not perhaps by any actual agreement to resist the power of the mother-country, but by incorporating and uniting the grievances of all the colonies, and making them the subject of common complaint. Whence it followed, that whenever afterwards any single colony brought upon itself the displeasure of the mother-country, the cause

Introduction.
1768.

of that colony was espoused by all the rest; and the refractory ungovernable spirit of the inhabitants of Massachusetts Bay, for ever running into excesses, and breaking forth into outrages against lawful authority, and thereby bringing down upon the province the consequent animadversions and chastisements of the mother-country, furnished to the assemblies of the other colonies a never-failing source of disquiet, uneasiness, remonstrance and complaint; until, by successive altercations with government, their passions became inflamed, resentment was kindled, and all respect for the mother-country being in time thrown aside, the bonds of union which connected her with the colonies were at last violently rent asunder. The transactions in this province will therefore occupy a principal part in the following pages, down to the year 1774.

There had been no good agreement between the governor* and the inhabitants of Massachusetts Bay from the time of the stamp act. He had on that, and indeed on every other occasion, shewn himself active and zealous in maintaining the authority of the mother-country, as far as it was in his power; and this conduct of itself was sufficient to make him unpopular. He had lived long enough in the province to be fully acquainted with the character of the people over whom he presided, and by his knowledge and experience was enabled to penetrate into their designs, which he did not fail to lay open to the British ministry. The animadversions on their conduct contained in some of the government dispatches, which it was necessary to lay before the assembly, discovered to them the nature of their governor's communications; and they, on their part, charged him with misrepresentation. In the preceding year he had exercised the prerogative of putting a negative on some of the violent men of the patriotic party, whom the assembly had elected as coun-

* Sir Francis Bernard.

fellors.

fellors. The excluded members felt this as a gross affront, and became his inveterate enemies. Their influence with the people was great, and they scrupled not to use it in stirring them up to thwart the governor, gratifying their private resentment at the expence of the public tranquillity: And to the efforts of these restless and discontented men may, in part, be ascribed the perturbed and unquiet state of this province during the whole of the ensuing year.

Introduction.
1768.

The first symptoms of a determined opposition to the act of the last session of parliament for imposing duties in America appeared at Boston in the month of October of the preceding year; where the inhabitants, at a meeting held in their town-hall, agreed to enter into associations to encourage manufactures amongst themselves, to discountenance luxuries of all sorts, and to discontinue the importation from Great Britain of all such superfluous articles of dress and clothing as necessity did not absolutely require. But the act which gave them most uneasiness was that which established a board of customs in America. Under the inspection and superintendence of that board they dreaded a more rigorous execution of the laws of trade than they had been yet accustomed to. Their apprehensions were the greater because the residence of this board was fixed to be at Boston: And their chagrin was the more distressing, from a conviction that this, of all the acts which had been passed, was the least liable to be assailed by objections of any considerable weight or importance.

When the assembly of that province met in the month of January of the present year, they entered upon a general consideration of grievances. A petition was prepared, to be presented to the king, complaining not only of the acts of the last session of parliament, but of every other act which had been passed for imposing duties in America since the year 1763. A very long letter was written to their agent in England, instructing him how to controvert these acts

Introduction.

1708.

upon grounds of natural right, and upon general principles of equity, policy, and commerce; and letters were also transmitted to the lords of the treasury, the secretaries of state, the marquis of Rockingham, the earl of Chatham, and lord Camden, pleading the cause of America, and intreating the exertion of their influence and abilities in furthering the object of the petition.

These steps having been taken for inducing a favourable hearing of their complaints in England, they now had recourse to the same kind of policy which had before been successfully practised in opposing the stamp act; thinking the present a favourable opportunity for renewing their correspondence with the other colonial assemblies, and for stimulating them to prefer similar complaints. With this view a circular letter was addressed to the assemblies of all the other colonies, communicating the deliberations of the assembly of Massachusetts Bay, on the late acts of parliament for imposing duties in America; giving a full detail of the grounds of argument which they had used to expose the evil tendency of these acts, in their petition to the king, in the instructions to their agent, and in their letters to the great officers of state in England; expressing a hope that measures of a similar nature would be adopted by all the assemblies upon the continent; and intimating a readiness and a wish to receive from these assemblies a communication of such other measures as might to them appear necessary to be pursued for the general interest of the whole.

This letter bore date the 11th of February. A copy of it was without delay sent to England by the governor, and gave much displeasure to the British administration. They viewed it as a wicked attempt in the assembly of Massachusetts Bay to light up again the flames of discord in the colonies, and as the commencement of a plan of regular opposition to the authority of the mother-country. And in order to counteract its effects, the secretary of state for
American

American affairs*, on the 22d of April, wrote an admonitory letter to the governors of the colonies, to be by them laid before their assemblies, in which the circular letter of the assembly of Massachusetts Bay was condemned as a measure of a most dangerous and factious tendency, calculated to inflame the minds of his majesty's good subjects in the colonies, to promote an unwarrantable combination, to excite an opposition to the authority of parliament, and to subvert the true principles of the constitution: And the colonial assemblies were admonished not to suffer themselves to be led away from their duty, nor to give any countenance to this mischievous effort of the Massachusetts Bay assembly for exciting discord; but rather to treat it with the contempt it deserved.

Introduction,
1768.

But this administration did not accord with the sentiments of the leading men in the colonies. They maintained that the colonial assemblies had a right to consult together and freely to communicate their observations to each other, on the subject of their common grievances; and they considered the interference of the British ministry, on the present occasion, as an unjustifiable attempt to discourage and prevent the inhabitants of the colonies from exercising the undoubted right of British subjects to prefer their united supplications to the throne whenever they thought themselves aggrieved.

And thus the letter from the secretary of state became the subject of severe animadversion, and gave occasion to some new and angry resolutions in several of the colonial assemblies: Whilst the circular letter from Massachusetts Bay was well received and approved of, and produced all the effect which was expected from it. Petitions formed on the model of that of Massachusetts Bay were transmitted to England from all the colonies.

* A new arrangement took place at the beginning of the present year, in the secretary of state's office; a third secretary being appointed for the department of the colonies.

Introduction.

1768.

Those shades of difference which had originally characterized the resolutions of the different assemblies, and which were most conspicuous in those of Massachusetts Bay and Virginia, now began to disappear. The republican notions and high pretensions of the people of New England were daily gaining ground: And the act of the last session of parliament for imposing duties, although apparently framed for the purpose of coinciding with the political creed of the southern colonies, was now as much condemned in the assembly of Virginia as it had been in that of Massachusetts Bay; the assembly of Virginia getting rid of their former distinction between internal taxes, by maintaining that the duties payable by this act, although on the importation of merchandize, were as much internal as those of the stamp act, because they were imposed not for the purpose of regulation, but of raising a revenue.

The letter from the secretary of state to the governor of Massachusetts Bay instructed him to require the assembly of his province to rescind the resolution of the preceding session, which had given birth to the circular letter, as it appeared to have passed near the end of the assembly, and in a thin house; and if they should refuse, he was directed to dissolve them. This requisition was accordingly made in the month of June; and the assembly, having refused to comply with it by a majority of ninety-two against seventeen, was dissolved by the governor, in pursuance of his instructions.

Previous to the dissolution of the assembly, the ill-humour, discontent, chagrin, and vexation of the inhabitants of Boston, aggravated by some new regulations introduced by the commissioners of the customs for checking the clandestine practices of the former, in the landing and shipping of goods, broke forth into such an open and violent resistance of lawful authority, as threatened speedily to involve the whole province in rebellion.

The

Introduction,
1708.

The sloop Liberty, belonging to John Hancock, one of their principal merchants, had arrived in the harbour of Boston, laden with wine, and a tide-waiter had been put on board to prevent the cargo from being landed, until she should be entered at the custom-house and receive a permit to unlade. On the night after her arrival, and before she was entered at the custom-house, the master of the vessel, having in vain tampered with the preventive officer to obtain his permission, at last forcibly locked him up in the cabin, and proceeded to discharge the wine; taking oil from the shore in lieu of it, with which the vessel was reladen before the morning. Information of this outrageous proceeding having been given at the custom-house, the collector, on the evening of the following day, being the 10th of June, made a seizure of the sloop, and put her for safety under the protection of the Romney ship of war. The sloop was accordingly removed from the wharf where she lay, and moored in the harbour under the stern of the Romney. This was no sooner seen from the shore than a mob assembled; the collector and controller of the customs were beaten and abused, and in making their escape were pelted with stones: The commissioners of the customs were threatened, their houses were attacked, and they themselves were obliged to take refuge on board the Romney: And finally, the collector's boat was carried in triumph, and burnt before the door of the owner of the sloop. Such were the riotous proceedings on the evening of the seizure of the sloop Liberty.

On the following day the commissioners of the customs applied to the governor for protection: Their application was by him communicated to the council and assembly, whose advice and assistance he requested; but advice was not given, nor assistance offered—the commissioners met with no protection: And the threats against them being continued, they were at last obliged to retire for safety to Castle William, a fortress situated upon an island at the mouth of the

Introduction.
1768.

the harbour. In the mean time, on the 14th of June, a town meeting was held, and so far were the inhabitants of Boston from discountenancing the resistance which had been made to lawful authority, that they presented a remonstrance to the governor on the seizure of the sloop, and the circumstance of her being put under the protection of a ship of war; and accompanied it with this strange request, that he would order his majesty's ship the Romney out of the harbour. All this happened during the sitting of the council and assembly; and yet no one step was taken by them, for assisting the governor in restoring energy to government, or in protecting its officers in the execution of their duty.

Representations on the subject of this tumult and insurrection were made not only by the governor but by the commissioners of the customs to the British ministry; and troops were ordered to be sent to Boston to aid the civil power. A rumour of the orders which had been given having reached Boston before the arrival of the troops, filled the inhabitants with new alarms and apprehensions; and a town meeting being called on the 12th of September, a petition from the inhabitants was presented to the governor, intreating him to convene the general assembly. To this petition the governor answered, that he had dissolved the assembly in consequence of an instruction, and that it was not in his power to call another until he received his majesty's orders for that purpose. The governor's answer did not contribute to allay the ferment which the expected arrival of the troops had occasioned; and the people of Boston, goaded on by their factious and discontented leaders, conceived and adopted in their present state of perplexity the new and daring resolution of assembling a convention of the people. For this purpose the town meeting was adjourned to the following day, when they voted and resolved, that they were under no obligation of submitting to laws to which they had not given their consent, either by themselves or their
their

their representatives, that the levying of money within the province for the use of the crown, without the consent of the general assembly, is a violation of their charter and of their natural rights as subjects, declared in the statute of the 1 W. & M.; that the sending an armed force amongst them without their consent, would be an infringement of these rights, and the employing of such a force to aid the execution of laws to which they had not given their consent, an intolerable grievance. And as the governor had declared himself unable to call a general assembly for the redress of grievances, they resolved it to be expedient that a convention of the people should be held. They appointed four persons to represent them in this convention, one of whom was the owner of the sloop, the seizure of which had occasioned the tumult. They directed the select men to write to the select men of the other towns in the province, to inform them of these proceedings at the town meeting of Boston, and to propose a convention to be held on the 22d of the same month. They resolved that the inhabitants of Boston should be requested to provide themselves with arms, pursuant to a law of the province which had been too much neglected, assigning as a reason for this vote, a prevailing apprehension of an approaching war with France; and lastly, they requested that the ministers of the town would set apart the following Tuesday as a day of fasting and prayer.

In pursuance of these votes, letters were written by the select men; and deputies were appointed to meet in the proposed convention by all the townships in the province, that of Hatfield alone excepted; the inhabitants of which not only refused to appoint deputies for the convention, but wrote an expostulatory letter to the select men of Boston, upbraiding the inhabitants of that town with their riotous behaviour, charging them with being the cause, by their misconduct, why troops were to be sent into the province; admonishing them that their future orderly behaviour was the only way to procure a

Introduction.
1768.

removal of the troops, and protesting against the proposed convention as a measure that was unconstitutional, illegal, and unjustifiable, subversive of government, and destructive of the peace of society.

The convention met on the twenty-second of September, and consisted of deputies from ninety-eight towns and eight districts. Their first act was to send a deputation to the governor with a message, in which they disclaim all pretence to authoritative or governmental acts, allege that they were met, in that dark and distressful time, only to consult and advise such measures as might promote the peace of his majesty's subjects in that province, and conclude with intreating him to call an assembly. The governor refused to receive their message, and the next day issued a proclamation in which he warned them of their danger, if they should proceed to any kind of business, admonished them to disperse, and threatened, if they did not, to assert the prerogative of the crown in a more public manner.

Whether the members of this convention were disconcerted by the governor's firmness, or whether they began to think that they had gone too far in assembling not only without but against his consent, is uncertain: But their proceedings during their short session were uncommonly mild and moderate, and did not seem to correspond with the temper of mind manifested in the votes of the town meeting at Boston. Their proceedings were only a petition to be presented to the king against the late acts of parliament, and a report stating the causes of their meeting, and the objects which they had taken into consideration. In this report they again disclaimed all pretence to authority, recommended to the people to pay deference to government, and wait with patience the result of his majesty's wisdom and clemency, and promised for themselves to assist the civil magistrate in preserving the peace. These papers having been prepared and dispatched to their agent in England, their meeting was dissolved

dissolved on the twenty-ninth of September, the day on which the first division of the troops arrived at Boston.

Introduction.

1768.

Upon the arrival of the troops some difficulties arose about quartering them; the council proposing that they should be sent to Castle William, where barracks were already erected, instead of being quartered in the town, where there were none; but it was necessary that the troops should be quartered in the place where their assistance was required: And all objections were at last obviated by hiring some empty houses in the town, which were fitted up and converted into barracks. The turbulence of the people being restrained by the presence of the troops, peace was thus for a time restored to Boston. The commissioners and other officers of the customs returned from Castle William; and business began to be carried on in its usual course.

In the province of New York the assembly having made submission, and complied with the terms of the mutiny act, were restored to the exercise of their legislative functions.

The success of the circular letter from the assembly of Massachusetts Bay in exciting the other colonial assemblies to petition for a redress of grievances has been already noticed. But petitions were not the only means to which they trusted for relief. Associations were again resorted to for distressing the trade of the mother-country, and for influencing the mercantile and manufacturing interest in England to bestir themselves in behalf of the colonies. To have restrained all importation from Great Britain would at that time have distressed themselves more than those whom they meant to injure: It was therefore proposed, that the importation of the more necessary articles of merchandize should be continued, and those only which were less necessary be prohibited. The concurrence of the merchants was indispensable: And as the necessary articles of merchandize were different in different colonies, it became no easy matter to adjust

Introduction.

1768.

their jarring interests; so that although various attempts had been made to introduce these associations in the beginning of the year, it was not till the end of it that they met with any thing like a general acceptance. The importation of the prohibited articles was to cease from the first of January 1769: And the effect which these combinations had upon the commerce of the mother-country will be seen hereafter.

Such were the principal transactions in America during the year 1768.

1769.

Upon the meeting of the parliament in England, the disorderly and disobedient state of the province of Massachusetts Bay was mentioned in the speech from the throne, and became the subject of debate early in the session.

The ministry now seemed determined to act with more than usual vigour in attempting to subdue that daring spirit of resistance to the authority of parliament, which had shewn itself by this time in some degree in all the colonies, but most unjustifiably in the province of Massachusetts Bay, in the provoking transactions of the preceding year. These transactions were accordingly made the ground of sundry parliamentary resolutions, in which they were recited with every circumstance of aggravation, and branded with every epithet of disapprobation which could serve to mark the high displeasure of the British parliament. The town of Boston was declared to be in a state of disorder and disobedience to law. The disinclination of the council and assembly to assist in suppressing the riots was severely censured; and the necessity of sending a military force to aid the civil power was fully justified. These resolutions having been agreed to and passed, a joint address from both houses of parliament was presented to his majesty, approving of the steps which had been already taken for maintaining the authority of the mother-country, and declaring their readiness to concur in such other measures as might be thought

thought necessary for that purpose. The address concluded with recommending to his majesty to bring the authors of the disturbances to exemplary punishment ; to instruct governor Bernard of Massachusetts Bay to transmit to England full information of all treasonable acts committed within his province during the preceding year, together with the names of the offenders ; to revive the execution of the statute of 35 Hen. VIII. for trying within the realm of England treasons committed beyond the seas ; and to issue a special commission for that purpose, if upon receiving governor Bernard's report such a proceeding should appear to be necessary.

Introduction.
1769.

These resolutions and this address, although finally passed by a great majority, were not voted without considerable opposition. The Rockingham and Grenville parties united their force to oppose them, and distress the ministry. The irregularities and extravagances of the people of Boston (for in such gentle terms were they spoken of) were either palliated or excused. It was said that this simple and inoffensive people had been driven to madness when they perceived that the taxes of which they now complained were not laid upon them by the influence of their enemies, but of their friends ; of those friends too who had opposed the stamp act, and had totally denied to the British parliament the right of imposing taxes in America. And the opposition, far from seeming to shrink from their defence, on the contrary upbraided the ministry with giving them the appellation of rebellious and disobedient subjects.

Such speeches, whatever might be the intention of those who made them, were destructive of the authority which the parliament wished to maintain. They often gave the tone to the subsequent measures pursued by the American patriots, who exerted themselves to verify the predictions which their friends in parliament had previously made. They were the means of raising a party in favour of America, even in Great Britain. And on the present occasion they were

Introduction.
 1769.

were calculated to encourage the inhabitants of Massachusetts Bay to persist in their refractory course, when they found that even the provoking insults offered to government in the preceding year met with such able defenders in the British parliament.

That part of the ministerial plan which advised the execution of the almost obsolete statute of the 35 Hen. VIII. for the trial of treasons committed beyond the seas, gave the most serious concern to all those inhabitants of the colonies whose attachment to the mother-country was yet unshaken. It was a measure of severity which the ministry probably did not intend to execute; but for that reason it ought not to have been threatened. To be torn from a man's family and friends, transported across an extensive ocean, landed in a strange country as a prisoner and criminal, and tried by a jury not of his vicinage but of strangers, unacquainted with him or his character, and whom even the important formality of bringing the prisoner from such a distance to England for trial would be apt to impress with an idea of extraordinary guilt—all these, with others which might be mentioned, were circumstances of such hardship as could not fail to arrest the attention of even the most careless and unthinking colonist, and incline him to question the foundation of an authority liable to be exercised in a way so oppressive. In fact, the threatened revival of this arbitrary statute alienated the affection of the loyal and well-disposed amongst the inhabitants of the colonies more than any thing which the British parliament had yet attempted. Even those who were the most friendly to government, and who on other occasions were accustomed to justify to their neighbours the proceedings of parliament, shrunk from the defence of it. It was universally reprobated as an unjustifiable measure, from the practical exercise of which every feeling mind must revolt with horror.

In

In the province of Massachusetts Bay, where the disorders chiefly prevailed which this severe measure was intended to repress, and where a military force was ready to execute the orders of the civil power, it produced at first some little effect*. The writers of seditious publications for a few weeks desisted from their labours; but no vigorous measures being afterwards pursued, their fears were soon dissipated. The assembly of that province, far from being intimidated, entered into resolutions of an opposite tendency to those of the British parliament, and maintained, with reason and justice on their side, that it was the right of every British subject to be tried in that country where his supposed crime was known to be committed; and that the sending of persons into another country for trial was tyrannical and oppressive, and derogatory of the rights of freemen. They also voted charges against their governor for misconduct, which, with a petition praying for his removal, were transmitted to their agent in England, to be laid before the privy council.

Introduction.

1769.

In the other colonial assemblies the address of parliament for reviving the execution of the statute of 35 Hen. VIII. produced severe strictures on the conduct of the British administration who could propose and carry through such an arbitrary and tyrannical measure. Resolutions were entered into declarative of their rights in cases of trials for treason; and these, in some of the colonies, were of so acrimonious a nature, and so disrespectful to the British parliament in the opinion of their governors, that they occasioned the dissolution of those assemblies who had passed them.

So many altercations happened between the American governors and their assemblies during the preceding as well as the present year, that dissolutions were now become very frequent: But instead of serving to support the authority of the mother-country, they were

* Governor Hutchinson's Letter, 27th April 1770.

Introduction.
1769.

in reality prejudicial to it, by diffusing more widely, upon the return of the members to their constituents, that disrespect to parliament, and that ill-humour, heat, and animosity, the appearance of which in the assemblies had produced their dissolution.

From the time of the arrival in America of the parliamentary resolutions of the present year, those who promoted the associations met with very little farther obstruction. Committees were appointed by the people in all the principal towns, whose business it was to examine cargoes upon their arrival from Great Britain, and make reports to their constituents how far the association had been faithfully adhered to, and in what instances it had been infringed. Meetings of the associators were regularly held for receiving those reports: And at those meetings votes of censure were passed upon delinquents, and their names published in the newspapers to expose them to the hatred of the populace. In some instances goods imported contrary to the association were stored to prevent them from being sold; and in others, in order to prevent them from being destroyed, they were re-shipped to Great Britain.

The effect which such proceedings had on the commerce of the mother-country became very soon perceptible. It was found, that the merchandize exported to America in the year 1769 had fallen short of what had been exported to the same place in the preceding year by the sum of seven hundred and forty-four thousand pounds. It was found too, that the revenue arising from the duties payable in America was yearly decreasing*: And as the associations which had been entered into were not against the use of the prohibited articles, provided they were not of the produce or manufacture of

* The sums applied by parliament out of this revenue in the following years will shew the decrease:

In 1767 applied by parliament	£110,000
1768	70,000
1769	30,000

Great

Great Britain nor imported from thence, it was manifest that the demand for such articles would be transferred to foreign countries; and from them they began to be smuggled into America, in considerable quantities. And thus, in consequence of the associations, the act of parliament, which was the principal ground of complaint, operated in the colonies as a prohibition on British manufactures and as a bounty and encouragement, not only to those of America but those too of foreign countries. The merchants trading to America were also alarmed, and presented a petition to parliament, praying for a repeal of the act which had given so much offence in that country, setting forth the loss which the mother-country had already sustained in the declension of the colonial trade, and stating the more ruinous consequences which they still apprehended if the repeal was longer delayed.

Introduction.
1770.

Influenced by some or all of these considerations, lord North, now first lord of the treasury *, as well as chancellor of the exchequer, on the 5th of March moved sundry resolutions in the house of commons for discontinuing all the duties payable in America under the act of parliament of the year 1767, the duty on tea only excepted. The minister, in moving these resolutions, did not hesitate to condemn the act by which these duties had been imposed, as a measure that was at least impolitic, because the articles on which the duties were payable being chiefly British manufactures, the exportation of them to the colonies, instead of being clogged with duties, ought rather to have been encouraged. He also admitted that the duty on tea was reserved for the sole purpose of saving the national honour, and maintaining the authority of parliament: A duty which was too insignifi-

* Early in January of this year lord chancellor Camden was dismissed from his office, and many others of the ministry resigned. On the 28th of that month the duke of Grafton resigned the office of first lord of the treasury, but continued to vote with the ministry. The earl of Chatham, from ill health, had resigned the office of lord privy seal in November 1768.

Introduction.
 1770.

cant to be noticed by the inhabitants of the colonies, unless they were at all events determined to quarrel with the mother-country, the whole produce of it being estimated at no more than sixteen thousand pounds per annum.

The members of opposition, on the other hand, contended that the duty on tea ought to be taken off with the rest; alleging that, unless this was done, the discontinuing of the other duties would be useless, since the Americans questioned not so much the amount of the duties as the right to impose them. To this the minister replied, that the Americans could have no reason to complain, because, at the time when the duty of three-pence per pound payable in America was imposed, other duties upon tea payable in England, and amounting to near one shilling per pound, were taken off upon its exportation to America; so that the inhabitants of the colonies, instead of losing, actually saved by this imposition nearly nine-pence per pound on all the tea which they used. The resolutions were carried as they had been at first moved by the minister; and a bill which was introduced in pursuance of them passed through both houses of parliament, and received the royal assent on the 22d of April.

Whilst the minister was thus taking measures for giving satisfaction to the colonies, an unfortunate incident happened at Boston in Massachusetts Bay, which so exasperated the turbulent and discontented inhabitants of that province, as to banish from amongst them all present thoughts of a cordial reconciliation with the British government.

So long as the military force which we have seen was sent to Boston in the autumn of the year 1768, continued respectable in point of number, so long the town remained tolerably quiet; but as soon as that was weakened by the departure of two out of the four regiments which had been stationed there, the former ill-humour of the inhabitants returned. The troops were vilified and lampooned
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in the newspapers ; the soldiers, when met singly in the streets, were insulted ; and every method was taken to degrade them in the opinion, and expose them to the hatred and contempt of the populace. Daily scuffles now happened between the lower classes of people in the town, and the soldiers when not on duty : And so much animosity had been excited by the virulent publications in the newspapers, that a design is said to have been formed of driving the troops from Boston by force, in which the people from the country were to have assisted. But if such a design was formed, the execution of it became unnecessary in consequence of the incident which we are now to relate.

On the evening of the fifth of March, the same day on which the British minister moved his resolutions in the house of commons for discontinuing the American duties, a quarrel arose at Boston between two or three young men of the town, and as many soldiers at or near their barracks. From words they proceeded to blows : And the soldiers having vanquished their opponents were seen pursuing them through the streets. The alarm to the populace was given by ringing the bells of the churches : And the people of the town assembling in great numbers at the custom-house, began to crowd round the sentinel who was posted there, and not only insulted him but threatened his life. Captain Preston, the officer on duty for the day, who had by this time received information of the tumult, proceeded immediately to the main guard ; and hearing that the sentinel placed at the custom-house had been threatened, fearing too that the custom-house might be in danger, he sent a party, under the command of a serjeant, to protect the one and secure the other ; and from greater precaution soon afterwards followed and took the command of the party himself. He endeavoured to prevail upon the people to disperse, but in vain. The mob now became more riotous, not only reviling the soldiers with abusive language, but throwing stones

Introduction.
1770.

at them, and whatever else came in their way. One of the soldiers received a blow from something that was thrown, and levelled his musket: The officer stretching out his arm to prevent the soldier from firing, was struck with a club, and the musket was discharged. The attack from the mob became more violent, and the rest of the soldiers following the example of their comrades, discharged their pieces singly and in a scattered manner, by which four of the populace were killed and several others wounded. They were intimidated, and for a moment fled; but soon afterwards collecting, took their station in an adjoining street. The drums beat to arms, the rest of the troops were assembled, and the whole town was in the utmost confusion;—a town meeting was held, and a deputation was sent to the governor, requesting him to remove the troops from the town. The governor called together the council, and the council giving it as their opinion, that the removal of the troops from the town would be for his majesty's service, the commanding officer promised to comply with their advice. Captain Preston surrendered himself for trial; and the soldiers under his command at the custom-house were taken into custody; the mob dispersed, and the following day the troops were removed to Castle William.

Some days afterwards the bodies of those who had been killed in the riot were carried in procession through the town, attended by an immense concourse of people, and interred with much funeral pomp. In this procession flags were exposed to view with emblematical devices, calculated to inflame the passions of the multitude, and inspire them with deadly revenge; and in the newspapers the transactions of the fifth of March were represented as a deliberate murder on the part of the troops, and as an atrocious massacre of the unoffending inhabitants.

Whilst such unjustifiable means were used to prejudice and poison the minds of the people, fortunate it was for the officer and soldiers

now in custody that their trials were delayed till the month of October. By that time the ferment which had been stirred up had in some measure subsided, and the rancorous hatred of the populace against the troops was in part abated. When the trials came on, the officer, after a most rigorous inquiry into his conduct and the examination of near fifty witnesses, was most honourably acquitted. The four judges who attended the trial were unanimous in their opinions upon the facts which were given in evidence; and the last* who delivered his sentiments concluded his charge in a few emphatical words which did honour to his independence and love of justice, and at the same time furnished the best comment on the whole transaction. "Happy I am," said he, "that after such strict examination the conduct of the prisoner appears in so fair a light; yet I feel myself at the same time deeply affected, that this affair turns out so much to the disgrace of every person concerned against him, and so much to the shame of the town in general." Six of the soldiers were also acquitted, and two only convicted of manslaughter.

The intelligence of the act of parliament for discontinuing the American duties having reached Boston whilst the minds of the inhabitants were yet agitated with the recent recollection of the melancholy events of the fifth of March, made no impression as a step towards reconciliation, but when viewed as a concession forced and extorted from the mother-country, yielded the most pleasing satisfaction.

In all the colonies, and in Massachusetts Bay as well as the rest, the embarrassments and inconveniences arising from the associations had by this time become irksome to the inhabitants: The want of some things which could not strictly be called necessaries, but which from long use and habit were become almost indispensable, had been

* Judge Lyndex.

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Introduction.

1770.

severely felt: And the people had become so weary of the engagements which they had entered into, that upon receiving the intelligence of even a partial repeal of the act of parliament which had been the cause of their complaints, they held the associations to be no longer binding, except for the single article of tea, on which the duty was still payable. In reality, those associations, from the tenor of them, ought to have subsisted in full force until the act for imposing the duties had been wholly repealed; and attempts were made in all the colonies to induce the people to construe them thus strictly. But the inconveniences already experienced were so great, that all the influence of the patriots was insufficient to prevail upon the people to submit to a farther continuance of them. The intercourse with the mother-country was now therefore again opened for every thing but the importation of tea: And during the remainder of this year and the whole of the next, commerce flowed into the American colonies in a tide unusually full.

1771.

By the act of the last session of parliament for repealing the American duties, introduced by the British minister, and carried through by his influence, it must be confessed that he went a great way to meet the wishes of the colonial inhabitants: But if entire reconciliation was his object, he did not go far enough. The reservation of the insignificant duty on tea was sufficient to give a fair pretence to the patriotic party * in the colonies to urge, that although the British parliament had now been twice foiled in its attempts to tax the colonies, it still made pretensions to the right, and only waited for a more convenient opportunity to accomplish this favourite object, the duty on tea being reserved for the sole purpose of establishing a precedent for the exercise of that right. In both these unsuccessful attempts at taxation the colonial patriots saw, or affected to see, that the British parliament had reluctantly given way, and that the people of the colonies,

* Perhaps by this time it might be called the republican party.

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by resistance and clamour, had worked out their own salvation; and they now renewed their efforts, by fresh publications, to preserve and keep alive amongst the people that jealousy and distrust of the British government which they had heretofore been so successful in exciting, and the continuance of which they considered as the best security for the future maintenance of their rights.

Introduction.
1771.

But notwithstanding these endeavours to keep up the ball of contention, a general calm now succeeded to their late agitations amongst the bulk of the people in the middle and southern colonies, more especially in the latter. If the British parliament had not given entire satisfaction, nor removed all ground of apprehension, the inhabitants of these colonies were at least willing to give it credit for so much as had been done, and seemed disposed to forget their remaining causes of complaint, provided no new attempt should be made to increase them.

In the New England provinces a very different disposition of mind prevailed. The act which imposed the duties formed only an inconsiderable part of their complaints. The restrictions upon their commerce, the powers granted to the officers of the navy to check their contraband practices, the establishment of an American board of customs, and the more steady execution of the laws of trade, were to them subjects of as much real concern as taxation. The total repeal of the act of parliament of the year 1767 would not have given them satisfaction; and the partial repeal of it they received not as a favour conferred, but as a forced and ungracious compliance with only a part of what they had a right to demand. Far from meeting the mother-country in reciprocal acts of reconciliation, they now assumed a higher tone in consequence of her concessions, and discovered an inclination to extend their clamour and demands beyond the limits which they had hitherto set to themselves. The assembly of Massachusetts Bay, in an address presented
to

Introduction.
1771.

to their governor on the fifth of July in the present year, declared “ that they knew of no commissioners of the customs, nor any revenue which his majesty had a right to establish in North America ;” and in an indignant strain subjoined, “ that they knew and felt a tribute levied and extorted from those who, if they were allowed to have property, had also a right to the absolute disposal of it.” In this province too the same disposition to obstruct the execution of the revenue laws manifested itself amongst the populace as on former occasions. From the time of the removal of the troops in the preceding year, the officers of the customs were left without protection ; and the populace, not satisfied with opposing them in the execution of their duty, proceeded in various instances to much greater lengths, and inflicted upon their persons the most degrading punishments.

1772.

Nor was this impatience under the controul of the laws of trade confined to Massachusetts Bay. It was perceivable in all the New England provinces, and was this year the cause of a most outrageous insult offered to government in the destruction of the *Gaspée* schooner, a vessel in his majesty’s service, stationed in Providence river, in the colony of Rhode Island, to prevent smuggling, and commanded by an officer * vigilant and active in the execution of his duty.

The *Gaspée* was boarded at midnight of the tenth of June by two hundred armed men in boats, who, after wounding and abusing her commander, and forcibly carrying him and his people on shore, set her on fire.

The causes of difference between the mother-country and the province of Massachusetts Bay had now so long subsisted, and a perverse spirit of opposition had so intirely possessed the inhabitants of

* Lieutenant Duddingstone of the navy.

the latter, that it would have been no easy matter to effect a cordial reconciliation between them under any circumstances, however favourable. Those which did occur were either of the unfavourable kind, or were wrested by the spirit of faction to serve the infernal purpose of fanning the torch of discord; so that in every succeeding year, the breach, instead of closing, seemed to widen.

Introduction.

1772.

A regulation adopted by the British ministry about the beginning of this year, respecting the judges and principal officers of the superior court in Massachusetts Bay, was sufficient to throw that province again into a state of uproar and confusion. The object of this declaration, held forth by the ministry who framed it, was, to render the judges, and the other officers to whom it extended, more independent: By the republican party in Massachusetts Bay it was said to be a ministerial plan for rendering them dependent upon the crown. Such opposite conclusions do opposing parties deduce from the same premises! The real fact, without gloss or comment, was this: By the new regulation, liberal salaries were assigned to the judges, and to the attorney and solicitor general, out of the American revenue, by a grant from the crown, in lieu of the scanty salaries annually voted to them by the assembly. Such a regulation in the infancy of the colony, instead of exciting murmurs, might perhaps have been received with satisfaction and gratitude; but at this time it was worked up into a cause of alarm almost equal to that which agitated the province in the year 1768, upon receiving the first intelligence of the expected arrival of a military force.

It was said, and impressed upon the people with much inflammatory declamation, that the British ministry having in vain attempted to dragoon the inhabitants of that province into a slavish submission to the will of parliament by the aid of a military force, were now trying to accomplish the same end in a way not so open, but not less dangerous—by influencing the judges with grants of salaries, and

Introduction.
1772.

thereby corrupting the source of justice: And the people were called upon and conjured to withstand so insidious and destructive an innovation.

A town meeting of the inhabitants of Boston was appointed by the select men, and held on the twenty-fifth of October. At this meeting a petition was prepared and presented to the governor, setting forth the evil tendency of the new regulation, with the alarm which it had occasioned amongst the people, and praying him to call an assembly. The governor refused to comply with the prayer of the petition: And the petitioners having appointed a committee to consider and propose what was fit to be done in that season of danger, adjourned to a future day for the purpose of receiving their report. The committee, having taken time to deliberate, drew up a report containing a new declaration of rights, more extensive than any which had been yet framed, and comprehending the rights of the colonists as men, citizens, and christians. In this report, the authority of the British parliament to legislate for the colonies, in any respect whatsoever, was completely denied. After enumerating the rights of the colonists, it set forth that these had been violated in various instances, but more especially by the declaratory act of the year 1766, by which the British parliament assumed to itself the power of legislating for them without their consent, and under pretence of that authority had imposed taxes in the colonies, and appointed new officers to be resident amongst them, unknown to their constitution, because unauthorized by their charter, for the purpose of superintending the collection of those taxes, and establishing what was called an American revenue. And the British ministry, by framing the new regulation for granting salaries to the judges and crown officers out of this odious tribute, were charged with designing to complete the system of slavery which had originated in the house of commons, assuming a power to grant their money without
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their consent. At the adjourned meeting of the inhabitants of Boston this report was read and agreed to; and six hundred copies of it were ordered to be printed and dispersed through all the towns of the province, accompanied with a circular letter, calling upon the people "not to doze any longer, or sit supinely in indifference, whilst the iron hand of oppression was daily tearing the choicest fruits from the fair tree of liberty."

Introduction.

1772.

When the assembly of this province met in the month of January, the governor probably intending to give them an opportunity, if they were so disposed, of doing away the evil impressions which might have been made by the unqualified resolutions of the town meeting at Boston, took occasion in his speech to insist on the supreme legislative authority of the king and parliament. But if he hoped to benefit government by bringing on this discussion, he was entirely disappointed. The assembly, instead of endeavouring to moderate and qualify the doctrines contained in the resolutions of the town meeting, seized the opportunity of the address which was to be presented, to fix them more firmly and in their utmost extent. They openly denied the authority of parliament, not only to impose taxes, but to legislate for them in any respect whatsoever; adding, "that if there had been in any late instances a submission to acts of parliament, it was more from want of consideration or a reluctance to contend with the parent state, than a conviction of the supreme legislative authority of parliament." This address also recapitulated a number of new grievances which had not heretofore been complained of: And such was its improper tendency, even in the opinion of the Assembly, upon cooler reflection, that six months after, in a letter* to the earl of Dartmouth, secretary of state for American affairs, they thought it necessary to apologize for it, im-

1773.

* Dated 29th June 1773.

Introduction.

1773.

puting the blame of their intemperate proceedings to their governor, who had unnecessarily brought the subject of parliamentary authority under their consideration. In this letter they say, "that their answers to the governor's speech were the effect of necessity, and that this necessity occasioned great grief to the two houses;" and then, in a style truly characteristic of puritanical duplicity, they exclaim, "For, my lord, the people of this province are true and faithful subjects of his majesty, and think themselves happy in their connection with Great Britain."

But this was not the only cause of complaint which that assembly had against their governor*. Their agent at the British court, Doctor Franklin, a man well known in the philosophical world, had by some means or other got possession of certain letters written by their governor in former years to official persons in England, and about this time transmitted them to the assembly. The subject of this correspondence was so displeasing, that it threw the assembly into a violent heat. They sent a deputation to shew the letters to the governor, without trusting them in his hands, and to inquire whether he acknowledged the signatures to be his. The signatures being owned, they prepared a petition and remonstrance to be presented to the king, charging the governor with betraying his trust, and slandering the people under his government, by giving private, partial, and false information; declaring him an enemy to the colony, and praying for his removal from his office.

How the letters which gave occasion to so much animosity in the assembly of Massachusetts Bay came into the possession of their agent,

* Their present governor was Mr. Hutchinson, a native of Massachusetts Bay, a lawyer and a man of learning, who had filled the office of chief-justice of the province with general satisfaction, and was appointed governor on the resignation of Sir Francis Bernard in the year 1770. Sir Francis Bernard went to England in the year 1769, to defend himself from the charges transmitted against him by the assembly; and although he was honourably acquitted by the privy council, he did not chuse to return to a province where he was so much disliked.

is not yet certainly known to the public. But either the manner of his obtaining them, or the use which he made of them, or both, gave so much offence to the British ministry, that he was dismissed from his office of joint deputy postmaster-general for America, under such circumstances of marked disapprobation as probably influenced his subsequent conduct in the American contest.

Introduction
1773.

Whilst the patriots of Massachusetts Bay were thus active in discovering new causes of complaint, and keeping the province in a state of perpetual clamour and agitation; the southern and middle colonies were peaceably and quietly advancing in population and prosperity, nothing having occurred for some years to give the republican party amongst them (for such a party was by this time formed in all the colonies) any new pretence for quarrelling with the mother-country.

But an act of parliament which passed this year was destined to revive all the heat of contention, and to bring the disputes between Great Britain and her colonies to their ultimate crisis. This was an act for empowering the commissioners of the treasury to grant licenses to the East India Company to export tea to all places whatsoever free of duty. The affairs of that company had by some means or other run into great confusion: Being unable to satisfy their engagements, they applied to parliament for relief, and complained that their distress was in part owing to the American disturbances, which had lessened the demand for their tea; in consequence of which, they had then lying in their warehouses, for want of a market, near seventeen millions of pounds. One of the regulations adopted for their relief was the act of parliament above-mentioned, for granting them leave, under the sanction of the treasury, to export their teas, duty free, wherever they could find a market for them. The minister, in procuring this act to be passed, had probably two objects in view; one, the relief of the East India company, and the other,

Introduction.

1773.

other, the increase of the American revenue, by this new device for introducing the company's tea into the colonies, where it still lay under a prohibition in consequence of the associations: And it was this last object which gave offence in America. The leading men foresaw that, if the tea was once introduced and landed in America, it would be impossible to prevent its sale and consumption, and thus the duty would be inevitably levied upon the inhabitants, notwithstanding all their efforts to prevent it. Resistance to taxation by the British parliament was become in America a point of national honour which they were determined to maintain. The associations against the importation of tea from Great Britain, which in some of the colonies had begun to be disregarded, were now enforced with rigour: And all those means which, we have seen, the leading men knew so well how to use, were again employed by them to excite opposition amongst the people, and stir them up to resist with force and violence the landing of such cargoes of tea as might be sent amongst them. Nor were their efforts in any of the colonies ineffectual. But the clamour and threatenings were greatest in the New England provinces; and in them, as on all former occasions, the first forcible resistance to the act of parliament was made.

As soon as intelligence was received in the month of November, that three ships freighted with tea on account of the East India company were on their passage to Boston, that place became again the seat of tumult, violence, and riot, excited for the purpose of frightening the consigners of the tea ships from acting under their appointments. The populace surrounded their houses and demanded their resignation, which not being complied with, the windows and doors of their houses were broken, and they themselves narrowly escaped the fury of the mob by flying from the town and taking shelter in Castle William. The governor in vain issued a proclamation commanding the civil magistrates to suppress the riots,
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and protect the peaceable and well-disposed inhabitants. His proclamation was vilified and contemned, and the sheriff insulted for attempting to read it at one of the illegal meetings. Even the council refused to advise any measures for securing the tea upon its arrival, or for protecting the consignees.

Introduction.
1773.

When the two ships did arrive, a meeting was held by the inhabitants of Boston and those of the neighbouring towns, and a determination was made that the ships should be sent back without discharging their cargoes. Notice of this determination was ordered to be given to the consignees of the tea and such other persons in Boston as were interested in the ships; and the meeting was adjourned for the purpose of receiving their answer. In the mean time difficulties arose about sending away the ships: A clearance from the custom-house could not be obtained for them, neither could they pass Castle William at the mouth of the harbour, without the governor's permission, which he refused to grant. These difficulties being reported to the adjourned meeting, it was immediately dissolved, with a general cry of, A mob! a mob! And in the evening a number of armed men, disguised as Mohawk Indians, boarded the ships and discharged their cargoes into the sea; the whole value of the tea destroyed being estimated at eighteen thousand pounds.

The outrages committed by the inhabitants of Boston had been so many, their opposition to government so daring, and their insults so frequently repeated, that the patience of the British administration was now exhausted. The intelligence of the destruction of the tea arriving in England during the sitting of parliament, and being communicated to both houses by a message from the king, was immediately referred to a committee, with the papers which accompanied it: And upon receiving their report it was determined, that the town of Boston, which had always been the foremost in resisting the authority of parliament, should now be made an example of par-

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1774-

Introduction.

1774.

liamentary vengeance. Two things were apparently necessary to be insisted on—satisfaction to the East India company, for the loss which they had sustained by the destruction of the tea; and reparation to the honour of the British nation, wounded by the insult. To effectuate these purposes an act was passed for shutting up the port of Boston, and prohibiting the lading or unlading of all goods or merchandize, except stores for his majesty's service, and provisions and fuel for the use of the inhabitants, at any place within its precincts, from and after the first of June, until it should appear to his majesty that peace and obedience to the laws were so far restored in the town of Boston, that trade might again be safely carried on, and his majesty's customs be duly collected; in which case his majesty might by proclamation open the harbour, but not even then until it should appear that satisfaction had been made to the East India company for the destruction of their tea, and also to those who had suffered by the riots at the time of its arrival at Boston*. This act having been passed, a fleet of four ships of war was ordered to be got ready to sail for Boston, and as a military force might also be necessary to reduce its disorderly inhabitants to obedience, general Gage, commander in chief in America, was appointed governor of Massachusetts Bay in the room of governor Hutchinson, who had desired leave to come to England: And to general Gage, to whom the execution of this act was to be entrusted, full powers were also given, by commission under the great seal, to grant pardons for treason and all other crimes, and to remit all fines and forfeitures to such offenders as should appear to be fit objects of mercy.

To devise means for preventing the commission of future enormities was at least as necessary as to inflict punishment for those which were past. From the papers laid upon the tables of the two

* This bill was introduced into the house of commons on the fourteenth of March, and received the royal assent on the thirty-first.

Missing page.

Introduction.

1774.

the laws of revenue, or where any person acting under the direction of the magistrate for any of those purposes, should be charged with the crime of murder, or with any other capital offence committed whilst he was so acting, to send the person so charged into any other colony, or to Great Britain, to be tried, if it should appear to the governor and council that an impartial trial could not be had within the province of Massachusetts Bay.

During the sitting of parliament letters were received from all the thirteen colonies, now the United States of America, by which it appeared that in all of them the landing of the tea had been resisted. In some it had been sent back in the same ships which brought it; in others, small parcels of it had been destroyed; and in others, where they had consented at least to the unloading of the ships, it was only upon condition that the tea should be stored under lock and key, and an engagement that it should not be offered for sale. Thus it appeared that the inhabitants of all the colonies were involved, although in a less outrageous degree than those of the province of Massachusetts Bay, in the guilt of having opposed the authority of the mother-country.

In this state of these provinces on the sea-coast, it was thought necessary to give satisfaction to the inhabitants of the interior province of Canada, by passing an act for the settlement of their government. The objects of this act were, to secure to the inhabitants of that province the free exercise of their religion; and to the Roman Catholic clergy their rights, agreeably to the articles of capitulation at the time of the surrender of the province; to restore their ancient laws in civil cases without a trial by jury, as being more acceptable to the French Canadians than the English laws with the trial by jury; and to establish a council, holding their commissions from and at the pleasure of the king, who were to exercise all the powers of legislation, that of imposing taxes only excepted. Such a council, composed principally
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of the Canadian noblesse, it was supposed would be more agreeable to the bulk of the people than a house of representatives. And the last object of the act was to extend the limits of the province, which, reaching far to the southward behind the other colonies, might be made to serve as a check upon them if necessary.

Introduction.

1774.

The first of these acts, the Boston port bill, passed through the two houses of parliament without much difficulty, as the conduct of the people of Boston, in destroying the tea, was generally disapproved of in England, and the cause of their losing many friends. The bill was introduced into the house of commons on the fourteenth of March, and received the royal assent on the thirty-first of the same month. But the other three acts, although finally passed by a great majority, were not carried through their intermediate stages without much opposition*. In every thing that respected America, the members of opposition, and particularly the Rockingham party, hung upon the minister, and if they did not prevent, certainly impeded his measures and lessened their effect; and, by their ill-timed prophetic forebodings, spirited up the Americans to act what they foretold.

Whilst the British parliament were thus passing acts for maintaining the authority of the mother-country over the colonies, and for punishing past and preventing future transgressions against it in the province of Massachusetts Bay; the assembly of that province, when they met in the beginning of the year, far from taking any steps for averting punishment, on the contrary, employed themselves in pursuing such measures as had a tendency to provoke still more the British ministry and parliament. The clamour raised in Massachusetts Bay in the year 1772, in consequence of the regulation for assigning salaries to the judges by grants from the crown, has been already noticed; and

* They received the king's assent on the twentieth of May.

Introduction.

1774.

this year it was revived by the assembly, who sent a message to the judges, requiring them to declare whether they meant to receive their salaries from the assembly as usual, or from the crown, by virtue of the new grants. All the judges, except the chief-justice, consented to receive their salaries as usual from the assembly. He alone declared his resolution to receive his salary from the crown, and him the assembly resolved to impeach for this supposed unconstitutional proceeding. Charges drawn up in the form of an impeachment were accordingly voted, and carried to the governor and council, whom the assembly judged to be as competent to the trial of an impeachment in Massachusetts Bay, as the house of lords is in Great Britain. The impeachment was however sent back with a message from the governor, importing, that the governor and council had no authority to try impeachments. The assembly now changed the mode of their accusation, converting the charges contained in the impeachment into a petition of complaint to be presented to the governor, which concluded with a prayer for the removal of the chief-justice. The governor refused to comply with the prayer of the petition; and finding the assembly determined to prosecute their complaint against the chief-justice in some form or other, he at last dissolved them about the end of March.

But the attention of the people of that province was soon to be engrossed by a subject of higher importance, than a dispute with their governor or chief-justice; and the inhabitants of Boston were at last to feel the weight of the displeasure of that power which they had so long provoked with impunity. In the month of May intelligence arrived, that the act for shutting up the port of Boston had been passed by the British parliament; and this intelligence, together with a copy of the act, was immediately published upon a paper with a black border, symbolical of mourning, and hawked about the streets, as a barbarous, cruel, bloody, and inhuman murder.

der. The former riotous proceedings of the town of Boston had been so often overlooked, that such an act of severity as the Boston port bill, was totally unexpected; and upon the first publication of the intelligence; nothing was to be heard but frantic expressions of rage and resentment against the tyranny and inhumanity of the British ministry and parliament; and vengeance was loudly called for and threatened. But unfortunately for the inhabitants of Boston, the operation of this act of parliament, as a punishment, unlike, in this respect, those which had preceded it, could not in their present circumstances be either resisted or eluded. It was doubtful whether the other sea-port towns in the province might not take advantage of the present moment, to raise their own commerce upon the ruins of that of Boston; and it was also uncertain whether the other colonies would cordially interest themselves in their behalf. Such considerations had undoubtedly an influence, as soon as they began coolly to reflect upon their situation; and to the first effervescence of resentment, a state of mind seems to have succeeded, bordering upon despondence. A town meeting was held, at which a vote was passed, addressed to the inhabitants of the other colonies, importing, that if they would come into a joint resolution to give up all intercourse with the mother-country in the way of trade, until the Boston port bill should be repealed, it would prove the salvation of America and her liberties; but if they did not, there was too much reason to fear that fraud, power, and the most odious oppression, would rise triumphant over right, justice, social happiness, and freedom. Copies of this vote were ordered to be sent to all the other colonies, and the meeting was dissolved, every one being busied in arranging his affairs for the first of June, the day on which the port of Boston was to be deprived of its commerce.

In this state of doubt and anxiety the people of Boston did not long remain without receiving some consolation. The inhabitants of the
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Introduction.

1774.

neighbouring towns, instead of attempting to profit by their distress, offered them the use of their wharfs and warehouses for the purpose of carrying on their trade: And from the other colonies they soon received the most flattering testimonies of condolence and commiseration.

In all the colonies the landing of tea had been resisted, and therefore they all shared in the criminality for which the town of Boston was about to suffer; and on such an occasion to have deserted their brethren in distress would have been unmanly and ungenerous. The assembly of Virginia, which was sitting at this time, set the example of making the sufferings of the inhabitants of Boston a common cause of complaint in all the colonies. In that assembly a resolution was passed for appointing the first of June, the day on which the Boston port bill was to take effect, to be set apart as a day of fasting, prayer, and humiliation, “to implore the divine interposition, to avert the heavy calamity which threatened destruction to their civil rights with the evils of a civil war; and to give one heart and one mind to the people firmly to oppose every injury to the American rights.” This resolution, the general tendency of which to excite opposition to the mother-country, was sufficiently obvious, and which at the same time encroached on the royal prerogative by enjoining a fast, occasioned the dissolution of the assembly: But, before the members separated, a private meeting was held, at which a declaration was drawn up and subscribed by a majority of the assembly, setting forth that the punishment about to be inflicted on the inhabitants of Boston, in order to compel them to submit to the payment of unconstitutional taxes, was in truth an attack upon all the colonies, and would ultimately prove destructive to the rights and liberties of all, unless the united wisdom of the whole was applied to prevent it. They therefore recommended to the committee of correspondence to propose to the committees of the other colonies,

lonies, that an annual congress should be held for all the colonies, to deliberate on such general measures as the united interests of America might from time to time require. And they concluded with an intimation, that a regard for their fellow-subjects, the merchants and manufacturers of Great Britain, prevented them from going further at that time.

Introduction.

1774

The example set by the assembly of Virginia was followed in the other colonies. Provincial, county, or town meetings were everywhere held, at which resolutions of a similar tendency were passed: And the first day of June was very generally observed in America as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer.

General Gage arrived at Boston not many days after the intelligence was received of the act for shutting up its harbour, and whilst the inhabitants, assembled at a town meeting, were yet deliberating on the melancholy prospect before them. Notwithstanding this inauspicious entry into his government, he was received with the usual honours. He had been many years commander in chief in America, was personally known at Boston, and universally respected for his amiable character and manners. But the animosity which had been kindled in the province of Massachusetts Bay against the British government had risen to too great a height to be checked by any personal considerations for a governor, however amiable or respectable. The assembly met according to custom, soon after his arrival; and in the speech delivered at the opening of the session, he gave them notice that they were to remove to Salem on the first of June, which from that time was to be considered as the seat of government. This information was far from being pleasing to the assembly, and they presented a petition to the governor, intreating him to appoint a day of general fasting and prayer. The governor declined complying with the petition, and soon afterwards adjourned the session to the seventh of June, then to meet at Salem.

13th May.

In

Introduction.

1774.

In the interval of this adjournment, letters were received from most of the other colonies; and it was perceived that the cause of the inhabitants of Boston was every-where warmly espoused. The leading men in Massachusetts Bay, cheered by this intelligence, laid aside their despondency, and resolved to act with more vigour than ever in resisting the claims of the mother-country. When the assembly met at Salem, a resolution was passed declaring the expediency of a general congress to be held for all the colonies, and setting forth at large their reasons for recommending such a measure. Five of their own members were appointed to represent them, all of them zealously attached to the American cause, and violently hostile to the pretensions of the British parliament; and a sum of money was voted to defray their expences. They were sensible that after this proceeding their dissolution would soon follow, and they hastened to prepare another resolution, declarative of their sentiments on the present state of affairs, and recommending to their constituents such measures as they wished them to pursue. In this resolution they lamented their present situation, which obliged them to struggle against the heavy hand of power; they complained that their petitions to the king and parliament had been disregarded; they set forth that it was apparently the design of the British government to destroy the free constitutions of the American colonies, and to erect in their stead the systems of tyranny and arbitrary sway, incompatible with liberty, and totally subversive of their constitutional rights: They called upon the people of the province to obstruct as far as was in their power the execution of such evil designs; and for this purpose recommended to them to give up as much as possible every kind of intercourse with the mother-country, until their grievances should be completely redressed. This declaratory resolution had scarcely been passed, when the governor, receiving information of their proceedings, put an end to the session by

17th June.

dissolving

Missing page.

Introduction.

1774.

in the present lawless and perturbed state of the province, of the most dangerous tendency. In order to recommend the association more powerfully to the attention of the populace, it was handed to them under the antiquated but impressive title of a solemn league and covenant, a term of the last century affixed to an engagement entered into by the Puritans, which was still held in great veneration by their descendants in Massachusetts Bay. To counteract this association, a proclamation was issued by the governor, in which it was styled an illegal and traitorous combination, contrary to the allegiance due to the king and subversive of the authority of parliament; and the people were cautioned against giving any countenance to it, under the penalties annexed to such heinous offences. But the proclamation was disregarded, and the solemn league and covenant was generally subscribed throughout New England.

29th June.

General Gage, soon after he took possession of his government, foreseeing the storm which was gathering, ordered some regiments of foot, with a detachment of artillery, to be sent to Boston: And these, upon their arrival, were encamped upon the common lying between the town and the narrow neck of land called Boston Neck, which joins it with the continent. When troops were formerly stationed at Boston, desertion was much encouraged by the inhabitants; and the same practice being again revived, a guard was placed upon Boston Neck to prevent it. This was magnified into an attempt to cut off the communication between the town and the country, and to compel the inhabitants of the former, by famine, to submit to such terms as might be imposed upon them; and a false report to this effect being spread about in the country, the inhabitants of the county of Worcester assembled in great numbers, and sent messengers to inquire into the truth of the report. These were charged to give an assurance to the people of Boston that several thousand armed men were ready to come to their assistance, should it

July.

be

be necessary ; but at the same time to acquaint them, that if they should lose their fortitude, so far as to surrender their liberties, the people of the country would not hold themselves bound by their submission.

Introduction.
1774.

About this time an authentic copy of the act of parliament for altering the constitution, and regulating the government of Massachusetts Bay, arrived at Boston, together with commissions from the king to those who were to constitute the new council, in the room of that elected by the assembly. This council was intended to consist of thirty-six members, but twenty-four only accepted their commissions; and these having qualified, writs were issued by the governor, with their advice, for the meeting of a new assembly in the beginning of October. But the rage of the populace now again burst forth, and was directed against those who had accepted seats in the new council; and the greatest number of them, to save their persons from being torn to pieces by the mob, and their property from being destroyed, were obliged to resign their appointments; a few only who resided in Boston, and were protected by the troops, retained their situations. When the superior court sat for the administration of justice, the juries refused to be sworn, and the inferior officers of the court, frightened by the threats which were denounced against them, declined acting under the new regulations; and so many obstructions were met with in every department, that from this time civil government in Massachusetts Bay was entirely dissolved. Boston was the only place of security in the province; and that in consequence of the military force encamped in its neighbourhood. By means of this force alone was protection afforded to such as differed in sentiment from the popular party. Whosoever rendered himself obnoxious, by discovering his attachment to the mother-country, and a wish to submit to her laws, was insulted by the populace; and many were hunted from their dwellings in the country,

August.

Introduction.

1774.

and obliged to take refuge in Boston. Arms were provided by those who were without them: Ammunition and warlike stores began to be collected: And the young men were employed in training themselves to military discipline.

Under such an appearance of hostile intention, and such preparations going forward, general Gage could no longer refrain from providing for the security of the troops which he commanded, by fortifying Boston Neck; and with the like intent, he removed to Boston the powder and other military stores deposited in the magazines at Charlestown, Cambridge, and the Medford powder-house, lest the people should have been stirred up to seize on them. These proceedings of the governor, which, in his situation, were apparently necessary, gave so much offence, and created so great an alarm, that the people, whose minds had been worked up to a degree of phrenzy by the machinations of the violent party amongst them, assembled again from all quarters, and were with difficulty restrained from marching to Boston and attacking the troops. About the same time a false report was spread in Connecticut, that an attack was begun upon the inhabitants of Boston by the ships in the harbour and the troops from the common, when several thousands of the militia of that province assembled in arms, and marched a considerable distance to the supposed relief of their brethren at Boston, before they were undeceived, and discovered that the report was false. These rumours were probably circulated by the contrivance of the leading men, to try the temper of the people. But their affairs were not yet ripe for open hostilities; and in this state of tumult and commotion it was thought fit to appoint a meeting of delegates from all the towns in the county of Suffolk, of which Boston is the capital, to advise such a plan of conduct to be observed by the people as the present posture of affairs might require.

This

This meeting was accordingly held, and the completion of its deliberations was such as no longer left it doubtful to what lengths the leading men of this province were determined to go, provided they met with support from the other colonies, and that the dispute between the mother-country and the colonies was fast approaching to that crisis, when an appeal must be made to the sword. In the resolutions passed on this occasion, they refused all submission to the late acts of parliament, and engaged to indemnify such as should be prosecuted for disobedience to them. They accused those who had accepted seats in the new council, of violating the duty which they owed to their country, and threatened them with being treated as public enemies, unless they resigned their appointment. They recommended the holding of a provincial congress. They exhorted the people to perfect themselves in the use of arms, and for that purpose to assemble once every week. They warned them to be upon their guard against the designs of their enemies, who had determined to seize upon some of those amongst them, who had deserved well of their country by a strenuous opposition to the arbitrary measures of the British ministry; and if such an attempt should be made, they were exhorted to oppose it; and should their opposition be ineffectual, they were directed to retaliate, by seizing upon every British officer they could find: And lastly, they recommended to the receivers of the public revenue to keep it in their own hands until the constitution of the province was restored, or until it should be otherwise disposed of by a provincial convention. They also presented a remonstrance to the governor, complaining of the fortifications carrying on at Boston Neck, and of the seizure of the public magazines; and they tell him, that although they have no inclination to commence hostilities against his majesty's troops, they are yet determined never to submit to the late acts of parliament.

Introduction.

1774.

September 9.

This

Introduction.

1774.

This was the most open assumption of power on the part of the people, and the most direct and daring interference with the executive authority, that had yet taken place in any of the colonies.

September.

But the attention of all America was now directed to the general congress, which had met at Philadelphia on the fifth of this month. During the course of the summer, preparatory measures had been taken in all the colonies, Georgia excepted, for holding this grand assembly of colonial representation; and Philadelphia, from its central situation, was fixed upon for the place of meeting. In those colonies in which their assemblies met, delegates to the congress were appointed by them, and resolutions were passed for their government and direction; and in the others the people elected representatives, as if it had been for an assembly; and these representatives meeting together, chose delegates to congress, and gave them instructions.

In those instructions there was a considerable variety, according to the different tempers of the leading men in the delegated assemblies. From some of the colonies the instructions were moderate, and from others more violent; but they all agreed in condemning the Boston port bill, and the other acts of the last session of parliament relating to Massachusetts Bay, and in denying the right of the British parliament to tax the colonies. But the most material of all their instructions, and what in a great measure superseded the use of all others, was a power given to their delegates to agree to whatever measures should meet with the concurrence of a majority of the congress.

This congress consisted of fifty-one delegates, representing twelve of the colonies lying along the shore of the Atlantic, from New Hampshire to South Carolina inclusive; the greatest number of delegates for any one colony being seven, and the smallest two. But this disparity in the number of delegates did not affect the votes, as it was agreed that each colony should have but one vote, whatever was the number of its delegates. The congress sat with their doors

locked; no one was permitted to be present at their deliberations, and all their proceedings, except those which they thought fit to publish, were kept profoundly secret. Assembled in the cause of freedom, they nevertheless thought fit to observe a form practised only in the most despotic governments. Their proceedings being wrapped up in mystery, and all the intermediate steps, leading to a conclusion, being hid from the public eye, their decrees, when promulgated, were received like the oracles of ancient times, as the dictates of profound wisdom.

Introduction

1774.

The only proceedings which they published, were, a declaration on the state of affairs in Massachusetts Bay; a letter to general Gage, a declaration of rights and grievances, accompanied with an association; a petition to the king; an address to the people of Great Britain; another to the inhabitants of the colonies; and a third to the people of Canada; all of them masterly compositions, and well adapted to the purposes for which they were intended.

In their declaratory resolutions on the state of affairs in Massachusetts Bay, which was the first of their public acts, and bore date the seventeenth of September, they approved of the plan of conduct which had been hitherto pursued by the people of that province, and of the resolutions passed, and measures proposed, by the delegates of the towns in the county of Suffolk, and advised a perseverance in the same line of conduct; and for the relief of the inhabitants of Boston, whose distresses were every day increasing, they recommended that contributions should be raised for them in all the other colonies, to continue so long as their occasions might require; and if at last it should be found necessary to remove the Bostonians into the country, that their losses in that case should be compensated at the charge of all the colonies.

With this first public act of the congress, which was considered as decisive of the opinions that they held, and the measures they meant

Introduction.

1774

meant to pursue, the friends of government (for such a party, and a very considerable one, there was in all the colonies), and even some of the more moderate of the patriotic party, were much chagrined and disappointed. They had hoped that the congress would have adopted only pacific means for obtaining a redress of grievances; but in the unqualified approbation given to the very irregular conduct of the people of Massachusetts Bay, and particularly to the resolutions of the delegates of the county of Suffolk, they thought that they saw an evident determination in the congress to oppose the authority of the mother-country by force and arms. And their apprehensions were rather increased than allayed by the letter from the congress to general Gage, in which they declared it to be the fixed and unalterable resolution of all the colonies to unite for the preservation of their common rights, in opposition to the late acts of parliament, and in support of their brethren of Massachusetts Bay.

The declaration of rights contained a summary of all the rights appertaining to British subjects, to the free exercise of which they maintained that they were entitled by the immutable laws of nature, by the British constitution, and by their several charters. All former distinctions between legislation and taxation, between external and internal taxes, were now laid aside. They claimed, in behalf of the colonies, the sole and exclusive power of legislating for themselves in all cases whatsoever: But from the mere necessity of the case, were willing to submit to such acts of parliament as were *bonâ fide* intended to regulate their foreign commerce, excluding however every idea of taxation, internal or external, for raising a revenue from the people of the colonies without their consent. Their grievances, they said, were occasioned by eleven acts of parliament passed in the present reign, most of which have been already mentioned in the course of this history; and in the enumerated list they included the three acts of the last session of parliament, relating to the colony of
Massa-

Massachusetts Bay, and the act for extending the limits of Canada. The repeal of all these acts, they insisted, was necessary to give them satisfaction; and as the most effectual measure which they could devise, for obliging the mother-country to do them justice in these respects, they recommended an association to be entered into by the inhabitants of the colonies for discontinuing all importations from Great Britain, Ireland, and the British islands in the West Indies, after the first of December following, and all exportation from the colonies to those countries, after the tenth of September 1775, and for giving up the use of tea entirely, from the first of March in that year, until the acts of parliament which constituted their grievances should be repealed. A formal instrument of writing to this effect, and containing various other regulations for enforcing the execution of it, having been prepared, was immediately subscribed by all the members of congress; and printed copies of it were forthwith distributed through all the colonies for the subscription of the inhabitants.

Introduction.

1774.

In their petition to the king, they set forth all the grievances recited in the association, and to these added many more of less importance; but at the same time gave an assurance that if they were relieved from the first, the harmony between Great Britain and the colonies, with the usual intercourses, would be immediately restored, and in that case they would trust in the magnanimity and justice of his majesty and the parliament to grant redress in the rest.

The object of their address to the people of Great Britain was to render the American cause in that country more popular than of late it had been; and to apologize for the suspension of commerce, a measure which, they insisted, necessity alone, and a regard to self-preservation, obliged them to adopt.

Their address to the inhabitants of the colonies was designed to explain to them in what manner they were all interested in the fate of the people of Boston, and to urge them to a compliance with those

Introduction.

1774.

measures which the congress had recommended, until a general redress of grievances should be obtained.

But the ablest of their compositions, although the most malignant in its intention, was their address to the people of Canada; the object of which was to render the inhabitants of that province discontented and uneasy under their new form of government, to sow the seeds of discord between them and the mother-country, and to induce them to join with the other colonies in the general confederacy.

Such were the public proceedings of this congress, which, after sitting fifty-two days, dissolved itself on the twenty-sixth of October, having first recommended that another should be held in the month of May: And its decrees, although published only in the style of recommendations, commanded greater respect, and were more implicitly obeyed in all the colonies, than the laws of their own governments.

But we must now return to the province of Massachusetts Bay, in whose fate, in consequence of the determination of congress, all the colonies felt themselves deeply interested, and upon the transactions in which depended more immediately the doubtful issue of peace or war. As the winter season approached, general Gage thought it necessary that barracks should be erected, as well for the greater ease of the inhabitants of Boston, as for the better accommodation of the troops: But in this necessary arrangement he met with many obstructions, not only from the general disinclination of the inhabitants to afford any assistance to government, but also from the particular interposition of the select men, by whose influence and persuasion the artificers who had been employed were induced to desist from carrying on the work. Nor were the barracks finished till other artificers were procured from New Hampshire and New York, the two colonies which had hitherto conducted themselves with the greatest moderation. Throughout the whole province of Massachusetts

chufets Bay every possible impediment was thrown in the way of government, and every method taken to prevent the troops from being supplied with such things as were necessary for their accommodation: The people had even proceeded so far as to burn a quantity of straw, and sink a number of boats loaded with bricks coming to Boston for their use. But notwithstanding these provocations no offensive measures were undertaken, the general having determined to act with the utmost caution and circumspection; so that, if the sword must at last be unsheathed, it might appear to be owing to no fault in him. That this must soon happen there was now indeed the greatest probability, as the violence of the people was daily increasing and breaking out into the most criminal excesses against such as were supposed to be unfriendly to the American cause. In consequence of this violence, the commissioners of the customs and all the officers of government had been obliged to quit Salem, and fly to Boston for protection; which, instead of being, as formerly, the seat of tumult and disorder, was now the only place of safety within the province of Massachusetts Bay.

It may be remembered that soon after the new council had qualified under the act for regulating the government of Massachusetts Bay, writs were issued by the governor for the election of a new assembly to sit in the beginning of October; but the violence of the patriotic party in the province had increased to such a degree, and so many of the new council, either from threats or from violence actually committed, had been obliged to resign their appointments, that a sufficient number did not remain to meet the assembly as a separate house. Under such circumstances the governor thought fit by proclamation to countermand the execution of the writs of election. But this proclamation was held by the leading men of the province to be illegal, and the elections were made in pursuance of the writs. The representatives who were chosen met at Salem at

Introduction.

1774

the time appointed for the return of the writs, and having waited a day for the governor without his appearing, they voted themselves into a provincial congress, and chose Mr. Hancock for their president. This was the same person, the seizure of whose sloop for contraband practices had occasioned an insurrection at Boston in the year 1768, and the consequences of which insurrection are supposed by many to have precipitated the dispute between the mother-country and her colonies towards its present alarming crisis. So dangerous is it to provoke a popular character in a republican government!

This self-constituted congress having chosen their president, adjourned themselves to Concord, a town about twenty miles from Boston. One of their earliest proceedings was a remonstrance which they presented to the governor on the subject of the fortifications at Boston Neck, and on the alarm occasioned in the province by the military force collecting at Boston, which they alleged was now daily increasing by the arrival of troops from all parts of the continent in such numbers as tended to endanger the lives, liberties, and property, not only of the people of Boston but of the province in general. To this remonstrance the governor, however averse to holding any correspondence with an illegal assembly, thought it necessary, in the present state of the province, to give an answer: And in his answer he indignantly told the provincial congress that the lives, liberties, and property of none but avowed enemies could be in danger from British soldiers, who, notwithstanding the enmity which had been shewn to them in withholding from them every thing necessary for their preservation, had not discovered that resentment which might have been expected from such hostile treatment. He put them in mind that, whilst they were complaining of alterations made in their charter, they were themselves subverting it by their present illegal meeting; and he admonished them to desist from such unconstitutional proceedings.

But

But notwithstanding these admonitions from the governor, the provincial congress continued to sit, and the situation of the town of Boston, possessed as it was by the king's troops, engaged much of their attention. The neck of land which joins it with the continent being now fortified, the people of the town might be kept as hostages for the behaviour of the inhabitants of the country; and whilst the inhabitants remained in the town, whom, distressed as they were, it would have been cruel to prevent from obtaining such things from the country as they stood in need of, it was not possible entirely to withhold supplies from the troops, an object which the provincial congress had much at heart. Boston too was capable of being made still stronger; and a garrison placed in it, if things were brought to extremity, would prove a great annoyance to the rest of the province. These considerations gave them great uneasiness; but it was difficult to devise a proper remedy for the evils which they apprehended. Frequent expresses passed between them and the general congress which was then sitting, and various plans and schemes were proposed; but all of them were liable to such insurmountable objections, that, after much time spent upon this subject, nothing was finally determined upon. In other matters they neither felt any scruples, nor met with any difficulties: They passed resolutions, under the style of recommendations, for regulating and exercising the militia, for collecting and disposing of the public revenue, and for providing arms and military stores.

These were such daring assumptions of the powers of government, under the mask of advice, that the governor thought it necessary to issue a proclamation warning the inhabitants of the province against suffering themselves to be ensnared by the provincial congress, or led by their influence to incur the penalties of sedition, treason, and rebellion; and strictly prohibiting all his majesty's liege subjects from paying any obedience to the recommendations or re-

solves:

Introduction.

1774.

10th Nov.

Introduction.

1774.

solves of such an unlawful assembly. But the governor's proclamation, as on former occasions, was treated with contempt; and the requisitions of the provincial congress were obeyed as laws. That assembly appointed another congress to be held in the month of February, and dissolved itself towards the end of November.

Previous to the meeting of the general congress no hostile preparations had been made either in the middle or southern colonies: But after the breaking up of the congress, and upon the return of its members to their respective colonies, the same spirit which actuated the people of the New England colonies seems to have pervaded the whole continent. The militia officers assembled their companies more frequently than had been customary, and were assiduous in training them. Arms were provided by those who were without them; and resistance to the power of the mother-country by open force was made the subject of common conversation. Soon afterwards a copy of the proclamation arrived, which had been issued in England, in the month of October, to prevent the exportation of warlike stores; and this prohibition served to make the inhabitants of the colonies more eager to procure supplies. Mills for making gunpowder, and manufactories for arms, were set up in several of the colonies; and great encouragement was offered for making saltpetre.

C H A P. I.

Insurrection in Rhode Island—and in New Hampshire—Consequences of shutting up Boston Harbour—Provincial Congress at Cambridge, in New England—Hostile Designs and military Preparations—Preparations in all the Colonies for holding a General Congress—Detachment of British Troops sent to destroy military Stores at Concord—harassed by the Americans—driven back by the way of Lexington to Boston—Boston invested by an American Army—Measures respecting the State of America taken by the English Cabinet—Reinforcement of Troops from Britain arrives at Boston—Battle of Bunker's Hill.

AS soon as the news of the proclamation reached Rhode Island, forty pieces of cannon of different sizes, belonging to the crown, which had been mounted on batteries for the defence of the harbour, were seized by the populace, and removed into the country. They did not hesitate to own that this was done to prevent the cannon from falling into the hands of the king's troops, and that they meant to use them against any power that should offer to molest them. By the assembly of this province resolutions were also passed for procuring at the public expence arms and military stores wherever they could be obtained, and for training the militia in military exercises.

In the province of New Hampshire too, which had been hitherto moderate, the news of this proclamation caused an insurrection. A number

C H A P.

I.

1774

Insurrection
in Rhode
Island.

Dec. 14.

C H A P.

I.

1774.
And in New
Hampshire.

number of armed men assembled, and surpris'd a small fort called William and Mary, garrisoned only by an officer and five men. They took possession of the ordnance, gunpowder, and other military stores that were found in it; and these being removed, the fort was abandoned, and the officer, with his men, released.

Of all the colonies, that of New York shewed the greatest aversion to giving up an intercourse with the mother-country in the way of trade. Such of the assemblies of the other colonies as had been called together since the breaking up of the general congress, had approved of its proceedings and confirmed its resolutions; but the assembly of New York, which met in the month of January of this year, refused to accede to them. That assembly nevertheless agreed with the other colonial assemblies in all the material points of their grievances; and, to obtain redress of these, transmitted, during their present session, a petition to be presented to the king, a memorial to the house of lords, and a representation and a remonstrance to the house of commons.

Consequences
of shutting up
Boston har-
bour.

In the mean time the difficulties which the inhabitants of Boston had to contend with were every day increasing in consequence of the inclemency of the winter season. Contributions had been raised, and supplies of provisions sent to them from the other colonies; but these were precarious, and not equal to their wants. In a large trading town, such as Boston, where so many of the inhabitants were entirely supported by commerce and its dependencies, scarcely any thing could befall them so ruinous as shutting up their harbour. No one was exempt from feeling its effects in some shape or other, and many were plunged in the deepest distress. Their sufferings they imputed to the British ministry and parliament, and they felt all the resentment that the ills under which they smarted were calculated to inspire. But the military force now collected at Boston was sufficiently respectable to prevent them from breaking out into those violences

which their former refractory conduct gave reason to expect, and which their present feelings probably dictated. These feelings were the more grievous for being repressed; and the only consolation which they received was in knowing that, throughout America, the inhabitants of Boston were considered as martyrs to the American cause.

C H A P.
I.

1775.

When the new provincial congress met at Cambridge, in the month of February, they published an address to the people calculated to alarm them with fresh apprehensions; and in conclusion told them that, from the information which they had received, they had reason to apprehend that the British ministry meant to devote to sudden destruction that province in particular, for having refused, with the other colonies, tamely to submit to the most ignominious slavery. Having thus awakened their fears, they, in the most persuasive terms, exhorted the militia in general, and the minute-men * in particular, to perfect themselves without delay in military discipline. They afterwards passed resolutions for the providing and making of arms; and forbade, in the strictest manner, the inhabitants of the province from supplying the king's troops with any thing requisite for military service.

Provincial
congress at
Cambridge.Their hostile
designs and
military pre-
parations.

Such hostile intentions being manifested by the provincial congress, whose edicts were obeyed as laws; it became necessary for the governor to disable them, as far as was in his power, from acting in a hostile manner, by seizing on such of their military stores as came within his reach. With this view, on the twenty-sixth of February, he ordered a small detachment of troops, under the command of a field officer, to proceed to Salem, and take possession of some brass cannon and field-pieces, which had been brought there for the

* Volunteer corps from the militia, who engaged to hold themselves in readiness for service at a minute's notice.

C H A P.
I.

1775.

use of the provincial congress. The troops sent on this service were embarked on board a transport at Boston, in the morning, and carried by water to Marble Head. Having landed there, they marched to Salem: But the cannon were removed before their arrival, and, according to the best information they could receive, only that morning. The officer, hoping to overtake them upon the road, marched on into the country until he was stopped by a small river, over which there had been a draw-bridge. Upon his approach, the bridge was taken up by a number of people assembled upon the opposite shore, who peremptorily refused to let it down, alleging that the road was not a public one, and the bridge private property, over which he had no right to pass without the owner's consent. The officer, seeing a boat in the river, was about to make use of it for transporting his men; but some country people, who were near, perceiving his intention, jumped into the boat, and with axes began to cut holes in her bottom. These people were interrupted by the soldiers, and a kind of scuffle now ensued which of them should keep possession of the boat; when a clergyman, who had been a witness of the whole transaction, seeing the officer determined to force his passage, and fearing the consequences that might happen if he met with further resistance, prudently interposed, and by his influence prevailed upon the people on the opposite side to let down the bridge. This was accordingly done; and the detachment passed over. But the day was now so far spent, in consequence of this interruption, that any further attempt to overtake the cannon, it was thought, would be fruitless. The officer marched back his men to Marble Head unmolested, reembarked with them on board the transport, and returned to Boston.

This incident is of little consequence, except to show on the one hand the strict discipline and cautious conduct of the troops, and on the other, the boldness with which such conduct inspired the people of the province to thwart their operations, and obstruct their movements.

ments. The object of the detachment was defeated by previous intelligence conveyed from Boston. Although some of the most violent of its inhabitants had removed into the country, a great majority of those who remained were not less hostile to all the measures of government. By them every action of the governor and every movement of the troops were narrowly watched: Intelligence was conveyed by expresses; and the people in the country were previously prepared for interrupting, if not defeating, every military operation that was attempted.

Preparations were now making in all the colonies for holding the general congress, which was to meet at Philadelphia in the month of May. It has been before observed, that the inhabitants of the middle and southern colonies began to arm themselves individually towards the end of the preceding year: But the business of arming and putting the country in a state of defence was now taken up by the provincial conventions, which met for the purpose of appointing delegates to congress. By them resolutions were passed for disciplining the militia, and for instituting corps of volunteers and minutemen, after the example of the New England provinces: And contributions were directed to be raised from the people, to be employed in the purchase of arms and ammunition. Still however the object of those preparations was not openly avowed in the public proceedings and journals of those conventions; and still they professed loyalty to the king, and attachment to the mother-country.

But the time was fast approaching, when the mask was to be thrown off, and when the subjects of the same sovereign, marshalled in opposing armies, were to imbrue their hands in each other's blood. In the province of Massachusetts Bay the authority of the British parliament had been first called in question; in the same province the first actual opposition to that authority was made; and there it was destined that hostilities should first commence between the mother-country and her colonies.

C H A P.
I.
1775.

Preparations
in all the co-
lonies for
holding a ge-
ne ral con-
gr ess.

C H A P

I.

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1775.

Detachment
of British
troops sent to
destroy mili-
tary stores at
Concord,

Information having been brought to Boston, that a considerable quantity of military stores purchased by the agents for the provincial congress, were deposited at Concord, a town which, as we have already had occasion to mention, was about twenty miles from Boston; general Gage, in the night between the eighteenth and nineteenth of April, detached the grenadiers and light-infantry of his army, under the command of lieutenant-colonel Smith of the tenth regiment of foot, and major Pitcairne of the marines, with orders to proceed to Concord, and destroy those stores: And the following morning another detachment, consisting of sixteen companies of foot, with some marines, was ordered to march, under the command of earl Percy, to sustain the first. The detachment under lieutenant-colonel Smith, having embarked in boats, was conveyed up Charles River, as far as a place called Phipps's Farm. Being landed there in the night, the troops proceeded on their march to Concord; every precaution being taken, by securing such persons as they met with, to prevent the people of the country from obtaining any intelligence of their march. But, notwithstanding this precaution, they had advanced only a few miles, when it was perceived, by the firing of guns and the ringing of bells, that the country was alarmed.

Upon this discovery lieutenant-colonel Smith detached six companies of light-infantry, to march on in all haste, and secure two bridges on different roads, leading from Concord, and on the other side of it. These companies reached Lexington, a town fifteen miles from Boston, about five in the morning; and as they advanced, saw a body of men assembled under arms on a green adjoining to the road. Upon the near approach of the British troops, who questioned them as to the cause of their being so assembled, and ordered them to disperse, they retired in some confusion: But as they went off, several guns were fired upon the king's troops from behind a stone wall, and from some adjoining houses, which wounded one
man,

man, and shot major Pitcairne's horse in two places. The British troops now returned the fire, by which some of the people under arms were killed, and others wounded, and the rest dispersed. The light-infantry having been delayed by this unexpected rencounter, were now joined by the grenadiers, and the whole detachment marched on unmolested to Concord.

C H A P.
I.
1775.

Upon its approach to that place, another body of armed men, or militia, was seen assembled upon a hill, near the entrance of the town; and the light-infantry were ordered to disperse them, whilst the grenadiers marched on by the direct road to Concord. As the light-infantry ascended the hill, the militia retreated towards Concord, and passed over one of the bridges on the other side of it, which was immediately taken possession of by the light-infantry. In the mean time the grenadiers were executing the purpose of the expedition, by destroying the military stores found at Concord. Whilst this was doing, the militia, who had retreated over the bridge, appeared again, to the number of three or four hundred, and advancing up to it, as if they meant to pass, were fired upon by the British troops. The fire was returned, and a sharp action ensued across the river, in which several on both sides were killed and wounded. But the purpose of the expedition being now accomplished, the light-infantry, posted at the bridge, received orders to retire, and the whole detachment now began their march back to Boston.

harassed by
the Ameri-
cans.

The whole country was by this time alarmed: The minute-men, volunteers, and militia, assembled from all quarters, and posted themselves amongst trees, in houses*, and behind walls, along the road through which the British troops were to pass; whilst the

* An officer, on the march of the second detachment to Concord, observed to the commandant, lord Percy, that, in his opinion, the opposition to the king's troops would be very little, for that all the windows were shut, and the houses seemingly deserted. "So much the worse," lord Percy replied; "for we shall be fired at from those very houses."

C H A P.

I.

1775.

militia, who had been engaged at the bridge, reinforced with others hourly coming in from the country, were ready to press upon their rear.

Such was the route by which the British troops had to pass, fatigued and exhausted as they were, by constant exertion from the preceding evening. And as soon as they began their retreat, an incessant though irregular fire commenced, which was kept up during the whole of their march back to Lexington, in which they were driven before the Americans like sheep. At that place they were met by the detachment under lord Percy, with two pieces of cannon. The two detachments rested on their arms, and received some refreshment.

Driven back
by the way of
Lexington to
Boston.

Lord Percy now formed his detachment into a square, in which he inclosed colonel Smith's party, who were so much exhausted with fatigue, that they were obliged to lie down for rest on the ground, their tongues hanging out of their mouths, like those of dogs after a chase. Lord Percy, after refreshing the troops, moved on towards Boston, harassed the whole of the way by the Americans, who, from behind stone walls and other places of shelter, kept up on our men an incessant fire, on either flank, as well as in front and rear. This fire it would not have served any purpose to return; as the Americans were concealed, and kept running from front to flank, and from flank to rear, loading their pieces at one place, and discharging them at another.

When the united detachments arrived at Boston river, lord Percy asked information of the country people concerning the most proper place for crossing it. But, had he followed the advice he received, his troops, in passing the river, must have been cut to pieces. Having a general knowledge of the country, he was led to suspect their intelligence, and passed the troops at a different place, where the Americans could not with safety follow him.

In

In war there is nothing that so much avails as secrecy of design and celerity of execution: Nor, on the contrary, so hurtful as unnecessary openness and procrastination. General Gage on the evening of the eighteenth of April told lord Percy, that he intended to send a detachment to seize the stores at Concord, and to give the command to colonel Smith, "who knew that he was to go, but not "where." He meant it to be a secret expedition, and begged of lord Percy to keep it a profound secret. As this nobleman was passing from the general's quarters home to his own, perceiving eight or ten men conversing together on the common, he made up to them; when one of the men said — "The British troops have "marched, but they will miss their aim." "What aim?" said lord Percy. "Why," the man replied, "the cannon at Concord." Lord Percy immediately returned on his steps, and acquainted general Gage, not without marks of surprize and disapprobation, of what he had just heard. The general said that his confidence had been betrayed, for that he had communicated his design to one person only besides his lordship.

C H A P.
I.
1775.

As soon as the two detachments, after their junction, resumed their march, they were again annoyed by the provincials, posted as before, who kept up a continued firing until the British troops reached Boston, about sun-set, quite spent and worn down with fatigue. The detachments, together, amounted to somewhat more than eighteen hundred men; and the whole loss sustained, during this long and harassing march, on the part of the British, was sixty-five killed, one hundred and thirty-six wounded, and forty-nine missing. Several of Smith's party were scalped by the Americans. The loss of the provincials, as estimated by themselves, amounted to sixty men, two thirds of whom were killed.

19th April.

The conduct of colonel Smith in this unfortunate expedition was generally censured; but lord Percy gained, on this occasion, what he

C H A P. ^{I.} he afterwards uniformly sustained, great reputation as an active, brave, and intelligent officer. Such were the events of the day on which blood was first shed in the contest between Great Britain and her colonies: Events which served to shew, that if the Americans were yet unacquainted with military discipline, they were not destitute of either courage or conduct, but knew well, and dared to avail themselves of, such advantages as they possessed. The people of the colonies are accustomed to the use of fire-arms from their earliest youth, and are, in general, good marksmen. Such men, placed in a house, behind a wall, or amongst trees, are capable of doing as much execution as regular soldiers: And to these advantages, which they possessed during the greatest part of the nineteenth of April, we may attribute the inconsiderable loss sustained by them, compared with that of our detachments.

An American army, suddenly raised, invests Boston.

The retreat of the British troops to Boston, which was always intended as soon as they had accomplished the purpose of their march, was represented in the province of Massachusetts Bay as a defeat; and so much were the people of the province elated with their supposed victory, that nothing now was talked of but driving the king's troops out of Boston. They were irritated too, by the spreading of a report, that one object of the expedition to Concord was to seize on John Hancock and Samuel Adams, two very popular and leading characters in the provincial congress. The militia from all the distant parts of the province, on hearing what had passed, poured in so fast, that an army was soon assembled, amounting to twenty thousand men, under the command of colonels Ward, Pribble, Heath, Prescott, and Thomas; officers who had served in the provincial regiments during the late war, and who now acted as generals. With this army they formed a line of encampment of thirty miles in extent, reaching from the river Mystic on the left to Roxburgh on their right, and inclosing Boston in the center. They fixed

fixed their head quarters at Cambridge, and were soon afterwards joined by a large detachment of troops from Connecticut, under colonel Putnam*, an old provincial officer of approved experience and reputation, who had served in the two last wars, and now took such a position with his detachment as to be able readily to succour such parts of the line of encampment as were nearest to Boston. By this force, formidable certainly in point of numbers, was Boston blockaded: But the works erected on the neck of land which joins that town to the continent, were now so well strengthened and covered with cannon, that the provincials, numerous as they were, durst not attack them.

C H A P.
I.
1775.

An army being already in the field, the provincial congress, which now removed to Water-town, a place about ten miles from Boston, passed regulations for arraying it, and for fixing the pay of the officers and soldiers. Rules and orders for the government of the army were also published, and a vote passed for issuing a large sum in paper currency to defray its expences, for the redemption of which the faith of the province was pledged. By the same congress a resolution was passed on the fifth day of May, declaring that general Gage, by the late transactions, had utterly disqualified himself from acting in the province as governor, or in any other capacity, and that no obedience was due to him; but, on the contrary, that he was to be considered as an inveterate enemy.

But it is now necessary to recur to such measures as had been taken in England, during the winter, for reducing the colonies to obedience. Notwithstanding the union which appeared amongst them, and their fixed determination not to submit to the authority

Measures of
the British
cabinet.

* Colonel, afterwards general, Putnam, at the conclusion of the war in 1763, retired to a small farm, to which he annexed a tavern, an economy not uncommon in America, particularly in the province of New England.

C H A P.

I.

1775.

of parliament in the imposition of taxes, the British ministry determined to persevere in their coercive plan, but with some discrimination according to the demerits of the respective colonies. The New England provinces were considered as the most deeply reprehensible; and as these had, early in the preceding year, entered into an association for giving up all commerce with the mother-country; so it was thought reasonable by the British ministry to interdict them on the other hand from all commerce with any other country; and, as a farther punishment, to prohibit them from fishing on the Banks of Newfoundland. An act of parliament for these purposes was accordingly passed. But as it soon afterwards appeared that most of the other colonies were treading fast in the steps of the people of New England, it was thought necessary to include them in the same prohibition; and another act of parliament was passed for this purpose, extending to all the other colonies except New-York, North-Carolina, and Georgia. An addition to the land and sea forces was voted by the house of commons, and a large reinforcement ordered to Boston, under the command of the generals Howe, Clinton, and Burgoyne; all of them officers of reputation.

But whilst the minister was thus preparing to enforce his coercive measures, he did not altogether lay aside the hope of reconciliation. With a view to this he moved a resolution in the house of commons as the basis of a future agreement between the mother-country and the colonies, which, after some debate and opposition, was carried. The purport of this resolution was, that when any of the colonies should propose, according to their abilities, to raise their due proportion towards the common defence; such proportion to be raised under the authority of the assembly of such province, and to be disposable by parliament; and when such colony should also engage to provide for the support of the civil government and the administration of justice within such province; it would be proper, if such
 proposal

propofal ſhould be approved of by his majeſty in parliament, to forbear, in reſpect of ſuch colony, to levy any duties or taxes, or to impoſe any further duties or taxes, except ſuch as ſhould be neceſſary for the regulation of trade. It was hoped, that the offer of accommodation held out by this reſolution, would be readily accepted by the colonies, in order to avert the calamities impending over them in conſequence of the prohibitory acts of the preſent ſeſſion of parliament already mentioned: And had ſuch an offer been made by the Rockingham adminiſtration previous to the repeal of the ſtamp act, there is ſcarcely any doubt that it would have been then gladly accepted by at leaſt a majority of the colonies, and prevented that union amongſt them ſo fatal to the authority of the mother-country. But it was now too late: The ſeaſon for reconciliation was paſt. The minds of the colonial inhabitants had become ſoured in the proſecution of the diſpute; and every propoſition now made by the Britiſh miniſtry was viewed with jealousy and received with diſtruſt. A kind of military furor, too, had by this time ſeized the inhabitants of the colonies, and rather than make any ſort of conceſſion to the Britiſh parliament, they were willing to riſque the conſequences of oppoſing in the field their juvenile ardour to the matured ſtrength of the parent ſtate; and in this reſolution they were encouraged to perſiſt by recollecting the events of the nineteenth of April, by which it appeared, according to their manner of reaſoning, that in ſuch a country as America, abounding with dangerous paſſes and woody defiles, the Britiſh troops, with all their valour, diſcipline, and military ſkill, were not, when oppoſed to the Americans, ſo formidable as had been generally apprehended.

Copies of this conciliatory propoſition were tranſmitted by the miniſtry to America; and as ſoon as theſe arrived, the different aſſem-

C H A P. **L**
 1775. **blies were convened, before whom they were laid for their consideration. But this parliamentary resolution was accepted by none of them as a ground for reconciliation. By some it was viewed only as a ministerial scheme for dividing and disuniting the colonies: By others it was held not to be satisfactory, because the amount of the contribution was not left to the discretion of the colonial assemblies, but was to be determined by the king in parliament: And by all the assemblies it was agreed to be referred to the general congress, which, they held, was alone competent to decide upon it. A reference to the general congress was the same thing as a rejection; for it was well known that the British ministry would hold no communication with the general congress on that or any other subject. Such was the fate of the minister's conciliatory proposition for terminating the dispute between the mother-country and the colonies.**

May.
 Reinforce-
 ment of
 troops from
 Britain ar-
 rives at Bos-
 ton.

Towards the end of May, and in the beginning of June, the expected reinforcements arrived at Boston, with the generals appointed to command them. From the time of the expedition to Concord the British troops had continued blockaded in Boston, the force then under general Gage being too small for any other purpose than defence. But this force, now increased by the troops lately arrived, was become respectable, not so much indeed for its numbers, as the excellence of the troops of which it consisted.

As a step preparatory to offensive measures, general Gage on the twelfth of June issued a proclamation, offering, in his majesty's name, a free pardon to all those who should forthwith lay down their arms, John Hancock and Samuel Adams only excepted, and threatening with punishment all such as should delay to avail themselves of the proffered mercy. By the same proclamation also, martial law was declared to be in force in the province, until peace and order should be so far restored that justice might be again administered in the civil courts.

courts. But this proclamation, like others which had been issued before, produced no beneficial effect, and was as much disregarded as they had been.

C H A P.
I.
1775.

Adjacent to the peninsula of Boston, on the north, is another of similar form, called the Peninsula of Charlestown. They are separated from one another by Charles River, which is navigable, and nearly the breadth of the Thames at London bridge: And on the northern bank of this river, over-against Boston, lies Charlestown, a spacious well-built town, which gives name to the peninsula. The peninsula of Charlestown, being bounded on the north by the river Medford or Myftic, and on the east by Boston harbour, is entirely surrounded by navigable water, except where it is joined to the main land by an isthmus, somewhat wider, and more accessible than Boston Neck. In the centre of the peninsula rises an eminence, called Bunker's Hill, with an easy ascent from the isthmus, but steep on every other side; and at the bottom of this hill towards Boston stands Charlestown. Bunker's Hill was sufficiently high to overlook any part of Boston, and near enough to be within cannon-shot.

Why a situation, from which the town of Boston was so liable to be annoyed, was so long neglected, it is not easy to assign a reason*. But, about this time, the provincials receiving information that general Gage had at last come to a determination to fortify it, were resolved to defeat his intention if possible, by being the first to occupy it; and their resolution was executed without delay. About nine in the evening of the sixteenth of June, a strong detachment of provincials moved from Cambridge, and passing silently over Charlestown Neck, reached the top of Bunker's Hill unobserved. Having

* It is said that general Gage was repeatedly advised to occupy and fortify this commanding post.

previously

C H A P.
I.

1775.

Battle of
Bunker's
Hill.

previously provided themselves with intrenching tools, they immediately set to work, and threw up an intrenchment, reaching from the river Mystic on the left, to a redoubt on their right, both of which they had nearly completed by the morning; their works being in many places cannon-proof. Although the peninsula was almost surrounded with ships of war and transports, the provincials worked so silently that they were not discovered till the morning; when, at break of day, the alarm was given at Boston, by a cannonade begun upon the provincial works, from the Lively ship of war. A battery of six guns was soon afterwards opened upon them from Cop's Hill, in Boston; and, about noon, a detachment from the army was landed upon the peninsula of Charlestown, under the command of major-general Howe and brigadier-general Pigot, with orders to drive the provincials from their works. The troops were formed without opposition as soon as they landed; but the generals perceiving that the provincials were strongly posted on the heights, that they were already in great force, and that large columns were every moment coming in to their assistance, thought it necessary to apply for a reinforcement. When the reinforcement arrived, the whole detachment, consisting now of more than two thousand men, formed in two lines, moved on towards the enemy, with the light-infantry on the right wing, commanded by general Howe, and the grenadiers on the left by brigadier-general Pigot; the former to attack the provincial lines, and the latter the redoubt. The attack was begun by a sharp cannonade from some field-pieces and howitzers, the troops advancing slowly, and halting at intervals to give time for the artillery to produce some effect. The left wing, in advancing, had to contend with a body of provincials, posted in the houses in Charlestown, and in this conflict the town was set on fire and burnt to the ground. The provincials upon the hill, secure behind their intrenchments, reserved their fire for the near approach of the British troops, when a close
and

and unremitting discharge of musketry took place, the provincials in the works, as soon as they discharged their pieces, being furnished with others ready loaded. So incessant and so destructive was this continued blaze of musketry, that the British line recoiled, and gave way in several parts. General Howe, it is said, was, for a few seconds, left nearly alone; most of the officers who were about him, being either killed or wounded: And it required the utmost exertion in all the officers, from the generals down to the subalterns, to repair the disorder which this hot and unexpected fire had produced.

C H A P.
I.
1775.

At this juncture, general Clinton, who had arrived from Boston during the engagement, was most eminently serviceable in rallying the troops; and by a happy manœuvre almost instantaneously brought them back to the charge. The British soldiers, stung with the reflection of having given way before an enemy whom they despised, now returned with irresistible impetuosity, forced the intrenchments with fixed bayonets, and drove the provincials from their works. The latter, thus driven, fled with precipitation; but as no pursuit was ordered, they were suffered to retire unmolested, except in passing Charlestown Neck, which was enfiladed by the guns of the Glasgow sloop of war, and some floating batteries; and here the provincials sustained their greatest loss.

This destructive, although successful attack, cost the British, in killed and wounded, nearly one-half the whole detachment. The total loss amounted to one thousand and fifty-four, of which two hundred and twenty-six were killed, and eight hundred and twenty-eight wounded, nineteen commissioned officers being amongst the former, and seventy amongst the latter. The loss on the side of the provincials, as estimated by themselves, was four hundred and forty-nine; of these one hundred and forty-five being killed or missing, and three hundred and four wounded. Amongst the slain on the

C H A P.

I.

1775.

side of the British, were lieutenant-colonel Abercrombie, and majors Pitcairne and Williams; all of them officers of experienced bravery and distinguished merit, who had signalized themselves on this fatal day, in an eminent degree; as also did major Spendlove, who died of his wounds some days after. Amongst the provincials, some officers of rank were also killed, but the loss of doctor Warren, who commanded in the redoubt, was most lamented.

If any thing had been wanting to show the bravery and discipline of the British troops, the action at Bunker's Hill furnished an ample proof of both. Twice they were stopped, and twice returned to the charge. In the middle of a hot summer's day, incumbered with three days provisions, their knapsacks on their backs, which, together with cartouche-box, ammunition, and firelock, may be estimated at one hundred and twenty-five pounds weight, with a steep hill to ascend, covered with grass reaching to their knees, and intersected with the walls and fences of various inclosures, and in the face of a hot and well-directed fire, they gained a complete victory over three times their own number (for such was the British general's estimate) of provincials strongly posted behind a breast-work, and defended by a redoubt. But, whatever credit may be due to the valour of the troops, the plan of the attack has been severely censured.

Had the Symmetry transport, which drew little water, and mounted eighteen nine-pounders, been towed up Mystic channel, and been brought to, within musket-shot of the left flank, which was quite naked; or one of our covered boats, musket-proof, carrying a heavy piece of cannon, been towed close in; one charge on their uncovered flank, it was said, might have dislodged them in a moment. It has been also said, that the British troops might have been landed in the rear of the provincial intrenchment, and thereby have avoided those difficulties and impediments which they had to encounter

encounter in marching up in front. By such a disposition, too, the breast-work of the Americans would have been rendered useless, and their whole detachment, being inclosed in the peninsula, must have either surrendered at discretion, or attempted, in order to get back to the main land, to cut their way through the British line. Further still, it has been said, that the success of the day was the less brilliant, from no pursuit being ordered, after the provincials had begun to take to flight.

C H A P.
L
1775.

Few engagements are free from unfortunate accidents and mistakes: And some which occurred in the action at Bunker's Hill, are supposed to have rendered that day more disastrous than it would have otherwise been to the British. During the engagement, a supply of ball for the artillery, sent from the ordnance department in Boston, was found to be of larger dimensions than fitted the calibres of the field-pieces that accompanied the detachment—an oversight which prevented the farther use of the artillery: But a disadvantage, perhaps, still greater, was the unnecessary load already mentioned, under which the British troops marched to the attack; and by which they were greatly exhausted before they came to the scene of action. This circumstance was universally censured as unmilitary and absurd. Another error certainly was, that, instead of confining our attack to the enemy's left wing only, the assault was made on the whole front. Their left was covered with nothing more than a breast-work of rails and hay, easy to be scrambled over; and behind it, was an open hill which commanded their redoubt and lines.

C H A P. II.

Designs of Congress on Canada—Capture of Ticonderoga and Crown Point—Fort Chamblée—St. John's—and Montreal—Siege of Quebec.

C H A P.
II.
1775.

Designs of
Congress on
Canada.

ALL the colonies, now united, vied with each other in professions of invincible attachment to the common cause; and the congress beheld their power acknowledged, in a very great degree, from Nova Scotia to Georgia. And as it was now evident that the mother-country was as resolutely determined to maintain, as they were to resist, her authority, they began to concert measures for supporting a war, and, in the first place, to consider where that authority was most vulnerable. With these sentiments they cast their eyes on the province of Canada.

Canada, surrounded by rivers and lakes, and stretching from Nova Scotia, in an oblong direction, almost to the southern extremity of Pennsylvania, was conveniently situated for hostile invasion, and would, if reduced, prove a most important acquisition: Nor were various moral circumstances wanting to encourage the Americans to commence hostilities by an attack on that extensive region. They were not unacquainted with that general odium that attended the Quebec act among the Canadians, who saw that it intended, by establishing the French laws, to introduce arbitrary power. Neither were they ignorant that the rejection of the petition presented against that offensive law, had weakened the attachment of the inhabitants to the mother-country; by which country they conceived that they

had been treated with injustice and oppression; inasmuch as, though subject to her power, they were deprived of the chief blessings resulting from her constitution. The supporters of the American cause failed not to place those arguments in as forcible a light as possible: Nor were their representations without effect. The congress however did not wait for the full result of those discontents and reasonings to which they gave birth, but came to a resolution to attack our province while they might do it with advantage.

C H A P.
II.
1775.

Ticonderoga and Crown Point, the former situated at the north end of Lake George, and the latter near the southern extremity of Lake Champlain, form the gates on that quarter of Canada. These posts had already been secured in the following manner: A volunteer, of the name of Ethan Allen, assembled, of his own accord, about fifty men, and proceeded immediately to the environs of the first-mentioned fortresses, commanded by captain De la Place of the twenty-sixth regiment, who had under his command about sixty men. Allen, who had often been at Ticonderoga, observed a complete want of discipline in the garrison, and that they even carried their supine negligence to the length of never shutting the gates. Having disposed his small force in the woods, he went to captain De la Place, with whom he was well acquainted, and prevailed on him to lend him twenty men, for the pretended purpose of assisting him in transporting goods across the lake. These men he contrived to make drunk; and, on the approach of night, drawing his own people from their ambuscade, he advanced to the garrison, of which he immediately made himself master*. As there was not one person awake,

3d May.

Capture of
Ticonderoga.

* The stores taken at Ticonderoga were between 112 and 120 iron cannon, from 6 to 24 pounders; 50 swivels of different sizes, 2 ten inch mortars, 1 howitzer, 1 cohorn, 10 tons of musket balls, 3 cart-loads of flints, 30 new carriages, a considerable quantity of shells, a warehouse full of materials to carry on boat-building, 100 stand of small arms, 10 casks of very

C H A P.

II.

1775.

and of Crown
Point.

awake, though there was a sentry at the gate, they were all taken prisoners. On the commandant's asking Allen, by what authority he required him to surrender the fort, he answered, " I demand " it in the name of the Great Jehovah, and the continental congress." The reduction of Crown Point, which had neither guard nor garrison, became a matter of course. Allen also surprised Skenesborough, belonging to major Skene, who, with his son and negroes, were taken prisoners. About the same time, an American officer, afterwards highly distinguished, seized the only ship of the royal navy on the Lake Champlain. Benedict Arnold, at the commencement of the difference between Great Britain and America, was placed at the head of a company of volunteers by the inhabitants of Newhaven. As soon as he received intelligence of the affair at Lexington, he assembled his company, and declared his intention of proceeding to Boston. Having obtained their consent, he applied to a committee, to which general Wooster belonged, for ammunition. After some demur they supplied him, and he marched off with his company to the American head-quarters, which he reached on the twenty-ninth of April.

The whole military force of Canada, at this period, did not exceed two regiments, the seventh and the twenty-sixth, containing together about eight hundred men: For so much did general Carleton rely on his influence with the Canadians, and the representations of the clergy, that in the preceding year assurances were sent to general Gage at Boston, that a corporal's command was sufficient for the defence of the province. Immediately however on the reduction of Crown Point, Ticonderoga, and the king's ship on the Lake

indifferent power, 2 brass cannons, 30 barrels of flour, and 18 barrels of pork. The prisoners were 1 captain, 1 gunner, 2 serjeants, and 44 rank and file, besides women and children. Captain de la Place, notwithstanding his shameful conduct, was not brought to a court-martial, but was suffered to sell out.

Champlain,

Champlain, the two regiments were ordered to St. John's, a fort about twelve miles from Montreal, which was strengthened by two redoubts, that were ordered to be constructed on their arrival.

C H A P.
II.
1775.

No sooner was intelligence of the success of the Americans received at Boston, than general Gage dispatched brigadier-general Prescott, and two officers of inferior rank, with two ships to Montreal, where they arrived in July. About the same time also colonel Guy Johnstone arrived at that place with seven hundred of the warriors of the Five Nations, who proposed to general Carleton to retake Crown Point and Ticonderoga, alleging that these places were but weakly garrisoned by the Americans. This project was not adopted by the general.

July.

In pursuance of the resolutions of congress to attack Canada, the generals Schuyler and Montgomery were dispatched with three thousand men to Lake Champlain, across which flat-bottomed boats were to convey them down the Sorrel. And, in order that their passage might not be obstructed, they took possession of an isle called the Isle aux Noix, commanding the entrance into the lake. Hence they marched to St. John's, where they arrived on the sixth of September. The moment they landed they were attacked by a party of Indians, who obliged them to retreat to their boats, and to return to Isle aux Noix.

September.

General Schuyler having fallen into an indisposition of body, the command of the detachment devolved of course on general Montgomery, who being joined by several parties of Indians, offended at their rejection by general Carleton, and the remainder of the troops destined for this expedition, resolved to advance immediately and lay siege to St. John's.

The whole military force of Canada being thus concentrated in one point, colonel Allen, the same Allen to whom the Americans were indebted for the reduction of Crown Point and Ticonderoga, and

C H A P.

II.

1775.

and who knew the weak state of Montreal, resolved to add, if possible, this important place to his other conquests.

With a party of about one hundred and fifty men, composed of Americans and Indians, he marched to the banks of the river St. Lawrence, which he crossed in the night, about three miles below Montreal. Intelligence however by this time had been received of their approach; and the town's-people, with about thirty-six of the twenty-sixth regiment, being embodied under the command of major Campbell, attacked and beat back colonel Allen's detachment, and took the colonel himself prisoner.

On this an order was dispatched to colonel Maclean, a brave, indefatigable, and experienced officer, then at Quebec, to procure as many recruits as he could, and hasten to that part where the river Sorrel discharges itself into the Gulph of St. Laurence. The colonel, by unwearied diligence, raised a force of three hundred and seventy Canadians, with whom he marched to the post to which he was ordered, where he was reinforced by about two hundred more of the natives. Here he remained waiting for orders, and expecting to be joined by general Carleton, who intended to cross the river at Montreal, and march to the relief of St. John's.

But it unfortunately happened that at the place where the general attempted to land, his boats could not be brought nearer than within a musket shot of the shore, where, too, the enemy had planted two pieces of cannon, which annoyed them severely. It was a subject of general animadversion, that he had attempted to land at the only place where opposition might be expected, and contrary to the advice of the most experienced inhabitants. There were other places where he might have landed in safety. Several of our men were killed: The few who landed were instantly taken prisoners; and the general, with the small remainder of his detachment, was forced to return to Montreal.

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In the mean time, general Montgomery had taken Fort Chamblée, a small fortress, five miles above St. John's, and commanded by major Stopford, of the seventh regiment, at the head of about one hundred and sixty men, with a few artillery. The whole of the detachment headed by Montgomery did not exceed, when greatest, two thousand five hundred men; nor the force sent against Chamblée, under a lieutenant colonel, three hundred. For at least fifteen days there was no breach made in the wall, nor at any time any impression made that deserved that name; for the enemy, who had only two six-pounders, and next to no ammunition, had never formed a regular battery*. The garrison did not want powder and other ammunition; but they were poorly clothed, and otherwise ill-provided. On the third of November they surrendered to the Americans, on the condition of being allowed to go out with the honours of war. It was generally and deeply regretted that this fort was not timely reinforced, as it might have been, and also that the ammunition was not destroyed; as there was a sally-port through which it might have been thrown, even in day-light, and without the knowledge of the enemy, into the river.

C H A P.
II.
1775.
Capture of
Fort Cham-
blée.

Nov. 3.

The ammunition found in Chamblée † enabled the American general to pursue the siege of St. John's, which, for want of provisions and ammunition, was under the necessity of surrendering unconditionally on the thirteenth of November §. The works of

Capture of St
John's,
St.

* A small hole was made in the wall, but not within less than twenty-five feet from the ground.

† Amounting to 80 barrels of flour, 11 of rice, 7 of pease, 6 firkins of butter, 134 barrels of pork, 124 barrels of gunpowder, 300 swivel shot, 1 box of musket shot, 6564 musket cartridges, 150 stand of French arms, 3 royal mortars, 61 shells, 500 hand grenades, 83 royal fusileer's muskets, 83 accoutrements, and rigging for 3 vessels. As the assailants were reduced to their last round of shot, if it had not been for the surrender of Chamblée, they must have abandoned their attempt on Canada.

§ In this fort were found 17 brass ordnance from 2 to 24 pounders, 2 eight-inch howitzers, 7 mortars, 22 iron ordnance from 3 to 9 pounders, a considerable quantity of shot

C H A P.
II.

1775.

and of Mont-
real.

St. John's had been suffered to remain in bad order, and without sufficient stores, although the governor had long been informed that a descent on Canada was in contemplation. Ammunition might, in good time, have been thrown in from Chamblée, only twelve miles distant. It is but justice here to mention that the garrison, consisting of upwards of five hundred regulars, and above one hundred Canadian volunteers, behaved with great fortitude and perseverance, though, from the disadvantages just mentioned, they were forced to surrender. Immediately on the surrender of St. John's, general Carleton quitted Montreal, as it was incapable of making any defence. It fell of course into the hands of the American general.

Apprehensions were now entertained for the safety of Quebec, and not without reason; for at this period it was ill provided with men, and its fortifications were in a ruinous condition. The garrison contained but one captain, two subalterns, and fifty men of the seventh regiment, one lieutenant-colonel, six captains, twelve subalterns, and three hundred and fifty of colonel Maclean's corps then raising, five companies of British militia, containing each about forty men, six companies of Canadian militia, about fifty men each, a battalion of seamen, under the command of captain Hamilton of the Lizard frigate, amounting to two hundred and fifty men, and a few of the artillery. There were no other works than a wall, surrounding the town; the parapets were broken down in several places, and

shot and shells, and about 800 stand of small arms, with a few naval stores. The capture of St. John's must undoubtedly be attributed to the shameful surrender of Chamblée by major Stopford, and to the reprehensible negligence of the commanding officers at Montreal and Quebec. It was well known that St. John's possessed neither a sufficient quantity of stores nor provisions; yet no assistance was afforded them in either of these articles, though both of them could have been procured with sufficient ease from Chamblée and Montreal, from the former place even by land carriage. The fort however, notwithstanding these disadvantages, was most gallantly defended, and was surrendered only on account of the want of provisions and ammunition.

there

there was neither glacis nor covered-way. The majority of its inhabitants were but ill affected to the British cause; and the Quebec act, with the rejection of their petition against it, had in a manner alienated their affections from the mother-country, as already observed. At this period general Carleton was not very popular; for when the Quebec act was in contemplation, he had taken an active part in the framing of it, and, on his examination before the house of commons, had cast some reflections on the conduct of the British merchants of that province. His manners, besides, were not conciliating, and he had always attached himself to the Canadian noblesse. The Americans were not ignorant of these circumstances, which, with good reason, they flattered themselves would operate in their favour.

C H A P;
II.
1775.

Colonel Maclean in the mean time, with his detachment, which decreased daily by desertion, still remained in expectation of receiving orders at Sorrel; which place, however, he was at length, without waiting for orders from sir Guy Carleton, determined to quit on the following account: On the fifth of November, an express was transmitted to him, acquainting him that colonel Arnold had unexpectedly arrived at a place called Point Levy, opposite Quebec, and that the city was in the most imminent danger.

At the time when the provincial army was encamped before Boston, colonel Arnold laid before general Washington the following plan: About one hundred and thirty miles to the northward of Boston, a river called the Kennebeck, stretches from the sea as far northward as the lake St. Pierre, which is at no great distance from the city of Quebec. The colonel proposed to sail up the river with a detachment of one thousand five hundred men, and penetrating through the swamps, forests, and hilly land that separate New England from Canada, beyond the sources of the Kennebeck, to surprize Quebec; which being unprepared for such an attempt, would fall an

C H A P. II. }
 1775. } easy prey. General Washington having testified his approbation of the proposal, the colonel set out on his expedition. Extreme were the difficulties and dangers he encountered and surmounted with the most astonishing fortitude and perseverance. The Kennebeck is full of rocks and shoals, which often obliged this gallant detachment to carry their boats and rafts on their backs for miles along the shore. Nor when they had traversed the length of the Kennebeck were their difficulties diminished. The swampy grounds, added to the fatigue already endured, produced a variety of disorders; provisions began to fail, and a third part of the detachment, on some trivial pretence, deserted with a colonel at their head. Difficulties however seemed only to invigorate Arnold: Neither dispirited by the desertion of a part of his army, nor by the diseases under which many of the remainder laboured, the colonel left the sick behind him, and marched on. Six weeks after his departure from Boston he arrived on the plains of Canada, and immediately encamped opposite to Quebec, at a spot called Point Levy.

The consternation occasioned by his unexpected arrival, and by the intrepidity of the achievement, was universal; and had not the small-craft and boats been fortunately removed before his approach, he would doubtless, in the general consternation, have made himself master of the city. The removal of these produced a delay of some days, to which Quebec owed her safety; for colonel Maclean, with his small detachment, having quitted Sorrel, after having informed sir Guy Carleton by letter of his intention, advanced by forced marches to Quebec, where he arrived in the evening of the thirteenth of November. On the succeeding day, Arnold, by the help of a dark night, having landed his men on the other side of the river, and being totally ignorant of colonel Maclean's arrival, attacked the city at the gate of St. Louis, but was repulsed with slaughter; the city being strengthened by some pieces of cannon that were landed from a frigate in
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the river. Arnold receiving intelligence from several Canadians residing in Quebec, that it was proposed to attack him early in the morning of the nineteenth, removed his men to Point au Tremble, twenty miles distant from Quebec.

C H A P.
II.
1775.

On the twentieth, general Carleton, who had made his escape through the enemy's craft in a whale-boat, arrived in the city, and immediately began to make vigorous preparations for its defence. At the same time he expressed his entire approbation of colonel Maclean's conduct, and publicly thanked him for his very judicious and gallant conduct.

Arnold, who had brought no artillery with him, and who now discovered the impossibility of taking the city without that advantage, contented himself with returning to the spot he had formerly occupied, where he could intercept all supplies and communications, and where he resolved to wait the arrival of Montgomery. Montgomery, after the capture of Montreal, employed himself in constructing flat boats to attack the British armaments, which, consisting of eleven armed vessels, on board of which were general Prescott, and some other officers of rank, together with a large quantity of military stores, was obliged to surrender to his victorious arms. Proceeding immediately to Quebec, he arrived there on the fifth of December, and summoned the city to surrender. The summons was treated with contempt, and general Carleton refused all correspondence with him. Batteries were then immediately opened, which did little damage, and were demolished almost as soon as they were erected. The whole artillery and fortifications of the city were committed to the management of colonel Maclean (whose indefatigable diligence and intrepid demeanour during the whole of the siege acquired him infinite honour), and every possible preparation was made to defend the city to the last extremity.

C H A P.
II.

1775.

Montgomery and Arnold were now in a most critical situation from the want of proper artillery, for they had none heavier than twelve pounders. They saw themselves unable to make any impression on the fortifications of Quebec; and from the malcontents they had nothing now to expect, because each had thought it most prudent to join the common cause for the preservation of his own private property. Winter was approaching fast, and to consume it on the plains of Canada was a prospect most dreary and unpromising; yet, on the other hand, it was essentially necessary that the first campaign should be closed with a brilliancy that should prevent the public ardour from experiencing any diminution.

Thus situated, it was resolved to storm the city. Forlorn indeed were the hopes of success; but forlorn, at any rate, was the prospect before them; and the resolution was not abandoned. It was supposed that Montgomery was averse to this measure, but he was under the necessity of giving his assent, because a large number of his men, whose time of service had nearly expired, threatened to leave him immediately if the attempt were not made. The necessary disposition for storming the town was accordingly put in execution, and Montgomery resolved to lead the forlorn hope. Four attacks were to be made at the same time—two false ones, by Cape Diamond and St. John's Gate; and two real, under Cape Diamond, by Drummond's Wharf and the Potash. The attacks were to be begun at break of day on the thirty-first of December 1775, and the firing of rockets was to be the signal. By some mistake however, the attacks on Cape Diamond and St. John's Gate were begun first, and the English discovering them to be merely feints, posted only a slight force to defend those points, and conveyed the greater part of their strength to the lower town, where with good reason they imagined the real attacks were to be made.

made. Montgomery headed one of these attacks, Arnold the other. Montgomery, with nine hundred men, had to pass a dangerous part, where he was between two fires. He led his men however to the attack with that coolness and intrepidity which never forsook him. Captain Bairnsfeather, the master of a transport, who defended this post, suffered the enemy's detachment to advance within fifty yards before a gun was fired. A dreadful discharge of cannon was then poured upon them, and almost the first who fell was Montgomery. The Americans, deprived thus of their gallant leader, paused a moment, but did not retreat. They marched onward to the attack with firmness, and for half an hour sustained a most galling discharge of cannon and musquetry. Finding then that their attempts could not be attended with success, they withdrew from the attack, and retreated.

Arnold, who at the head of seven hundred men attacked the city at the Saut des Matelots, was rather more successful. The Canadian guard, appointed to defend it, ran away after the first fire; and of the seamen who managed the guns, all were either killed or wounded. Arnold having the misfortune to receive a wound in the leg early in the engagement, was obliged to retire; but the next in command continued the attack with unabated vigour. The first and the second barriers were taken, after an obstinate resistance, and against the third a ladder was already placed to convey the enemy into the town, when a detachment of colonel Maclean's regiment under captain Nairn, and a party with colonel Caldwell at their head, fortunately arrived. Captain Nairn immediately seized the ladder, and by his resolute conduct drove the enemy from the house against which they had fixed it. They were then driven from the barrier, after a most desperate attack, and pursued to some distance. In these attacks
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C H A P.

II.

1775.

C H A P. the loss on the part of the English was but trifling, nor did the
 II. Americans lose above fifty men.

1775.

Colonel Arnold, though thus disappointed in his endeavours against Quebec, resolved not to withdraw from the province. He still remained encamped on the heights of Abraham, whence he could intercept any supplies that might be attempted to be conveyed into the city, and where he hoped to increase his small detachment by ingratiating himself with the Canadians.

Such was the issue of the expedition against Canada, and such the termination of the first campaign, in which the Americans had acquired great military distinction; yet brilliantly (though certainly unsuccessfully) as the first campaign was concluded, the Americans thought their military glory dearly purchased with the loss of the gallant Montgomery.

Montgomery, at the conclusion of the last war, retired to America, where he married. Here his character was so universally respected, that at the commencement of the disturbances he was invited by congress to defend their cause, and honoured with the rank of brigadier-general. His manners were easy and conciliating, and he possessed in a peculiar degree the art of acquiring the confidence of those whom he commanded. In his person he was tall and slender, but well limbed. The day after the attack his body was found, and upon examining it, a wound was discovered in each thigh, and one on his head.

C H A P. III.

Situation of Affairs in Virginia, North and South Carolina, and at Boston.—1775, 1776.

THE fatal effects of disorder and tumult were not felt, however, solely in the northern provinces. In the south the situation of affairs was equally critical and alarming. The governor of Virginia at this period was the earl of Dunmore, a man of sufficient firmness and resolution, and who had been formerly very popular. His popularity, however, was now rapidly declining; for, at the commencement of the disturbances in the other colonies, he had transmitted to the government of Great Britain an account of the state of the province of Virginia. The particulars of this statement, by some means becoming known, highly incensed the planters, to whom it chiefly related. It represented them as encumbered with debts, of which they seemed anxious to rid themselves by encouraging rebellion. It accused them of impeding the operations of justice, in order to procure temporary advantages by such delays; and it concluded by deducing from their conduct a prediction that they would soon attach themselves openly to those who opposed the mother-country.

The planters were more highly enraged on account of the truths which this representation contained. They poured upon the governor the foulest torrents of invective and abuse, and insinuated that his lordship, in conjunction with administration, had formed a design of assassinating the speakers of their assembly, Mr. Randolph.

In

C H A P.
III.

1775.
Situation of
affairs in Vir-
ginia.

C H A P.
III.
1775.

In order to add to the effect of this insinuation, the corporation of Williamsburg presented an address to Mr. Randolph, who returned an answer, not at all calculated to disappoint the wishes of those with whom it had originated. While the public mind was thus stimulated, an event occurred, which was made a pretence for taking up arms.

Lord Dunmore, foreseeing the consequences of this state of fermentation, and unwilling to place the means of violence within the power of the planters, had early in May removed the gunpowder from the public magazine at Williamsburg. The motives of this measure being easily penetrated, an armed force assembled under the command of a Mr. Henry, a man possessed of great influence and popularity, in order to compel a restitution of the powder. This detachment, however, proceeded no further than within fifteen miles of Williamsburg, where they were met by the magistrates of the city, who prevailed on them to depart, after having entered into an agreement that the receiver-general of the province should become security for the payment of the gunpowder.

But the reign of temperance and moderation was now at an end; public meetings and military associations were universally encouraged; and the assembly of the province, approving the conduct of Mr. Henry, ordered a guard to be provided for the safety of the magazine, without submitting this step to the consideration of the governor.

In consequence of lord Dunmore's intimations to the government of Great Britain, several conciliatory propositions were transmitted to his lordship, who, early in June, laid them before the council of Virginia. The council acceded to them; but the assembly unanimately refused their acquiescence. Scarcely had this rejection been conveyed to his lordship, when, from a private channel, he received intelligence of a design upon his life. It is probable that this was
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only a false alarm, conveyed by the malcontents to the governor, in order to induce him to retire from the province. Whether it was or was not, his lordship certainly adopted the most prudent line of conduct: For immediately on receiving this intimation, he abandoned his house and property, and with his lady and children retired on board the Fowey man of war. The motives for this step he transmitted to both houses, who immediately united in addressing his lordship; assuring him that his suspicions were ill-founded, and beseeching him, for the sake of the public peace, to return to the capital. But his lordship, unwilling to commit himself in a manner to their custody, declined complying with the contents of the address. Nevertheless, he submitted to their consideration the subsequent proposition: That he would either correspond with the council and assembly from the Fowey, or adjourn them to York, about twelve miles from Williamsburg, where he had no objection to reside, and terminate the business of the session. This proposal, however, was rejected, and both houses continued sitting. After having, on a trivial pretence, increased the military establishment, by the addition of a company of riflemen, they proceeded to investigate the conduct of the governor. In the course of this investigation several propositions and messages were transmitted to his lordship, the purport of which was, that he should return to Williamsburg, to give his assent to several bills; replace the powder he had removed from the magazine; and deposit an additional quantity of military stores for the use of the colony. To these propositions his lordship returned for answer, that, as his suspicions relative to his personal safety were by no means allayed, he could not return to Williamsburg, but that if the council and assembly chose to bring the bills to him, he would give his assent to them. With respect to the powder, the colony had no right to claim it, because it belonged to the Rippon man of war. To the last proposition his lordship returned no answer.

C H A P.
III.
1775.

C H A P.
III.

1775.

ately on receiving this determination, the assembly entered the following resolution on their journals; viz. "That their rights and " privileges had been invaded; that the constitution of the colony " was in danger; and that preparation ought to be made accord- " ingly." Having passed this resolution, both houses adjourned to October.

The greatest part of the members having now retired to their plantations, and tumult and disorder having somewhat subsided, lord Dunmore, with several officers of the Fowey, ventured to a farm belonging to his lordship on the banks of York river, about two miles from Williamsburg. Many minutes, however, had not elapsed after their arrival, before intelligence was received of a party of riflemen being on their march to seize his lordship. He was therefore under the necessity of retreating immediately to the boats, which were ready to receive him. Several shot were fired at them, but happily they were at too great a distance to receive any injury. Lord Dunmore, now fully convinced that moderate measures would be feeble and ineffectual, dispatched his lady and family in a schooner to England, and repaired immediately to Norfolk, a town advantageously situated at the mouth of Chesapeak Bay. In the mean time, the colony proceeded to the election of deputies, who, on their meeting, assumed the appellation of the provincial convention. After justifying their conduct, by asserting that their liberties and possessions were endangered by the machinations of the mother-country, they increased the military establishment, and imposed taxes for the maintenance of it.

At this period the resources possessed by lord Dunmore were very inadequate to oppose or counteract the proceedings of the convention. His lordship had ravaged those parts which were contiguous to the shore, and had made an attempt to burn the town of Hampton. In this however, though well supported by the shipping, he was unsuccessful. A
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body of riflemen coming to the assistance of the town, compelled him to retire with the loss of one of his vessels. In order to remedy this insufficiency of resources, his lordship adopted a measure which was certainly not very politic, and which stimulated the minds of the Virginians almost to a degree of phrensy. He issued a proclamation, declaring martial law to be in force throughout the colony. He erected the royal standard, to which he commanded his majesty's subjects to repair, and he emancipated all the slaves who should take up arms in defence of the British cause. By this means his lordship obtained a considerable increase of strength, but far from adequate to his expectations. He had already secured the possession of all the country situated between Norfolk and the sea; when the provincial meeting, in order to prevent the desertion of the slaves, and to arrest his lordship in his career, resolved to send a considerable force against him. About the beginning of November, a detachment, consisting of one thousand men, was dispatched from the western side of Virginia to Norfolk, in the neighbourhood of which they arrived early in December. The river Elizabeth running between them and the town, they were under the necessity of making a circuit of ten miles to a village called the Great Bridge, where the river is fordable: Previously, however, to their arrival, the bridge had been removed, and some works thrown up, which were defended by a body of provincials and negroes, in order to impede their crossing the river. Thus situated, and convinced that the loyalists would soon be obliged to abandon their post, the Americans contented themselves with intrenching on the opposite side of the river. Lord Dunmore, though he possessed a considerable degree of military experience, was impetuous and impatient. He resolved to adopt a scheme which was certainly not defensible on the grounds of prudence, and which was far from receiving the approbation of those who were under his command. The scheme was, to attempt to dislodge the enemy from

C H A P.
III.
1775.

C H A P.

III.

1775.

their intrenchments on the other side of the river. On the eighth of December a detachment of one hundred and twenty men, under the command of captain Fordyce of the fourteenth regiment, a brave officer, departed from Norfolk at midnight, and arrived at the Great Bridge before day-break. The planks of the bridge were replaced as silently as possible, and every proper disposition made for the attack. The Americans, however, apprised of the scheme, had prepared themselves accordingly. A caufway extended from the bridge through a swampy bottom, almost as far as the enemy's works, which were situated on a rising ground. The right side of this caufway was skirted by a thicket, within the distance of musket-shot. At break of day captain Fordyce crossing the bridge proceeded along the caufway, and was suffered to advance very near the intrenchments without opposition. A heavy fire was then poured at the same moment upon him, both from the thicket and the works, which did great execution. Disconcerted, but not daunted, he still continued to advance. A second discharge from the enemy proved fatal to him. He fell within a few feet of the breast-work of the intrenchments. Thirty of the hundred and twenty, including the leader, being now killed or wounded, the detachment retreated from the attack, and retired across the bridge.

On the succeeding night, the English abandoned their post between the Elizabeth and Norfolk, which last place it was thought prudent also to relinquish, on account of the increasing strength of the Americans. Lord Dunmore therefore, with such of the inhabitants as were attached to the British cause, retired on board the shipping in the river, and the Americans took possession of the town.

The loyalists were now in the most pitiable situation: Provisions were scarce, and such of the boats as ventured on shore to obtain a fresh supply, were in the most imminent danger from the riflemen, who had taken possession of the wharfs, which projected a great

way into the river. To remedy this inconvenience, it was resolved by lord Dunmore to set these wharfs on fire. This was performed accordingly, on the first of January 1776. The other parts of the town were at the same time set on fire by the Americans; and thus was the town of Norfolk levelled with the dust. Norfolk, at the commencement of the disturbances, was one of the most flourishing towns on the shores of the Chesapeak. It contained eight thousand inhabitants. Its proximity to the sea, the excellence of the timber that grew in abundance near it, the capaciousness and safety of its harbour, and the salubrity of its situation, had rendered it the most desirable place of residence in the extensive province of Virginia. The damage computed to be done by the destruction of this place was near four hundred thousand pounds.

C H A P.
III.
1775.

After the conflagration of Norfolk, the Americans, in order to prevent the shipping from procuring provisions, destroyed all the plantations contiguous to the river, forcing the possessors of them to remove with their effects into the interior parts of the province. Experiencing now the greatest distress, the ships were obliged to put to sea, and lord Dunmore, leaving a considerable body of the loyalists and negroes who had joined the royal standard, proceeded with the remains of his army to New York, and joined the army under the command of general Howe.

In stating the situation of affairs in Virginia at this period, it may not be thought anomalous to mention the particulars of an enlarged and daring scheme that was projected by a Mr. Connelly, a native of Pennsylvania, and communicated to lord Dunmore while he was on the coast of Virginia. The plan was, to invade that and the other southern colonies on their back and inland parts, where it was known that the people were strongly attached to the British government. These, it was not doubted, would take up arms in its defence; and it was also supposed that several of the Indian tribes might be induced

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C H A P.
III.

1775.

to join them. With this force it was intended to open a passage into the very heart of the colonies. The projector, Mr. Connelly, was peculiarly fitted for the conduct of such an enterprize. He was active, enterprising, patient of fatigue, and he possessed that which is the soul of enterprize, unconquerable perseverance.

The scheme having received the approbation of lord Dunmore, was immediately put into execution. Notwithstanding the variety of difficulties and dangers that surrounded him, Mr. Connelly traversed the province of Virginia from Chesapeak Bay to the Ohio, a journey of between three and four hundred miles, negotiated a treaty with the Indians on that river, and brought over to his purpose the white people situated in those distant settlements. Returning to lord Dunmore, he was immediately dispatched to general Gage, who appointed him leader of the enterprize, and promised him his countenance and support.

It was determined that Mr. Connelly, as early as possible in the ensuing spring, should collect as many men as Detroit and the neighbouring forts could spare, and proceed with them to Pittsburg, situated beyond the Allegany mountains, where he was to remain until he had procured a sufficient number of persons attached to the British cause. He was then to cross the Allegany mountains, and penetrate into Virginia: Then leaving a strong garrison at Fort Cumberland, he was to sail down the river Potomack, and seize upon Alexandria, where lord Dunmore was to join him with as many ships as possible. Strong fortifications were immediately to be constructed, in order that at all times the friends of government might declare themselves and form a junction, and that all communication might thus be cut off between the northern and southern colonies, divided from each other by the Potomack, which stretches from an arm of Chesapeak Bay to the Allegany mountains. It is broad, rapid, and not easily to be forded. The only town of any consequence

quence on its banks was Alexandria, equidistantly situated between the sea and the Allegany mountains. But the scheme was frustrated by one of those causes which, trifling as they appear, produce often the most important effects.

C H A P.
III.
1775.

Already had Mr. Connelly penetrated to the back settlements of Maryland, and had congratulated himself on having fortunately escaped almost every danger, when a tradesman, who knew him, met him on the road, and immediately communicated his suspicions to the nearest committee. In consequence of this information, he was seized, thrown into prison, his papers taken from him, and transmitted to congress. These discovered the whole scheme, which was thus entirely overthrown; Mr. Connelly was sent prisoner to Philadelphia, where he was put in irons, and treated with the most rigorous severity.

While lord Dunmore was thus driven from his government of Virginia, the governor of North Carolina, Mr. Martin, was not more peaceably situated. The same complaints were advanced against him as had been adduced against his lordship, viz. of having attempted to stir up the negroes against their masters. The replication of Mr. Martin, couched in the form of a proclamation, was so spirited and severe, that the provincial convention voted it to be a most outrageous libel, and ordered it to be burnt by the public executioner.

In North Carolina,

Ten or twelve pieces of old dismounted cannon, which had been for many years used only on joyful occasions, lay on the banks of the river near governor Martin's house at Newburn. On the first of June 1775, the governor's servants being employed in examining them (probably for the purpose of using them on his majesty's birth-day), were observed by the malcontents, who spreading the alarm, the inhabitants immediately assembled, chose a person of the name of Nash for their speaker, and went in a body to the

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C H A P.
III.

1775.

and in South
Carolina.

the governor's house. On being asked what he meant to do with the guns, he replied, that they belonged to his majesty, and that he should use them in any manner he pleased. This firm reply somewhat daunted the malcontents, and they retired without continuing the inquiry relative to the guns. Newburn, where Mr. Martin resided, was situated in such a manner, that it could derive no assistance from the navy. On this account, and intelligence having been received that the malcontents had embodied themselves, the governor thought it most prudent to retire on board a ship off Cape Fear. Similar disturbances arose about the same time in South Carolina, the inhabitants of which compelled lord William Campbell, the governor, to retire on board a man of war.

As soon as his lordship had departed, proper measures were used to prevent an invasion from the inhabitants of the back settlements, by concluding a treaty with them, and to put the province in an adequate state of defence.

At Boston no events of importance occurred at this period, except the resignation of general Gage, who departed for England, leaving the command of the British forces to general Howe. The besiegers of Boston, and the besieged, remained in a situation of equal inactivity.

C H A P. IV.

Proceedings of the British government—Deputies arrive in London from Congress—State of Commerce—Meeting of Parliament—Effect of its Resolutions in the Colonies.

ABOUT the latter end of August, two deputies from congress, Messrs. Richard Penn and Arthur Lee, arrived in London with a petition, which they were ordered to present to his majesty. The petition pointed out the flourishing state of the colonies previous to the present disturbances, and reminded his majesty of the assistance they had afforded him during the continuance of the late glorious war. As a recompense for this assistance, it had been expected that they would have been permitted, with the rest of the empire, to share in the blessings of peace, and the emoluments of victory and conquest. How were they disappointed, when, in place of this reward, a new system of statutes and regulations was adopted for the administration of the colonies, equally injurious to their prosperity, and to the welfare of the mother-country? The petition then animadverted in a pointed manner on the conduct of his majesty's ministers, who, by persevering in their obnoxious system, and by proceeding to open hostilities in order to enforce it, had compelled them to arm in their own defence. But as they were not ignorant of the consequences of civil discords, they thought themselves required by indispensable obligations to Almighty God, to his majesty, to their fellow-subjects, and themselves, to stop the further effusion of

C H A P.
IV.

1775.

Deputies arrive in London from Congress.

C H A P.
IV.

1775.

blood. After expressions of duty and attachment to his majesty, they solemnly assured him, that they not only most ardently desired that the former harmony between Great Britain and her colonies might be restored, but that concord might be established between them upon so firm a basis as to perpetuate its blessings, uninterrupted by any future dissensions, to succeeding generations in both countries. But this reconciliation they did not wish to procure at the expense either of the dignity or welfare of the mother-country. In conclusion, it was earnestly recommended to his majesty, to direct the adoption of some mode which should have for its tendency the repeal of those statutes that were injurious to the interests of the colonies.

Such were the particulars of this celebrated petition, which was signed by John Hancock, president of the congress, and every one of the members. On the first of September it was delivered to lord Dartmouth, and on the fourth of the same month, Messrs. Penn and Lee were informed, "That no answer would be given to it."

The fate of this petition, and the acrimony of argument used by those who supported and those who opposed it, revived that party distinction of Whig and Tory, which had been dormant since the reign of queen Ann.

State of com-
merce.

Hitherto the commercial part of the nation had experienced but trifling inconveniences from the loss of the trade to America: For the Americans had transmitted large sums to discharge the debts due to their English correspondents. Demands for goods to a considerable amount were also received from Turkey and Russia; and Great Britain herself, by contracts and supplies for the army and navy, prevented commerce from drooping, on account of the deprivation of a free intercourse with her colonies. But in the middle of the year, however, the trading part of the nation received a severe and an unexpected blow. The profits derived from the Newfoundland fishery

fishery are, in the knowledge of every one, immense. The usual number of vessels were sent this year to the banks of Newfoundland, where, on their arrival, they found themselves unable to proceed in their operations, on account of a decree made by congress, which prevented their being supplied with their former necessaries. This decree owed its origin to the act passed by Great Britain, for depriving the people of New England of the benefits of the fishery at Newfoundland. In consequence of this prohibition most of the ships, in order to avoid the miseries of famine, made the best of their way home; and the decrease in the profits of this branch of commerce this season, was computed at very little less than half a million. This was a severe stroke which, while it afforded the opposers of the American war additional arguments against it, increased the anger of those who considered the inhabitants of the colonies in no other light than that of rebels.

C H A P.
IV.
1775.

On the twenty-sixth of October, the session of parliament was opened with a speech from the throne, in which his majesty stated that the situation of America was the cause of his assembling both houses of parliament so early. Adverting to the particulars of this situation, he declared, that his revolted subjects had raised troops; assembled a naval armament; seized the public revenue; assumed legislative, executive, and judicial powers, which they exercised in the most despotic manner over their fellow-subjects. Till they had arrived at this possession of power, they had endeavoured to deceive and amuse the mother-country by vague expressions of attachment to her, and of protestations of loyalty to her sovereign. His majesty next reminded each house, that though it was known last session that a rebellion existed within the province of Massachusetts, yet even that single province it was endeavoured rather to reclaim than subdue. The same mode of conduct had been pursued with respect to the other revolted colonies, and though certainly proper

Meeting of
parliament.

C H A P.
IV.

1775

measures were taken to enforce authority, yet, at the same time, conciliatory propositions had always preceded those coercive measures. America, however, had rejected all these propositions, and prepared herself to oppose force by force. Hence it was visible, that she aimed at the establishment of a separate government, and an independent empire. After pointing out the injurious consequences that would ensue to the parent state from the success of such a plan, his majesty declared that it was absolutely necessary to adopt the most decisive measures. Under the impression of this idea, he informed both houses that he had increased the naval and military establishments, and that he had it in contemplation to engage some foreign troops offered him. Nevertheless he assured them that he should be ready to receive them with tenderness and mercy, whenever they should become sensible of their error. In conclusion, the parliament was informed, that the proper estimates for the necessary supplies were ordered to be submitted to their consideration.

In answer to this speech, the ministry proposed that an address should be presented to his majesty, assuring him that both houses concurred in admitting the necessity of adopting vigorous measures against the colonies; and that they would assist him with supplies necessary to carry such measures into effect. This proposition met with severe and violent opposition; and instead of such an address, it was moved by a member in the minority, that a declaration should be adopted; the purport of which should be, that the parliament were convinced that the means which had been adopted to allay the ferment in the colonies, had rather increased it: From which they were led to suppose that those means were not properly adapted to secure the end proposed: That they were satisfied that the present disturbances originated in the want of adequate information relative to the true state of the colonies, which had been the cause of obnoxious measures having hitherto been carried into execution. The declaration.

declaration then proceeded to assure his majesty that his parliament would proceed to review, in a most solemn manner, the whole of the late proceedings, in order to avoid the alarming necessity of shedding the blood of fellow-subjects, and the dreadful expedient of arming a Briton against a Briton. The ministry carried their point with respect to addressing his majesty; but the above-mentioned declaration occasioned long and important debates.

C H A P.
IV.
1775.

The arguments used by those who supported the declaration, and opposed the adoption of coercive measures, were copiously answered by the supporters of government, who asserted that the representations of the opposition were unfounded, and only calculated to intimidate and repress the national vigour and spirit. From the conduct of the Americans, it was absurd and ridiculous to infer that they aimed at less than unconditional, unqualified, and total independence. In all their proceedings they had considered themselves as entirely separated from Great Britain; and though their professions and petitions breathed peace and moderation, their actions and preparations denoted war and defence. Whether it was more wise to infer intentions from words than from deeds, remained with the opposition to determine. Every attempt that could be made to soften the colonists had been put in practice without effect. Their obstinacy was inflexible, and in proportion as the parent state acceded to their wishes, their conduct became more insolent and overbearing. The right of taxation had in a manner been given up by parliament, for they had allowed the Americans the right of taxing themselves. Yet with this permission they were not contented, refusing to contribute any thing towards the expenses of that state which had nursed them with such tenderness and fostered them with such care. Every hope of accommodation was now at an end. Only two alternatives remained for the British nation to adopt, coercion or contempt.

To

C H A P.
IV.
1775.

To this effect were the arguments adduced in support of the ministry. A whole night was spent in debating upon the royal speech, and it was not till five o'clock in the morning that a division took place, when the declaration proposed by the opposition was rejected by a majority of one hundred and seventy; the numbers being, for it, one hundred and eight; against it, two hundred and seventy-eight.

The colonies in the mean time waited with anxious impatience for the determination of Great Britain. That hostilities were resolved did not much surprize them, but the idea of having foreign troops employed against them stung them to the quick. They considered the adoption of this measure as an avowal of the mother-country having shaken off all former considerations, and of her having banished from her memory every idea that reminded her of both having originated from the same source.

The consequence of this indignation in the colonies may be easily conceived. Their resolutions to oppose the measures of the mother-country were fortified more strongly. Preparations were continued with additional eagerness and impetuosity; and those of the Americans who had wished hitherto that moderate measures should be adopted, felt no longer that inclination. And indeed, it must be confessed that the idea of introducing foreign troops was not reprobated solely by the Americans and the colonies: Many of the firm friends of the minister conceived it to be derogatory to the constitution, and contrary to law. Thus, though they acquiesced in the necessity of decisive and vigorous measures, they absolutely refused their assent to this proposition, and refused him every assistance which it was in their power to give, either by their eloquence or their votes.

The minister however remained firm to his purpose. Hitherto, he said, Great Britain had been unsuccessful through delay. Immediate

diate measures were to be used, and the supplies necessary to carry on the war ought to be transmitted to America as early as possible. That the introduction of foreigners was illegal he denied in the most positive manner, affirming it to have been adopted in times not very dissimilar to the present, viz. in the rebellion of 1745. In the midst of debates on this subject, the ministry received information from America that the inhabitants increased in strength daily; that most vigorous preparations were carrying on both by sea and land; and that they had made overtures to several foreign nations, who did not seem averse to afford them every assistance and support. In consequence of this information, it was proposed that the naval establishment should be augmented this year to twenty-eight thousand men and eighty ships; and that the military establishment in America should consist of twenty-five thousand of the flower of the English forces. This proposal was condemned by the opposition, who tried their strength a second time in moving, with a view to render such warlike operations no longer necessary, an address to his majesty, requesting him to authorise the commissioners alluded to in his speech from the throne, to receive conciliatory propositions from congress, or any collective body that should be formed to convey the sentiments of one or more of the colonies, without inquiring into the legality of such an assembly, or the forms under which they might be disposed to treat. This condescension, it was strongly insisted, would smooth the way to consequences most beneficial and advantageous to the mother-country. Nor were condescensions of this nature uncommon. Monarchs, wisely considering that formal distinctions fade away before substantial powers, had often treated with their subjects who had assembled without any legality of form. John offered no objection to the informality of the barons' assembly; and subsequent monarchs, deriving no claim to the crown from lineal descent, had owed it solely to the will of a popular assembly.

Besides,

C H A P.
IV.
1775.

C H A P.
IV.

1775.

Besides, it was contended, that if forms had always been attended to, none of those revolutions which have contributed to the happiness of mankind, and the advancement of arts and sciences, would have been accomplished. Prudent policy always accommodated itself to the exigencies of events.

The ministerial party, in replying to these arguments, agreed that peace and reconciliation were generally preferable to war and opposition; but, at the same time, that there were circumstances which rendered the former even more desirable than the latter. Great Britain had sufficiently receded. It was her duty now to advance. At all events it was totally inconsistent with her dignity and her character to acknowledge the congress to be a legal assembly. After every possible argument had been marshalled on each side, the proposal made by opposition was negatived, and the minister carried his point.

Indispensable business had hitherto prevented any formal notice being taken of the petition presented to his majesty by the deputies from congress, in either house of parliament. At length however a copy of it having been laid before the house of lords, a motion was made that Mr. Penn should be examined at the bar of the house relative to its contents. In order to induce the ministry to comply with this motion, it was stated that Mr. Penn, who had been formerly governor of Pennsylvania, was well acquainted with the real interests of the colonies, and could communicate such information to the house as would tend, perhaps, to heal the breach between the contending powers: Besides, he was personally acquainted with every member of the congress. To this motion the ministry acceded, and Mr. Penn was examined. In his examination he positively, and in the most explicit terms, denied the charge brought against the Americans, viz. that they aimed at independence. Congress had not been elected in any other manner than what was warranted

warranted by the constitution of Great Britain. They were chosen by the voice of their constituents, and entrusted by them with almost unlimited power. With a view to determine what number of men would be sufficient for carrying on the war, he was particularly questioned relative to the population of Pennsylvania. This he represented to have increased so much, during a very short period, as to afford a militia of sixty thousand men. Of these, twenty thousand, before his departure, had attached themselves to the common cause, arming themselves at their own expence, and receiving no pay for their services. Congress had purchased in abundance materials for iron cannon, which they had already cast at Philadelphia, as well as small-arms, fully adequate to present and future exigencies. He likewise stated that sanguine hopes were entertained of the success of the petition he had brought over; so sanguine indeed, that it was called the olive-branch. The consequences of the rejection of it he feared would be fatal. The most vigorous preparations would be adopted; and he had every reason to suppose that the Americans would not want the assistance of foreign powers possessed of ample resources. Such was the effect of Mr. Penn's examination, and so satisfied were the opposition with the information it contained, that a motion was immediately made for declaring that the petition from the continental congress to the king, afforded sufficient ground for reconciling the unhappy differences subsisting between Great Britain and her colonial possessions. Though the opposition however were satisfied with Mr. Penn's evidence, it must be confessed that that gentleman had overstated several circumstances. It cannot be denied that the object of the Americans, from the commencement of the disturbances, was unqualified independence. It is also true that congress had not been chosen by more than one third of the people, and that the militia did not amount to above half the number at which Mr. Penn had stated it. In debating on the motion

C H A P.
IV.
1775.

C H A P.
IV.
1775.

made by the opposition, various arguments were adduced on each side. The blood that would be shed, the treasures that would be wasted by proceeding to hostilities, were again insisted on and again answered by the ministerial party, with the arguments of the duplicity and deceit of congress; the contradiction that existed between their words and their actions, their professions and their preparations; and the obstinacy with which they had rejected every proposition that Great Britain had found it consistent with her dignity to offer.

After a long debate the house divided, and the motion in favour of the petition was rejected by a majority of fifty-three.

Mr. Burke's
conciliatory
bill.

Much about the same period Mr. Burke, who at that time patronized the republican principles, and maintained an intimate correspondence with the prime movers of the revolution in America, brought forward a bill in the house of commons, which, on account of its tendency, was called the conciliatory bill. It reprobated every idea of a war that proposed for its ultimate object either conquest or treaty; and it proposed peace and immediate concession. In order that such a measure might not wear the appearance of innovation, the bill was modelled on a statute made in the thirty-fifth year of Edward the First. The necessity which occasioned that statute to be framed was similar to the exigencies of the present times. It originated in a dispute between that monarch and his people relative to taxation. The latter were victorious; obtaining this important privilege, that no taxes should be imposed on them without the consent of the parliament. The present bill was intended to procure a similar advantage for the Americans. On this account the bill, in the first place, renounced the exercise of taxation, waving the consideration of the question of right. Great Britain however reserved to herself the power of levying commercial duties, which were to be applied to those purposes that the general assembly of each province should

should judge to be most salutary and beneficial. The mother-country also reserved to herself the power of assembling the colonies in congress. The bill then proposed to repeal all the laws complained of by the Americans, and to pass an immediate act of amnesty.

C H A P.
IV.
1775.

Against the provisions of this bill it was objected, that though they gave too much away from Great Britain, they would not satisfy the demands of America: That after what had been proposed by his majesty, any other conciliatory plan would be disrespectful to him; and that, finally, nothing now remained for Great Britain but coercion. After an important debate, in which both sides displayed uncommon abilities and eloquence, the bill was rejected, two hundred and ten dividing against it, and one hundred and five for it.

The rejection of this bill was immediately followed by the introduction of a prohibitory bill, to restrain all intercourse with the colonies. This passed both houses, not however without violent opposition. Notwithstanding the fate of Mr. Burke's proposition, another conciliatory bill was submitted to the consideration of the lower house by Mr. Hartley. The end proposed to be attained by it was the same as that intended by Mr. Burke's bill, but the means were varied. It proposed that hostilities should be immediately suspended, and that the colonies should be enjoined to establish a trial by jury in favour of their slaves in criminal cases. If they complied with this injunction, all the obnoxious laws since the year 1763 were immediately to be repealed, and an act of indemnity passed. Subsequently to the adoption of these measures the colonies were to be required to furnish only those supplies which were necessary for their own support and defence. The same answer was given to this proposition by the ministry, as had been before given to Mr. Burke's bill; and it met with the same fate.

The prohibitory bill.

Mr. Hartley's conciliatory bill.

In consequence of the conciliatory proposition agreed to last session of parliament, the colony of Nova Scotia transmitted, about this

Petition from Nova Scotia.

C H A P.
IV.

1775.

period, a petition to government, the contents of which were, that a revenue should be raised in that colony, under the direction of Great Britain: The manner in which this revenue was to be raised, was by a stipulated sum in the hundred on the importation of foreign goods. The petition was granted, and all the other taxes and duties, except those which regarded commerce, were, in consequence, immediately repealed.

Foreign
troops.

About the latter end of February 1776, the minister submitted to the consideration of both houses that part of his majesty's speech which related to the engagement of foreign troops. The measure was opposed with the united abilities and eloquence of opposition; nevertheless, after several debates, it was carried by the minister, in the house of peers, by a majority of sixty-eight, and in the house of commons by a majority of one hundred and fifty-four.

Conciliatory
motion by
the duke of
Grafton.

Though opposition had hitherto been unsuccessful in every conciliatory proposition, another attempt was made to put a period to the differences between Great Britain and her colonies, by the duke of Grafton, on the fourteenth of March. This nobleman, at the commencement of the disturbances, possessed a share in the administration, which he soon after resigned in disgust. His grace moved that an address should be presented to his majesty, intreating him, in order to put an end to the effusion of blood and treasure, and to evince to the world the wish of the sovereign and the parliament to restore peace and tranquillity, to issue a proclamation, declaring that, if the revolted colonies would present a petition to the commander in chief of his majesty's forces in America, or to the commissioners sent out with powers adequate to the purposes of making peace or war, setting forth their grievances, hostilities should be immediately suspended, and the petition should be referred to the parliament, by whom it should be considered

considered with the most solemn and serious attention. In order to strengthen this proposition, it was alleged that the Americans would immediately be joined by foreign powers; for, from undoubted authority, it was known that two French gentlemen had been dispatched to America, where, on their arrival, they had instantly repaired to congress. In reply to the assertions of the opposition, it was alleged that no dependence could be placed on the assurances of the colonists with respect to peace: That they had never discussed any terms of pacification, and that they seemed to think that the mother-country either possessed not sufficient power to compel them to obedience, or that, if her abilities were adequate to such a task, she was afraid to exert them. On this account therefore it was absolutely necessary that the colonies should be convinced of their error; and that government should no longer, by delay, furnish them with an opportunity of accomplishing their preparations, and completing their hostile intentions. With regard to the intimation of their receiving assistance from foreign powers, that was only vague and uncertain; for nothing had yet transpired relative to the business which had conveyed the two French gentlemen to America. But granting even that the suggestions held out by opposition, on this head, were true, they afforded only an argument for immediate and vigorous preparations.

The debate on the duke of Grafton's motion was long and violent. It was at length negatived by a majority of sixty; and thus ended all attempts to reconcile the unhappy dissensions between the two contending powers..

C H A P.
IV.

1775.

C H A P. V.

Blockade and Evacuation of Boston—Siege of Quebec—Defeat of Loyalists at Moore's Creek—Attack of Charlestown.—1776.

C H A P.
V.
1776.
Blockade of
Boston.

WHILE Great Britain was engaged in these parliamentary discussions, the British troops blockaded in Boston suffered incredible hardships and fatigue. They had been closely invested ever since the affair at Lexington; provisions were scarce; and though they sent to the West Indies for a fresh supply, they could not obtain any, on account of the dearth subsisting in that quarter. In addition to these hardships, general Washington began to prosecute the siege with redoubled vigour, in order that the place might be captured before the arrival of reinforcements from Great Britain.

On the second of March 1776, a battery was opened on the western side of the town, whence it was dreadfully annoyed by a furious discharge of cannon and bombs; and on the fifth another was opened on the eastern shore: Nevertheless the British troops acquitted themselves with the most surprising fortitude, and for fourteen days endured this bombardment with the most undaunted courage.

No alternative remained now for the besieged, but to dislodge the provincials from their new works, or evacuate the town. To succeed in the former was impossible, for the British troops must have ascended an almost perpendicular eminence, on the top of which the Americans had prepared hogheads chained together in great numbers, and filled with stones, to roll down upon them as they

they marched up: A curious provision, by which whole columns would have been swept off at once. This species of preparation will exemplify, in a striking manner, that fertility of genius in expedients, which strongly characterized the Americans during the war. This would effectually have destroyed all order, and have broken the ranks. It was therefore determined to evacuate the town: This measure required a fortnight to carry it into execution, on account of the numbers to be removed, many of whom were sick and wounded. At length, however, it was effected, and the brave garrison, with those attached to the British cause, in number about two thousand, embarked for Halifax in Nova Scotia, where, on account of the favourableness of the weather, they soon arrived*. Thus was the capital of Massachusetts added to the American cause.

C H A P.
V.
1776

* The British troops left behind them at the Castle-Island and at Boston, 250 pieces of cannon, half of which were serviceable, 4 thirteen and a half inch mortars, 2500 chaldrons of sea-coal, 25,000 bushels of wheat, 2300 bushels of barley, 600 bushels of oats, 100 jars of oil, and 150 horses. This large supply was of the utmost importance to the enemy, who were labouring under the greatest want both of stores and provisions. It ought not, however, to be omitted, that sir William Howe might have carried with him the greatest part of the ammunition, and all the provisions; it may also be necessary to mention that the fortifications of Boston were so excellent, that it would have been extremely difficult for the Americans to have forced them. The British troops left the houses of Boston in good condition, and in a state of cleanliness, which was soon abolished by the residence of the American troops. The evacuation of Boston afforded also another most important advantage to the enemy. Many store-ships from Great Britain consigned to Boston, and ignorant of the British troops having abandoned it, entered the harbour, and were of course captured; of these, the ship Hope was the most valuable—She had on board 1500 barrels of powder, besides carbines, bayonets, travelling-carriages for heavy cannon, and all sorts of tools necessary for the army and artillery: Besides these, there were other articles, those of bedding and clothing particularly, of which the enemy stood greatly in need. These goods sir William Howe might have distributed among the army and navy, trusting to government to make payment to the individual proprietors. At any rate, they should not have been left in Boston, but have been destroyed, as they were articles of which the Americans stood in the greatest need; and which enabled them to bear up under the severities of that winter.

As

C H A P. V. As soon as general Washington had taken possession of the town, he detached several regiments to the defence of New York, imagining that the British troops might have departed for that place, on their secession from Boston.

1776.

Colonel Arnold, in the mean time, remained encamped near Quebec : Though unable to capture the town, he reduced it to great distress, on account of having cut off all communication between the inhabitants and the adjacent country. But the season now approaching when reinforcements would arrive from England, he was under the necessity of recommencing the siege in due form. On the shores of the river St. Laurence, batteries were erected to burn the shipping. These attempts, however, were unsuccessful. While the attention of the besieged was engaged in these endeavours on the shipping, Arnold had prepared scaling-ladders to storm the town: The scheme was plausible, but it failed in part: The Americans obtained admittance into the suburbs, where they burned several houses, and compelled the garrison to pull down the rest, in order to prevent the fire from spreading. While the Americans were employed in this siege, the small-pox broke out among them with great violence, and many of the soldiers deserted, in order to save themselves from the consequences of a disorder so fatal, and so much dreaded in that country. On this account, and certain that succours would soon arrive from England, Arnold thought proper to retire. The English squadron, making its way through the ice, arrived unexpectedly before Quebec. Though, at the time when Boston was evacuated, it was understood that this squadron, with reinforcements, were at sea, no care was taken to leave a sufficient force off the harbour, to prevent them from running into the throat of the enemy: In consequence of which neglect, lieutenant-colonel Archibald Campbell, with seven hundred men, ran
right

right into Boston harbour, not knowing but that place was still in our hands. He was treated in a cruel and savage manner*. Commu-

C H A P.
V.
1776

* Copy of a letter from the late sir Archibald Campbell to sir William Howe.

“ S I R,

“ *Concord Gaol, 14th February 1777.*

“ SCARCE eight days had elapsed after the period of my first address, when I found myself stripped of half my property, the very necessaries of life; and I have been lately informed that the side-arms of my officers have actually been disposed of, notwithstanding they were honourably restored to them by the captors. I was, however, sent upon my parole of honour to Reading, where I resided till the first of this month, during which time it was even beyond the power of malevolent aspersions to charge my conduct justly with impropriety.

“ On the first of February I was committed, by an order of congress, through the council of Boston, to the common gaol of Concord, intimating for a reason, that your excellency had refused to exchange general Lee for six field officers (of whom I happened to be one), and that your excellency had put that officer under custody of the provost. How far it may be consistent to ill treat an officer because his commander does not chuse to accept of professed barter of that nature, is left to reason and future consequences to decide, especially when it is considered, that there is no personal charge against that officer, and the public faith and honour of America was pledged for his being treated as a gentleman.

“ With respect to your excellency’s treatment of general Lee, I can scarcely think it similar to mine; but that you may be able with more precision to decide on that point, I shall briefly state my present unmerited condition.

“ I am lodged in a dungeon of twelve or thirteen feet square, whose sides are black with the grease and litter of successive criminals; two doors, with double locks and bolts, shut me up from the yard, with an express prohibition to enter it, either for my health or the necessary calls of nature: Two small windows, strongly grated with iron, introduce a gloomy light to the apartment, and these are at this time without a single pane of glass, although the season of the frost and snow is actually in the extreme. In the corner of the cell, boxed up with the partition, stands a necessary-house, which does not seem to have been emptied since its first appropriation to this convenience of malefactors. A loathsome black-hole, decorated with a pair of fixed chains, is granted me for my inner apartment, from whence a felon was but the moment before removed, to make way for your humble servant, and in which his litter and excrement remains to this moment. The attendance of a single servant is also denied me, and every visit from a friend positively refused: In short, sir, was a fire to happen in any chamber of the gaol, which is all of wood, the chimney-stacks excepted, I might perish in the flames before the gaoler could go through the ceremony of unbolting the doors; although, to do him justice in his station, I really think him a man of humanity; his house is so remote, that any call from within, especially if the wind is high, might be long of reaching him effectually.

“ I have the honour to he, &c.

“ ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL.”

C H A P. V.
 1776.
 nication between the forces that lay on each side of the river was thus prevented, and Arnold found it impossible to put his intentions of the day before into execution.

On the sixth of May 1776, the reinforcement being landed, general Carleton sallied out upon the provincials, who fled with the utmost speed, leaving behind them all their artillery and military stores. Their vessels were at the same time attacked and taken by the light-armed vessels of the English. Thus was the siege of Quebec raised, after a duration of five months. The prisoners taken by general Carleton were treated with the greatest lenity; while, on the other hand, the Americans, by their misconduct, entirely lost the affections of the Canadians: A circumstance to which we are in some measure to impute the failure of their designs.

Expedition
 against the
 Cedars.

Early in the spring of this year, an expedition, by command of sir Guy Carleton, was undertaken against a place called the Cedars by captain Forster, who commanded the post of Oswagatchie. The Cedars is situated about thirty miles from Montreal, to the westward, on the river St. Laurence, about a mile from the Cascade. This place is naturally strong: On the south the land stretches so far into the river as to render the east and west points inaccessible: The north-part is the only one on which an attack can be made with any probability of success.

11th May.

On the eleventh of May captain Forster departed from Oswagatchie with two lieutenants, thirty-eight privates, ten volunteers, and about one hundred and twenty Indians. Arriving on the fourteenth at the village of St. Regis, he convened a council of the warrior chiefs, and endeavoured to prevail on them to afford him their assistance in his intended expedition. The chiefs, who had been tampered with by the enemy, at first refused to accompany him, but at length permitted their young men. On the seventeenth of May, having received intelligence that the Americans, to
 the

the number of four hundred, were posted at the church of the Cedars, but that they were ignorant of his expedition, he embarked his troops, and landed at ten o'clock at night at Point au Diable, a place about six miles from the Cedars. A party was immediately dispatched to reconnoitre the situation of the enemy. On the eighteenth captain Forster proceeded, under cover of a thick wood, within a mile of the fort, where he made the following disposition: One company of privates, the volunteers, and one hundred Indians, were ordered to take possession of the wood, and to penetrate it as near as possible to the enemy. Another body of one hundred Indians was at the same time dispatched to the Falls at the entrance of the Cascade, in order to cut off all communication with the island of Montreal. This body on their march fell in with a detachment of the garrison, who were returning with provisions from the Cascade. At sight of the British troops they fled to the fort, with the loss of one man. This was the first certain intelligence received by the enemy of the approach of captain Forster.

A flag of truce was then sent to the fort, ordering the enemy to surrender themselves prisoners of war. Major Butterfield, who commanded it, requested four hours consideration. Conceiving that this requisition originated only in a wish to gain time, and being informed that a colonel Biddel had been sent to obtain a reinforcement from Montreal, captain Forster sent a second flag, saying that the Indians were at present perfectly under his command, and that if the garrison surrendered immediately, he had no doubt but that they would agree to any thing he wished; but if the fort did not surrender, and any of the Indians should be killed, captain Forster could not answer for the consequences. In reply to this requisition, the commanding officer of the garrison agreed to a surrender, on condition of being allowed to retire to Montreal. To this, captain Forster

C H A P.
V.

1776.

would not consent. In the evening of the eighteenth a redoubt was thrown up at the edge of the wood, within five hundred yards of the fort. In the morning of the nineteenth captain Forster advanced within one hundred and twenty yards of the fort, and commenced a heavy fire of musketry, which continued till twelve o'clock, when the fort was surrendered, on condition of the lives of the enemy being preserved, and their baggage prevented from being plundered. In this attack one Indian was killed on the part of the English. The number of prisoners taken amounted, officers included, to three hundred and ninety *. On the twentieth of May, captain

* Articles of Capitulation for surrendering the Cedars.

" After the maturest deliberation on the customs and manners of the savages in war, which I find so opposite and contrary to the humane disposition of the British government, and to all civilized nations, and to avoid the inevitable consequence of the savages custom in former war (which by their threats and menaces I find is not changed), that of putting their prisoners to death, to disencumber themselves in case of their being attacked by their enemy, I have therefore, in compliance with the above disposition in government and the dictates of humanity, thought fit to enter into the following articles of agreement with brigadier-general Arnold, in the name of the power he is employed by, and of the officers and soldiers who shall be released by this agreement, whose rank and number shall be endorsed on this cartel.

" 1st, That there shall be an exchange of prisoners faithfully made, returning an equal number of his majesty's troops of the same rank of those released by this agreement, as soon as possible, within the space of two months, allowing a moderate time for casualties that may render the performance of this article impracticable.

" 2d, That the prisoners shall be conducted with safety, and all possible convenience and dispatch that circumstances will permit, to the south shore of the river St. Laurence, from which they are to repair to St. John, and return to their own countries immediately, without committing any waste or spoil on their march thither, allowing ten or twelve to go to Montreal, to transact their private affairs.

" 3d, That the prisoners so returned shall not, under any pretext whatsoever, either in words, writing, or signs, give the least information to government-enemies, or to their adherents now in arms, in the least prejudice to his majesty's service.

" 4th,

captain Forster being informed that a party of the enemy were advancing from Montreal to the fort, ordered one hundred Indians to take possession of the woods on both sides of the road through which they were under the necessity of passing. This detachment soon fell in with a party of the enemy, which, after a short conflict, in which one Indian was killed and three wounded, surrendered at discretion. The Indians immediately returned with their prisoners to the fort. On their arrival at the outside of the works they halted, for the purpose of putting them to death. Captain Forster however, by his spirited conduct, prevented them from putting this inhuman determination into execution, and, risking the

C H A P.
V.
1776.

“ 4th, That the batteaux, or other conveniencies made use of to transport the prisoners to the south shore of the said river, or the necessary people to conduct them, shall return unmolested.

“ 5th, That hostages be delivered, for the performance of articles to the full, according to the sense and spirit of the agreement, without any equivocation whatsoever.

“ 6th, That the security of the subscribers be given to the inhabitants for all the waste and spoil committed by the detachment under colonel Biddel, on fair account attested and signed being delivered, for which the hostages are not to be answerable.

“ It being our full intention to fulfil the above articles, we mutually sign and interchange them as assurances of performance.

“ Given under our hands this 27th day of May, A. D. 1776.

(Signed)

“ GEORGE FORSTER,

“ At Vandrevil.

“ Captain, commanding the king's troops.”

“ Article 2d, The prisoners shall be sent to the south shore of St. Laurence, within one league of Caughnawaga, and from thence to St. John's to their own country, except twelve who have liberty to go to Montreal, for which purpose six days shall be allowed, and hostilities to cease on both sides.

“ 4th, Four captains shall be sent to Quebec as hostages, and remain there until prisoners are exchanged.

“ 6th, The continental troops, from principle, have ever avoided plundering. Upon proof being made of any waste committed by colonel Biddel's detachment, reparation shall be made.

“ Given under our hands this 27th day of May 1776.

(Signed)

“ B. ARNOLD,

“ St. Ann's.

“ Brigadier-general of the continental troops.”

C H A P.
V.
1776.

safety of his own men, deposited the prisoners in the fort, having satisfied his Indians by making them some presents. On the succeeding day he advanced to Vaudreuil, situated about six miles to the northward of the Cedars. On the twenty-fourth of May, having received intelligence that the enemy, under colonel Arnold, had posted themselves at Lashine, nine miles from Montreal, captain Forster marched to attempt to dislodge him from it. He had advanced within three miles of Lashine, when he was informed that the number of the enemy amounted to six hundred, which would be increased to near treble that number on the succeeding day. On this account he thought it prudent to retire to Vaudreuil. On the twenty-sixth of May colonel Arnold advanced up the river, with seven hundred men, to attack him. Captain Forster immediately formed his men into three divisions, which were placed on three points of land that stretched a little way into the river. The left point was occupied by the savages. The ground in that point was rather swampy, and covered with wood almost to the water's edge. The central point, which was open ground, was possessed by captain Forster; and the right point, situated at the head of a dangerous rapid, was defended by a body of Canadians: Another body of Canadians was also situated on the isle of Perrault, opposite to the right point. The enemy first made an attempt on the left point, but were repulsed. They next endeavoured to land in the central point, but were prevented. An attempt against the third point was attended with the same success. The enemy therefore relinquished their intentions, and returned to St. Ann's, on the island of Montreal. Captain Forster finding himself now much encumbered by the number of his prisoners, and having received no intelligence of general Carleton's arrival at Trois Rivieres, judged it expedient to enter into an exchange of prisoners with colonel Arnold. This cartel was afterwards broken by congress, on a pretence that captain Forster had conducted himself towards the prisoners taken at the Cedars in a

cruel and inhuman manner. This pretence however, it should be mentioned in justice to captain Forster, had not the smallest foundation. And in confirmation of the assertion, and of captain Forster's humanity, captain Sullivan, who had been taken prisoner, in a letter to his brother general Sullivan, expressed his surprise at hearing that congress, instead of redeeming him and the other hostages, according to the cartel, had demanded captain Forster to be delivered up. At the same time he declared, in the most solemn manner, that no man could behave with more humanity than that gentleman did after the surrender of the party to which he belonged*.

C H A P.
V.
1776.

General

* Letter from E. Sullivan to major-general John Sullivan, member of congress.

“ DEAR SIR,

Montreal, Aug. 4, 1776.

“ I AM permitted by his excellency, which is a favour I did not expect to obtain, to inform you I am well, as are the hostages that are with me. I am much surprised to hear that the congress, instead of redeeming us according to the cartel, have not only refused to do it, but have demanded captain Forster to be delivered up to answer his conduct in what they are pleased to term the massacre at the Cedars. I would fain flatter myself that the congress would never have thought of such unheard-of proceedings, had they not had a false representation of the matter. I do not think that I am under any restraint when I say, and call *that* God who must judge of all things to witness, that not a man living could have used more humanity than captain Forster did after the surrender of the party I belonged to; and whoever says to the contrary, let his station in life be what it will, he is an enemy to peace, and a fallacious disturber of mankind. What reason they can give for not redeeming us I cannot conceive; if they are wrongly informed that the affair of the Cedars was a massacre, why do not they rather fulfil the cartel than let their hostages remain in the hands of a merciless enemy; or do they regard their troops only while the heavens make them victorious?

“ Were we in the hands of a rigorous power, as they would intimate, have they not every colour of justice, after so enormous a breach of faith, laden with chains, to cast us into some horrid place, and tell us to languish out our days under a sentence passed by our own people? If they say that there is some hidden reason far beyond the reach of policy to find out, for could they suppose it policy to distress his majesty's troops by retaining such a number of men from them, it would not only be the breach of their faith that would threaten them; for consider the number of prisoners already in the hands of the British army, and also consider the chance of war
“ that

HISTORY OF THE

H A P.
V.

1776.

The Americans attack
Trois Rivieres.

General Carleton, now reinforced by an additional number of troops from England, hastened to Trois Rivieres, situated half-way between Montreal and Quebec. That place, however, the Americans had deserted, and retreated as far as the river Sorrel, a distance of one hundred and fifty miles. Here they halted, and were joined by reinforcements sent by congress. On the strength of these they resolved to make an attempt on Trois Rivieres. On this expedition two thousand men were dispatched under the command of general Thomson. Coasting the lake St. Peter's on the south side, they proceeded to the river Nicolet, which commences at the extremity of the lake, and discharges itself into the river St. Laurence. The banks of the Nicolet are covered with a thick wood. Here they remained all day. At night they crossed over to a place called Point

“ that may yet throw greater numbers into their hands. Will people rest content when they
“ find their own rulers willing to let them remain prisoners in the hands of what they them-
“ selves term (though unjustly) a merciless people; or will they not, fired with resentment for
“ such inhuman treatment, take arms to suppress the power that regards them no longer than
“ while their blood is spilling in their service? If this, which appears too probable, should
“ happen, consider whether those persons will not be followed by a number of their friends,
“ which must naturally make a great division in the colonies. Then take a view of Great
“ Britain and her allies pouring on you, and let the most sanguine expecter in America there
“ judge how long the colonies, thus divided, can stand the fury of the combat. I know your
“ influence has been great, and for that reason have written, that you may, if possible, yet pre-
“ vent America from being branded with the name of injustice. If you suspect I write this
“ for the sake of getting my own liberty, your suspicions wrong me; it is not my confine-
“ ment, but the breach of a treaty, which even savages have ever held sacred, that causes me
“ to write.

“ You will be so kind as to convey the inclosed to my wife, and if ever I had so much of
“ your love as to demand any favour of you, let this be the time I may implore your assistance
“ for my distressed wife and helpless orphans. May God grant that I may once more see them
“ till when,

“ I am

(A true copy.)

“ Your affectionate brother,

“ EBEN. SULLIVAN.”

“ To the hon. general John Sullivan, in Durham county,

“ in New Hampshire, near Portsmouth.”

du Lac, where they landed, and immediately proceeded to Trois Rivieres. A Canadian peasant, however, as soon as they had landed, hastened before them to general Frazer at Trois Rivieres, to inform him of their operations. General Frazer immediately landed a body of troops and some field-pieces, and prepared to receive them. General Nesbit, at the same time, posted his detachment in the enemy's rear, and effectually cut off a retreat by the common road, while major Grant taking possession of the bridge, rendered their escape over the river De Loup impracticable.

C H A P.
V.
1776.

On the arrival of the enemy at Trois Rivieres, a furious attack was commenced, which proved unsuccessful. General Frazer repulsed them with great loss; and their commander, general Thompson, with about two hundred of his men, were taken prisoners. A large body, under the command of colonel Allen, who afterwards commanded a provincial regiment in his majesty's service, knowing that their retreat by the common road had been cut off, retired into a wood on their left, which was full of deep swamps. Here they remained in great distress till next day, when sir Guy Carleton, who had arrived from Quebec, ordering major Grant to relinquish the possession of the bridge over the river De Loup, they fortunately effected their escape. The enemy, however, were pursued by water, but for some unknown reason the pursuit was discontinued on the arrival of the British troops at Sorrel. It was generally believed that if, instead of coming to anchor, general Carleton had continued the pursuit, which he might have done, as the wind was as favourable as it could possibly be, he would undoubtedly have arrived at Chamblée ten or twelve hours before general Sullivan, who was encumbered with heavy cannon and baggage. In this case Sullivan would have been compelled to lay down his arms; general Arnold would have been intercepted at Montreal, where he remained till the sixteenth of June;

Repulsed
with great
loss.

C H A P. and Ticonderoga, also, would have been taken, as no troops had
 V. been stationed there for its defence.
 1776.

June.

General Burgoyne, who had arrived with the last reinforcements from England, now proceeded, in pursuit of the continental army, up the river to St. John's, but under orders from general sir Guy Carleton, not to risk an engagement, until he should be sustained by another column on his right, directed to proceed to Montreal. This great precaution of the commander in chief gave the Americans an opportunity of making their escape.

The Americans driven from Canada.

The Americans had now entirely quitted Canada, having in their retreat from Montreal and St. John's, crossed the lake Champlain, and stationed themselves at Crown Point; which post it was not judged expedient by the British commanders, at present, to attack.

Efforts on the side of the British government in North Carolina.

It has already been mentioned that Mr. Martin, governor of North Carolina, had been obliged to flee for shelter, like the governors of other provinces, to a ship. In this situation, however, he was not inactive: He had, by means of his emissaries, formed a junction between some Scotch emigrants, and a band of resolute unruly men, called Regulators, who had long lived in a wandering state of independence, their chief occupation being that of hunting. The command of these parties was given to the colonels Macdonald and Macleod, who, by the governor's direction, erected the king's standard, to which he summoned all persons to repair. This force was intended to act in conjunction with a body of troops expected early in the spring, which, however, did not arrive in time for co-operation. The Highlanders were to march down the northernmost branch of Cape Fear to Wilmington, a town about twenty-four miles from the Fork, where they were to be met by the king's troops, and such vessels of war, of easy draught of water, as could come up there: A plan which, if it had been adhered

to,

to, bid fair to secure the allegiance of the inhabitants of Cape Fear, and of consequence extending more or less influence over the other parts of this province. In the mean time those who had usurped the government, directed that six regiments of continental troops should be raised in North Carolina; one of which was to be stationed at Wilmington, under the command of colonel James Moore, a man of the most just fame in that part of the province, who had formerly been lieutenant-colonel of provincials, under his majesty's government; a man of an active, humane, and gallant disposition, but little acquainted with military operations. On the other hand, the loyalists were by no means inactive; a number of the inhabitants in the counties of Orange and Chatham, many of whom were formerly distinguished by the name of Regulators, agreed to act in concert with the Highlanders: In consequence of which, a council was formed of some of the leaders of the back-country men, and the chiefs of the Highlanders. The governor appointed Mr. Macdonald to the command, with the rank of brigadier-general, and gave a lieutenant-colonel's commission to Mr. Macleod, who was to be second in command. The other officers were nominated by the council, such as were most agreeable to their leaders: It happened unfortunately, however, that general Clinton did not arrive as soon as was expected; and in the month of January 1776, it was necessary to embody the loyalists, as the only chance of keeping them steady in their intentions, and which was to take place on a certain day, at the town of Cross Creek, which they had fixed upon as their head-quarters and place of rendezvous. These operations, however secretly they were intended to be carried on, did not elude the vigilance of the popular leaders; and as soon as it was known that the loyalists were embodying, the continental regiment at Wilmington, and such of the rebel militia as could be collected; were ordered to march under the command of colonel James Moore, to intercept their

C H A P.
V.
1776.

C H A P.
V.
1776.

progress from Cross Creek to Wilmington. The troops collected on this occasion amounted to between eight and nine hundred, and they marched up the north-west of Cape Fear, without meeting any of the loyalists, who remained embodied at Cross Creek. The rebel troops crossed Rock-Fish, which is a creek with very high banks, and there is a bridge over its end, which is about six miles from Cross Creek; upon the western side of this bridge the rebels encamped, and remained there for three days, during which time nothing took place but messages by flags of truce, relative to such persons as were occasionally taken prisoners by each party.

It unfortunately happened that there were great divisions in the councils of the loyalists. That unanimity, necessary to vigorous and decided measures, was wanting; and it may be presumed they did not mean to act offensively, unless impelled to it by necessity; or otherwise the insecure and unsoldierly position that the rebels had taken, which was with a deep morass and swamp on their left, the north-west river on their right, and the deep creek of Rock-Fish in their rear, added to the dread that at that period they entertained of the broad-sword, as well as of the use the Highlanders had on former occasions made of it, were circumstances too inviting to be neglected by any who were in the least acquainted with military operations.

The loyalists had certainly nothing else in view but to smuggle themselves down to Wilmington, regardless of what force they left in the rear, provided they met none in front to oppose their progress; and, with this view, after wasting their time in fruitless intercourse with the rebel party at Rock-Fish, they crossed the north-west river at Cambleton and Gibson's ferries, intending to proceed to Wilmington, through a neck of land thinly inhabited, which is called Black River Road, and separated by that river and the north-west, and which leads to a place, situated on the conflux of the north-east

east and north branches of Cape Fear, within half a mile of Wilmington, and called Negro-Head Point.

C H A P.
V.
1776.

In the mean time, the embodying of the loyalists had spread abroad through the province; and as soon as colonel Moore's party had marched from Wilmington, a colonel Caswell, who commanded one of the continental regiments in the neighbourhood of Newburn, collected about four or five hundred men, and with one two-pounder and two swivels marched to the north-west of Cape Fear, to act as occasion might require. Colonel Caswell, who was a sensible discerning man, and was reckoned one of the best woodsmen in the province, readily foresaw that, if an engagement had taken place between the loyalists and rebel party on the north-west side of Cape Fear, that their route would be by the Black River Road; and for that purpose he marched to the road leading to Negro-Head Point, and crossed Moore's Creek, which is about twelve miles from thence.

In order to arrest the progress of the loyalists, at the same time, colonel Moore, finding that the loyalists had taken the other side of the river, returned with his troops the same way he went up, and crossing at the lower ferries, on the north-west, effected a junction with colonel Caswell, who was at that time encamped on the north side of Moore's Creek bridge. The loyalists had proceeded without interruption within half a mile of the rebel camp; and the night before they intended to attack it, they sent a flag of truce, by way of getting intelligence of their situation, and which was nearly as hazardous a one, as that which colonel Moore had placed himself in at Rock-Fish; but the insecurity of their position did not escape the vigilance of Mr. Caswell; for as soon as night came on, he lighted up all his fires, which he left burning, in order to deceive the loyalists, retreated over Moore's Creek, took the planks off the bridge, and greased the sleepers, which are only passable by one man at a time, and placed his men about fifty yards from the banks of the creek,

C H A P.

V.

1776.

creek, behind trees, and such little intrenchments as in the course of the night they were able to throw up.

The loyalists, on the other hand, flushed with the accounts that their flag of truce brought them, determined to attack the rebels in their camp the next morning; and accordingly colonel Macleod, who commanded the attack, seeing the fires in the rebel camp burning, and nobody there, concluded that the rebels had evacuated it through fear, and with about twenty-two of the Highlanders he got over the bridge, intending to attack them sword in hand. But he had no sooner reached the top of the bank than he received two or three bullets, and almost instantly expired; the remainder of the advanced party were all killed and wounded, except colonel Thomas Rutherford and captain Fraser, who escaped unhurt. The loyalists, dismayed at seeing a leader fall in whom they had so much confidence, after firing off some of their firelocks (which were levelled too high to do any execution), broke and dispersed, every one taking the nearest way he could through the woods to his own home. Those from the back country were more successful in their retreat, as being better woodsmen than the Highlanders, the leaders of whom were almost all taken, together with general Macdonald, and sent off under a guard to different prisons at the northward. The rebels had one or two slightly wounded; the loyalists, about eight killed and fourteen wounded, of whom the greater part died. And thus unfortunately ended the first enterprise in the Carolinas in support of his majesty's government.

Colonel Moore was afterwards a major-general in the rebel service, and colonel Caswell was one of their governors; and both behaved with great lenity and moderation towards the loyalists while they continued in power. The army of the loyalists consisted of about eighteen hundred.

The

The governors of the several colonies, in their representations to the government of Great Britain, had adduced many reasons on which they founded the following suppositions: That on account of the insufficiency of strength in the different provinces, those who were well affected to Great Britain were restrained from taking an active part against the Americans; but that, if the mother-country would provide a respectable force to countenance and co-operate with them, they would immediately attach themselves to her cause. In consequence of these representations, the fifteenth, twenty-eighth, thirty-third, thirty-seventh, fifty-fourth, and fifty-seventh regiments, with seven companies of the forty-sixth regiment, embarked from Cork, on the twelfth of February 1776, under the command of lord Cornwallis, in several transports under the convoy of sir Peter Parker. This is the force above alluded to, intended to co-operate with the loyalists in North Carolina. After a long voyage of near three months, occasioned by the improper lateness of their departure from Great Britain, all the fleet, except some few ships, arrived at Cape Fear, in North Carolina, on the third of May. General Clinton, who had quitted Boston in December, immediately took the command of the troops, and issued a proclamation, in which he invited the inhabitants of the several colonies to return to their allegiance, and to place themselves under the protection of the British government.

C H A P.
V.
1776.

The effect produced by this proclamation was trifling, and the cause of Great Britain acquired by it but a small addition of adherents.

The remainder of the fleet being not yet arrived, general Clinton resolved to make a small diversion, the principal object of which was to obtain a supply of cattle, sheep, and vegetables. Four companies of light infantry, with the thirty-third and thirty-seventh regiments, embarking in flat-bottomed boats, proceeded to the town of Brunswick,

C H A P.
V.
1776.

Brunswick, situated on a small river to the north-westward of Cape Fear. On the approach of the troops the inhabitants abandoned their habitations, and after surprising a party of the Americans, and securing a quantity of provisions, the detachment returned on board their respective ships. It was expected that the troops from Ireland would have arrived two months earlier than they did. General Clinton's orders were to try if any of the southern provinces would take up arms in favour of Britain; in which case he was to have left a body of troops to assist those loyalists; but he was instructed to repair with the remainder of the troops to New York harbour, by such time as it was probable that the commander in chief would arrive there, from Halifax, to begin the great operations for that campaign. The arrival of the troops at Cape Fear was so tardy, that it was obvious that no time could be spared sufficient to make a proper trial of the affections of any of those provinces. General Clinton, however, thought he might avail himself of the force collected under his command to attempt a secondary purpose, suggested by the information which reached him during his stay in Cape Fear river, and which it was hoped might be completed within the time allowed him by his instructions. The trade carried on from the harbour of Charlestown was the great support of the funds for the warlike preparations of the southern colonies. A fort built on Sullivan's Island protected and commanded the channel of the harbour. The capture of that fort was the object of the expedition to South Carolina. The possession of that fort would give to the British the entire dominion of the harbour of Charlestown. It was therefore projected that, if the fort should be taken, a sufficient garrison should be left for its defence; but that operations, for the present, in this quarter, should be carried no farther.

Attempt of
general Clinton's
against
Charlestown.

General Clinton having waited till the thirtieth of May for the ships he expected, resolved to waste no more time, but to set sail for

South Carolina. Fortunately however those ships joined him off Cape Fear, and the whole fleet now proceeding to Charlestown, arrived there on the fourth of June. The general immediately taking possession of Long Island, the loyalists of which had been disarmed by the Americans in January, encamped the troops upon it.

C H A P.
V.
1776.

Half a mile from Charlestown harbour the Americans had constructed a strong fortification on Sullivan's Island, which consisted of twenty-two thirty-two pounders, and was garrisoned by three hundred men. As it commanded the harbour, general Clinton resolved to attempt the reduction of it. Lee, the American general, who had watched with the utmost anxiety every operation of general Clinton, and who had followed him through the several provinces he had visited, was at this period encamped on a spot northward from Sullivan's Island, with which he held a communication by a bridge of boats. Two batteries of cannon and mortars, constructed on the point of Long Island to answer those of the enemy, and to co-operate with the floating batteries destined to cover the landing of the troops on Sullivan's Island, being completed, it was determined to commence the reduction of the fort on the twenty-eighth of June. At half past ten o'clock in the morning sir Peter Parker, in the Bristol, made the signal for action to the following ships—the Experiment of fifty guns; the Active, Solebay, Actæon, Syren, and Sphynx, frigates; the Thunder bomb, and the Friendship armed ship of twenty-four guns. At a quarter past eleven, all the ships having got springs upon their cables, began a most tremendous fire upon the fort. Three of the frigates, the Actæon, Syren, and Sphynx, got aground. The two last however hove off, but the first stuck fast, and was set on fire on the succeeding morning, in order to prevent her falling into the hands of the enemy.

C H A P.
V.

1776.

At the same time that the fleet began firing, the batteries on Long Island opened. At twelve o'clock the light-infantry, grenadiers, and the fifteenth regiment, embarked in boats, the floating batteries and armed craft getting under way at the same time to cover their landing on Sullivan's Island. Scarcely, however, had the detachment proceeded from Long Island, before they were ordered to disembark, and return to their encampment: And it must be confessed that, if they had landed, they would have had to struggle with difficulties almost insurmountable. The ground on which the fort stood was insulated by a broad and deep trench cut across the island, and this canal under the immediate command of the guns of Fort Sullivan.

In the mean time the ships continued an unremitting fire upon the fort. Between one and two o'clock the fire of the enemy slackened for a short time, owing to a want of ammunition. Having obtained however a fresh supply, their fire was renewed, and ceased not till between nine and ten o'clock. In this day's attack the Bristol and Experiment suffered most; the fire of the enemy being principally directed against them, they were left almost wrecks upon the water. Early on the morning of the twenty-ninth, the light-infantry, grenadiers, and the fifteenth regiment, were again embarked, and almost immediately afterwards ordered to disembark. In this inactive state did affairs remain till the fifteenth of July, when orders were issued to the troops to embark on board the transports. Sir H. Clinton had been greatly deceived in his information. The passage was not fordable in the rear of the fort; for sir Henry and several other officers waded up to their shoulders, and then, on finding that the depth of water increased, returned. On putting the boats, in which were the artillery, into the water, it was found that they let in the water so fast that they must sink. The officers and men of the artillery who were in them had nearly been lost. The ships kept at too great a distance: They might have gone
 2 much

much nearer, and, if they had, would have done great execution by pouring broadsides into the fort; but their distance was such that they did little or no damage to the fort. The Americans were much elated upon this success, which considerably inflamed the spirit of revolt.

C H A P.
V.
1776.

On the twenty-first, the army sailed for New York, under the convoy of the Solebay frigate, the rest of the fleet being under the necessity of remaining to refit. Thus ended an expedition from which the friends of government had predicted the most beneficial consequences.

C H A P. VI.

Proceedings of Congress—Declaration of Independence—Arrival of Lord Howe from England—Battle of Long Island—Overtures on the part of the British Commanders for Peace.—1776.

C H A P.
VI.
1776.

IT will be remembered that early in the summer of 1775 congress had voted that the assemblies of the several colonies should give instructions to their delegates relative to the independence of America. However premature such a vote might be thought at that period by moderate men, the subsequent success of the American arms had entirely overcome their objections to its tendency, and had paved the way for another vote more open and more ample in its nature.

Acts of the
American
congress.

On the fifteenth of May 1776 it was resolved “to recommend to the various assemblies and conventions in the United States of America, where no form of government adequate to the exigencies of affairs had yet been adopted, to establish such a constitution as should be most conducive to the public welfare and security.” This vote was immediately published in the Pennsylvania Gazette, with a preamble, stating that, as “his Britannic majesty had, with the concurrence of his parliament, excluded the inhabitants of the colonies from his protection,” it was deemed necessary and expedient to suppress and abolish the power and constitution which had been derived from that source.

The assemblies of the colonies readily complied with the recommendations of congress, except Maryland, whose delegates, together
with

with the Pennsylvania assembly, seceded from congress. Virginia, however, seemed to possess more of the spirit that animated the congress than the other provinces; for on the day on which the above resolution passed at Philadelphia, the assembly of Virginia, which was then sitting at Williamsburg, instructed their delegates to propose a resolution of a similar tendency to that of congress; appointing at the same time a committee to prepare the plan of a new constitution. They also published the following declaration of rights:

C H A P.
VI.
1776.

1. That all men are born equally free, possessing certain natural rights, of which they cannot by any compact deprive their posterity.
2. That all power is vested in the people, from whom it is derived.
3. That they have an unalienable indefeasible right to reform, alter, or abolish, their form of government at pleasure.
4. That the idea of an hereditary first magistrate is unnatural and absurd;—and,
5. That no government, independent of, or separated from, the government of Virginia, ought to prevail within the limits of Virginia.

In pursuance of the recommendation of congress, most of the provinces had instructed their delegates on the subject of independence. The catastrophe was now at hand, and on the fourth of July 1776, America was severed for ever from Great Britain by a resolution, which, after enumerating the several grievances already stated, declared, “that, on account of the king of Great Britain having refused to redress them, the inhabitants of the United Colonies were thereby discharged and absolved from all allegiance and obedience to him.”

Declaration
of independ-
ence.

Previously

C H A P.

VI.

1776.

Previously to the passing of this resolution it had been dispatched to the different provincial assemblies, in order that it might be ratified immediately after it had passed the congress. No opposition was made on this account in any of the provinces, except in Maryland, where the ratification was rejected by the assembly, who ordered their delegates to secede from congress. A body of the people however obliged them to return immediately, and the assembly were compelled to ratify the important resolution. This unanimity was in a great degree produced by the numerous publications that appeared about this period. Of these the most distinguished was a work entitled Common Sense, the author Mr. Thomas Paine, who has since rendered his name so famous on the theatre of Europe, and of the world. Such were the measures which America had adopted previously to the arrival of lord Howe from England.

Arrival of a
fleet under
lord Howe
from Eng-
land.

The army having now sufficiently recovered from the fatigue and sickness produced by their confined situation in Boston, departed from Hallifax on the eleventh of June, and proceeded to Sandy Hook, to wait for the arrival of the reinforcements from Europe. It may not be unnecessary to mention here, that it was the general opinion that sir William Howe should have gone to Long Island instead of Hallifax; the soldiers might then have been supplied from the island with cattle in abundance, and if there had been no tents they might have been hutted, as the Americans were, and by that means have been enabled to have opened the campaign much earlier. The army reached Sandy Hook on the twenty-ninth of June. General Howe, who had been there for some time, had received from major-general Tryon, the governor of New York, who had been obliged to take refuge on board a man of war, the following account of the situation of the Americans in that province:

Having

Having obtained undoubted information that the British armaments were to be directed against New York, they were endeavouring, by strong entrenchments, both there and on Long Island, to obstruct the passage of the fleet up the north and east rivers. To increase these impediments, chains of sunken vessels were laid in various parts of the channel. They had also magazines of warlike stores, and a large train of artillery. In consequence of this information, and certain that succours from England would soon arrive, general Howe resolved to waste no more time at Sandy Hook, but to proceed with the army to Staten Island, situated opposite to Long Island, where he could watch the operations of the enemy. Accordingly, on the third of July, he landed the troops on the Island without opposition, the enemy abandoning it on his approach. The troops thus landed, consisted of two battalions of light-infantry, two of grenadiers, the fourth, fifth, tenth, seventeenth, twenty-second, twenty-third, twenty-seventh, thirty-fifth, thirty-eighth, fortieth, forty-second, forty-third, forty-fourth, forty-fifth, forty-ninth, fifty-second, fifty-fifth, sixty-third, and sixty-fourth regiments of foot, and part of the forty-sixth and seventy-first regiments, and the seventeenth regiment of light dragoons. There were besides two companies of volunteers raised at New York, consisting of one hundred men each. The total amount was nine thousand men. It had been determined to land on Long Island; but upon further consideration it was thought more advisable to wait for the arrival of the troops from Europe, and to land in the mean time upon Staten Island.

On the first of July lord Howe, and the long-expected succours from England, arrived at Sandy Hook, and thence proceeded to Staten Island. The reinforcement brought from England amounted, with the troops already in America, to near thirty thousand men. The late arrival of this reinforcement is to be particularly lamented,

C H A P.
VI.
1776

C H A P.
VI.
1776.

lamented, because, for some time before this period, general Washington's army did not amount to nine thousand men fit for duty; two thousand of whom were entirely destitute of arms. It must therefore be sufficiently apparent, that most important advantages would have accrued to the British cause if the campaign had commenced two months earlier than it did. The American army must then have been inevitably overwhelmed by the superiority of numbers and of discipline opposed to it. So well convinced was colonel Joseph Read, the American adjutant-general, of this superiority, that, in a letter to a member of congress, he stated the amount of the American army to be less than eight thousand men, "all of whom, from the general to the private, were exceedingly discouraged." Lord Howe had been appointed to the command of the fleet destined to co-operate with his brother general Howe, with the unanimous approbation of the people of England. Whatever may be thought of lord Howe as a naval commander, there was a certain hauteur and frigid reserve in his deportment that but ill qualified him for the office of a soother and a mediator between two contending parties, irritated against each other almost to a degree of madness. His lordship brought with him a commission sanctioned by parliament, empowering him and his brother to treat with the Americans. Their powers were ample and extensive. They were invested with the ability of making peace or of continuing the war—of receiving the submission of all or any one of the colonies—of pardoning or of punishing delinquents.

At this period, the celebrated Dr. Franklin, who had for many years resided in England as agent for the colonies of Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, retiring to America soon after his dismissal from his office of joint post-master-general of America, was a leading member of the congress. To him lord Howe addressed a letter soon after his arrival. In

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it he informed him of the nature of his commission; expressing, at the same time, hopes that he would find in America the same disposition for peace that he brought with him, and concluding with requesting his aid to accomplish this desired end. Dr. Franklin, in answer, informed his lordship, that, preparatory to any propositions of amity or peace, it would be required that Great Britain should acknowledge the independence of America, defray the expences of the war, and indemnify the colonies for burning their towns. This, however, he stated to be only his own opinion, and that what he had said was not authorised by those in whom the Americans had invested the power of peace or war. Lord Howe also addressed a circular letter, accompanied with a declaration, to several of the late governors of the provinces, acquainting them with the power with which he was invested. These letters and the declaration were forwarded to congress, and published in the different newspapers: At the same time his lordship opened a correspondence with general Washington, which produced no beneficial consequence to the British cause.

C H A P.
VI.
1776.

Lord Howe and his brother, unwilling to accede to those conditions which had been stated by Dr. Franklin to be the only terms that would be accepted, and seeing, from the declaration of independence, and the vigorous preparations of the enemy, that nothing less would be accepted, resolved to commence hostilities immediately.

The troops under general Clinton, from the southward, having joined the grand army, the campaign opened on the twenty-second of August. A division of four thousand men, under the command of general Clinton, landed without opposition in Gravesend Bay, Long Island, to the right of the Narrows, their disembarkation being covered by three frigates and two bomb-ketches: This division having landed without resistance, the rest of the army and artillery were also landed. The advanced party of the enemy fled at the approach of the army, setting fire, on their retreat, to all the houses and

C H A P.
VI.

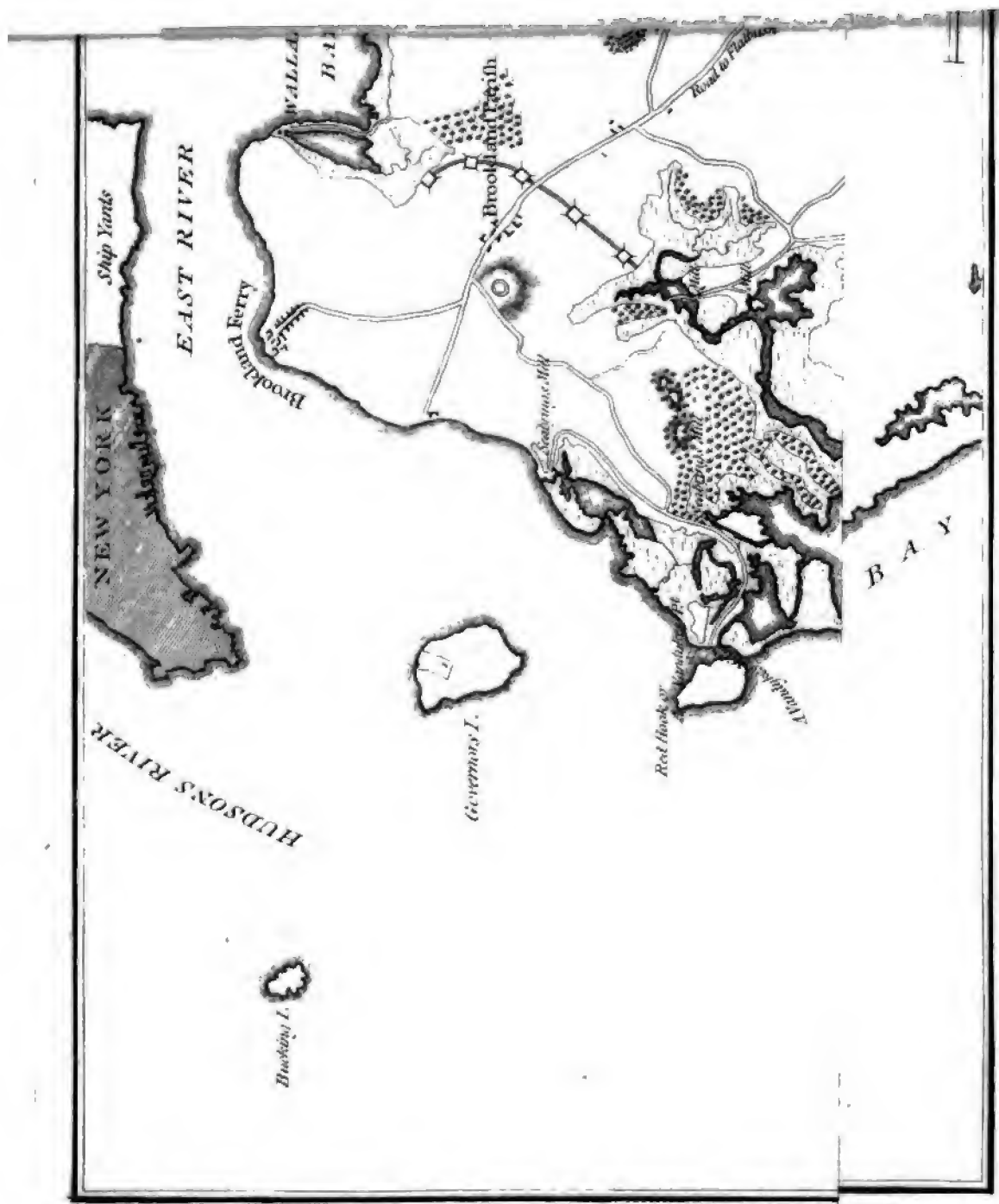
1776.

granaries, and seeking refuge in the woody heights that commanded the way which the English were under the necessity of passing. The English possessed an extent, reaching from the Narrows through Gravesend and Utrecht. The Americans, to the number of fifteen thousand, were posted on a peninsula, between Mill Creek, a little above Red Hook, and an elbow of the river, called Wallabach Bay. They had constructed strong fortifications opposite to New York, from which they were separated by the East River, at the distance of a mile. A line of intrenchment from the Mill Creek enclosed a large space of ground, on which stood the American camp. This line was not only secured by abatis, but flanked by strong redoubts, and lined with spears or lances provided against assault. From this post ten thousand men, under the command of general Putnam, were detached. Their object was to occupy the heights which obliquely intersected the island, and to defend against the progress of the English, the defiles which led through those hills.

Opposite the centre of Putnam's line stood, in the plain, the village of Flat Bush. To this town the Hessians, under general De Heister, were advanced, occupying entirely the attention of the Americans, and frequently skirmishing with their patrols. In the mean time sir Henry Clinton and sir William Erskine, having reconnoitred the position of the enemy, saw that it would not be a difficult matter to turn their left flank, which would either oblige them to risk an engagement, or to retire under manifest disadvantage. This intelligence being communicated to sir William Howe, he consented to make the attempt. Accordingly the right wing of the English army moved, consisting of a strong advanced corps, commanded by general Clinton, supported by the brigades under lord Percy. The commander in chief himself marched with this corps, which quitted its camp at nine o'clock at night on the twenty-sixth of August, crossing the country, by Flat Lands, in order to secure

August 26.

a pass



a pass over the heights of Guiana, on the road to Bedford. This pass the enemy had neglected to secure by detachments, on account of its great distance. In order to watch it, however, they sent out occasional patrols of cavalry: But one of these being intercepted by a British advanced guard, the pass was gained without any alarm being communicated to the Americans. At nine o'clock in the morning the British passed the heights and reached Bedford. An attack was immediately begun on the enemy's left; they made but a feeble resistance, and retired from the woody grounds to their lines, into which they threw themselves in evident confusion. It is to be lamented that this advantage was not pursued; for in the confusion into which the enemy were thrown by the rapid march of the English army, a most decisive victory would have undoubtedly accrued to the British arms. The works of the enemy could not have resisted an attack, when it is considered that it might have been made by that part of the army under sir William Howe, which had not been engaged, and which therefore possessed a manifest superiority over troops fatigued by contest, exhausted by hard labour, and disheartened by partial defeat.

As soon as the firing on the enemy's left was heard, general De Heister, with a column of Hessians from Flat Bush, attacked the centre of the Americans. After a warm engagement the enemy was routed and driven into the woods, with the loss of three pieces of cannon. The left column, led by general Grant, advancing from the Narrows by the edge of the bay, in order to divert the attention of the enemy from the principal attack on the right, about midnight fell in with their advanced guard, stationed at a strong pass, which, however, they immediately abandoned, and retired to a very advantageous post, where they kept their ground. On the advancement of the English, a furious cannonade commenced on both sides, which was continued with unceasing perseverance till the enemy heard the firing at Bedford.

C H A P.
VI.
1776.

Battle of
Long Island
or Brooklyn.

C H A P.
VI.
1776.

ford. The Americans in this quarter did not attempt to retire until they received news of the total rout of the rest of their army. Apprehensive then of being unable to regain their lines, they made a sudden movement to secure a retreat, by crossing a morass to Mill Creek, which covered the right of their works. But this movement was made in much disorder and confusion; general Grant, however, did not take adequate advantage of it, for had he moved rapidly to the edge of the morass, through which, and over a mill-dam, the principal part of them escaped, the greatest number of the detachment, as well as of those who fled from Flat Bush, must have either been drowned or taken prisoners.

Thus ended the operations of the day: Victory was certainly on the side of the English; but it was not so decisive as it might have been, owing to the restrictions imposed by the commander in chief. The loss of the Americans was great. Two thousand were either killed on the field, drowned, or taken prisoners: And among the latter, generals Sullivan, Udell, and lord Sterling. The Maryland regiment suffered most severely, having lost upwards of two hundred and sixty men; which was much regretted, as that regiment was composed of young men of the best families in the country. The royal army took six pieces of brass ordnance. The loss on the part of the English did not exceed three hundred in killed and wounded; of which number between sixty and seventy were killed. Among the killed was lieutenant-colonel Grant, of the fortieth regiment; among the wounded, lieutenant-colonel Monckton. The British troops, on this occasion, displayed great activity and valour: So impetuous was their courage, that it was not without difficulty that they could be restrained from attacking the American lines; and had they been permitted to go on, in the judgment of most men, including sir William Howe himself, they would have carried them. "But," says the general, "as it was apparent that the lines must
" become

August.

Missing page.

C H A P.
VI.

1776.

Americans; but a considerable time had elapsed before a pursuit was ordered. Sir William Howe at length, however, desired lord Percy to order a pursuit; but it was too late. The enemy had effected their retreat, which was rendered less hazardous from the want of frigates in the East River between Long Island and New York. Had any armed ships been stationed there, it would have been impossible for them to have made their escape. The East River is deep enough for a seventy-four gun ship to ride at anchor. Washington thought himself happy in getting safe with his papers from Long Island, having crossed to New York in a small boat. Had two or even one frigate moored as high up as Red-Hock, as the Phoenix and Rose men of war had done before, the one carrying forty-four guns, and the other twenty-eight, the retreat of the Americans would have been cut off most completely; and indeed so decided were the Americans themselves in this opinion, that, had only a single frigate been stationed in the East River, they must have surrendered at discretion. It is to be observed, that in the very same boats in which the Americans crossed from New York to Long Island, they re-crossed after their defeat from Long Island to New York, the boats having lain for three days on the Long Island shore in readiness to carry them off. Now it is evident that this small craft, by the above precaution, might have been effectually destroyed.

In reviewing the actions of men, the historian is often at a loss to conjecture the secret causes that gave them birth. It cannot be denied but that the American army lay almost entirely at the will of the English. That they were therefore suffered to retire in safety, has by some been attributed to the reluctance of the commander in chief to shed the blood of a people so nearly allied to that source from whence he derived all his authority and power. We are rather inclined

Missing page.

C H A P.
VI.

1776.
Overtures on
the part of
the British
commanders
for peace.

Whilst these operations were carrying on, general Sullivan, who had been taken prisoner on Long Island, was dismissed on his parole, and dispatched to Philadelphia at his own request, in order to submit some propositions to congress. In those propositions lord Howe expressed a wish to enter into conferences with several moderate members of congress, not as deputies from an independent state, but as private gentlemen of influence in the different colonies. In these conferences preliminaries were to be settled, on which an accommodation of the differences between the two countries was to be founded. As an inducement to congress to comply with these propositions, it was strongly insisted that so favourable a crisis as the present would not again occur; inasmuch as neither party had been reduced to a state of humiliation by compulsory means, nor to a situation where assent or ruin was the only alternative.

The congress, in reply to this message, acquainted his lordship that it was inconsistent with their dignity to send any of their members to confer with him in a private capacity; and requested that they would depute a committee to learn whether his lordship had authority to treat with persons commissioned by congress, and that they would receive what proposals he was commanded to offer. Accordingly a committee, consisting of Dr. Benjamin Franklin, Messrs. John Adams and Edward Rutledge, was appointed to wait on lord Howe at Staten Island. No advantage could be expected to accrue to the mother-country from such a committee; the members of it being men whose principles were violent in the extreme, and who sought every opportunity of reducing the parent-state to humiliating and mortifying situations. In the outset of the conference lord Howe still adhered to the contents of the message carried to congress by general Sullivan, viz. "that though his powers did not extend so far as to treat with the above gentlemen, as a committee
" deputed

“ deputed by congress, yet he was empowered to enter into a consultation on the means of reconciling the differences between Great Britain and America with any gentleman of influence and importance.” As soon as his lordship had made this declaration, the committee informed him that they should not act in any other character than that with which congress had invested them: Nevertheless they wished to hear any proposals he might have to make. His lordship then informed them that the most ardent wish of the king and government of Great Britain, was, to put an end to the dissensions at present existing between the parent-state and the colonies. To accomplish this desire, every act of parliament which had been thought obnoxious to the latter should undergo a revival, and every just cause of complaint should be removed, if the latter would declare her willingness to submit to the authority of the British government.

C H A P.
VI.
1776.

In reply to this offer the committee declared, that an acknowledgment of the superiority of Great Britain could not now be expected. They recalled to his lordship's remembrance the many petitions that had been presented by the colonies to parliament and the king, all of which, particularly the last, had been treated with disrespect and contempt. They reminded him that it was not America that had severed herself from Great Britain; but Great Britain that had separated herself from America. The latter had never declared herself independent till the former had denounced war against her, and thereby rendered such a declaration indispensably necessary. Besides, even if congress wished to replace America in her former situation, she could not carry these wishes into execution; for the declaration of independence had been made in consequence of the congregated voice of the whole people, by whom alone it could be invalidated and abolished. But though the Americans desired not

C H A P.
VI.

1776.

to return under the domination of England, yet they were willing to enter into any treaty that should be deemed advantageous to both countries. From this declaration of the committee, it required very little penetration to discover that America was resolved to enter into no accommodation; but to procure the acknowledgment of her independence by force. Immediately therefore on being furnished with this answer, lord Howe put an end to the conference.

When the deputies returned to congress they made the following report:—" That it was their opinion that lord Howe's commission did not contain any other powers than those of granting pardons, and of receiving all, or any one, of the colonies into the protection of the British government, upon submission. With regard to treating with congress, the commissioners were totally silent, on account of their being forbidden to acknowledge the authority of that assembly, and empowered only to treat with the members of it in their private characters, as men of abilities, weight, or importance." The commissioners being therefore thus limited in their powers, no firm reliance could be placed on any terms they might propose or accede to *. Though lord Howe had been thus unsuccessful in his propositions to the congress committee, he thought it necessary to publish a declaration to the people of America, wherein, after glancing at the answer returned by that committee to his offers of reconciliation, he acquainted them that the parent-state was willing to receive into its bosom and protection all who might be willing to return to their former submission and obedience. His lordship was certainly induced to adopt this measure from the conviction that a majority of the inhabitants of America were decided-

* It was confidently asserted at Philadelphia that Mr. Rutledge, upon his return, declared that the whole of what had passed between lord Howe and the committee had not been made public, *i. e.* the whole of what had been offered by lord Howe.

ly in favour of entering into an accommodation of the differences between the two powers; and this conviction was by no means ill-founded. This declaration however produced but little effect, for those who resolved to accede to nothing short of an acknowledgment of the independence of America had acquired the sole management of affairs, and had concentrated in themselves all the powers and resources of the country.

C H A P.
VI.
1776.

C H A P. VII.

The Americans retreat, and the English Army takes possession of New York—The Americans greatly disheartened—Design to burn New York partly executed—Various Skirmishing—Battle of White Plains.

C H A P.
VII.
1776.

CONVINCED now that all pacific measures would be ineffectual, lord Howe resolved to adopt other measures. It has been before said that when the provincial forces retreated from Long Island they took shelter in New York. Here they employed themselves in erecting batteries, and throwing up intrenchments, in order to annoy the British shipping. Both armies were divided by the East River, the breadth of which, at this part, was about thirteen hundred yards. After a long and severe cannonade it was resolved to make a descent on the island on which New York stands. To prevent their intentions from being discovered by the enemy, five ships of war moved higher up the East River, while, on the fifteenth of September, several flat-bottomed boats were employed in landing the troops.

The first division, consisting of four thousand men under general Clinton, landed on New York island, at a place called Kipp's Bay, about three miles from the town, and took post on a height called the Inclenberg. The enemy were at this time in possession of very advantageous ground and powerful intrenchments: Nevertheless, they not only refrained from opposing the English, but abandoned their works on account of the furious cannonade of the five men of war

appointed

appointed to cover the disembarkation of the troops. As the different divisions, landed they posted themselves on the high grounds that stretch in an ascending direction from the sea-shore. At the same time a detachment of Hessian troops advanced to New York, and in their way fell in with a party of the enemy retreating by the pass at Blooming Dale. A skirmish ensued, in which the British were victorious, and the Americans lost a brigadier-general and several other officers. About the same time another detachment of the British troops made a movement to the right, in order to attack a large body of the enemy, who, however, on the approach of the English, retreated to the main body of the American army posted on Morris's Heights. No attempt being made to defend New York, it was taken possession of by the English. General Washington's army, at this period, amounted to twenty-three thousand men, but most of these, raw, undisciplined, and ill provided with necessaries.

New York is situated in an island about fifteen miles in length, but not more than two in breadth; on which account the English were enabled to extend their camp quite across the island, on the part farthest from the town. The enemy were posted opposite to them, and in such an advantageous manner that any attack upon them would have been dangerous and imprudent. General Washington had stationed four thousand five hundred men in New York, which he withdrew on the approach of the British army; six thousand five hundred at Haerlem; and twelve thousand at a place called King's Bridge, which he had fortified in order to secure a retreat, in case he should be under the necessity of relinquishing his present situation, to the continent. And indeed it was peculiarly fortunate for the enemy that they were thus, in a manner, secure from attack, as their ardour had visibly declined since their defeat on Long Island. A pause was necessary in order to enable them to recover their former spirit.

C H A P.
VII.
1776.

The Americans retreat, and the English army takes possession of New York.

The

C H A P.
VII.1776.
The American army
greatly dis-
heartened.

The check at Long Island, and the expulsion from New York, dispirited the American troops greatly. They apprehended every thing, and were in great despair. The militia were impatient to return, and totally disobedient to orders. They went off by half, and in some instances by whole, regiments. What was called their flying camp was literally so. Ravages were committed not only by privates, but, among the New Englanders, by officers. "Almost every villany and rascality," a gentleman of the army* wrote to his friend, "was daily practised with impunity. Unless some speedy and effectual means of reform are adopted by congress, our cause will be lost. As the war must be carried on systematically, you must establish your army upon a permanent footing, and give your officers good pay, that they may be, and support the character of, gentlemen, and not be driven, by a scanty allowance, to the low and dirty arts which many of them practise, to filch the public of more money than all the amount of the difference of pay. It is not strange that there should be a number of bad officers in the continental service, when you consider that many of them were chosen by their own men, who elected them, not from a regard to merit, but from the knowledge they had of their being ready to associate with them on the footing of equality. It was sometimes the case, that, when a company was forming, the men would chuse those for officers who consented to throw their pay into a joint stock with the privates, from which captains, lieutenants, ensigns, serjeants, corporals, drummers, and privates, drew equal shares. Can it then be wondered at, that a captain should be tried and broken for stealing his soldiers blankets? or that another officer should be found shaving his men in the face of characters of distinction? With an army of force before, and a secret one

* General Read, in a letter to a member of congress, dated July 4th, 1776.

" behind,

“ behind, we stand on a point of land with six thousand old
 “ troops, if a year’s service can entitle them to that name, and
 “ about fifteen hundred new levies of this province; many dis-
 “ affected, and more doubtful. In this situation we are. Every man
 “ in the army, from the general to the private (acquainted with
 “ our true situation) is exceedingly discouraged. Had I known the
 “ true posture of affairs, no consideration would have tempted me
 “ to have taken an active part in this scene: And this sentiment is
 “ universal. General Howe is sufficiently strong, considering the
 “ goodness of his troops, to make a successful attempt on the
 “ Americans; but being in daily expectation of reinforcements
 “ from Europe, he will undoubtedly remain inactive until their
 “ arrival.”

C H A P.
 VII.
 1776.

The greatest animosities, too, prevailed between the northern and southern troops. Their reflections on each other were mutual and equally illiberal. Their variances were so great, that the Pennsylvanians and New Englanders would as soon have fought each other as the enemy. Officers of all ranks were indiscriminately treated with the greatest scurrility and abuse, for no other reason than that they were born on this or that side of Hudson’s River; just as formerly, in England, violent disputes were carried on between the inhabitants of the south and those of the north side of the Trent.

As soon as the English had taken possession of New York, general Howe, and some other general officers, repaired to the house of a Mrs. Murray, with whom they remained in conversation so long, that general Putnam, with three thousand five hundred men, was enabled to make good his retreat to the main body of the American army. But delay is not the only error imputable to the commander in chief in this transaction. It has been mentioned that the American army was posted at Haerlem and King’s Bridge: Its position at this little place was for the purpose of securing a retreat

to

C H A P.
VII.

1776.

to the continent, should the pressure of affairs render such a measure necessary. Instead, therefore, of directing his attention to New York, sir William Howe ought to have thrown his army round King's Bridge, by which means he would have hemmed in the whole American army; and such a step was not at all impracticable, when we consider the extent of the military and naval resources subservient to his will.

September.

On the morning of the sixteenth of September, a detachment was sent out from the main body of the Americans to a wood facing the left flank of the English army. Three companies of our light-infantry were dispatched to dislodge them. The enemy, with a seeming intention of retreating to the main body, retired into the interior parts of the wood, where they were reinforced by another detachment; which made it necessary that the remainder of the light-infantry, with the forty-second regiment, should be sent to support the companies that were engaged. The action was carried on by reinforcements on both sides, and became very warm. The enemy, however, possessed a great advantage from the circumstance of engaging within half a mile of their intrenched camp, whence they could be supplied with fresh troops as often as occasion required. Victory, nevertheless, was on the part of the loyalists; and the Americans retreated with the loss of three hundred killed and wounded.

The English encampment, it has been said, extended across the island, on each side of which were stationed ships of war, in order to secure the right and left flanks. The enemy saw the advantage of this disposition of the shipping, and attempted to make some impression on it by sending down four fire-ships, which, however, by the skillfulness of the commanders of the English vessels, were prevented from doing any damage. It had been resolved by the Americans, in case the English should obtain possession of New York, to set fire to it in several places, previous to the evacuation of it by
the

Design to
burn New
York partly
executed.

the enemy. The speed, however, with which they were obliged to quit it, had rendered it impossible for them to put their designs into execution: Nevertheless, several persons having purposely secreted themselves in the deserted houses, contrived to set fire to the town, on the morning of the twenty-first of September, in several places. One-third of the town was thus destroyed; and had not the military exerted themselves in a most extraordinary manner, the whole would have been levelled with the ground. The flames first broke out at some wooden store-houses, at the southernmost or windward part of New York, near the Whitehall-stairs, just by the battery, and soon became general up the Broadway, &c. by the violence of the wind blowing burnt shingles from the houses on fire to others, and setting them on fire in rapid succession. The wind was so strong, that it was almost impossible to face it, for smoke and flakes of fire. The next day (Saturday) a great many cart-loads of bundles of pine sticks, dipped at each end for five or six inches in brimstone and other combustible matters, were found concealed in cellars of houses to which the incendiaries had not had time to set fire. Between one and two hundred men and old women were taken up during the night, and sent to gaol on suspicion, and three or four men detected with matches and combustibles were killed by the enraged soldiers. Most, if not all the men and women put into gaol, were released in a few days, after having their names taken and examined by a committee. The old English church, and a German church, near it, with about eleven hundred houses, were burnt. The rebels at Paulus Hook gave three cheers when the steeple of the old English church fell down, which, when burning, looked awfully grand.

The American army, with strong ground in their front, and extensive fortifications in their rear towards King's Bridge, seemed to

C H A P.
VII.

1776.

think themselves perfectly secure, and almost invulnerable. The British troops knew the strength of situation which the enemy possessed, and therefore employed themselves in throwing up a chain of redoubts on Macgowan's Hill to cover New York, and render it capable of a vigorous defence, even after the bulk of the army should be engaged in more remote operations. As soon as the redoubts were completed it was determined to attempt the enemy's rear, by the New England road, from which they received most of their supplies. This arrangement would either force them to hazard a battle, or reduce them to the necessity of suffering themselves to be surrounded and confined in York Island. It has been asserted that as soon as the English had taken possession of New York, they should have attacked the Americans, as the different positions which they had taken between the city and Fort Washington, afterwards called Fort Mifflin, might have been forced without great difficulty or danger. In consequence of the determination just mentioned, three brigades of British and one of Hessians being left to guard New York, the rest of the troops embarked on the twelfth of October in flat-bottomed boats and batteaux, and passing through an intricate and dangerous passage, called Hell Gate, to the Sound, landed the same morning at Frog's Neck, not far from West Chester, on the continent towards Connecticut. This was thought to be an error on the part of the commander in chief: Frog's Neck being really an island connected with the main by a bridge, easy to be broken down (as happened in fact) by the enemy. The mistake, when discovered, should have been remedied instantly, by pushing along some other route to King's Bridge, which would undoubtedly have reduced the enemy to the necessity either of defending the island or of forcing their way through the English army, in order to gain the territory of New England. All possibility of their retiring to the Jerseys was cut off by the British ships, which had now, with incredible difficulty and

and danger, passed Fort Washington, and taken their stations in the North River. Thus it is sufficiently apparent that the Americans could not possibly have effected a retreat without hazarding a battle, unless, indeed, they were to be permitted to retire to the continent in as secure and uninterrupted a manner as they did from Long Island to New York. The Americans themselves began to entertain serious alarms for their safety; for on the day the English landed, their main body moved off, in order to avoid being blockaded in the island. This movement originated with general Lee, who had recently arrived from South Carolina, and whose abilities and success had rendered his opinion of great weight and importance. But this measure, to which the American army undoubtedly owed its safety, was adopted contrary to the original plan of general Washington. The circumstances of it are as follow:—When the British army landed at Frog's Neck, Washington harangued his officers, and told them, that they must retreat no farther, but decide the fate of America on that ground. The ground on which they were then entrenched, extended in front of King's Bridge. General Lee came up soon after, and having learnt what had passed, remonstrated against so absurd a determination. He represented that the British would infallibly hem Washington's army round with such a chain of works, as would reduce him to the necessity of surrendering through famine, without exposing them to the hazard of a battle. Lee's representations succeeded; and the American army immediately resolved to quit so dangerous a position.

On the eighteenth of October, the British troops re-embarking proceeded along the coast to Pell's Point, where they ought to have landed originally; and disembarked there without difficulty. Soon after their landing a sharp skirmish happened in an attempt to dislodge the enemy from a narrow pass, at which they had taken post with a strong corps. Notwithstanding their advantageous situation,

C H A P.
VII.

1776.

October 18.

C H A P. VII. the Americans retired with considerable loss. Thirty-two were killed and wounded on the side of the English.

1776.
Oct. 21.

On the twenty-first of October the main division of the British army moved to New Rochelle, situated on the sound that divides Long Island from the continent. Here they were joined by the second division of foreign troops that had arrived from England, under the command of general Knyphausen. The American army was now in a disagreeable situation. The soldiers were very poorly clothed, and a scarcity of provisions among them had been followed by much illness. Nor, amidst these disadvantages, was their position either secure or eligible in other respects. Their sole resource was to avoid action: For which reason it was determined in a council of war that they should extend themselves into a long line behind the Brunx, well secured by works thrown up in front, to command every ford. The provincial army, in consequence of this determination, stretched along the ground parallel to that on which the British troops were marching; from King's Bridge on the right, to White Plains on the left. The two armies were separated by a deep river called the Brunx, already mentioned. The rear of the British was covered by the Sound, not far distant. With this relative arrangement the armies moved slowly towards the White Plains, where, on the eastern side of the Brunx, a detachment had been fortifying a camp for the Americans, which camp they occupied with their whole army on the twenty-sixth.

Oct. 28. The royal army, in two columns, marched from its encampment near Ward's House, on the banks of the Brunx; sir William Howe accompanied the left column, sir Henry Clinton commanded the right. As they approached the White Plains, the right column fell in with several bodies of the enemy: And those bodies, sharply driven back, propagated a considerable alarm in the enemy's camp. When our troops arrived within about three quarters of a mile of the Americans,

The battle of
White Plains.

Americans, they had a distinct view of their whole position. They were encamped on a long ridge of hill, the brow of which was covered with lines hastily thrown up. A bend of the Bronx protected their right flank, and by another turning in its course enveloped also the rear of their right wing. Farther still, the point of the hill on the enemy's right, exceedingly steep and rocky, was covered by a strong abatis in front of the entrenchment. The left of the enemy was rather refused to the line in which the British troops approached them, so that they could not judge of it with great accuracy; but it appeared to be posted in very broken ground, difficult to be assailed, and furnishing a secure retreat. The weakest part was the centre. The slope of the hill was very gradual in the direction of the road by the Court House. The lines were by no means formidable, not being fraized; and the rockiness of the soil prevented the ditch from being made of any troublesome depth. The British had in the field thirteen thousand effective men. The enemy's force was said to exceed twenty thousand, but was not probably above seventeen or eighteen thousand. Nor was a great part of this force any other than a loose militia; nor had the continental regiments yet acquired the character which they afterwards attained from continued and more successful service. Had an assault been made on the centre of the enemy's works, defeat would have been destruction to the Americans. The whole of their right wing must have fallen into the power of the British army; for the Bronx not being passable in that part, cut off their retreat, and victory was to be reasonably expected, not only from the valour of our troops, but from the confusion of the enemy. This indeed was obvious beyond example. When our army came in fight their tents were standing. The hurry of striking them, and of loading the waggons with the baggage, together with the movement of troops backward and forward, in evident uncertainty of purpose, gave an extraordinary picture of alarm.

During

C H A P.
VII.
1776.

C H A P. VII.
 1776. } During this time the Americans kept up a cannonade on our army, who returned it, but the distance was so great that there was little effect on either side. Part of the British columns formed behind some rising ground, nearly parallel to the enemy's front; but the right wing of the British did not extend beyond the centre of the American army. That part of the enemy's position did not seem to be considered; all the attention of the British commander being fixed on another part of the field. Four thousand of the enemy were posted on a hill in a line with the right of their camp, but separated from it by the Brunx. The reason of their occupying this posture is inexplicable, unless it be that they could not be contained within the works of their camp. The possession of that hill would not enable the royalists to annoy their camp, for it rose so gradually from the Brunx that its crest was not within random cannon shot; as was proved by many of our battalions lying upon it on their arms the whole evening after the action: Nor had the enemy to apprehend that, from that quarter, an attack might be made on their rear, since the Brunx, deep and impracticable, would have been still between the two armies. It seems to have been a blunder of general Washington's to have placed so considerable a corps entirely out of the capability of supporting the rest of the army; for two battalions and two pieces of cannon could effectually prevent them from crossing either a ford or a bridge near their right flank, for the purpose of annoying our troops, whilst they assailed their camp. Possibly this error might lead sir William Howe to imagine this hill to be of more importance than it immediately appeared to be from its situation. However, against this hill all the efforts of the British army were directed. A part of our left wing passed the ford, which was entirely under command of our cannon. They then mounted the hill, and very gallantly drove the enemy from the strong heights on which they were posted. It was an attack

Missing page.

C H A P.
 VII.
 1776.

resist an attack, but being informed by a deserter that the British army would march against them the next morning, they evacuated their lines on the morning of the first of September, and retired across the Croton river to North Castle, setting fire, in their retreat, to all the houses on White Plains. Their position was now so advantageous, that any attack on them must have proved unsuccessful, for the river Croton stretched along their front, and their rear was defended by woods and heights. Convinced that it was part of the enemy's system studiously to avoid an action, and that their knowledge of the country enabled them to execute this system with advantage, general Howe resolved to cease an ineffectual pursuit, and employ himself in the reduction of King's Bridge and Fort Washington. This last post was of the utmost importance, inasmuch as it secured an immediate intercourse with the Jersey shore, to Fort Lee, and effectually obstructed the navigation of the North River. It was situated on the western side of New York Island, at a small distance from King's Bridge, and almost opposite to Fort Lee. The fortifications were in good order, but its principal strength consisted in its situation; for it could not be approached without exposing the besiegers to a heavy fire from the garrison, and the works and lines by which it was surrounded. Sensible of the importance of this post, the Americans had garrisoned it with three thousand men, under the command of colonel Magaw, a gentleman peculiarly fitted for the trust reposed in him. He was brave, generous, and humane; his manners engaging, and his education liberal. He was a native of Pennsylvania; and the former part of his life had been spent in the profession of the law. As soon, however, as the disturbances commenced, he offered his services to congress; whom he served with zeal and fidelity, that could result only from a conviction that the cause for which he fought was the cause of liberty and independence. On the fifteenth of November, the

Missing page.

C H A P.
VII.

1776.

they penetrated through the wood, and fixed themselves on the top of the ascent. The second division was equally successful: The light-infantry made good their landing, and forced the enemy from their rocks and trees up a steep and rugged mountain. The third division was much galled in crossing the lower part of Haerlem Creek. Colonel Sterling, the commander of the forty-second, had to encounter a heavy fire before he landed, and he had then to ascend a woody promontory, the ground of which was very uneven: Nevertheless he succeeded in his attempt, and, though the post was obstinately defended, he carried it, making two hundred of the enemy prisoners. The last division was not less fortunate in the advances they made through the enemy's lines. Lord Percy, with his usual gallantry and good conduct, having surmounted incredible difficulties, carried the advanced works of the enemy. The garrison, finding that it was not possible to defend the fort longer, surrendered prisoners of war. The loss of the royal army, in killed and wounded, amounted to about eight hundred: That of the garrison, including killed, wounded, and prisoners, about three thousand three hundred. It was a great error in colonel Magaw, that he suffered his troops to crowd into the fort, after quitting their lines: For had they been posted on the brow of the hill, facing the north and south, the contest would have been prolonged, and the assailants have sustained a heavier loss: But the grand error was on the part of the American general; who, as if he had entertained a predilection for a post, no longer useful, did not withdraw the garrison on the evening preceding the assault.

On the morning of the attack, general Washington had been at the fort, in order to give directions to colonel Magaw: He had, however, repassed over to the Jersey shore long before the heat of the action. On the other side of North River, opposite to Fort Washington, lay Fort Lee, which occupied next the attention of the commander

Missing page.

C H A P.
VII.

1776.

which distinguish his usual conduct, he would have pursued the weakened and alarmed enemy to the Delaware, over which, without falling into his hands, they never could have passed. At Brunswick the British army halted near a week; the Americans, to the number of three thousand, with all their heavy cannon and baggage, at Prince Town, seventeen, and at Trenton, on the Delaware, twenty-nine miles distant. On the seventeenth of December, our army marched from Brunswick at four o'clock in the morning, and about the same hour in the afternoon arrived at Prince Town. This place general Washington, in person, with Stirling's brigade, left not one hour before the British arrived. At Prince Town the British general waited seventeen hours, marched at nine o'clock in the morning of the eighth, and arrived at Trenton at four o'clock in the afternoon; just when the last boat of general Washington's embarkation crossed the river, as if he had calculated, it was observed, with great accuracy, the exact time necessary for his enemy to make his escape.

The winter now beginning to set in, the army went into winter-quarters. The British troops were placed between the Delaware and the Hakenack, the latter of which runs near New York. Trenton, the most important post and the barrier, was occupied by a brigade of Hessians, under the command of colonel Ralle; and Bordenton, which formed the angle nearest the enemy, was placed under the command of count Donop and four battalions of Hessians. The enemy, in the mean time, were suffered to make good their retreat across the Delaware.

While lord Cornwallis was thus successful in the Jerseys, an expedition was undertaken against Rhode Island by general Clinton and sir Peter Parker. At their approach the provincials abandoned the island, and the English took peaceable possession of it: An unlucky measure, as it had no use but to keep a great body of troops unemployed during three years.

On

On account of the success of this expedition, the American squadron, commanded by commodore Hopkins, was under the necessity of retiring up the river Providence, where it remained blocked up and inactive. When the expedition was dispatched to Rhode Island, sir Henry Clinton strongly urged that he might rather be permitted to conduct it to the Delaware. Possibly, had that counsel been adopted, the blow might have been irrecoverable to the Americans: But it is said lord Howe insisted on the possession of Rhode Island for the fleet.

C H A P.
VI.

1776.

C H A P. VIII.

Transactions in the Jerseys—Apparent Errors of the British Commander—Despondence of the Rebels—Vigour of Congress—Encouragement to enlist in the American Army—Congress appeal with Effect to the American People.—1776.

C H A P.
VIII.
1776.

FROM the success that had attended the British army, very beneficial consequences were expected to result. And indeed, when we consider the comparative situation and strength of both armies at this period, such expectations will neither appear too sanguine nor unreasonable.

The American army had been raised and embodied on the following principle:—Each man enlisted only for a twelvemonth; after which period, he was at liberty to quit the service. Congress began now to be convinced that this principle was erroneous; for the shortness of the term induced many to enlist at first, but it was now become necessary to form a settled and permanent military establishment: Such an establishment, however, could not at present be accomplished. Those who had fulfilled the term of their engagement retired from the service, alleging, as a reason for their conduct, that it was incumbent on their fellow-countrymen to bear an equal share in the defence of the common cause. Thus the places of those who had acquired a degree of military experience, were filled by persons who were totally ignorant of the duties of their new situation, and who were very inadequate to resist the attacks of the veterans, of which the British army was composed. In consequence
of

of the success of the royalists, supplies of men were acquired by congress but slowly. On the other hand, prodigious numbers retired from the service, and the actual strength was reduced from thirty thousand, of which it consisted when general Howe landed on Staten Island, to scarcely three thousand. The British army, at this period, amounted from twenty to thirty thousand. The men were all healthy and in good spirits; success had increased their military ardour, and they possessed every thing that could contribute either to their comfort or their convenience. The greatest expectations were accordingly formed, from so great a degree of health, animation, and courage, heightened by success: Advantages which, if rightly improved, would naturally lead the way to still farther success and glory. The reduction of Forts Washington and Lee opened to the British general a free ingress into the Jerseys. The enemy, panic-struck, flew before him, and yet he would not suffer them to be pursued; ordering lord Cornwallis to proceed no further than Brunswick. By this tenderness of operation, the enemy were enabled to make good their retreat, and to cross the Delaware in safety. He thus neglected the opportunity of making the remnant of the American army prisoners of war: Yet, even subsequent to this period, his conduct was equally inexplicable. The Americans, though they had thus crossed the Delaware, were far from feeling themselves in security; and had the commander in chief passed over the river after them (which he might have done a little above Correll's Ferry), the consequences would have certainly been fatal to the American cause. The panic struck by the several defeats of the Americans at Long Island, New York, and the White Plains, with the progress of the army through New Jersey, had extended itself from the military to all the civil departments of the new states, and particularly in the middle colonies. The governor, council, assembly,

C H A P.
VIII.
1776.

Blunders of
the British
commander.

C H A P.
VIII.

1776.

bly, and magistracy of New Jersey had deserted that province. The self-created state in Philadelphia had dispersed, and the congress itself, giving up all as lost, had fled with great precipitation into Maryland. Repeated attempts were made to raise the militia of Pennsylvania in vain. Three of the principal citizens of Philadelphia, in behalf of the rest, waited on congress before their flight, and boldly informed them; that they intended to meet sir William Howe, and throw themselves on his protection. The principal city of North America, and at that time the seat of the new government, only waited for the arrival of the British army, to submit to the mother-country. Other parts, which had, from the commencement of the disturbances, followed the example of Philadelphia, would have pursued the same conduct. In this manner advantages, which, in all probability, would have put a period to the war, were neglected: Nor were these the only errors of which the commander in chief was guilty. The great and principal error in sir William Howe's conduct at this period, was, his dividing his army into small detachments; and those at such a distance from each other, as, in case of attack, not to be capable of receiving immediate assistance from the main army: And it was owing to this injudicious arrangement, that the British army, when in the Jerseys, were, as we shall see hereafter, cut up in detail. The manner in which he disposed the army into winter cantonments, was particularly blameable. In the first place, the chain of communication which the British troops occupied from the Delaware to the Hakenfack was too extensive, and the cantonments too remote from each other; for the space between the two rivers was not less than eighty miles. In the next place, foreign troops ought not to have been stationed either at Trenton or Bordenton; for they were the barriers to the Jerseys, and lay nearest to the enemy. The light-infantry should have occupied these posts;

for

for the Héſſian troops, underſtanding nothing of the language of the country, were unable to obtain proper intelligence, and, inſtead of conciliating the affections, made themſelves particularly diſagreeable to the natives, by pillaging them, and taking from them the neceſſaries of life, without making them an adequate compenſation. It was farther obſerved, that the four frontier cantonments at Trenton, Bordenton, White Horſe, and Burlington, were the weakeſt, in reſpect of number of troops, in the whole line of cantonments. The poſt at Trenton, oppoſite to which Waſhington lay with the main body of his army, and with boats prepared to croſs the Delaware at his pleaſure, was defended only by twelve hundred Héſſians; and thoſe of Bordenton, White Horſe, and Burlington, by no more than two thouſand. In this weak ſtate, the frontier poſts, the poſts of moſt danger, were left by the commander in chief; while the other poſts were made ſtronger and ſtronger, in proportion to the decrease of their diſtance from the enemy, and their conſequent danger; nor were theſe frontier cantonments ſecured from the attacks of the enemy by any works of art, but left without a ſingle redoubt or intrenchment, to which, in caſe of a ſurpriſe, the troops, until they ſhould be relieved from the other poſts, might retreat.

C II A P.
VIII.
1776.

The affairs of congreſs, in the mean time, continued to droop daily. As ſoon as the Britiſh troops had been diſperſed into winter-quarters, the commander in chief iſſued a proclamation in the name of his brother and himſelf, in which pardon was offered to all perſons, who, within the ſpace of ſixty days, ſhould take the oath of allegiance, and ſubmit to the authority of the Britiſh government. The good effects of this proclamation were ſoon apparent. People from all quarters crowded to take the benefit of it. Whole diſtricts threw down their arms: Nor was this all the diſtreſs that con-

Deſpondence
of the revolt-
ers.

C H A P.
VIII.
1776.

gress suffered. In addition to their misfortunes, they incurred the following unfortunate loss:—General Lee, to whom, on the departure of general Washington, the command of the troops at Croton's Ferry had devolved, receiving information of the perilous situation of general Washington, and the defenceless condition of the banks of the Delaware on the side of Philadelphia, resolved, notwithstanding the desertion in his army, occasioned by those whose terms of service were expired, to cross the North River, and form a junction with him. Accordingly, on the sixth of December, he crossed the North River at King's Ferry, with three thousand men and some pieces of cannon. He continued his route through Morris County, intending to cross the Delaware to the northward of Trenton. On the thirteenth of December, while his army was encamped in Morris County, he quitted the camp, in order to reconnoitre. In the course of this employment he proceeded to the distance of three miles from his army, where he stopped at a house to breakfast.

Capture of
general Lee.

In order to obtain information of the movements of the army under general Lee, colonel Harcourt had been dispatched with a detachment of light-horse: Collecting information, as he advanced into the country, the colonel was induced to proceed farther. In his progress he intercepted a countryman, charged with a letter from general Lee, by which he understood where he was, and how slightly he was guarded. He immediately formed a resolution of carrying him off; and for that purpose made the proper dispositions to prevent his escape. He then galloped up to the house where the general was at breakfast, surpris'd the centinels placed to guard it, forced open the door, and made him a prisoner, as well as a French lieutenant-colonel, who had accompanied him. The general was immediately mounted, and, notwithstanding the extent of country through

Missing page.

C H A P.
VIII.

1776.

Vigour of
congress.

Notwithstanding the perilous situation of their affairs, congress were not dispirited. They proceeded with the utmost vigour and activity to repair their losses, and to remedy the defect in their military system. They ordered a new army to be raised, the soldiers of which, instead of serving one year, should be bound for three, or during the continuance of the present disturbances. This army was to consist of eighty-eight battalions, to be furnished and maintained by the respective colonies, according to the following proportion: Virginia and Massachusetts were to furnish fifteen battalions each; Pennsylvania, twelve—North Carolina, nine—South Carolina, six—Connecticut, eight—Maryland, eight—Rhode Island, two—Delaware, one—New Hampshire, three—and Georgia, one. New York and Jersey being partly in the enemy's possession, were only assessed at four battalions each.

Encourage-
ment to enlist
in the Ame-
rican army.

As an inducement to men to enlist, the following liberal offers were made: Each soldier was to have a bounty of twenty dollars, besides an allotment of lands at the end of the war to all who survived, or to the families of those who should fall in the service. The allotment of a common soldier was to be one hundred acres—of an ensign, one hundred and fifty—of a lieutenant, two hundred—a captain, three hundred—a major, four hundred—a lieutenant-colonel, four hundred and fifty—and a colonel, five hundred. This allotment, however, was not to extend to those who enlisted only for three years. In addition to these offers, congress forbade any one to purchase the allotment of lands belonging to another, in order that by this prohibition each soldier might procure for himself a decent maintenance when the public should no longer want his professional assistance. In order to provide for the support of such a large body as was proposed to be raised, congress borrowed a loan of five millions of dollars at four per cent. interest.

The

The British troops at this period were masters of the Jerseys, and separated from Pennsylvania, and the capital Philadelphia, only by the Delaware. In this critical situation, congress thought it advisable to publish an appeal to the inhabitants of the several colonies, in order to remind them of their assurances of protection and support. In this appeal they were entreated not to forget that activity and unanimity were absolutely necessary to ensure welfare and success to the common cause. They travelled over the same grounds they had formerly done, with respect to a recapitulation of the grievances they had suffered, and the manner in which they had been treated by the mother-country. They insisted that nothing short of an absolute submission would satisfy the demands of their enemies, and they desired an answer to this question: Which of the two alternatives was preferable—resistance or slavery? The appeal next adverted to recent transactions, and contended that the success of the British arms had been greatly exaggerated, and dearly purchased. In conclusion, congress assured them of the assistance of foreign powers, and exhorted them to prepare for a vigorous defence of those objects which must be dear to every man. This appeal produced the desired effect. The people of America determined to contribute every possible assistance to the common cause; and for that purpose exerted themselves with astonishing activity in procuring reinforcements of men for the army under the command of general Washington.

Winter was now approaching fast. The Delaware was expected to be soon frozen, and it was not doubted but that the British troops only waited for this event in order to cross it and attack Philadelphia. The friends of congress, therefore, with good reason, began to entertain apprehensions for the safety of that body, which on this account retired to Baltimore in Maryland. The city of Philadelphia by their departure was thrown into confusion. As long as congress resided there,

C H A P.
VIII.

1776.
Congress appeal with effect to the American people.

C H A P.
VIII.

1776.

there, those who were attached to Great Britain were under the necessity of submitting to a power which they could not resist. The operation of this cause had no sooner ceased than they avowed their attachment openly, and used every endeavour to acquire fresh adherents to the British cause. Their attempts were not unsuccessful. Many of the inhabitants quitted Philadelphia, and claimed the benefit of the proclamation recently made by the commissioners. Others, who, though well affected to Great Britain, did not think proper to leave the city, made use of every artifice to prevent its being put into a proper state of defence, according to the directions of congress before their departure. These attempts occasioned violent animosities and disturbances; to put an end to which, general Washington was reduced to the necessity of dispatching a considerable detachment of the trivial force which now remained under his command.

The situation of the Americans was now almost desperate. General Washington, though reinforced by the junction of general Lee's army, had not five thousand men under his command; many of whom were raw and inexperienced, and all were dispirited by disappointment and defeat. An hostile army, flushed with conquest and success, lay on the opposite side of the Delaware, within twenty miles of him. Winter was approaching fast. The Delaware would be frozen; and the only obstacle that prevented the enemy from attacking him would then be removed. Thus situated, he resolved to adopt a desperate expedient; and indeed the necessity of the case left him only the alternative of adopting such a measure, or of submitting to the enemy. He knew the manner in which the British army was disposed; that it was stationed in extensive cantonments; and therefore could not easily be condensed, in a short period, into one body capable of resisting the attack of the men under his command. Besides, he wished to obtain for Philadelphia a temporary

porary security, by inducing the enemy to quit the vicinity of the Delaware.

C H A P.
VIII.
1776.

It has been already said that the barriers at Trenton and Bordenton were defended by Hessian troops under the command of colonel Rhalle and count Donop. These posts general Washington determined to attack. But in order to draw colonel Donop from his post at Bordenton, and to prevent him from affording any support to Colonel Rhalle, at the time of the intended assault, he sent a corps of four hundred and fifty militia, many of whom were boys picked up in Philadelphia, and the counties of Gloucester and Salem, to Mount Holly, with orders not to fight, but to take to flight the moment when the effect of the manœuvre should take place. The plan succeeded. Colonel Donop marched against this insignificant detachment of the American force, with the whole of his party, to the number of two thousand men, with the exception of eighty, left at Bordenton, down to Mount Holly, twelve miles from his own station, and eighteen from Trenton, the post he ought to have been near, for the purpose of supporting it in case of danger. The small American party, on his approach, immediately fled and dispersed; and yet Donop, instead of returning straight to support colonel Rhalle, loitered two days in the neighbourhood of Burlington, without the smallest semblance of necessity. Washington discerned the fit moment for enterprise, and embraced it. He divided his troops into three parts, which were to assemble on the banks of the Delaware on the night of the twenty-fifth of December. Two of these divisions were led by generals Irwing and Cadwallader. The third, which was the principal division, was commanded by himself in person. It consisted of two thousand five hundred men, and was furnished with a few field-pieces. General Washington was attended by generals Sullivan and Green. The first division was ordered to pass the river at Trenton

General
Washington
surprises the
British troops
at Trenton.

C H A P.
VIII.

1776.

Ferry, a mile below the town—the second near Bordenton—and the third at Mackenzie's Ferry, nine miles above Trenton. The Delaware had already begun to be frozen, and the boats that carried this last division found it difficult to make their way through the ice. Other inconveniencies which the men encountered after they landed delayed their march so long, that they did not arrive at the destined place before eight o'clock on the morning of the twenty-sixth of December. As soon as general Washington had landed he divided his men into two detachments, which were ordered to proceed to Trenton by the two roads that led to it; the upper, or Pennington road; and the lower, or River road.

The Hessians, since they had been quartered at Trenton, had given way to a laxity of discipline, and an inattention that proceeded from a knowledge of the enervated situation of the enemy, and of the improbability of their adopting any offensive measures against them. It is not therefore wonderful that they neglected the means of securing themselves from a surprise, nor that the Americans were suffered to proceed on their march without molestation. The first intelligence that the Hessians received of their approach was from an advanced post in the upper road, and the out-guards on the lower road, both of which were under the necessity of retreating into the town with the utmost celerity. Rhalle, with all possible speed, endeavoured to collect his troops during the night; but many of his men were absent on pillaging parties, and those who were on the spot were more busily employed in securing their plunder in waggons than in putting the town in a proper state of defence. The enemy took advantage of this confusion, and possessed themselves of the different avenues, where they placed their field-pieces, and thence began to pour a heavy fire upon the dismayed and astonished Hessians. By activity and diligence Rhalle
assembled

assembled the best part of his three regiments, with which he charged the enemy with great courage, but receiving a mortal wound in the commencement of the engagement, his troops refused to continue it, and endeavoured to retreat to Prince Town. Being disappointed, however, in this attempt, they were under the necessity of surrendering prisoners of war. The number of killed and wounded on both sides was inconsiderable. The number of prisoners amounted to near one thousand. The two other divisions of general Washington's army were not so successful. The quantity of ice in the Delaware was so great, where they attempted to cross it, that they found the task impracticable. Had this not been the case, their success would have been complete; for these divisions would have prevented the chasseurs and light-horse from escaping to Bordenton, and also have made themselves masters of all the cantonments on the side of the river. General Washington, in consequence of this failure in the other divisions, judged it improper to prosecute his intentions further. He therefore repassed the Delaware on the evening of the twenty-sixth, carrying with him his prisoners, and all the artillery of which he had made himself master at Trenton.

The Americans had hitherto beheld the Hessians with fear and dismay. They knew that they were veterans, and in the highest state of discipline. This victory, however, gained over those strangers, animated them to a surprising degree, and revived that spirit which had for some time been decreasing. The Hessians were dispatched to Philadelphia, and carried through the different streets of that city, in order to convince the inhabitants that the success of the American arms was not, as many industriously suggested, pretended or fictitious. The loss of Trenton was very generally imputed to the misconduct of the commander in chief. It was al-

C H A P.
VIII.
1776.

leged that the principal barrier should not have been committed to the care of foreigners; that it was extremely reprehensible to neglect throwing up some defensible works in order to prevent a surprize; and that the extent of the cantonments was so enlarged, as already observed, as to render every idea of conveying assistance from one cantonment to another totally impracticable. Rhalle, though brave, was totally unfit for the station he held. He was obstinate, passionate, and incessantly intoxicated with strong liquors. The commander in chief affected to throw the blame of the appointment of Rhalle to the command at Trenton on general De Heister.

Sir William Howe has been very severely censured for having given the command of this post to a foreigner, unacquainted with the language, customs, or manners, of the people. He was liable to be imposed on by the country people in any information he might want; and little could be expected from colonel Rhalle in the way of conciliation accompanying that of armed force, the only way in which final success was to be expected. For whoever casts his eye on the map of the vast continent of America must readily perceive that force of arms alone, unaccompanied by conciliatory measures, must be wild and chimerical. When the enemy had arrived in the town the troops in the British service were solely occupied in securing their plunder in waggons, and many of them were actually made prisoners while engaged in this shameful avocation.

Though the success of general Washington, in his attack on Trenton, had surpassed his most sanguine expectations, he yet dreaded every moment the approach of the troops under general Leslie, from Prince Town, and of colonel Donop from Mount Holly, and fled with the utmost precipitation to his winter-quarters on the west

side of the Delaware. Of taking up quarters in New Jersey he never entertained a thought: Not doubting but the British commander, with a force so greatly superior to his own, would re-occupy the important posts on the Delaware, and fortify them so strongly as to put it out of his power to retake them. Nor was Washington, as yet, sufficiently acquainted with the character of Sir William Howe, to suppose it possible that this commander might pursue a different line of conduct. To recover and fortify his chain of posts on the Delaware was necessary, in order to keep alive the panic already diffused throughout all the colonies, and support the spirits of the well-affected to government. It was necessary to the preservation of West New Jersey, just conquered: It was necessary, in order to convince the enemy that the British troops, although they might be surprised, were not to be intimidated or discouraged from action: And, finally, it was practicable without danger, as those troops were, at that crisis, six times more in number, as well as superior in point of military discipline and experience, to the feeble force that opposed them. But instead of an immediate movement of the two nearest corps, to regain what had been so strangely lost, Colonel Donop abandoned his post, and hastened to join General Leslie at Prince Town. These officers, united, were much superior in force to General Washington: Yet, though there was no enemy in New Jersey to disturb them, they were permitted to remain for some time wholly inactive. The two main barriers of the British power on the Delaware being left unguarded and defenceless, and the conduct of the British commander betraying manifest irresolution, if not infatuation, General Washington, after an interval of eight days, was encouraged again to cross the Delaware, and march to Trenton at the head of four thousand men.

C H A P.
VIII.
1776.

C H A P.
VIII.

1776.

January
1777.

The British commander in chief was now seriously alarmed. The British and auxiliary troops, with the forces at Brunswick under general Grant, advanced to Prince Town; and lord Cornwallis, who was on the point of sailing for England, was immediately ordered to leave New York, and take the command of the Jersey army. As soon as his lordship joined general Grant, he marched to attack the enemy at Trenton. General Washington, on his approach, retired from the town, and crossing a rivulet at the back of it, posted himself on some high grounds, seemingly with a determination of defending them. Both armies immediately commenced a severe cannonade, which continued till night. Lord Cornwallis determined to renew the attack next morning, but general Washington resolved not to hazard a battle. About two in the morning of the third of January he retreated with profound silence, leaving his fires burning, his pickets advanced, and several small parties for the purpose of guarding the passage of the rivulet. Quitting the main road, he took a large circuit through Allentown, and proceeded to Prince Town, which place he intended to surprise. When lord Cornwallis quitted Prince Town, he left lieutenant-colonel Mawhood to defend it with the seventeenth, the fortieth, and the fifty-fifth regiments. On the third of January however, orders were transmitted him to march with the seventeenth and fifty-fifth regiments to Maidenhead, a village midway between Prince Town and Trenton. General Washington had used such expedition in his march, that at sun-rise his van came up with colonel Mawhood's detachment, which had just begun its march. The morning was so foggy, that the enemy were at first supposed to be Hessians: Colonel Mawhood soon discovering that it was part of the American army, immediately conjectured that general Washington had retreated from lord Cornwallis, and was on his march to Prince Town. A brook separated

Missing page.

C H A P.
VIII.
1777.

ricans much more. Among the killed, on the part of the latter, was a general Mercer, whose loss was extremely lamented. The fortieth and fifty-fifth regiments being unable to make good their way to Maidenhead, effected a retreat to Brunswick, with the loss of near one half their number. The Americans at the same time took possession of Prince Town. As soon as daylight appeared, on the third of January, lord Cornwallis discovered the retreat of the American army, and entertaining apprehensions for the safety of Brunswick, which was in a defenceless situation, resolved to march instantly to its relief. On the approach of his lordship, general Washington retreated from Prince Town, and proceeded to Brunswick. Brigadier Matthews, the commanding officer of the garrison, being informed of his approach, took the precaution to send away the immense quantity of stores that had been placed there for the use of the army, and with his small detachment posted himself on some high grounds commanding the town, intending to check the progress of the enemy, in order to cover the retreat of the store-waggons, which were hurrying along the Rariton to a bridge about two miles distant from the town. The captive general Lee, who was confined in Brunswick, was at the same time dispatched across the Rariton in company with these waggons.

Notwithstanding the expedition that general Washington used in his march to Brunswick, yet his rear was hard pressed by the van of the English army. He therefore resolved to relinquish his designs on Brunswick, and crossed the Millstone river, breaking down the bridge at King's Town to evade a pursuit.

The army under lord Cornwallis, harassed and fatigued, declined pursuing the enemy, and proceeded to Brunswick. Whilst Cornwallis, for the necessary refreshment of his troops, remained in this town, general Washington over-ran both East and West Jersey, spreading his army over the Rariton, and penetrating into Essex County, where he
made

made himself master of the coast opposite to Staten Island, by seizing Newark, Elizabeth Town, and Woodbridge. His head-quarters he fixed at Morris Town. This place is situated amongst hills which are difficult of access. A fine country was in his rear, whence he could draw supplies, and through which he could at any time secure an easy passage over the Delaware.

C H A P.
VIII.
1777.

By such judicious movements did general Washington not only save Philadelphia and Pennsylvania, but recover the greatest part of the Jerseys, in defiance of an army infinitely superior to his, in discipline, resources, and numbers. Of all their recent extensive possessions in the Jerseys, the English retained now only the posts of Brunswick and Amboy; the first situated on the banks of the Rariton; the second on a point of land at its mouth. Both places have an open communication with New York by sea.

In all these transactions there was something inexplicable, to the rational part of mankind. They could not, by any well-founded arguments, defend the manner in which the troops were cantoned. They could not account for so slender an establishment being left on the two barriers of Trenton and Bordenton. At the first place Rhalle had only twelve hundred Hessians; at the second, count Donop's force exceeded not two thousand. The neglecting to fortify these posts nearest the enemy, and most in danger, seemed to them unpardonable: The placing the British in the greatest numbers farthest from the enemy; the not retaking the posts on the banks of the Delaware, which posts covered the whole province of Jersey: All these circumstances were generally animadverted on with much severity. Men of plain sense could not understand why the commander in chief, at the head of thirty thousand veteran troops, should suffer an undisciplined army, not amounting to a sixth part of his own numbers, to remain in a province so lately in his firm possession; and not only to remain there, but to compel him to abandon that province. When
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Inactivity of
the British
army.

C H A P.
VIII.

1777.

the adherents of administration reflected on the dreadful consequences that must arise from this erroneous conduct, they were reduced to a situation of grief and despair.

General Washington, with his usual sagacity, perceived that, during the winter of 1776, his situation required enterprise and daring expedients; which, while they harassed the British army, would keep his little force in action, and prevent the minds of his men from yielding to the fatal effects of despondence. Small as his force was, he always posted himself near the British army. He was incessantly insulting, surprising, and cutting off their pickets and advanced guards; firm and undaunted amidst want, inclemency of weather, and difficulty and danger of every kind. Amboy and Brunswick were in a manner besieged. In this unfavourable and indecisive warfare it is supposed that more of the British were sacrificed than would have been lost in an attack on general Washington's whole force, which, at this period, was less than four thousand men, most of them undisciplined and inexperienced, and such as might have been defeated and dispersed by a fifth part of the British army.

Sir William Howe suffered such an enemy, so greatly inferior to his own, as then opposed him, to remain for six months within twenty-five miles of his head-quarters, without molestation, and without taking any means to revenge the insults that were offered daily to the army under his command.

It has been alleged in defence of sir William Howe's inactivity and passive demeanour, that he had to attack an enemy, posted in a country containing numberless inaccessible posts, and strong natural barriers formed by the various combinations of woods, mountains, rivers, lakes, and marshes; and that these circumstances might be said to fight the battles of the inhabitants of such countries in a defensive war. Allowing the validity of this argument, still it will neither acquit the

the commander in chief of the charge of impolicy, in not crossing the Delaware after the capture of Forts Lee and Washington, nor in the several other instances already mentioned.

C H A P.
VIII.
1776.

These successful operations on the part of the Americans were immediately followed by a proclamation, in the name of general Washington, absolving all those who had been induced to take the oaths of allegiance tendered by the British commissioners, and promising them protection on condition of their subscribing to a form of oath prescribed by congress. The effects of this proclamation were almost instantaneous. The inhabitants of the Jerseys, who had conceived a violent hatred to the British army, on account of their unchecked course of plundering, instantly renounced their allegiance to Great Britain, and attached themselves to the cause of America. Several who were resolved to avenge their wrongs, joined the army under general Washington, while others rendered equal service to the side to which they attached themselves, by supplying the American army with provisions and fuel, and by conveying intelligence of the operations of the British army at Brunswick and Amboy.

Well-timed
proclamation
by general
Washington.

In consequence of their assistance, general Washington was enabled to harass the English greatly. The excursions which the garrison of Brunswick made for forage, were often attended with fatal consequences; and as the American army had extended their line of cantonments from Morris Town to Woodbridge, within three miles of Amboy, the provisions that were forced to be conveyed by land to Brunswick were often cut off by parties of the enemy, who were always on the watch, and to whom intelligence was regularly conveyed by those persons who inhabited the space of ground between Amboy and Brunswick. General Howe too, as has been observed, had issued proclamations, calling upon the inhabitants to join him, in supporting his majesty's government, and promising

Howe's con-
duct contrast-
ed with that
of Washing-
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C H A P.
VIII.

1776.

them protection in both person and property. But no sooner had the army entered the Jerseys, than the business (we say business, for it was a perfect trade) of plunder began. The friend and the foe, from the hand of rapine, shared alike. The people's property was taken, without being paid for, or even a receipt given, which would have been evidence that such property was taken; leaving the payment or non-payment to be determined by the issue of the war, and the political merit of the parties. The British army foraged indiscriminately, procuring considerable supplies of hay, oats, Indian corn, cattle, and horses; which were never or but very seldom paid for. Nevertheless the expences of the extraordinaries of the army were rapidly increasing, and ultimately swelled to a most unparalleled and alarming amount.

Before the disaster at Trenton, the people of the Jerseys were well affected to his majesty's government. Numbers joined the royal army; and two brigades of provincials were raised for the British service, who, on many subsequent occasions, discharged their duty with all the zeal of good subjects, and the bravery of veteran soldiers. But when the people found that the promised protection was not afforded them; that their property was seized, and most wantonly destroyed; that, in many instances, their families were insulted, stripped of their beds, with other furniture—nay, even of their very wearing apparel; they then determined to try the other side, trusting that they would at least, at one period or other, receive compensation for the supplies taken from them for the use of the American army. And it is but justice to say that the Americans never took any thing from their friends, but in cases of necessity; in which cases they uniformly gave receipts for what they did take, always living, as long as they could, upon their enemies; and never suffering their troops to plunder their friends with impunity. But at the same time it is to be noticed, that the American troops

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were

were suffered to plunder the loyalists, and to exercise with impunity every act of barbarity on that unfortunate class of people; frequently inflicting on them even scourges and stripes.

C H A P.
VIII.
1776.

In this manner ended the campaign of 1776; in the course of which it has been sufficiently seen, how advantages were neglected on the one part, and trivial occurrences rendered highly beneficial on the other; and, what activity and perseverance can effect, even with inferiority of strength, when opposed to negligence and inertness.

C H A P. IX.

Proceedings of Congress—They determine to renounce all Dependence on Great Britain—Sketch of a new American Government.

C H A P.
IX.
1776.

IN the midst of these operations in the Jerseys, congress were not idle. Though they could not afford at present much assistance to general Washington, they resolved to strengthen the band of union between the thirteen colonies, by putting the last hand to the famous system of confederacy.

Hitherto their system of conduct had proceeded upon certain suppositions of a reconciliation with the parent state. Those suppositions, however, were now superseded by the determination that had been made to renounce all dependence upon Great Britain, and to erect the colonies into sovereign states. In consequence of this determination, a permanent form of government, relinquishing every idea of a subordinate connection with the parent state, was absolutely necessary to be settled. A committee appointed to prepare a new form of government, in the outset of their composition, made the following alteration in the appellation of the colonies: Whereas they had hitherto styled themselves the United Colonies; they now assumed the name of the United States of America. The constitution proposed by this committee, was in substance as follows:

American congress determine to renounce all dependence on Great Britain.

Sketch of a new American government.

1. That each colony should bind itself to assist the rest, and to repel the attacks that might be made upon them on any pretence whatever.

2. That

2. That each state should possess the power of regulating its own internal government, and of making laws in all cases; provided they did not interfere with the general safety and welfare of the common cause.

C H A P.
IX.
1776.

3. That all negotiations, alliances, and treaties, should be submitted to the consideration of the United States assembled in general congress; and that no state in particular was to infringe the provisions of this article on any pretence whatever.

4. That it should be criminal in any person, possessing authority under the United States, to accept presents, gratuities, employments, or titles, from any foreign power.

5. That no titles of nobility should be conferred by the general assembly of the United States, or the assembly of any particular states.

6. That none of the states were to form alliances or private treaties among themselves, without the consent of the United States.

7. That no duties or imposts were to be established in any state, which might tend to infringe the provisions of any treaty which the general assembly might think proper to enter into with any foreign power.

8. That no particular state was to increase its naval establishment beyond the number prescribed for each state by the general assembly. That the military establishment should be governed by the same regulation. That a well-disciplined militia was to be kept up in every state, adequately armed and equipped; and that the public magazines should always contain a sufficient number of field-pieces, tents, and other necessary implements of war.

9. That all officers of the rank of colonel, and under, should be appointed by the legislative body of each state.

10. That the expences of war should be defrayed out of the general treasury of the United States.

11. That

C H A P.
IX.

1776.

11. That in order to constitute a public fund, adequate to any particular exigencies, each of the states should contribute a certain sum, in proportion to the number of its inhabitants (Indians excepted). That this number might be now precisely determined, it was provided that the inhabitants of each state should be numbered every three years. This enumeration was then to be sent to the general assembly of the United States.

12. The assessment determined on by this enumeration was to be paid by taxes levied by the authority of the legislative body of each state.

13. When any question was submitted to the decision of the general assembly, by any particular state, that decision was to be binding.

14. War was not to be commenced without the consent of the general assembly, except in cases of invasion, or where it was known that an invasion was intended, and the danger was too pressing to obtain the consent of the general assembly.

15. Commissions to vessels or letters of marque and reprisal were not to be granted by any particular state, till after a declaration of war by the general assembly.

16. For the general interest of the United States, each state was to nominate a certain number of delegates, who were to meet at Philadelphia on the first Monday in November of each year.

17. To each state was to be attached the power of recalling their delegates, at any part of the year, and of appointing others in their room. The delegates of each state were to be maintained at the expence of that state, during the sitting of the general assembly, and also as long as they were members of the council of state.

18. Each state was to have a vote for the decision of questions in the general assembly.

19. To

19. To the general assembly alone was to belong the right of deciding on peace and war; to determine in all cases of capture, whether by sea or land; to constitute tribunals for the trial of piracies; to appoint and receive ambassadors; to negotiate treaties; to decide the differences between each state; to coin money; to regulate commerce; to treat in all matters concerning the Indians; to appoint general officers of the land and naval forces; and to direct the operations of both in time of war.

C H A P.
IX.
1776.

20. A council of state was to be appointed by the general assembly, and also such committees and civil officers as should be necessary to dispatch the public business during their sitting. The public affairs were to be under the direction of the council of state, after the rising of the general assembly.

21. The president and other officers were to be appointed by the general assembly, to which were to belong the right and power of fixing the sums necessary to be raised for the public defence, and of determining the application of those sums; of borrowing money and of creating bills; of building and fitting out fleets; of deciding on the number of troops necessary to be raised; of calling upon each state for its proportion of military assistance, and of requiring it to arm and equip the forces raised in obedience to this requisition, in a proper manner.

22. The general assembly was to be allowed the power of demanding of any particular state more than its just proportion; and compliance with this power was not to be refused, unless the legislative body of the state should deem such compliance to be injurious to its security and safety.

23. The general assembly was not to exercise any of the powers contained in the twenty-first article, unless nine of the thirteen states should consent to it. On every point whatever, a decision should be made by the majority of the United States.

24. No

C H A P.
IX.
1776.

24. No delegate was to be chosen for more than three years out of six.

25. No person possessed of any employment, or receiving a salary, or wages, was eligible to the office of a delegate.

26. The general assembly was to publish, monthly, a journal of their proceedings, except what might relate to treaties, alliances, or military operations, which it should be deemed necessary to keep secret.

27. The council of state was to consist of one delegate of each state, chosen by the other delegates of the said state.

Article 28th related to the powers of the council of state, which, during the adjournment of the general assembly, were similar to those allowed to the general assembly.

29. If Canada should be willing to accede to the present system of confederation, it was to be allowed all the benefits of it, and to be admitted into the union. No other colony, however, was to be admitted but by the consent of nine of the United States.

The foregoing articles were to be submitted to the legislative bodies of each state. If they approved of them, they were to authorise their delegates to ratify them in the general assembly: Thus ratified, the provisions of them were to be implicitly obeyed by all, and an eternal union was thus to be established. Such were the conditions of this celebrated treaty of union. After they had been prepared by the committee, they were submitted to congress, and solemnly discussed. Having received the approbation of congress, they were transmitted to the different colonies, and then ratified by all the delegates, who signed them on the fourth of October 1776.

October.

Such cool, deliberate, and resolute conduct was the more remarkable, that congress had now to contend with an additional enemy. This enemy was the Indians.—It has been shewn how unsuccessful every attempt had hitherto proved to detach the southern colonies

nies from the support of the common cause to their own immediate defence, by involving them in civil war through the means of the Regulators and Highland emigrants in the Carolinas, or of the negroes in Virginia. It has also been shewn that the provincials adduced these attempts as charges against their several governors. Unsuccessful, however, as these endeavours had hitherto been, the consequences that would result from such a plan of operations were too important to be neglected. British agents were again employed in engaging the Indians to make a diversion, and to enter the southern colonies on their back and defenceless parts. Accustomed to their dispositions and habits of mind, the agents found but little difficulty in bringing them over to their purpose by dint of presents, and hopes of spoil and plunder. The plan of action that was to be adopted in consequence of this consent, on the part of the Indians, was as follows: A large body of men was to be sent to West Florida, in order to penetrate through the territories of the Creeks, Cherokees, and Checkesaw Indians. The warriors of these nations were to join the body, and the Carolinas and Virginia were immediately to be invaded. At the same time the attention of the colonists was to be diverted by another formidable naval and military force, which was to make an impression on the sea-coasts.

But this undertaking was not to depend solely on the British army and the Indians. It was intended to engage the assistance of the white inhabitants of the back settlements, who were known to be well affected to the British cause. Circular letters were accordingly sent to those persons by Mr. Stuart, the principal agent for Indian affairs, requiring not only the well-affected, but also those who wished to preserve their properties from the miseries of civil war, to repair to the royal standard, as soon as it should be erected in the Cherokee country, with all their horses, cattle, and provisions, for which they should be liberally paid. They were

C H A P.
IX.

1776.

likewise required, in order to insure their safety, and to distinguish them from the king's enemies, to subscribe a written declaration of their allegiance. These operations were conducted with such plausibility, that considerable hopes were entertained of their success. Already had a large number of the Indians declared in favour of the English; and even the Six Nations, who had sworn to the observance of a strict neutrality, violated their oaths, and committed several acts of hostility. Matters were not yet ripe for execution, when the Creeks, a bloody and cruel race, eager to partake of the expected plunder, resolved not to await the arrival of the British troops, but to commence the insurrection immediately. They proceeded in the execution of their intentions with incredible barbarity; but finding that they were not supported, and beginning to consider that they should be overpowered if they acted singly, they paused in their career, and, in a consultation among the chiefs, it was determined to desist from hostilities, and to sue for a peace with the colonists. In the present situation of affairs their request was easily complied with, and they returned to their native possessions.

The Cherokees, ignorant of the determination of the Creek Indians, sent them word, as soon as they had completed their preparations, that they were going to march against the enemy, and intreated their assistance. The Creeks, however, returned for answer, "that the Cherokees had plucked the thorn out of their foot, and were welcome to keep it." The Cherokees, notwithstanding this repulse, proceeded to invade the back settlements of Virginia and the Carolinas with inconceivable fury and barbarity; but their career was soon checked. The inhabitants of the provinces of Carolina and Virginia immediately assembled a large militia, which marched with great expedition to the relief of the back settlers. The Cherokees were soon driven from the places of which they had possessed themselves, and pursued into their own country,

country, where their towns, their habitations, and their fields were laid waste, and a prodigious number of their warriors destroyed. In this dreadful dilemma they were glad to accept of any terms the conquerors chose to impose on them. The Checkesaws, who, fortunately for them, had not completed their preparations, as soon as they heard of the ill success that had attended their neighbours, the Creeks and the Cherokees, determined to remain quietly within their own confines. Thus, for the present, ended the designs of the English on the back settlements of America. The event was peculiarly fortunate for congress; for it made them formidable to the Indians, and attached several of the back settlers to their cause, convincing them that they had now nothing to hope from a continuance of their attachment to the government of Great Britain.

The congress, relieved from any apprehensions of an invasion on their frontier settlements, and the grand system of confederation being now ratified, were enabled to concentrate their attention upon general Washington, whose army they laboured with uncommon activity and diligence to supply with the necessaries it wanted, and with new levies of men, in order that the ensuing campaign might be commenced with a proper degree of vigour.

C H A P.
IX.
1776.

C H A P. X.

Situation of Affairs in Canada—General Carleton sends an Armament against Crown Point and Ticonderoga—Force opposed to this by the Americans.

C H A P.
X.
1776.

General
Carleton
equips an ar-
mament
against
Crown Point
and Ticonde-
roga.

THE Americans, though they were under the necessity of relinquishing their designs on Canada, still possessed Crown Point and Ticonderoga, and were masters of Lake Champlain. To dispossess them of these posts was an arduous and a difficult task, inasmuch as the British had not a vessel on Lake Champlain to oppose the American fleet. Difficult however as it was, general Carleton resolved to use every effort to procure a naval force adequate to the importance of the object in view. Thirty vessels were necessary to acquire a superiority of force on the Lake. The largest were sent from England; but it was found necessary to take them to pieces. It was also requisite to transport over land, and drag up the rapid currents of St. Therese and St. John's, with thirty long boats, a number of flat boats of great burthen, a gondola, weighing thirty tons, and above four hundred batteaux.

In spite of the fatigue of the undertaking, and the complexity of difficulty that attended it, the task was completed in about three months. Dispatch indeed was rendered absolutely necessary; for the winter season was approaching, and it was wished that the object should be attained before the severities of the season should render

any attempts of the kind impracticable. The difficulty of the scheme may be conceived from the following relation: The English had to pass two inland seas, to subdue an unknown force on each, and to make themselves masters of Crown Point and Ticonderoga.

C H A P.
X.
1776.

In addition to these impediments, the communication between Lakes George and Champlain would not admit the passage of those vessels of force, which, after being successful on one lake, might be wanted on the other. Should, however, all these difficulties be overcome, then the army would still have to march through intricate forests, deep morasses, swamps, and a country still in a state of nature, before they could arrive at Albany, the first post southward. But the magnitude of the object rendered all these difficulties and dangers light: For general Carleton, in dispossessing the enemy of Crown Point and Ticonderoga, and in securing the possession of Lakes George and Champlain, had not only in view the clearing the frontiers of Canada, but of opening a communication with the northern and middle colonies, which he conceived he could then invade at will. Besides, by possessing Hudson's River, he knew that he should be able to co-operate with general Howe, and to afford him assistance in case of emergency. Added to these advantages, should success attend the present undertaking, the southern would be separated from the northern provinces. The latter would, of course, be under the necessity of sustaining the attacks of two armies, or of yielding to such terms as should be imposed upon them, leaving the southern colonies to continue the war alone. Nor could general Washington then hold the possession of the Jerseys, unless he chose to expose himself to the disadvantageous predicament of encountering a superior army in front, and the Canadian forces in his rear.

About

C H A P.
X.

1776.

About the beginning of October the English fleet was ready to oppose the enemy on Lake Champlain. It consisted of the following vessels: The Inflexible, mounting eighteen twelve-pounders; which vessel had been re-constructed at St. John's in twenty-eight days after her keel had been laid down; one schooner, mounting fourteen, and another twelve, six-pounders; a flat-bottomed batteau, carrying six twenty-four, and the same number of twelve-pounders, besides howitzers; and a gondola, with seven nine-pounders. Twenty smaller vessels, called gun-boats, carried either brass field-pieces, or howitzers. Some long-boats were furnished in the same manner. An equal number of large boats served as transports for the troops, baggage, warlike stores, provisions, and all the other necessaries for the army; that, under convoy of the shipping, was to be conveyed across the lakes. This fleet was commanded by captain Pringle, an active and brave officer, who had under his command seven hundred seamen. The army embarked in the batteaux, which were ordered to keep in the rear as soon as they had entered Lake Champlain, in order that the fleet might reconnoitre the situation of the enemy.

The force opposed to the British armament by the Americans

The force which the Americans had to oppose to this armament was in every respect unequal to it. Their vessels were neither so well constructed nor furnished with necessaries as those of the English; besides, they were inferior in point of number, the fleet amounting only to fifteen vessels of different kinds, consisting of two schooners, one sloop, one cutter, three galleys, and eight gondolas. Colonel Arnold, who had acquired such fame before Quebec, was honoured with the command of it. On the eleventh of October the British fleet discovered that of the enemy, very advantageously posted off the Island Valicour, with an intention of defending the passage between that island and the western main. A schooner

schooner and some gun-boats, being considerably a-head of the rest of the fleet, began the engagement, which was continued for some hours on both sides with great intrepidity. Unfortunately the Inflexible, and the other ships of force, could not advance near enough to take a part in the engagement, on account of the unfavourableness of the wind: For this reason captain Pringle, having consulted general Carleton, thought it advisable to order those that were engaged to sheer off, and, for the present, discontinue the action. In this attack the largest of the enemy's ships was forced a-shore, and one of their gondolas sunk. Night coming on, the enemy retired into Cumberland Bay, and captain Pringle, in order to prevent their retreat, formed the British fleet into a line as near the entrance of the bay as possible.

C H A P.
X.
1776.

defeated.

Arnold, who was fully sensible of the insufficiency of his strength, determined to take advantage of the darkness of the night, and retreat to Crown Point. This determination, notwithstanding the proximity of the British fleet, he was enabled to execute in part. He retired out of the bay undiscovered, and on the morning of the twelfth of October was out of sight. The British fleet immediately followed him, and the wind proving favourable on the thirteenth, he was overtaken a few leagues from Crown Point. Unable to avoid an engagement, Arnold resolved to conduct it with his wonted intrepidity and resolution. About noon the engagement commenced on both sides, and continued with great fury for two hours. Several of Arnold's fleet then left him, and retreated with great speed to Ticonderoga. Arnold, however, refused to follow their pusillanimous example, and, with the remnant of his fleet, still continued to resist the attack of the British with unabated intrepidity. At length victory decided against him. His second largest galley, called the Washington, commanded by brigadier-

C H A P.
X.

1776.

gadier-general Waterby, after a desperate resistance, was at length forced to strike her colours. Finding then, that all his efforts would be ineffectual, he resolved to retreat. But even in this situation he displayed a magnanimity of courage that was astonishing. Though reduced to the necessity of bending under superior power, he resolved that neither his men nor his vessels should be taken. The Congress galley, which he commanded, and five other gondolas, were run a-ground by his orders, and as soon as the men were landed, burnt down to the water's edge. He remained himself on board his own ship till she was set fire to in several places, in order that his flag might not be struck by the English.

This victory on the Lakes was obtained without much loss on the side of the English, two gun-boats only being lost, and not more than fifty men killed and wounded. On the fifteenth of October the British fleet anchored off Crown Point, which the enemy immediately evacuated, retiring to their main body at Ticonderoga. General Carleton disembarking the army at Crown Point, remained there till the third of November. As the winter was advancing fast, he did not think it advisable to attempt the reduction of Ticonderoga. His opinion, however, did not coincide with that of other officers. Ticonderoga is but fifteen miles from Crown Point. It was well known that the fortifications were in no condition to withstand an attack; and indeed, general Gates, convinced of this fact, was prepared to evacuate it, as soon as any measure should be adopted for the investiture of it. With respect to the advanced state of the season, they thought that to be not a very strong argument, because eight days would have been fully sufficient for the attainment of the desired object. The reduction of it would certainly have forwarded the operations of the ensuing campaign, and would have increased the number of loyalists, a body of persons

persons from Albany, well affected to Great Britain, having prepared themselves to join the commander in chief as soon as he should arrive at Ticonderoga. General Carleton remained not long at Crown Point, but returned to St. John's, and placed the army in winter-quarters, Isle aux Noix, being the frontier post, and the cantonments extending through different parts of the country.

C H A P.
X.
1776.

C H A P. XI.

Inevitable Necessity of War in the general Opinion of the British Nation—Distress of the West Indies—Capture of American Privateers—Conduct of France and Spain—Meeting of Parliament—Debates in both Houses.

C H A P.
XI.

1776.

Inevitable necessity of war.

WAR, in the opinion of a great majority of the people of Great Britain, was now inevitable. There was, indeed, a kind of passion for it that pervaded the whole nation; nor could the depredations of the American cruizers, the capture of many richly-laden West India vessels, and the consequent failure of several large houses in the city, retard its operation, or arrest its effect. Such a disposition could not but be extremely agreeable to administration, because it procured them a degree of stability that seemed to defy the attacks of an opposition ill connected, and proceeding on no regular or given line of conduct. In both houses of parliament the force of government was fully adequate to every desire that administration could entertain; nevertheless, a few days before the recess, the upper house received an addition of ten new peers. In every preceding debate on the American war, those who opposed it had always predicted that it would involve the British West India islands in great calamity and distress. Such predictions were then treated as chimerical.

May 14,
1776.

Distress of
the British
West India
islands.

In July, accounts were received of a scarcity in the islands of the necessaries of life, which, on that account, had, within a short period, risen to four times their usual price. Other wants began to multiply; but as they did not immediately relate to a scarcity of necessary sustenance,

sustenance, they were felt less sensibly than otherwise they would have been. In addition to these distresses, the negroes in Jamaica had meditated an insurrection, which, however, was happily crushed before it had attained any dangerous height. Our military strength in Jamaica was but weak, on account of the drafts that had been made for the American service. The naval force was on the point of being employed in convoying home a large fleet of merchantmen, which had completed their homeward-bound investments. Their departure was to be the period at which the insurrection was to commence. By some fortunate event the plan was discovered. The naval force, of course, was detained, and the merchantmen remained a month beyond the time fixed for their departure. After the mutinous spirit of the negroes had been sufficiently quelled, the merchantmen were suffered to depart; but the delay produced the most ruinous consequences. The Americans thereby gained time to equip their privateers, and bad weather separating the fleet, many of our merchantmen, whose cargoes were extremely valuable, fell into their hands. The British nation, by these captures alone, during the year 1776, lost property to the amount of above a million sterling.

C H A P.
XI.
1776.

It was about the middle of this year that France and Spain began to manifest a hostile disposition towards Great Britain. Their ports in Europe were open to the American privateers, and English prizes were sold without any attempts to make such sales secret. Government remonstrated against such proceedings; but their remonstrances were attended but with little effect: For though the open disposal of prizes was checked, yet the practice still continued in secret. In the French West India islands, the countenance given to the Americans was much more avowed. French vessels accepted American commissions, and carried on hostilities against the commerce of Great Britain, even without any American seamen on board. These

Conduct of
France and
Spain.

C H A P.
XI.

1776.

doings were not unknown to the administration of Great Britain; but it was judged necessary that, for a time, the assertion of the national dignity and character should be suspended.

In consequence of these captures by the American cruizers and the French vessels with American commissions, the price of insurance was considerably increased; but that upon vessels bound from the West Indies amounted to the enormous sum of twenty-three pounds per cent.

It was now apparent to all, that Great Britain would not have only one enemy to contend with. Spain and France were busily employed in making warlike preparations; the object of which, it was reasonably supposed, was to co-operate with America. Besides, the hostile disposition of each of the two powers was sufficiently discernible from their treatment of the ally of Great Britain, Portugal. These circumstances were sufficient to infuse into the mind of administration a considerable degree of disquiet and alarm: Nevertheless they prepared to meet the impending storm with resolution, in which, it has been said, and generally believed, they were encouraged and confirmed from a very high quarter. Nor, indeed, is there any thing more natural than that the august personage, now alluded to, conscious of a just cause, breathing the courage of his royal ancestry, and animated by the general vows of his people, should be willing to call forth all the resources, in order to maintain the glory, with the individuality, of the empire; resources which, in spite of all our enemies, would have ultimately led to safety and triumph, if they had been as prudently employed as they were liberally opened. About the middle of October sixteen additional ships were put into commission, and seamen were invited to enter into the service, by a bounty of five pounds per man. A proclamation was issued, commanding all British seamen, who were employed in any foreign service, to return to England: A second and a third were issued,

issued, laying an embargo on the exportation of provisions from Great Britain and Ireland; and the fourth commanded the observance of a fast..

C H A P.
XI.
1776.

On the thirty-first of October 1776, both houses of parliament assembled, and the following is the substance of the speech delivered to them from the throne: It began by assuring them, that it would have afforded his majesty much satisfaction to have been able to inform them that the disturbances in the revolted colonies were at an end, and that the people of America, recovering from their delusion, had returned to their duty; but so mutinous and determined was the spirit of those who led them, that they had openly abjured and renounced all connection and communication with the mother-country, and had rejected, with the utmost contempt, every conciliatory proposition that had been submitted to them. After alluding to the late declaration of congress, in which they had erected the colonies into sovereign and independent states, it was contended that much mischief would accrue, not only to the commerce of Great Britain, but to the general system of Europe, if this rebellion and revolt were suffered to take root. Nevertheless it was asserted, that this benefit would result from the open declaration of the rebellious colonies—that their intentions being now clearly understood, would produce unanimity at home, because every one must be convinced of the necessity of the measures proposed to be adopted. The success of the British arms in Canada, and on the side of New York, was adduced as a good reason for supposing that the most beneficial consequences would arise from it. Another campaign, however, must be prepared for, and the supplies necessary for carrying it on, procured as soon as possible.

Meeting of
parliament.

The conduct of Spain towards the British ally, Portugal, was next adverted to; and it was stated that, though a continuance of the general tranquillity in Europe was hoped, yet it was thought most advisable

C H A P.
 XI.
 1776.

viseable to increase the defensive resources at home. The disposition of other European powers was declared to be pacific. After expressing a conviction of the cheerfulness with which the necessary supplies would be granted, the speech in conclusion assured both houses that his majesty had no other end in view, by his present system of conduct, than to restore the revolted colonies to their former situation of prosperity and security under the dominion of Great Britain. The addresses in answer to this speech were couched in the usual form: Amendments, however, were proposed in both houses.

In the house of commons lord John Cavendish moved an amendment to the following effect: It included an enlarged view of the conduct of administration with respect to America, and expressed great regret at beholding the hearts of a large, and hitherto loyal, portion of his majesty's subjects alienated from his government. This event, it was contended, could not have been produced without great misconduct on the part of those who possessed the direction of the affairs of government; the particulars of which misconduct were stated, at great length, and with much animation, in the house of lords. A similar amendment, proposed by the marquis of Rockingham, was defended by similar arguments. The minister however, as usual, was supported by a large majority. In the house of commons the amendment proposed by lord John Cavendish was rejected by two hundred and forty-two, and supported by only eighty-seven. The original address was then put and carried. In the upper house the friends of the minister were equally numerous. The marquis of Rockingham's motion was negatived by ninety-one lords to twenty-six. The proposed amendment, however, was entered in the Journals of the house, in form of a protest, and signed by fourteen peers. Yet was not the minister supported by a large majority in parliament only: The obstinate and unvarying opposition which the Americans

had shewn towards the mother-country, and the arguments that had been adduced by the adherents of administration, had, in a great manner, estranged the hearts of the people from their brethren in the colonies. Perhaps too, from national pride, which it is not my intention to condemn, they were induced to support the war, from a wish that the mother-country might convince the world that she possessed the means of subduing all who were hardy enough to oppose her.

C H A P.
XI.
1776.

C H A P. XII.

*Proclamation issued by Lord and General Howe—Debates upon it—
The American Laws proposed to be revised by Lord John Cavendish—
This Motion rejected—The Propriety of a partial Seccession considered
—Seamen voted—Naval Affairs—Supplies for the Military and
Naval Service—Recess of Parliament.—1776.*

C H A P.
XII.
1776.

Nov. 6.

SCARCELY had the addresses from both houses been presented to his majesty, when the proclamation issued by lord Howe and his brother, subsequently to the capture of New York, was published in one of the morning papers. This was conceived to be extraordinary, because, although two gazettes had been published the preceding day, no notice had been taken of such a proclamation in either of them. On the day on which the proclamation appeared in the morning paper, lord John Cavendish submitted it to the consideration of the house of commons, though he affected not to consider it in any other light than as a forgery, and an imposition on the people, which required exemplary punishment.

In reply to this speech, the minister acknowledged that such a proclamation had been made, and that the paper now produced contained an authentic copy of it. Lord John Cavendish, on receiving this information, immediately rose with great warmth and indignation. He reprobated the conduct of administration, contending that they had grossly insulted the house by withholding such an important

portant piece of intelligence, and by suffering it to come to the knowledge of the public through the medium of a common paper. But this treatment was not different from that which the minister had thought proper to shew to parliament from the commencement of the American disturbances; a treatment that, whilst the shadow of a constitution remained, and ministers continued to be responsible for their conduct, could not be defended on any grounds or by any arguments whatever. Administration, on the other hand, and their adherents, contended that the promise held out in the proclamation by the commissioners was not novel. It was only pursuing that mode of conduct which had been adopted by parliament at the commencement of the disturbances, viz. the restoration of peace to America. With regard to the insulting treatment with which administration had been charged in not publishing the proclamation in the gazette, it was said, that it seemed not to be of sufficient importance, because it was neither a treaty, nor part of one; it only formed a preliminary, which might eventually lead to one. If, therefore, this preliminary were even important enough to be laid before parliament, ministers were justified in not pursuing such a measure by precedent. The negotiation between Mr. Pitt and M. De Buffy was not laid before the house of commons during its pendency. The motion for a committee was opposed in the most strenuous manner. It was contended that it would tend rather to impede than accelerate the negotiations of the commissioners, and to infuse into the minds of the Americans improper jealousies and apprehensions. Besides, it would be impolitic to seem too fond of conceding; for the Americans would then demand more than they might originally intend. Another, and most forcible, objection to the motion was, that it would be absurd to consider of the revival or repeal of laws, the authority of which was denied in the most unqualified manner. America had declared herself inde-

C H A P.
XII.
1776.

C H A P.
XII.

1776.

pendent. The first point therefore to be settled, preliminary to any negotiation, was the question of independence. As long as she persisted in this independence, no treaty could be begun, and all concessions would be dishonourable. If she consented to give it up, and to acknowledge the authority of the mother-country, then would be the proper season to revise and repeal obnoxious laws, and to establish regulations consonant with the rights of those who were to be bound by them. From the approaching campaign much was to be expected. The tyranny of the congress would operate in favour of the British cause, and the acknowledged superiority of the British troops, both in number and in discipline, would produce consequences favourable to the mother-country, and likely to put a speedy termination to the war. After a very long and interesting debate, the motion was put, and the house divided: Forty-seven supported the motion, and one hundred and nine voted against it.

Secession of
members of
the house of
commons.

The rejection of this motion produced an extraordinary effect. Several members of the minority withdrew themselves whenever any questions relative to America were discussed. They did not wholly refrain from attending the house; but as soon as the private business of the day was dispatched, they made their usual obeisance to the speaker, and retired. Thus, for some time, all debates upon important subjects were avoided, and vast supplies were granted without a single observation with respect to their tendency, or the purposes to which they were to be applied. The members who seceded adduced the following reasons in justification of their conduct: As affairs were at present situated, all opposition to the propositions of government, with respect to American affairs, was not only fruitless, but contemptible, on account of the numbers that supported the minister on every question. They were tired with opposing reason and argument to superior power and numbers. This conduct, however, of the seceding members, did not receive the approbation

of

of the opposition in general. Several contended that a partial secession was inconsistent with the duties attached to the situation of a member of parliament. A collective secession had been sanctioned by a precedent in the reign of the first Charles, but it ought always to be general.

C H A P.
XII.
1776.

The disunion occasioned by this difference of opinion, added greatly to the strength of administration, and contributed not a little to increase the number of those who supported the continuance of the war. When the minister, in a committee of supply, proposed that forty-five thousand seamen should be voted for the service of the ensuing year, Mr. Luttrell, a member in opposition, seized the opportunity of reprobating, in very severe terms, the conduct of the peer who possessed the rank of first lord of the admiralty. He charged him with wilfully imposing on the parliament and the nation by a fallacious account of the state of the navy both with respect to the ships and the seamen. The minister, in reply to these observations, vindicated the conduct of the peer alluded to, and contended that it was improper to attack a person who, from his station, could not defend himself in that house. He also alleged, that the introduction of the accusation, without any previous notice, was disorderly, and inconsistent with the rule of parliament.

Extraordi-
nary supplies.

Mr. Luttrell, however, insisted that, as a member of parliament, he had a right to make such observations on the conduct of ministers as appeared to him to be well-founded. With respect to the want of a formal accusation, he would remove all objections on that head when the house should be resumed. Accordingly he took the earliest opportunity of moving for several returns of the navy. These, he contended, would establish the charges he had adduced against the noble lord, and convince the house what was the real state of the naval resources of the country. These returns, however, were refused by administration, and their refusal was supported

C H A P. on the following grounds: It was contended that a disclosure of the naval strength or weakness of the country would be attended with injurious consequences, inasmuch as, if Great Britain were superior to other powers, they would be induced to be more circumspect in their designs, and if she were weaker than them, they would thereby be encouraged to take advantage of our defenceless situation.

XII.
1776.

The supplies for the navy, granted this year, amounted to three millions two hundred and five thousand five hundred and five pounds; including the ordinary, at four hundred thousand pounds; and the expences of building and repairing ships, at four hundred and sixty-two thousand five hundred pounds. In this account, however neither the sum voted to Greenwich hospital, nor the million granted at the close of the session for the discharge of the navy debt, were included. The supplies for the military establishment amounted to a sum little less than the supplies for the navy—the amount was three millions. The extraordinaries, however, of the preceding year, amounting to one million two hundred thousand pounds, with fresh contracts for German forces, expences of half-pay and Chelsea hospital, were not included in the gross sum. All the necessary public business being dispatched on the thirteenth of December, both houses adjourned to the twenty-first of January.

Adjournment of parliament.

C H A P. XIII.

Letters of Marque and Reprisal Bill—Bill for securing Persons charged with High-Treason—Debates upon it—Amendment proposed by Mr. Dunning—Agreed to—The Bill carried through both Houses—Extraordinary unprovided Expences of the War voted—Motion for an Address to the Throne by the Earl of Chatham—Rejected—Prorogation of the Parliament.—1777.

AS soon as the parliament met after the recess, a bill was passed, authorising any owners or captains of private merchant-ships to make prizes of all vessels belonging to the thirteen American colonies.

On the sixth of February, the minister moved in the house of commons for leave to bring in a bill, to secure and detain persons charged with, or suspected of, the crime of high-treason, committed in America or on the high seas, or the crime of piracy. In support of his motion he observed that, during the present disturbances, prisoners had been made in the actual commission of the crime of high-treason; others, suspected of the same crime, could not be secured, on account of the want of sufficient evidence. Formerly, in cases of rebellion and revolt, and when an invasion was apprehended, parliament granted this power to the crown; but in the present period, as neither rebellion at home, nor invasion from abroad, were in danger of being experienced, he should not request that power in its full extent. The law now did not empower government officially to apprehend the most suspected person, nor could the crown confine rebel prisoners or pirates in any other place than in the com-

C H A P.
XIII.

1777.
Letters of
marque and
reprisal bill.

Bill for secur-
ing persons
charged with
high-treason.

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C H A P.
XIII.

1777.

Debate upon
it.Amendment
proposed by
Mr. Dun-
ning.

mon gaols. To remedy these inconveniences, and to empower his majesty to confine such persons in the same manner as other prisoners of war, until criminal proceedings could be instituted against them, were the objects proposed to be attained by the present bill. Leave was given for the introduction of the bill: On the question for the second reading of it, it appeared that the enacting clause rendered all persons taken in the act of high-treason, or suspected of it, liable to be committed to prison without bail or trial, during the continuance of the law. When the question was put, a gentleman of great eminence in his profession (Mr. Dunning) animadverted severely on the conduct of the minister, in attempting, when the house was thinly attended, to introduce and precipitate the passage of a bill, which was to undermine that bulwark of the constitution, the Habeas Corpus act. Time, he contended, ought to be given to the nation to consider whether they would surrender the foundation and corner-stone of all the rights which they possessed. For these reasons, and in order to prevent the second reading of the bill, he moved that it should be printed; in which the minister was under the necessity of acquiescing. The introduction of this bill recalled several of those members who had seceded from the house. In every stage through which the bill passed, it was violently opposed by the minority, who contended that no reason existed for investing the crown with so dangerous a power; that it would tend to widen the breach between the mother-country and the colonies, and cut off all hopes of a conciliation of the differences between them. Besides, it was contended, that the power might be extended to innocent persons, and would thereby become an instrument of tyranny and oppression. Several amendments were proposed, all of which were rejected, except one on the third reading, proposed by Mr. Dunning. The amendment was contained in the following clause: " Provided also, and be it hereby declared, that nothing herein
" contained

“ contained is intended, or shall be construed to extend to the case
 “ of any other prisoner or prisoners, than such as have been in some
 “ one of the colonies before mentioned, or on the high seas, at the
 “ time or times of the offence or offences wherewith he or they
 “ shall be charged.” The amendment, with some trifling alteration,
 was agreed to. The acceptance of this clause afforded great joy to
 the minority, who considered the bill as divested thereby of the
 most dangerous tendency. Nevertheless they still continued to op-
 pose the principle of the bill with undiminished vigour and unwea-
 ried perseverance. In this, however, they were unsuccessful, and
 the bill was passed without a division.

C H A P.
 XIII.
 1777.

agreed to.

In the house of lords, no opposition was made to it, all the peers
 in the minority having absented themselves, except the earl of
 Abingdon.

The bill car-
 ried through
 both houses.

About the latter end of February, the several extraordinary un-
 provided expences of the war, to the amount of two millions one
 hundred and seventy thousand pounds, were defrayed by the house
 of commons. No debates of any importance relative to the American
 war occurred in either house, till the end of May. An address to
 the throne was then moved in the house of peers, by the venerable
 earl of Chatham. At this period his lordship laboured under many
 bodily infirmities. Nevertheless his intellectual vigour remained un-
 impaired, and, in his zeal to serve his country, the enfeebled state
 of his body was forgotten. His lordship had in former periods re-
 peatedly endeavoured to reconcile the differences between the co-
 lonies and the mother-country, and though his attempts were not at-
 tended with the desired effect, yet he resolved to make one effort more.

Extraordina-
 ry unprovided
 expences of
 the war voted.

The lords being accordingly summoned on the thirtieth of May, his
 lordship moved that an address should be presented to his majesty,
 representing that the house of lords were sensible of the ruin that
 threatened the country from a continuation of the unnatural war with

Motion for an
 address to the
 throne by the
 earl of Chat-
 ham.

the

C H A P.
XIII.

1777.

the British colonies in America, and advising that the most speedy and effectual measures should be taken for putting a period to such fatal hostilities, upon the only just and solid foundation, namely, the removal of the accumulated grievances; with an assurance, that the house would enter upon that great and necessary work with cheerfulness and dispatch, in order to open to his majesty the only means of regaining the affections of the British colonies, and of securing to Great Britain the commercial advantages of those valuable possessions; fully persuaded that to heal and to redress would be more congenial with the goodness and magnanimity of his majesty, and more prevalent over the hearts of generous and free-born subjects, than the rigours of chastisement, and the horrors of civil war, which hitherto had served only to sharpen resentment and consolidate union, and, if continued, must finally end in dissolving all ties between Great Britain and her colonies.

Such was the purport of the address. In commenting on the necessity of an assent being given to it, his lordship declared, that under the words *accumulated grievances*, he meant to convey every transaction, with respect to America, since 1763, and the redress of all their grievances, including more particularly the right of disposing of their own money. This spirit of conduct would pave the way for treaty and negotiation; it would testify the amicable temperament of the parliament; and thus the chief obstacle being removed, all other matters would follow as things of course. The pressing and immediate necessity of acquiescing in the address he insisted on, from the danger to which Great Britain was exposed from France.—A few weeks, and the fate of the country, as a nation, might be decided by a treaty between the house of Bourbon and the Americans. His lordship proceeded to state the immense advantages that the mother-country would lose from the commerce of the colonies being turned into another channel, and
suffered

suffered to flow into the hands of the natural enemies of Great Britain. Trade, he said, was rapidly declining, inasmuch as it was now carried on in French and other bottoms; the conquest of America was impracticable; and if it were not, it would be attended with the most ruinous consequences. To use the words of this great man, "America," he declared, "was contending with Great Britain, under the masked battery of France, which would open upon this country, as soon as she perceived that we were sufficiently weakened for her purpose, and she found herself sufficiently prepared for war."

C H A P.
XIII.
1777.

In reply to his lordship's observations, and to those who supported him, administration opposed the address on the old grounds that independence was the primary object of the Americans, that their present conduct was but the effect of the premeditation of several years, and that all concessions on the part of Great Britain would be equally ridiculous and impolitic. The danger held out from France was again denied, and it was contended that the assistance afforded the Americans in that quarter, originated, not in the government, but in private individuals, and in that spirit of enterprise for which that nation had always been remarkable. After an animated debate, the question was put, when there appeared, on a division—for the proposed address, twenty-eight—against it, ninety-nine.

rejected.

The money bills *, a vote of credit, and the other public business being dispatched, his majesty thought proper to prorogue both houses of parliament on the sixth of June. In his speech from the throne, he declared his entire approbation of the measures that had

* The speech of the speaker of the house of commons, sir Fletcher Norton, afterwards lord Grantley, to his majesty, on the seventh of May 1777, in the house of peers, on presenting a bill for the better support of his majesty's household, which made a great noise at
VOL. I. N n that

C H A P.
XIII.

1777.

had been adopted during the continuance of the session; testified his thankfulness for the liberality and cheerfulness with which the extraordinary supplies for the service of the current year had been

that time, and was a subject of various reflection, together with a consequent resolution and vote of the house of commons, we here lay before our readers.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

THE bill, which it is now my duty to present to your majesty, is intituled, “ An act for the better support of his majesty’s household, and of the honour and dignity of the crown of Great Britain :” To which your commons humbly beg your royal assent.

By this bill, sir, and the respectful circumstances which preceded and accompanied it, your commons have given the fullest and clearest proof of their zeal and affection for your majesty. For in a time of public distress, full of difficulty and danger, their constituents labouring under burthens almost too heavy to be borne, your faithful commons postponed all other business; and with as much dispatch as the nature of their proceedings would admit, have not only granted to your majesty a large present supply, but also a very great additional revenue;—great, beyond example; great, beyond your majesty’s highest expence.

Butt all this, sir, they have done in a well-grounded confidence, that you will apply wisely what they have granted liberally; and feeling, what every good subject must feel with the greatest satisfaction, that, under the direction of your majesty’s wisdom, the affluence and grandeur of the sovereign will reflect dignity and honour upon his people.

[Copied from the Votes of the House of Commons, 7th May 1777.]

Ordered, Nem. Con.

That Mr. Speaker be desired to print the speech by him made to his majesty in the house of peers, this day, upon his presenting to his majesty the bill for the better support of his majesty’s household, and of the honour and dignity of the crown of Great Britain, which then received the royal assent.

9th May 1777. Some allusions having been made, in the debate on the last question, to the speech of Mr. Speaker, delivered at the bar of the house of peers, on Wednesday last, Mr. Speaker, as soon as the said question was determined, called the attention of the house to this subject, and desired that a copy of the speech then made by him, might be read at the table. And the same being read accordingly, Resolved, That the speaker of this house, in his speech to his majesty at the bar of the house of peers on Wednesday last, and which was desired *nemine contradicente*, by this house to be printed, did express, with just and proper energy, the zeal of this house, for the support of the honour and dignity of the crown, in circumstances of great public charge.

Ordered,

That the thanks of this house be returned to Mr. Speaker, for his said speech to his majesty.

voted;

AMERICAN WAR.

275

voted; and finally expressed his hope that, by a well-concerted and vigorous exertion of the great force entrusted to his hands, the operations of the present campaign would effectually tend to the suppression of the rebellion in America, and to the re-establishment of that constitutional obedience which all the subjects of a free state owed to the authority of the law. The parliament was prorogued to the twenty-first of July.

C H A P.
XIII.
1777.

Prorogation
of parlia-
ment.

C H A P. XIV.

Opening of the Campaign—Expedition to Peek's Hill—To Danbury—Vessels and Provisions destroyed at Saggy Harbour—The Commander in Chief takes the Field—Endeavours to bring Washington to an Action—The British Troops relinquish the Jerseys—General Prescott carried off—Commander in Chief proceeds to Chesapeake Bay—Lands at the Head of the Elk—Proclamation issued—General Washington moves to the North Side of the Brandywine River, in order to defend Philadelphia—Action at the Brandywine—General Wayne defeated—Royal Army passes the Schuylkill—Lord Cornwallis takes possession of Philadelphia.

C H A P.
XIV.
1777.

IT has been already shewn what hardships the British army endured at Brunswick and Amboy during the winter, and till the commencement of the spring. The weather was particularly severe; the duty unremitting and hard; the enemy watchful; and provisions and forage were not obtained without repeated skirmishes. Nevertheless the soldiers endured these hardships with a fortitude and a perseverance that acquired them infinite honour.

At the opening of the season a body of provincial troops, amounting to several thousand men, was embodied under the direction of the commander in chief. These men were disciplined by those who had been under the necessity of relinquishing their possessions, and of flying from their habitations, on account of their attachment to the British cause. These troops were allowed the same pay as the regulars, with a further advantage of receiving an allotment of lands

at the conclusion of the disturbances. Such a large body of strength drawn from the heart of the country with which the British were waging war, was a most fortunate circumstance. It decreased the resources of the country, and it enabled the veteran troops to adopt more active operations than they would otherwise have been enabled to undertake. These provincial forces, it is true, were inexperienced, and unacquainted with military discipline, but they were extremely well fitted for garrison service, and for the defence of a town. Accordingly they were immediately sent to New York, from which the regulars were drafted in order to join the grand army. Governor Tryon, who had been very active in raising and disciplining these new forces, was raised to the rank of major-general of the provincials, by which he was enabled, on any emergency, to unite the divided bodies of these troops, and to condense them into one body*.

The natural strength of the tract which the Americans possessed, and which has been before described, and its fertility in resources, had induced them, notwithstanding the severities of the winter, to employ themselves in adding as much as possible to this natural strength, by erecting forts and building mills and magazines. Of this tract of land, the most mountainous, and of course the most advantageous, was a place which bore the appellation of the Manor

C H A P.
XIV.
1777.

Opening of
the cam-
paign.

* About this time the royalists in the counties of Somerset and Worcester, in the province of Maryland, became so formidable that an insurrection was dreaded: And it was feared that the insurgents would, in such a case, be joined by a number of disaffected persons in the county of Sussex in the Delaware state. Congress, to prevent this evil, recommended the apprehension and removal of all persons of influence, or of desperate characters, within the counties of Sussex, Worcester, and Somerset, who manifested a disaffection to the American cause, to some remote place within their respective states, there to be secured. From appearances, congress had also reason to believe that the loyalists in the New England governments and New York state had likewise concerted an insurrection. See Gordon's History of the American Revolution, vol. ii. p. 461, 462. By the same authority we are informed that general Gates wrote to general Fellows for a strong military force, for the prevention of plots and insurrection in the provinces of New England and New York.

of

C H A P.
XIV.

1777.

of Courland. This was in a manner converted into a citadel, and large quantities of provisions, forage, and stores of every kind, were deposited in it. About fifty miles from New York, up the North River, was a place called Peek's Hill, which served as a port to Courland Manor, and by which stores and provisions were received and conveyed either to the army or to the numerous erections situated in the more interior parts.

Convinced of the importance of this place, and the distress to which the Americans would be driven if they should be deprived of it, the commander in chief determined to open the campaign by an attack upon it. An attempt upon the Manor of Courland was deemed unadvisable, on account of its great natural and acquired strength, and the consequent disadvantage of a battle in such a place. Besides, even if such an attempt had not been judged improper, it would have been absolutely necessary, preliminary to it, to have secured the possession of Peek's Hill. In pursuance of this resolution, a detachment of five hundred men, under the command of colonel Bird of the fifteenth regiment, was ordered to proceed from New York about the latter end of March, on this service. This detachment embarked on board two transports, which conveyed them to the place of their destination the day after they left New York. On their approach a body of between seven and eight hundred men drew up at a distance, under the command of a colonel Macdougall, with a seeming determination of opposing the British armament. On the nearer advancement, however, of colonel Bird, they thought proper to retire from Peek's Hill, and being unable to remove the stores and provisions it contained, set fire to the barracks and store-houses. Unable, on this account, to bring off the different articles that were contained in the magazine, the British thought proper to complete the conflagration; after which they returned to New York.

Expedition
to Peek's
Hill,

The

The consequences that had resulted from the success of this expedition were not so important as had been expected. The commander in chief had received false intelligence of the situation of Peek's Hill, which did not contain that quantity of stores and provisions he had been led to expect. Nevertheless it was absolutely necessary that the strength of the enemy should be impaired and weakened as much as possible, by cutting off their resources, and curtailing the means by which they were enabled to convey supplies to the troops stationed in different parts of the Manor of Courland.

C H A P.
XIV.
1777.

The commander in chief having received intelligence of a large quantity of stores having been deposited on the borders of Connecticut, in the town of Danbury, and other parts on the confines of Courland Manor, resolved to undertake another expedition against those parts. Two thousand men, drafted from different regiments, were employed in this service, which was entrusted to the command of major-general Tryon, who had accepted of the rank of major-general of provincials, and who panted for a military command. Sir William Howe very prudently appointed general Agnew, and sir William Erskine, to accompany governor Tryon, in his new character of general on this service. On the twenty-fifth of April this detachment embarked from New York in transports, under the convoy of two frigates. They proceeded up the East River, as far as Camp's Point, where they landed. At ten o'clock at night they began their march to Danbury, where, about eight o'clock the next day, they arrived. The enemy, entertaining no apprehension of the intentions of the English, and unprepared to resist them, retired on their approach, and suffered them to enter the town without opposition. Convinced of the impossibility of carrying off the stores that were contained in the town, and indeed having brought with them no carriages necessary for this purpose, the English were under the necessity of setting

and to Dan-
bury.

C H A P.
XIV.

1777.

ting fire to the place *. The conflagration was not completed till the next morning. The detachment immediately set out on their return to the transports. The enemy, however, during the time occupied in the burning of Danbury, had assembled from all quarters, and posted themselves, under the command of general Arnold, at a town called Ridgefield, through which it was necessary for the English to pass. In order to render their situation more secure, Arnold had thrown up intrenchments:

The British troops did not expect to meet with any resistance; nevertheless, on their arrival at Ridgefield, they attacked the American intrenchments with great spirit, and carried them in a short space of time. The troops were by this time extremely fatigued from want of rest and their late hard service. As the day was on the wane, they lay on their arms till morning, having first taken the precaution to form themselves into an oblong square. As soon as they began their march at day-break, the enemy, who, during the night, had received a considerable increase of strength, assailed them from all quarters; and from the houses and stone walls, with which that country abounds, did considerable execution on the ~~fl~~ipping as the British retreated. The route of the British troops lay over a bridge, of which the enemy took possession, as well as some strong ground that commanded the pass beyond the bridge. They were in possession of some field-artillery, which had been brought by general Wooster, and the front they presented to the English was extremely formidable. Fortunately, however, the guide whom the English had engaged conducted them to a part of the river, three

* The British destroyed at Danbury 1600 barrels of pork and beef, 600 barrels of flour, upwards of 2000 barrels of wheat, rye, and Indian corn, a very considerable quantity of military clothing, and 2000 tents; a loss which, from their scarcity, was severely felt by the Americans. The British, in their return, destroyed about 70 barrels of flour, and 112 hogheads of rum.

miles

miles above the bridge, which they forded, and which the enemy had neglected to secure, having deemed the passage of it impracticable. This manœuvre somewhat disconcerted them; nevertheless they continued their skirmishes and attacks on the British troops till they had arrived within half a mile of the shipping. Two distinct bodies of the enemy now appeared, making a shew of attacking the detachment, which by this time was almost exhausted with fatigue. The men had had no rest for three days and nights, and several of them dropped on the road with fatigue. Dispirited however and exhausted as they were, brigadier-general Erskine putting himself at the head of four hundred of the most able of the detachment, attacked and broke the two columns, and put them to flight. So great was the panic among them, occasioned by this spirited attack, that they did not attempt any further annoyance on the troops, though they might have done them considerable damage on account of the numerous rocks that skirt the shore. The English, embarking in the transports, returned to New York. It may be reasonably doubted, whether the loss which the British sustained in this expedition, did not more than counterbalance the advantage derived from the complete attainment of their object.

C H A P.
XIV.
1777.

In this expedition near two hundred men, including ten officers, were killed and wounded on the part of the British. The loss of the Americans was much greater, and general Wooster, with some field-officers, was numbered amongst the slain.

The enemy seized every opportunity of annoying the English by skirmishes, and the thirty-third regiment, and a battalion of the seventy-first Highland regiment, who were posted at Bonham Town, between Amboy and Brunswick, lost a great many men, the enemy constantly attacking their pickets.

On the twelfth of April lord Cornwallis, with a considerable detachment, effected a surprise upon the enemy's advanced posts at

C H A P.
XIV.
1777.

Bondwick, seven miles from Brunswick, where the American general Clinton was stationed with about twelve hundred men. The surprise would have been more complete had not some chaffeurs, who were in the van, given the alarm too soon, by firing on the centinels; nevertheless the enemy were routed, and retired from the town, leaving some field artillery behind them, and about one hundred prisoners. On the nineteenth of April, an attempt was made by general Vaughan, with the garrison at Amboy, to cut off the enemy's advanced pickets at Woodbridge. His intentions, however, were prevented, on account of the Americans having received intimation of his designs.

On the eighth of May, an attempt was made on the post of Piscataway, by the American general Stevens, who had two thousand men under his command. The forty-second regiment, which was cantoned there, sustained the attack with great resolution, and forced the enemy to retreat, after a furious engagement, with considerable loss.

Vessels and
provisions de-
stroyed at
Saggy Har-
bour.

About the middle of this month, the Americans having received intelligence that a large quantity of provisions and forage were deposited in Long Island, at a place called Saggy Harbour, resolved to attempt the capture of them. In this design they were encouraged by the distance of the place from New York, and the weakness of it, being defended only by an armed schooner of twelve guns. Nevertheless some danger attended the execution of the scheme, on account of the necessity of crossing the Sound, which was full of British cruizers. This expedition was entrusted to colonel Meigs, an active officer, who had been trained under Arnold, and had been taken prisoner in the attempt to storm the city of Quebec. The colonel, with his detachment, traversed the Sound in whale-boats, landed on the north branch of the island, and after carrying the boats over an arm of land, embarked again, and landed on the south branch of the island,

island, within four miles of Saggy Harbour. At this place they arrived before break of day, and immediately commenced the attack. The place was vigorously defended by the crews of the merchant-vessels and the schooner, which kept up a very heavy fire upon them; nevertheless they succeeded in their intentions, having burnt a dozen brigs and sloops that lay at the wharf, and destroyed every article of provision and stores that was deposited on the shore. In this attack ninety of the English were made prisoners, viz. the officer who commanded the harbour, and his men; the commissaries, and the crews of the vessels which they had burnt.

C H A P.
XIV.
1777.

There is a circumstance in this expedition, which, if it be true, is curious. The Americans relate, that colonel Meigs, with his detachment, returned to Guildford in Connecticut, within twenty-five hours after his departure. In this space of time, he had passed and repassed the Sound, and traversed a space not less than ninety miles.

About the latter end of May, congress were enabled to send supplies of men from the different provinces to general Washington, who, on receiving this large reinforcement, relinquished his encampment at Morris Town, and removed to a strong place, called Middle Brook. Here it was not thought advisable to attack him, for his camp extended along several hills, and was strongly fortified by intrenchments and artillery. In the front the approach was difficult, on account of the natural strength of the ground. Every movement of the British on the Brunswick hills was easily discernible; as also any operation that might be carried on in the intermediate space between Brunswick and Amboy. In his rear, general Washington had a plentiful country, from which he drew vast supplies; and he was enabled, if the situation of affairs should render such a step necessary, to secure a safe retreat over the Hudson and the Delaware rivers.

C H A P.
XIV.

1777.

The British
commander
in chief takes
the field.

The tents and other necessaries, together with a fresh supply of troops, being at length arrived from England, in the beginning of June the commander in chief left New York, and crossed over to the Jerseys, with an intention of opening the campaign immediately. The British troops were, as usual, greatly superior in point of number to the Americans; and perhaps it may not here be deemed improper to state the number of the troops on each side, from the beginning of 1776, to the commencement of the campaign in the following year.

BRITISH and REBEL FORCE in 1776.

Dates.		British.	Rebel troops.
August	—	24,000	16,000
November	—	26,900	4,500
December	—	27,700	3,300

In 1777.

March	—	27,000	4,500
June	—	30,000	8,000

Endeavours
to bring Wash-
ington to an
action.

Sir William Howe was thoroughly sensible of the impracticability of making an attack on general Washington in his present situation. He therefore made use of every possible effort to induce him to quit his position, and to hazard an engagement. The American general, however, easily penetrated into the designs of the commander in chief, and eluded them by his cool, collected, and prudent conduct. Finding that all his endeavours hitherto to provoke him to battle were unsuccessful, general Howe resolved to adopt an expedient, which in part succeeded. On the nineteenth of June he suddenly retreated from his situation in front of the enemy, with marks of seeming precipitation. He ordered the whole army to relinquish Brunswick, and retire to Amboy. This manœuvre deceived

ceived the Americans, who, in several large bodies, under the command of generals Maxwell and Conway, and lord Sterling, pursued them. The commander in chief suffered himself to be pursued to some distance. He threw a bridge over the channel that separates Staten Island from the continent, over which he passed his heavy baggage, and a small number of men. General Washington, conceiving this retreat to be real, immediately relinquished his encampment on the hills, and removed to a place called Quibble Town, in order to be able to co-operate with that part of his army which had been detached in pursuit of the British. As soon as the British commander in chief had succeeded in drawing the American general from his fastnesses, he marched the English army back by different routes, in order to bring general Washington to an engagement, to cut off his advanced parties, and, if both those schemes should fail, to secure some passes in the mountains, which would reduce the Americans to the necessity of relinquishing their former encampment on the hills. For this last purpose, lord Cornwallis was detached with a considerable body of troops. On the twenty-sixth of June, his lordship began his march, and about seven o'clock in the morning, fell in with an advanced body of the enemy, amounting in number to about three thousand, under the command of lord Sterling and general Maxwell; they were strongly situated and well provided with artillery. The ardour, however, of the British troops was irresistible—after a furious attack, the enemy gave way on all sides, and retreated with great precipitation. They were pursued as far as Westfield, when, on account of the intense heat of the day, and the woods, his lordship thought proper to discontinue it. In this action, the Americans lost two hundred men, killed and wounded, besides three pieces of brass cannon. Convinced of his error, in removing to Quibble Town, general Washington immediately re-
gained

C H A P.
XIV.
1777.

C H A P.
XIV.

1777.

The British
troops relin-
quish the Jer-
seys.General Prescot
carried
off.

gained his station on the hills, and at the same time secured those passes, of which it was in the contemplation of lord Cornwallis to have possessed himself.

Sir William Howe, being now sensible that every scheme of bringing the Americans to an engagement would be unattended with success, resolved to retire from the Jerseys. Accordingly, on the twenty-eighth of June, he returned with the army to Amboy, and on the succeeding day crossed over to Staten Island. A short cessation of course occurred on each side.

During the continuance of this, a spirited determination was made and executed by an American colonel of the name of Barton; it was to carry off the commander of Rhode Island (general Prescot), and in consequence to procure the enlargement of general Lee, by exchanging him for general Prescot. The British general's head-quarters were on the west side of the island, near the Narraganset Bay, about a quarter of a mile from the shore. He was guarded by only one centinel at a time, and his quarters were above a mile from any body of troops.—No patrols were posted on the shore, and the general depended solely on a guard-ship that lay in the bay, opposite to his quarters. Colonel Barton being acquainted with these circumstances, set out from Providence, with some officers and soldiers, in two boats, keeping near the island of Providence, till he came to the south end, which was not more than two miles and a half from the general's quarters. Here he remained till dark, when he proceeded across the bay unperceived, and landed about midnight. The centinel was surpris'd and properly secured—two other soldiers ran away; the general was taken out of bed, and, without being suffered even to put on his clothes, was hurried on board one of the boats. The boat passed under the stern of the British guard-ship without being perceived, and conveyed the general in safety to Providence. The general was

much

much and deservedly blamed for his imprudence, in trusting himself so far from the troops under his command, and for not adopting proper means to secure his safety. The commander in chief had hitherto steadily refused to relieve general Lee on any conditions whatever; nevertheless, the capture of general Prescott obliged him to relinquish his resolution; and general Lee was, in a short period, restored to the American cause.

C H A P.
XIV.
1777.

Until the beginning of June, the numbers of general Washington's army did not exceed eight thousand men, militia included; a circumstance which naturally pointed to the expediency of an early campaign; but the British commander conceiving it impossible to make any considerable movements till the green forage was on the ground*, did not take the field with the main army till the twelfth of June, when he assembled the troops at Brunswick. General Washington was encamped on a hill above Quibble Town, about nine miles from that place, on the north side of the Rariton, with a force under six thousand, and these undisciplined and badly appointed; which, with a corps under general Sullivan of two thousand men at Prince Town, composed his whole force. His camp was not inaccessible, either through nature or art; it was strong, and capable of defence in front, being guarded by the Rariton; and the hill in that quarter was steep and difficult of access; but in his rear towards the mountains, and on his right towards the Delaware, it was by no means impracticable. There were large and good roads around it, leading from Brunswick on either side of the river. In this state Washington remained, as if he had been perfectly acquainted with the intended movements of the British army. The British commander marched his army in two columns, to Middle

* Yet the country was full of grain, hay, and dry forage, much to be preferred to green, which would rather scour and weaken his horses, than add to their strength. This kind of forage he had, or might have had in his magazines, or might, as in the last campaign, have procured in his march through the country.

C H A P.
XIV.

1777.

Buſh and Hillsborough, two villages lying in a low level country, completely overlooked by the Americans, and on the ſouth ſide of the Rariton, keeping that river, which was not at that time fordable, between his army and the enemy. Proviſions for a few days only were taken from Brunſwick; the pontoons and flat-bottomed boats were left at that place, and the fleet lay ready at Staten Iſland to receive the army. General Waſhington, probably judging from the circumſtances that ſir William Howe did not mean to croſs the Delaware, remained in his camp, contenting himſelf with frequently haraſſing the Britiſh by his advanced parties.

General Sullivan, on the approach of the troops towards Prince Town, fled in a panic towards the Delaware. He had begun to embark his men, but was ſtopped by an order from general Waſhington, and took poſt at Flemingtown. In theſe poſitions the two armies remained from the fourteenth to the nineteenth of June; when the Britiſh general returned to Brunſwick, and on the twenty-second to Amboy. In his march to both theſe places, his army was inſulted and haraſſed by ſmall parties of the rebels. On the thirtieth the troops croſſed Staten Iſland, in order to embark for the Cheſapeak. Thus the Britiſh general retreated before an enemy greatly inferior in force; and, after obtaining great advantages, altered the plan of operation which he himſelf had propoſed, and the Britiſh miniſter for war had approved *. Why (it was aſked) did he make ſuch expenſive preparations for croſſing the Delaware, without making uſe of them? Why did he paſs on the ſouth ſide of the Rariton, and take poſitions in which he could neither aſſail his enemy nor the enemy him, if diſpoſed to do ſo? Why did he not march round either on the north or ſouth to the rear of that enemy, where he might have been aſſaulted without any other hazard than

* In a letter to lord George Germaine, dated the twentieth of January 1777, he declared his intention of penetrating with the main body of the army into Penſylvania by the way of Jerſey.

ſuch

such as must, in the common course of war, be unavoidably incurred? If the enemy was, in his judgment, so strongly posted as to render an attack on his camp a measure too bold and desperate, why did he not intercept his convoys, cut off his supplies of provisions, and reduce him under his power by famine; or cross the Delaware, and destroy his posts and magazines? It could not be supposed that general Washington would suffer the British army to pass the Delaware, and seize his magazines and other places of strength, without a struggle. Had that been attempted, he must have quitted his camp and fought the British army, or have lost his magazines, and the capital and most important city in North America; a sacrifice which, as was demonstrated by his subsequent conduct, he would never make without measuring arms.

C H A P.
XIV.
1777.

Notwithstanding these and many other considerations that, in the general opinion, should have moved our force in another direction, the British troops, consisting of thirty-six Hessian and British battalions, including light-infantry and grenadiers, a corps called the queen's rangers, and a regiment of light horse, on the fifth of July embarked in transports, where both foot and cavalry remained pent up, in the hottest season of the year, in the holds of the vessels, until the twenty-third, when they sailed from Sandy Hook; but meeting with contrary winds, did not arrive at the Capes of the Delaware till the thirtieth. At New York were left seventeen battalions, the new provincial corps, and a regiment of light-horse, under the command of general Clinton, and several battalions were stationed on Rhode Island. There were many who blamed the commander in chief, and with apparent reason, for not proceeding up the North River to Albany, instead of going to Philadelphia, in order to have effected a junction with general Burgoyne, and it was the general opinion that, had he adopted such a measure, he would not only have prevented the fatal consequences

British commander in chief proceeds to Chesapeake Bay.

July 23.

C H A P.
XIV.

1777-

Lands at the
head of the
Elk.Proclamation
issued.

that ensued, but would have effected the reduction of America. Besides, the delays incident to any expedition to the southward at a season of the year when the southerly winds usually blow nineteen out of twenty days, might have proved exceedingly injurious to the men so closely stowed in the transports, and could not but be ruinous to the horses. The commander in chief at first intended to have gone up the Delaware, but having received intelligence that the enemy had rendered the navigation of that river difficult, he gave up his original intention, and proceeded to Chesapeak Bay. The winds proved so contrary, as every one acquainted with the climate had predicted, that the fleet did not enter the Chesapeak till the middle of August. As soon as they arrived in the Bay they proceeded up the Elk, the head of which river sir William Howe gained in safety on the twenty-fourth of August.

As soon as the army was landed, the commander in chief published a proclamation, in which he offered pardon and protection to all who would surrender themselves to the British troops; and at the same time he assured the inhabitants that the strictest order and discipline should be preserved by the troops in marching through the country. On the twenty-eighth of August the army moved forwards to a village at the head of the Elk, where the head-quarters were fixed. On the third of September a farther progress was made by a part of the army, which moved forwards about five miles; dispersing the advanced guards of the enemy, and taking post on Iron Hill, a place that commanded a view of the Delaware. Generals Grant and Knyphausen having joined the commander in chief with the troops under their command on the eighth of September, the whole army moved onwards in two columns on the route to Philadelphia. After they had proceeded about thirteen miles they halted, on receiving intelligence that the enemy were in motion.

On

On the eleventh of September the British army moved forwards; the enemy, to the number of fourteen thousand, retiring before them to the other side of the Brandywine river. Here the Americans halted, and posted themselves on some very strong ground under cover of woods with intervals of open ground between them. Their advanced corps was stationed at Red Clay Creek. The Brandywine Creek runs into the Delaware at Wilmington, and it was indispensably necessary for the British army to pass over it in their route to Philadelphia. The enemy therefore secured, and resolved to defend, the principal fording-places.

At Chad's Ford, the spot where it was judged most probable that the royal army would make an attempt, batteries were erected on the banks of the rivulet, with intrenchments that commanded the pass.

While the enemy were occupied at Chad's Ford, lord Cornwallis, with one column of the army, consisting of two battalions of grenadiers, as many of light infantry, the Hessian grenadiers, part of the seventy-first regiment, and two British brigades, made a circuit of some miles, and crossed the forks of the Brandywine on the thirteenth of September, with an intention of gaining the enemy's rear. At the same time general Knyphausen, with the second division, consisting of two British brigades, the Hessians, and Wemy's corps of rangers, marched in a direct line to Chad's Ford; and attacked a detached body of the enemy that had crossed the river, and were posted on the south side of it. This body, after some resistance, was forced to repass the Brandywine under cover of their batteries.

Several pieces of cannon having been brought up and placed on the most commanding eminences, a sharp cannonade ensued, which was answered by the enemy's batteries on the other side of the river. The attention of the Americans was thus amused, in order that lord Cornwallis might make his passage good. As soon as this was known, by the firing of cannon in that quarter, and the evident confusion of

C H A P.
XIV.

1777.
General
Washington
moves to the
north side of
the Brandy-
wine river, in
order to de-
fend Phila-
delphia.

C H A P. XIV. ¹⁷⁷⁷ the enemy, general Knyphausen, with his division, began to pass the ford, and with great bravery soon carried the batteries and intrenchments; the enemy relinquishing them, and leaving behind five pieces of cannon and an howitzer. Lord Cornwallis, on the other hand, as soon as he had crossed the two branches of the river, took the road to Delworth, which led him upon the enemy's right.

Action at the Brandywine.

General Washington being informed of lord Cornwallis's movements, detached general Sullivan, with a considerable force, to oppose him. The general took possession of the heights above Birmingham church, his left reaching towards the Brandywine, his artillery judiciously placed, and his flanks covered by woods. About four o'clock in the afternoon lord Cornwallis formed the line of battle, and began the attack. The Americans sustained it with considerable intrepidity, but the impetuosity of the British troops was not to be resisted. They rushed upon the enemy, and, in spite of a very spirited opposition, drove them into the woods on their rear. Nevertheless the enemy posted themselves a second time in one of the woods, from which they were, after a desperate resistance, dislodged and forced to retire. A general rout took place. A considerable part of the American army fled with precipitation, in small and confused parties, by different roads, towards Philadelphia, Lancaster, and Reading, while general Washington, and the corps he was able to keep together, fled with his cannon and baggage to Chester; where he remained, within eight miles of the British army, till next morning, when he marched by Derby to Philadelphia. Here he staid three days, collecting as many of his troops as he possibly could, and recruiting from his magazines the stores he had lost in battle. On the third day after the engagement he assembled his troops, and marched up the north side of the Schuylkill, which he crossed at Sweed's Ford, and passed on to the road to Lancaster. Meantime the British army under sir William

Howe

Howe remained on the field of battle. The Americans suffered considerably in this action. Three hundred were killed, six hundred wounded, and near four hundred taken prisoners; they also lost several pieces of artillery. The loss on the part of the British was by no means in proportion to that of the enemy. Not above one hundred were killed, and four hundred wounded.

C H A P.
XIV.
1777.

It may not be improper to mention here some circumstances that evince the opinion which several European nations entertained of the present disturbances. In the action at Brandywine the celebrated marquis de la Fayette, at that time a young man of spirit and enterprise, and a warm partisan of the Americans, bore a command in the American army. Inspired by enthusiastic notions of liberty, he purchased and freighted a ship with military stores, and proceeding in it with several of his friends to America, presented it to congress. His age was not more than nineteen, and when he departed from Paris he informed his wife that he was going to pay a visit to his aunt in Italy. Several other French noblemen were officers in the American army, and two Polish noblemen exhibited in the battle of Brandywine, great proofs of bravery and attachment to the cause they had espoused. On the evening after the battle, a party of the British was sent to Wilmington, who took the governor of the Delaware state, Mr. Mackenlie, out of his bed, and seized a shallop lying in the creek, loaded with the rich effects of some of the inhabitants, together with the public records of the county; a large quantity of public and private money; all the papers and certificates belonging to the loan office and treasury office; articles of plate, &c.

The victory does not seem to have been improved in the degree which circumstances appeared to have admitted. When the left column of the British had turned Washington's right flank, his whole army was hemmed in: General Knyphausen
and

C H A P.
XIV.

1777.

and the Brandywine in front; sir William Howe and lord Cornwallis on his right; the Delaware in his rear; and the Christiana river on his left. He was obliged to retreat twenty-three miles to Philadelphia, when the British lay within eighteen miles of it. Had the commander in chief detached general Knyphausen's column in pursuit early next morning, general Washington might with ease have been intercepted, either at the heights of Crum Creek, nine miles; at Derby, fourteen; or at Philadelphia, eighteen miles, from the British camp; or the Schuylkill might have been passed at Gray's Ferry, only seventy yards over; and Philadelphia, with the American magazines, taken, had not the pontoons been improvidently left at New York as useless. Any one of these movements, it was thought, might have been attended with the total destruction of the American army. For some reason however, which it is impossible to divine, the commander in chief employed himself for several days in making slight movements, which could not by any possibility produce any important benefits to the British cause.

On the twentieth of September intelligence was received that general Wayne had concealed himself in the woods on the left wing of the army with fifteen hundred men, with an intention of harassing the rear of the British army. Major-general Grey was accordingly dispatched at night to surprise him. The British general proceeded in this expedition with great secrecy and dispatch, and in order that the surprise might be complete, he gave strict orders that bayonets alone should be used, and that not a gun should be fired. This manoeuvre had the desired effect. General Wayne's outposts were surprised about one in the morning, and the British troops rushing immediately on the enemy's encampment, made a dreadful slaughter. Three hundred were killed and wounded, and one hundred taken prisoners. The rest contrived to make good their retreat with

General
Wayne de-
feated.

with the loss of all their baggage. On the part of the British the loss was too trifling almost to be mentioned. One officer was killed, and seven privates were killed and wounded. The skill and energy of general Grey were very conspicuous in this enterprise.

C H A P.
XIV.
1777.

On the twenty-third of September, sir William Howe having secured the command of the Schuylkill, crossed it with the whole army, advanced, on the twenty-sixth, to German Town, and on the succeeding day lord Cornwallis, at the head of a strong detachment, took peaceable possession of Philadelphia.

Royal army passes the Schuylkill.

Lord Cornwallis takes possession of Philadelphia.

German Town consists in one street two miles in length; and is distant from the capital of Pennsylvania about seven miles. The British army, in their line of encampment, intersected this village near the centre, and almost at right angles. The Schuylkill covered the left wing; in the front of which were the German chaffeurs. A battalion of light-infantry and the queen's American rangers covered the right wing in front; and at the head of the village, the fortieth regiment with another battalion of light-infantry were stationed. Three regiments detached under colonel Sterling, for the purpose of conveying stores and provisions, lay at Chester; and a considerable body of troops, as already mentioned, under lord Cornwallis, at Philadelphia. The possession of this place was a most important acquisition, as it opened a communication between the northern and southern provinces; and, if the Delaware were opened, between the army and the navy. So sensible were the Americans of its importance, that they had formerly resolved, if ever it should be in real and imminent danger of falling into the hands of the British, to commit it to the flames.

But, although German Town and Philadelphia had been for some time occupied by the British troops, the communication was not yet free down the river to the fleet.

C H A P. XV.

American Batteries and other Means of Defence—Attacked—Action at German Town—At Red Bank—Mud Island and Red Bank taken—American Fleet burnt—Removal of the royal Army to Whitemarsh.

C H A P.
XV.

1777.

American
batteries and
other means
of defence,

AS the Delaware is navigable to Philadelphia and even beyond it, the congress, whose residence was at that city until it was taken by sir William Howe, very early endeavoured to render it inaccessible to the British fleet. In devising contrivances for this purpose, Dr. Frankin is said, before his departure for France, to have assisted. Three rows of chevaux de frize, composed of immense beams of timber bolted and fastened together, and stuck with iron pikes fastened in every direction, were sunk across the channel, a little below the place where the Schuylkill empties itself into the Delaware. The lower line of chevaux de frize was commanded by some works, erected on the Jersey shore, at Billing's Port; and the upper by an inclosed fort, mounting heavy cannon, and situated on a marshy island, called Mud Island, being formed by an accumulation of sand and vegetable mould, near the Pennsylvania shore; and on the opposite shore, by a redoubt and intrenchment, at a place called Red Bank; the redoubt being constructed on high and commanding ground, served also as a protection for the provincial water force, which might occasionally retire under the guns of that work for safety. This water force, which was stationed between the two forts, consisted of fourteen row-gallies, carrying each one piece of heavy ordnance—two floating batteries, carrying nine guns each—and a number of
fire-

fire-ships and rafts. Towards the end of September, a detachment from the British army, consisting of three regiments under colonel Sterling, had been passed over from Chester to the Jersey shore, for the purpose of reducing the provincial works of Billing's Port, which, on the approach of that detachment, were abandoned by the garrison, and immediately dismantled. The lower line of chevaux de frize being thus left without defence from the shore, an attempt was made to remove it by captain Hammond of the Roebuck, who commanded the British naval force in the Delaware; in which he so far succeeded, notwithstanding the opposition made by the enemy's row-gallies and floating batteries, as to make an opening sufficient to admit the largest ships of the fleet; but still the two other rows of chevaux de frize remained; and the forts which defended them were yet in the possession of the Americans. Things were in this situation, when lord Howe arrived with the fleet from the Chesapeak. Lord Howe, as soon as he received intelligence of the success of the army at Brandywine, left the Elk river, and quitting the Capes of Virginia on the twenty-third of September, steered his course towards the Delaware, where he arrived on the eighth of October. As the passage to Philadelphia was yet impracticable, the fleet was brought to anchor, on the west shore, from the town of Newcastle down to Reedy Island.

The voyage from the Capes to the Delaware was boisterous; and the attempt to get up that river required great abilities, caution, and prudence; for the obstructions that had deterred the fleet from entering the Delaware before, had been considerably increased. The Americans had almost completed an extensive work—wooden piers for defending the approaches to the line of sunken frames that crossed the channel of the river. To remove these obstructions, so as to open a communication between

C H A P.
XV.
1777.
September.

C. H. A. P. the fleet and the army, was an object of the utmost importance, but
 XV. which could not be accomplished without previously reducing the
 1777. forts, by which they were defended. Preparations for this purpose
 were accordingly made immediately after the arrival of the fleet. Some heavy cannon were landed from the ships, and batteries were begun on Province Island, which was formed by the conflux of the rivers Schuylkill and Delaware, and was opposite to the fort on Mud Island; but, owing to the swampiness of the ground, the works advanced slowly, and the approaches were made with difficulty. Major Vatape, of the tenth regiment, who commanded a detachment of the British on Province Island, to cover the working parties, abandoned most shamefully his artillery, upon the Americans having landed a small body of men on the island. From the gallantry, however, of a subaltern officer, the artillery was retaken, and the enemy compelled to retire. Major Vatape was obliged to quit the service, and fell out below the regulated price.

As soon as the enemy perceived the designs of the English, they dispatched two frigates and a schooner, with some row-gallies, to demolish the batteries and cannonade the town. For some time the vessels kept up a heavy fire upon the town, but, on the falling of the tide in the Delaware, one of the frigates ran a-ground, and was taken; the rest of the fleet were under the necessity of retreating as fast as possible.

General Washington, who was at this time encamped at Skippack Creek, on the eastern side of the Schuylkill, about seventeen miles from German Town, being reinforced by fifteen hundred troops from Peek's Kill, and one thousand Virginians, on receiving intelligence of the large detachments that were sent to take possession of Philadelphia, to cover the convoys and destroy the works on the Delaware,

Action at
 German
 Town;

Delaware, formed the design of surprising the camp at German Town. At six in the evening of the third of October, the enemy quitted their encampment at Skippack Creek, and under cover of a thick fog, made an attack on the troops posted at the head of the village, at dawn of day, on the fourth. There, after a vigorous resistance, they were driven into the village, and general Washington advancing with his army, divided into five columns, endeavoured to enter the north end of the village, in order to separate the British force, and thereby to ensure success to the different attacks on the British flanks. The fortieth regiment, which lay at the head of the village, had been under the necessity of retreating before the enemy; nevertheless lieutenant-colonel Musgrave, who commanded this regiment, by his address and activity had contrived to keep five companies of the regiment together. In order to impede the progress of the enemy he threw them into a large stone house in the village, that lay in the front of the enemy. This gallant conduct arrested the Americans in their career, and in the event prevented the separation of the right and left wings of the British troops; by which means time was afforded to the rest of the British line to get under arms. General Washington immediately ordered a brigade to surround the house. Colonel Musgrave, however, and his brave men, refused to surrender, and from the windows pouring a heavy fire upon the enemy, did considerable execution. Four pieces of cannon were then brought against him, the fire of which he continued to brave till he received assistance from major-general Grey, who, with the third brigade, and brigadier-general Agnew with the fourth brigade, attacked the enemy with great spirit. The engagement for some time was very warm. At length, part of the right wing attacking the enemy on the opposite side of the village, they

C H A P.
XV.
1777.

C H A P.
XV.

1777.

gave ground, and retired with great precipitation. They attempted to rally upon some rising grounds, and made a shew of renewing the action; but it was only a feint to secure a retreat. This they effected, with all their artillery, under cover of the fog, which rendered it difficult for the British troops to discover their movements. This fog, which had at first been so advantageous to the Americans, was alleged to have greatly contributed to the disappointment of the scheme, inasmuch as it prevented the different bodies of the American army from discovering each other's operations.

On the part of the English six hundred were killed and wounded. Among the former were brigadier-general Agnew, and colonel Bird, officers of distinguished reputation. The loss on the side of the Americans was supposed to amount to between two and three hundred killed, six hundred wounded, and above four hundred made prisoners. General Nash and a great number of officers were among the slain. The neglect of the commander in chief in the action at German Town was extreme. He was acquainted with the intentions of general Washington on the evening before the attack, and therefore could have provided against it. Had he adopted such a mode of conduct, the American army would certainly have been destroyed. It was the general opinion of the officers of both armies, that, had the Americans advanced immediately, instead of attaching the fortieth regiment, the total defeat of the British must have ensued. But the delay occasioned by the several attempts to reduce Chew's House afforded time for the British line to get under arms; and that circumstance was justly considered as the salvation of the royal army. Notwithstanding the importance of the capture of Philadelphia, it was seen that the army could

could not maintain itself during the winter, unless Mud Island should be reduced. In order to effect the reduction of this, the royal army removed from German Town to Philadelphia. The enemy after the action at German Town had returned to their old camp at Skippack Creek.

C H A P.
XV.
1777.

In consequence of measures concerted between the commander in chief and lord Howe, a joint attack was resolved to be made on Mud Island and Red Bank.

Colonel Stirling, after destroying the American works at Billing's Port, saw the necessity of forming a post at Red Bank, not yet occupied by the enemy, it being of no great consequence while they retained possession of the other post just mentioned. But when they had lost that station, it became of the utmost importance, being the only key to the fort on Mud Island; the only spot from which it could be relieved or supplied. And, had this post been taken and occupied by British troops, the fort and water-guard would have been placed in the midst of a triangle, and constantly exposed to the cannon from posts on each of its sides; from Red Bank on the east, the Province Island on the west side of the Delaware, and from the men of war on the south in the river below. Possessed of these, colonel Stirling desired permission to take possession of Red Bank, but it was not granted him. The rebels, taking advantage of this blunder, immediately fortified it: And, under its cannon, they constantly covered their water-guard, which sallied out from this advantageous post when they wished, either to supply or relieve the fort, or to annoy the ships of war. The subsistence of the British troops in Philadelphia depended so much on the surrender of this fort, that Washington exerted every nerve to preserve it. He offered one hundred pounds extraordinary bounty to every soldier who should serve in defending it during the siege. These men were
relieved

C H A P. relieved every six hours from Red Bank, and therefore the defence
 XV. was extremely obstinate.

1777.

On the nineteenth of October the British army was withdrawn from German Town, and encamped in the immediate vicinity of Philadelphia, as a more convenient situation, from which detachments might be made, and occasional reinforcements sent to reduce the forts upon the river: And soon after this movement an attempt was made to carry the redoubt and intrenchment at Red Bank by assault. The execution of this enterprize was intrusted to colonel Donop, a brave and high-spirited German officer, who, with three battalions of Hessian grenadiers, the regiment of Mirbach, and the infantry chasseurs, passed the Delaware, from Philadelphia, on the twenty-first of October, and, on the following day in the afternoon, reached the place of his destination. A disposition for the attack was instantly made, and the brave Donop, with undaunted firmness, led on his troops to the assault, through a tremendous fire, not only from the works at Red Bank, but from the provincial galleys and floating batteries upon the river; and whilst destruction every instant thinned their ranks, the German battalions advanced, unmoved, to the charge, and forced an extensive outwork, from which the enemy were driven, and obliged to flee for shelter within the redoubt. By this time the intrepid Donop had fallen, his thigh having been fractured by a musket shot, and the second in command was also wounded. The redoubt was found to be more than eight feet high, with a parapet boarded and frized, and could not be forced without scaling-ladders. Why the assailants were not furnished with this necessary implement has not been explained; but for want of it, in the moment of victory, and with the object of the enterprize within their grasp, they were obliged precipitately to retire through such a fire as that under which they had advanced, leaving

leaving their brave commander behind them, who died of his wound some few days after, whilst a prisoner in the hands of the Americans.

C H A P.
XV.
1777.

But this was not the only misfortune that happened at this time. It was intended that a part of the fleet, by moving up the river as far as it could go, should make a diversion in favour of the attack by land. For this purpose the *Augusta*, *Roebuck*, *Liverpool*, *Pearl*, and *Merlin* sloop, were ordered to pass through the opening in the lower chevaux de frize, and be in readiness. And as soon as Donop's attack commenced these ships slipped their cables and moved slowly up the river with the flood tide; but the natural course of the channel having been altered by the artificial obstructions thrown across it, and sand-banks being collected where there were none before, two of these ships, the *Augusta* and the *Merlin*, unfortunately got a-ground a little below the second line of chevaux de frize. At the next tide of flood every exertion was made to get them off, but in vain, the flow of the tide having been prevented from rising to its usual height by a strong northerly wind. It was not until the following morning that the situation of these ships was perceived by the enemy, when they began to fire upon them from their works, galleys, and floating batteries, and sent down several fire-ships with the expectation of destroying them. The fire-ships were however towed off without doing any injury, by the activity and dexterity of the seamen; but, unfortunately, the *Augusta*, by some accident, caught fire, and the flames, spreading so rapidly that they could not be got under, it was with the utmost difficulty that the greatest part of the crew were saved. Only a few, and amongst these the second-lieutenant, chaplain, and gunner, perished in the flames. It now became necessary to remove with all haste the frigates which lay near the *Augusta*, that they might not suffer by her explosion; and as the

C H A P.
XV.

1777.

the Merlin could not be got off, orders were given to abandon and destroy her. Such were the unfortunante consequences of the attack on Red Bank fort.

In the mean time the preparations for reducing the fort on Mud Island were going forward on the western shore of the Delaware; but, from the difficulty of constructing works in marshy grounds, and the length of time required for transporting through swamps such heavy stores as were indispensably necessary, the batteries were not opened before the tenth of November. Immediately below Mud Island, and ranging nearly in a line with this, were two others, called Province and Hog Islands. Between these and the western shore was a narrow channel of sufficient depth to admit ships of a moderate draught of water. For some days, that part of the fleet which was destined to co-operate in the attack, was prevented by contrary winds from moving up the river; but on the fifteenth of November, the wind proving favourable, and every thing being in readiness, the Vigilant armed ship, followed by a hulk, both of them mounted with heavy cannon, passed through between Province and Hog Island, and got into the channel behind, so as to bring their guns to bear upon that part of the fort which was least provided with defences. At the same time two of the large ships, the Isis and the Somerset, with the Roebuck, and several frigates, sailed up the main channel of the river, and lay as near the front of the fort as the second line of the chevaux de frize would permit. The ships being thus disposed, a heavy cannonade commenced as well from them as from the batteries on shore, which dismounted several of the guns in the fort, and otherwise so damaged its defences, that the garrison, fearful of an assault, quitted it the ensuing night, and were carried off by their shipping. Two days after the redoubt at Red Bank was also abandoned upon the approach of lord Cornwallis with a detach-

Mud Island
and Red
Bank taken.

a detachment from camp sent to reduce it; and the provincial water force, being now no longer protected by the works on shore, quitted its station, and retired up the river. Some few of the smaller galleys, by keeping close on the Jersey shore, passed Philadelphia in the night, and escaped. The rest were abandoned and burnt. And thus a communication by the Delaware was at last opened between the navy and army.

C H A P.
XV.
1777.

American
fleet burnt.

General Washington, after receiving a reinforcement of four thousand men from the northern army, left his strong situation at Skippack Creek, drew nearer to the British lines, and encamped at White Marsh, an advantageous station, about fourteen miles from Philadelphia. A valley and a rivulet were in his front; and to the south and east an abbatis of trees, their top branches pointed and lying outwards.

Sir William Howe hoped that, in consequence of this reinforcement, Washington might be tempted to risque an engagement in the view of regaining possession of the capital of Pennsylvania. With this expectation he marched with the army from Philadelphia on the fourth of December at night, and on the following morning took post on Chesnut Hill, in front of the right wing of the provincial encampment. Here the British army remained for two days, offering battle to the provincials, but the latter continued within their lines, except a corps of about one thousand men, which being sent out to skirmish with the light-infantry, under lieutenant-colonel Abercrombie, who were posted in front, was quickly repulsed with loss.

Removal of
the royal
army to
White Marsh,
where general
Washington
was encamp-
ed.

On the sixth at night the army was again put in motion, and the following morning took post on Edge Hill, an eminence one mile in front of the enemy's left, which was occupied by a strong corps of northern provincials, and from whence they were driven by the van-guard of the army under lord Cornwallis. The same

C H A P.
XV.

1777.

morning, another out-post of the enemy was forced by a column of the army under major-general Grey, and so nearly surrounded by a rapid movement of the light-infantry of the guards to turn their left, that the provincials, in making their escape, were driven across the fire of the centre and left of the general's division, and sustained a considerable loss in killed and wounded.

During all this time general Washington remained quiet within his lines; and sir William Howe, seeing no prospect of being able to provoke him to an engagement, and, after having viewed the right, left, and centre, of his encampment, judging it unadvisable to attack him in his present strong position, returned on the eighth with the army to Philadelphia: The enemy still keeping so close within their lines, that the rear-guard of the army under lord Cornwallis, which did not leave its ground till four in the afternoon, was suffered to retire unmolested. It was generally expected that the commander in chief would have made some farther attempts on general Washington. It is true he made some movements on the enemy's front, right, and left, but none on their rear, where they were vulnerable without difficulty. By the same movement he would have cut off Washington from his baggage and provisions, which lay five miles distant. The American general dreaded this, and was prepared for flight. Our troops, notwithstanding, retired, to the surprise of all who were acquainted with the ground on which general Washington was encamped, and the variety of excellent roads that led round to his rear. It was even well known that Washington's army was under the greatest apprehension, and constantly expecting the necessity of attempting a hazardous movement to escape.

Not long after the retreat of the British troops from White Marsh, general Washington quitted his camp at that place in the night,

Missing page.

C H A P.
XV.

1777.

deed difficult to give an adequate description of his misery in this situation. His army was destitute of almost every necessary of clothing, nay, almost naked; and very often on short allowance of provisions; an extreme mortality raged in his hospitals, nor had he any of the most proper medicines to relieve the sick. There were perpetual desertions of parties from him of ten to fifty at a time. In three months he had not four thousand men, and these by no means to be termed effective. Not less than five hundred horses perished from want and the severity of the season. He had often not three days provision in his camp, and at times not enough for one day. In this infirm and dangerous state he continued from December to May, during all which time every person expected that the commander in chief would have stormed or besieged his camp, the situation of which equally invited either attempt. To have posted two thousand men on a commanding ground near the bridge, on the north side of the Schuylkill, would have rendered his escape on the left impossible; two thousand men placed on a like ground opposite the narrow pass, would have as effectually prevented a retreat by his rear; and five or six thousand men, stationed on the front and right of his camp, would have deprived him of flight on those sides. The positions were such, that, if any of the corps were attacked, they could have been instantly supported. Under such propitious circumstances what mortal could doubt of success? But our army, neglecting all these opportunities, was suffered to continue at Philadelphia, where the whole winter was spent in dissipation. A want of discipline and proper subordination pervaded the whole army; and if disease and sickness thinned the American army encamped at Valley Forge, indolence and luxury perhaps did no less injury to the British troops at Philadelphia. During the winter a very unfortunate inattention was shown to the feelings of the inhabitants of Philadelphia, whose satisfaction should have been vigilantly

lantly consulted, both from gratitude and from interest. They experienced many of the horrors of civil war. The soldiers insulted and plundered them; and their houses were occupied as barracks, without any compensation being made to them. Some of the first families were compelled to receive into their habitations individual officers, who were even indecent enough to introduce their mistresses into the mansions of their hospitable entertainers. This soured the minds of the inhabitants, many of whom were Quakers.

C H A P.
XV.
1777.

But the residence of the army at Philadelphia occasioned distresses which will probably be considered, by the generality of mankind, as of a more grievous nature. It was with difficulty that few could be got on any terms. Provisions were most exorbitantly high. Gaming of every species was permitted, and even sanctioned. This vice not only debauched the mind, but, by sedentary confinement, and the want of seasonable repose, enervated the body. A foreign officer held the bank at the game of pharo, by which he made a very considerable fortune; and but too many respectable families in Britain have to lament its baneful effects. Officers who might have rendered honourable service to their country, were compelled, by what was termed a bad run of luck, to dispose of their commissions, and return penniless to their friends in Europe. The father who thought he had made a provision for his son by purchasing a commission for him in the army, ultimately found that he had put his son to school to learn the science of gambling, not the art of war. Dissipation had spread through the army, and indolence, and want of subordination, its natural concomitants: For if the officer be not vigilant, the soldier will never be alert.

Sir William Howe, from the manners and religious opinions of the Philadelphians, should have been particularly cautious: For this public dissoluteness of the troops could not but be regarded by such people

C H A P.
XV.

1777.

people as a contempt of them, as well as an offence against piety; and it influenced all the representations which they made to their countrymen respecting the British. They inferred from it also, that the commander could not be sufficiently intent on the plans of either conciliation or subjugation; so that the opinions of the Philadelphians, whether erroneous or not, materially promoted the cause of congress. During the whole of this long winter of riot and dissipation, general Washington was suffered to continue, with the remains of his army, not exceeding five thousand effective men at most, undisturbed at the Valley Forge: Considerable arrears of pay due to them; almost in a state of nature, for want of clothing; the Europeans in the American service disgusted, and deserting in great numbers, and indeed in companies, to the British army; and the natives tired of the war. Yet, under all these favourable circumstances for the British interest, no one step was taken to dislodge Washington, whose cannon were frozen up, and could not be moved. If sir William Howe had marched out in the night, he might have brought Washington to action; or if he had retreated, he must have left his sick, cannon, ammunition, and heavy baggage behind. A nocturnal attack on the Americans would have had this further good effect: It would have depressed the spirit of revolt, confirmed the wavering, and attached them to the British interest. It would have opened a passage for supplies to the city, which was in great want of provisions for the inhabitants. It would have shaken off that lethargy in which the British soldiers had been immersed during the winter. It would have convinced the well-affected that the British leader was in earnest. If Washington had retreated, we could have followed. With one of the best appointed, in every respect, and finest armies (consisting of at least fourteen thousand effective men) ever assembled in any country, a number of officers of approved service, wishing only to be led to action, this dilatory commander, sir William Howe, dragged

out the winter, without doing any one thing to obtain the end for which he was commissioned. Proclamation was issued after proclamation, calling upon the people of America to repair to the British standard, promising them remission of their political sins, and an assurance of protection in both person and property; but these promises were confined merely to paper. The best personal security to the inhabitants was an attack by the army, and the best security of property was peace; and this to be purchased by successful war. For, had sir William Howe led on his troops to action, victory was in his power, and conquest in his train. During sir William Howe's stay at Philadelphia a number of disaffected citizens were suffered to remain in the garrison; these people were ever upon the watch, and communicated to Washington every intelligence he could wish for. Sir William Howe ought not to have suffered the avowedly hostile to remain in the city. A commander in chief should form his plans with secrecy. Whenever any foraging parties were sent from the garrison, the enemy were always apprized of it. This will account why our supplies were always so scanty, and our rear always harassed. That war is necessary, in some cases, is certain; but it is the duty of every commander to lessen the horrors of war, and to abridge their period. Severity in the early part of the war would have been mercy in the end. Thousands of lives would have been saved on both sides; the enormous load of the national debt would not have swelled to its present amount; America might have been taught the necessity of peace; and Britain, the justice and policy of granting honourable terms. But, unfortunately for this country, the instant the war should be at an end, the multiplication of pounds, shillings, and pence, would cease to be carried on by individual characters, who wished to make a fund, or aggregate sum, to retire upon. In confirmation of the distress in the American army above related we shall here insert a letter from the committee of congress.

C H A P.
XV.
1777.

A LET-

C H A P. A LETTER from the Committee of Congress to the President;
 XV. found among the Papers of HENRY LAURENS, Esq.

1777.

“ SIR, *Camp at Valley Forge, Feb. 12, 1778.*

“ WE had flattered ourselves, that, before this time, the pleasure of congress would be made known to us, respecting the quarter-master’s department. We fear our letter upon this subject has miscarried, or the consideration of it yielded to other business. You will therefore pardon us, sir, when we again solicit your attention to it, as an object of the last importance; on which not only the future success of your arms, but the present existence of your army, immediately depend. The influence of this office is so diffusive through every part of your military system, that neither the wisdom of arrangement, the spirit of enterprise, or favourable opportunity, will be of any avail, if this great wheel in the machine stops, or moves heavily. We find ourselves embarrassed in entering on this subject, lest a bare recital of facts should carry an imputation (which we do not intend) on those gentlemen who have lately conducted it. We are sensible, great and just allowances are to be made for the peculiarity of their situation, and we are perhaps not fully acquainted with all their difficulties. It is our duty, sir, to inform you it is not our intention to censure; and be assured, nothing but a sense of the obligation we are under, to postpone all other considerations to the public safety, could induce us to perform the unpleasing task.— We find, sir, the property of the continent dispersed over the whole country; not an encampment, route of the army, or considerable road, but abounds with waggons, left to the mercy of the weather, and the will of the inhabitants; large quantities of intrenching tools have, in like manner, been left in various hands, under no other security that we can learn, than the honesty of those who have them in possession. Not less than three thousand spades and shovels, and
 the

Missing page.

C H A P.
XV.

1777.

quences of this delay in forming a new army, or the preservation of this. Almost every day furnishes instances of the small-pox in the natural way. Hitherto such vigilance and care has been used, that the contagion has not spread; but surely it is highly incumbent upon us, if possible, to annihilate the danger.

“ We need not point out the effect this circumstance will have upon the new-draughted troops, if not carefully guarded; they are too obvious to need enumeration. In conference with the forage-master on this subject (which, though in appearance trivial, is really important), he acquainted us, that, though out of his line, he would have procured it, if waggons could have been furnished him for that purpose.

“ The want of horses and waggons for the ordinary as well as extraordinary occasions of the army, presses upon us, if possible, with equal force; almost every species of camp transportation is now performed by men, who, without a murmur, patiently yoke themselves to little carriages of their own making, or load their wood and provisions on their backs.—Should the enemy, encouraged by the growing weakness of your troops, be led to make a successful impression upon your camp, your artillery would now undoubtedly fall into their hands, for want of horses to remove it.—But these are smaller and tolerable evils, when compared with the imminent danger of your troops, perishing with famine, or dispersing in search of food. The commissaries, in addition to their supplies of live cattle, which are precarious, have found a quantity of pork in New Jersey, of which, by a failure of waggons, not one barrel has reached the camp.

“ The orders were given for that purpose as early as the fourth of January.—In yesterday’s conference with the general he informed us, that some brigades had been four days without meat; and that even the common soldiers had been at his quarters to make known their

their wants.—At present, sir, there is not one gentleman of any rank in this department, though the duties of the office require a constant and unremitting attention. In whatever view, therefore, the object presents itself, we trust you will discern, that the most essential interests are connected with it. The season of preparation for next campaign is passing swiftly away. Be assured, sir, that its operations will be ineffectual, either for offence or protection, if an arrangement is not immediately made, and the most vigorous exertions used to procure the necessary supplies.—Permit us to say, that a moment's time should not be lost in placing a man of approved abilities and extensive capacity at the head of the department, who will restore it to some degree of regularity and order; whose provident care will immediately relieve the present wants of the army, and extend itself to those which must be satisfied, before we can expect vigour, enterprise, or success.—When your committee reflect upon the increased difficulties of procuring waggons, horses, tents, and the numerous train of articles dependent on this office, without which your army cannot even move; they feel the greatest anxiety, lest the utmost skill, diligence, and address, will prove ineffectual to satisfy the growing demand. All other considerations vanish before this object; and we most earnestly wish congress may be impressed in a proper degree with its necessity and importance.

“ A report has reached us, that colonel Lutterlogh is a candidate for the office of quarter-master-general; we have therefore been led to make some inquiry into his character and conduct. We should be far from doing injustice to his abilities and experience in a subordinate line; but, exclusive of the danger of entrusting so confidential an office to a stranger, whose attachment to this country must be light and transient, and whose interest may be so easily distinguished from ours, we cannot find that he possesses talents or activity equal to this important office.—We find, in the course of the campaign, necessary tools and stores have often been wanting; important and

C H A P.
XV.

1777.

reasonable movements of the army delayed; in some instances, wholly frustrated; and favourable opportunities lost, through the deficiencies of this department.—The rapid marches of our army, and unforeseen disasters which attended it during the summer season, partly claim some allowances; but that disorder and confusion prevail through the department, which requires some able hand to reform and reduce it, is a certain and melancholy truth.

“ Unacquainted with the resolution of congress with respect to general Schuyler, we have hesitated what further to propose. Time is so extremely precarious, that we are unwilling to lose a single unnecessary moment; and have therefore been induced to extend our views to the disapprobation of this gentleman, and make some provision for that event. A character has presented itself, which, in a great degree, meets our approbation, judgment, and wishes. We have opened the subject to him, and it is now under his consideration. When we are at liberty, we shall introduce him to your notice; but delicacy forbids our doing it, until he has made up his mind on the subject, and given his consent to the nomination.— Another gentleman of extensive connexions, great activity, and comprehensive genius, but intirely in civil life, has also been proposed. As he is at a distance, we have not been able to consult him; and are restrained, by similar motives of delicacy, from making his character and name a subject of discussion without his consent.

“ By the time we are favoured with the determination respecting general Schuyler, and he should not be approved, we hope to be able to announce both these gentlemen for your consideration.

“ We are, with the greatest regard and respect,

“ S I R,

“ Your most obedient, and very humble servants,

“ (THE COMMITTEE.)

“ *To the President of Congress.*

(Signed) FRA. DANA.”

IT must be confessed that, on the whole, the British arms under sir William Howe were attended with success; but this success was never duly followed up and improved. That commander had several opportunities of defeating the American army, and thereby of putting an end to the war. At Long Island, in the Jerseys, at Brandywine, at White Marsh, and at Valley Forge, fortune had placed the enemy within his grasp, but he declined to seize the offered advantage. None of his military exploits possessed either plan, object, or decision. And the only fruit derived from the several victories of sir William Howe, during the campaign of 1777, amounted to no more than the acquisition of good winter-quarters for the British army at Philadelphia.

C H A P.
XV.
1777.

C H A P. XVI.

Canadian Operations—General Burgoyne invested with the Command of the Northern Army—General Carleton, offended with this Appointment, resigns his Government—Opinions on the Employment of the Savages—Number of Troops under General Burgoyne—Expedition under Colonel St. Leger—Burgoyne's Manifesto—Ticonderoga and Mount Independence invested—The Forts abandoned by the Americans—American Gallies destroyed near Skeneborough—Americans abandon their Works—Their Rear overtaken—General St. Clair arrives at Fort Edward—Americans repulsed by Colonel Hill—Americans abandon Fort Anne—Difficulties encountered in the March of the Royal Army to Fort Edward—Americans retire to Saratoga.

C H A P.
XVI.

1777.
Canadian
operations.

General Burgoyne invested with the command of the northern army.

IT will be necessary now to turn our attention from the south to the north; from the plains of Pennsylvania to those of Canada: where, instead of victories mixed with loss, we meet with nothing but disappointment, disaster, and defeat.

The administration of Great Britain resolved to carry on the war upon the side of Canada and the Lakes with activity and energy. The command of this expedition was entrusted to general Burgoyne. Sir Guy Carleton was certainly, and with much reason, offended with this appointment, which, indeed, could not be justified on any grounds of reason or of prudence. General Burgoyne, without doubt, possessed bravery, and some military knowledge; but it must be allowed that general Carleton was better qualified for the important

portant expedition, which, under his direction, would probably have been attended with success. From his long residence in Canada, he knew more accurately than general Burgoyne, the situation of the country, the manners of the inhabitants, and the extent of its resources; and he united greater authority with more military experience. He would have been more aware of the difficulties to be encountered, and better prepared for surmounting them. But general Burgoyne was a member of parliament, and it was one of those miserable expedients which the minister substituted for grandeur of design, to bestow some of the most important employments, both military and naval, on men who were in the habits of opposing the measures of administration. By this pitiful policy he was enabled to secure himself against parliamentary attack, and to carry his measures more easily in the house of commons.

C H A P.
XVI.
1777.

That general Carleton was offended with the appointment of general Burgoyne is sufficiently evident, from his immediate resignation of his government. Much was expected from this expedition, and, to do the minister justice, nothing was wanting on his part to render success probable. A large body of veteran troops was sent from England, well provided with every necessary, and great quantities of warlike stores were also transmitted in order to supply those inhabitants who were expected to declare in favour of the British cause.

General Carleton, offended at this appointment, resigns his government.

In addition to the strength already possessed by the English in Canada, several nations of savages who inhabit the back settlements of that province, and the borders of the Western Lakes, resolved to take up arms against the Americans. The acceptance of their assistance has occasioned much discussion, and a variety of opinions. General Burgoyne was certainly induced to adopt this measure from a knowledge of their warlike character, and from a well-grounded supposition that, if he refused their offers, they would instantly join

Opinions on the employment of the savages.

the

C H A P.
XVI.

1777.

the Americans. But he resolved to bring them into action as little as possible. In the preceding year he did not make much use of them, and he determined to pursue, as far as he could with prudence, the same line of conduct in the present year. He knew that their object in all wars was murder, desolation, and destruction; and though he certainly wished to conquer the revolted Americans, yet he did not wish to exterminate them. His conduct however, in this respect, did not receive general approbation; for it was contended that partial severity was general mercy, and that, to put a speedy end to the rebellion, the most vigorous and resolute measures should be adopted. Among the opponents of general Burgoyne on this subject was the minister himself; who, accordingly, transmitted orders to general Carleton to use all his influence in securing the assistance of the Indian nations. This he did so effectually, that he became fearful at length of obtaining a larger number than was necessary.

Number of
troops under
general Bur-
goyne.

The army under general Burgoyne consisted of British and German troops, amounting to seven thousand one hundred and seventy-three men, exclusive of the corps of artillery. Of these the foreign troops amounted to near one half. This body of troops accorded very nearly with the plan submitted to the minister by general Burgoyne. He had required eight thousand regulars, rank and file, exclusive of the artillery, a corps of watermen, two thousand Canadians, including hatchet-men, with a thousand savages.

General Burgoyne was furnished with picked and experienced officers. The most eminent of these were major-general Philips, brigadier-generals Frazer, Powel, and Hamilton; the Brunswick major-general Reidesel, and brigadier-general Specht. This large body of veteran troops was to be kept together as much as possible. In order to produce this effect, the inhabitants of Canada were commanded to furnish men sufficient to occupy the woods on the
5 .. frontiers,

frontiers, to prevent desertion, to procure intelligence, and to intercept all communication between the enemy and the malcontents in the province. They were also required to provide men for the completion of the fortifications at Sorel, St. John's, Chamblée, and Isle aux Noix, for the carriage of provisions, artillery, and stores, and for making roads. In addition to this, they were to furnish an adequate quantity of horses and carts.

C H A P.
XVI.
1777.

Colonel St. Leger, with a body of light troops and Indians, amounting to between seven and eight hundred men, having been previously detached by the way of Lake Ontario, and the Mohawk river, in order to make a diversion in favour of the army, general Burgoyne set out from St. John's on the sixteenth of June 1777.

Expedition
under colonel
St. Leger.

The naval force, under the command of commodore Lutwych, preceded the army, and opened the way for its advances, detachments of Indians having been previously made from the river Bouquet, as well to act upon the enemy's convoys and communications on the side of Otter Creek, as to cover the reconnoitre of South Bay, through which country it was probable that the enemy would pass, if Ticonderoga should fall into the hands of the British. The fleet proceeded without any opposition, and, under its protection, the troops were landed about the middle of June, and encamped at a small distance from Crown Point on the north side. The advanced parties of the enemy retired on the approach of our army.

At this place general Burgoyne thought proper to give the Indians a war-feast, and to make a speech to them. The purport of it was, to induce them to refrain from cruelty, and to mitigate their natural ferocity.

Before the royal army advanced to Ticonderoga general Burgoyne issued a proclamation or manifesto, in which, with a most ill-judged policy, he threatened to punish, with the utmost severity, those who

Burgoyne's
manifesto.

C H A P.
XVI.

1777.

refused to attach themselves to the British cause. At the same time he magnified the ferocity of the savages, animadverting with peculiar emphasis of diction on the eagerness which they discovered to butcher those who continued hostile to the mother-country, whose interests they had espoused. Having remained at Crown Point a few days, in order to rest themselves, and to establish magazines, the whole army proceeded with caution to Ticonderoga, which place it was resolved to invest.

Ticonderoga
invested,

Ticonderoga is situated on the western shore, a few miles to the northward of that narrow inlet which unites Lake George to Lake Champlain. Crown Point lies more northward than Ticonderoga, and is situated on an angle of land washed on two sides by water flowing over rocks. A deep morass covered the third side, except in a small part, where formerly the French had erected lines, which still continued, and which the Americans had now strengthened by additional works.

and Mount
Independence.

Opposite to Ticonderoga, on the eastern shore, the Americans had with great industry fortified a high hill called Mount Independence. On the top of it, which is flat, a star fort had been erected, containing extensive barracks well supplied with artillery. The mountain stretched in a sloping direction into the water, strongly entrenched to its base, and well supplied with heavy artillery. Midway up the mountain, another battery was erected to cover the lower works. With infinite labour the Americans had united Ticonderoga and Mount Independence by a strong bridge of communications over the inlet. Twenty-two sunken piers supported the bridge at equal distances. Between the piers floats were placed, fastened together with chains and rivets, and bound to the sunken piers. On the Lake Champlain side of the bridge, a boom, composed of very large timber, was erected, fastened together by rivetted bolts and double chains, made of iron an inch and a half square.

square. This bridge effectually prevented any attack by water from the northern side. But Ticonderoga, notwithstanding its apparent strength, had one disadvantage to contend with. To the southward of the bridge of communications was a hill, called Sugar Hill, which overlooked and commanded both the works at Ticonderoga, and on Mount Independence. This place the Americans were unable to fortify, on account of the want of men; general St. Clair, who commanded at Ticonderoga, not having above three thousand men.

C H A P.
XVI.
1777.

The royal army, when they left Crown Point, advanced with the greatest circumspection and prudence on both sides of the Lake, the fleet keeping in the centre till the army had enclosed the enemy on the land side, and the fleet had arrived just out of cannon-shot of their works. On the approach of the right wing on the second of July, the enemy instantly relinquished and set fire to their works on the side of Lake George. Major-general Philips therefore immediately secured the possession of an important place called Mount Hope, which commanded the enemy's line, and cut off all communication with Lake George.

The royal army having arrived at Ticonderoga, proceeded with great expedition and alacrity in constructing works necessary for the investment of that place. By the fifth of July these works were completed, and a road made to the top of Sugar Hill for the construction of a battery there. The enemy, discovering these vigorous operations, thought proper to hold a council of war, in which it was resolved to evacuate Ticonderoga and Mount Independence immediately. In consequence of this determination, their baggage, provisions, and stores, were embarked in two hundred batteaux, and dispatched up the south river to Skenesborough. The army took the Castle Town road, in order to reach Skenesborough by land. The American general conceived that his retreat would be made

The forts
abandoned
by the Ame-
ricans.

C H A P.
XVI.

1777.

American
gallies de-
stroyed near
Skenesbo-
rough.

without any difficulty, on account of the obstacles which the English must necessarily overcome before they could pursue him. The dawn of the day, on the sixth of July, discovered this unexpected retreat. Commodore Lutwych immediately began to prepare for a pursuit by removing an immense work of framed timber sunk in the water, and by cutting away the boom that obstructed the passage, and which had cost, in the completion of it, near twelve months labour. As soon as these obstructions were removed (which task was effected by nine o'clock in the morning), captain Carter of the artillery, who commanded a brigade of gun-boats, gave chase, and pursued that division of the enemy which was making its retreat by water. So great was the speed with which he executed the trust reposed in him, that he overtook them near the Falls of Skenesborough, engaged and captured some of their largest gallies, obliging them to set the others on fire, together with a considerable number of their batteaux.

The Ame-
ricans abandon
their
works.

The grand division of the army under general Burgoyne, in gun-boats, the Royal George, and Inflexible frigates, approaching the Falls, were saluted by a discharge of cannon from the works at Skenesborough. On this account the general thought proper to return and land his army at South Bay, where part of the batteaux of the enemy had taken refuge. These would certainly have been destroyed if the day had not been too far advanced. Immediately on the landing of the English the enemy evacuated their stockade fort, and other works, to which, as well as to the mills and store-houses, they set fire previous to their departure.

Their rear
overtaken.

During these operations by water, brigadier-general Frazer, at the head of the advanced corps of grenadiers and light infantry, pressed hard upon the rear of that division of the enemy which had taken the route of Hubberton, and which he overtook at five o'clock on the morning of the sixth of July. This division consisted of near one thousand

five

five hundred of the best marksmen and chosen troops, under the command of colonel Francis. They were posted on strong ground, and received the attack of the British from behind breastworks composed of logs and old trees. General Frazer's detachment was not equal in point of number to the enemy; nevertheless he commenced the engagement, because he expected a reinforcement of troops under the German general Reidesel. The Americans maintained their post with great resolution and bravery. The reinforcement did not arrive so soon as was expected, and victory for a long time was doubtful. The arrival however of general Reidesel decided the fate of the day. Hearing the firing of guns he pushed forwards with a small number of men, and joined general Frazer with a full band of music playing. The enemy conceiving from this circumstance that the whole of the German troops had advanced into the field, immediately retreated with great precipitation.

C H A P.
XVI.
1777.

The Americans lost in this action their brave commander, several other officers, and above two hundred men killed. The same number were taken prisoners; and it was supposed that not less than six hundred wounded died in the woods.

The loss on the part of the British did not exceed twenty officers, none, except major Grant, of any rank; and about one hundred and twenty men killed and wounded. During this engagement general St. Clair was at Castle Town, about six miles distant from the field of battle. Immediately on receiving intelligence of this defeat, he bent his course to the woods on his left, fearful of being intercepted at Fort Anne, but yet uncertain whether he should proceed to the upper part of the Connecticut, or to Fort Edward. In the mean time a party of the enemy having taken the road by Wood Creek, in order to proceed beyond Fort Anne, after their retreat from Skenelborough, were pursued by colonel Hill and the
ninth

C H A P.
XVI.

1777.

ninth regiment, and overtaken near Fort Anne. A warm engagement immediately commenced, the enemy having infinitely the advantage in point of number. But colonel Hill had posted himself in such a judicious manner, that all the attacks of the enemy in front were ineffectual. A disposition was then made to surround him, which the British commander, with admirable dexterity, avoided, by changing his situation in the heat of the action. The engagement still continued, with various success, for three hours, when the Americans were repulsed with great slaughter, and forced to retreat, after setting fire to Fort Anne, to Fort Edward. The artillery lost, by the evacuation of the northern posts, and taken or destroyed in the armed vessels at Skenesborough, was prodigious, amounting to no less than one hundred and twenty-eight pieces, serviceable and unserviceable. The loss of flower, biscuit, pork, and beef, was also very considerable. At Fort Edward, where general Schuyler was joined by general St. Clair on the twelfth, after a fatiguing march, the whole strength of the Americans did not exceed four thousand four hundred men, including militia. It may not be improper to relate here one of those stratagems in which the genius of the Americans, during the whole course of the war, was remarkably fertile. Schuyler took out of a canteen with a false bottom, a letter from a person in the interest of the provincials to general Sullivan, and prepared an answer to it, drawn up in such a strain as to perplex and distract Burgoyne, and leave him in doubt what course to follow. This letter, which fell, as was intended, into the English general's hands, had the desired effect; for he was completely duped and puzzled by it for several days, and at a loss whether to advance or retreat.

General Burgoyne, after remaining some time at Skenesborough, left that place, with an intention of taking the road that leads to Hudson's River, and thence to Albany, in order to open a communication

cation with Lake George, on which he had embarked the heavy artillery and baggage. In this undertaking, the difficulties which the royal army had to encounter were infinite. Swamps and morasses were to be passed. Bridges were to be constructed, not only over creeks, but over ravines and gullies. The roads were to be cleared of the forest trees, which had been felled and disposed in such a manner as to intersect each other. Notwithstanding, however, all these obstacles, in a sultry season of the year, and in a close country, which the numerous insects render almost intolerable to Europeans, the royal army endured this amazing fatigue with great cheerfulness, and opposed themselves to difficulty and danger with untired perseverance and unabated fortitude. This general has, with much reason, been blamed for adopting this difficult and tardy mode of conduct; by returning to Ticonderoga, and embarking again on Lake George, he might have easily proceeded to Fort George, whence there was a waggon-road to the place of his destination, Fort Edward. The reason he gave for not pursuing this line of conduct was, that a retrograde motion would have checked the vigour and animation of the troops. Whether the mode he chose to adopt was likely to increase them it is not very difficult to determine. As soon as the British troops had secured the possession of Skenesborough, that active officer major-general Philips returned to Lake George, to transport the artillery, provisions, and baggage, over the lake, to Fort George, and thence by land to Fort Edward, on Hudson's River, together with a large number of boats and batteaux for the use of the army in the intended descent to Albany. General Schuyler, who at this time commanded the northern American army, had posted himself, immediately after the affair of Hubberton, as already observed, at Fort Edward. On the advance of the royal army he retreated down Hudson's River to Saratoga, where he issued a proclamation calculated to counteract the effect intended to be produced

C H A P.
XVI.
1777.

C H A P.
XVI.

1777.

duced by the manifesto published by general Burgoyne. The royal army, on account of the numberless difficulties they had to encounter, advanced but slowly ; and it was not till the thirtieth of July that they arrived on Hudson's River. Here their progress was checked for some time, because it was necessary, before they could proceed, that the provisions, stores, and other necessaries, which had been brought to Fort George from Ticónderoga, by general Philips, should be embarked. The army of course was immediately employed in the prosecution of this service.

C H A P. XVII.

Difficulties experienced at Fort Edward—Colonel St. Leger's Expedition—Detachment to Bennington—Baum and Breyman defeated—Fort Stanwix invested—Attempt to relieve it by General Harke-mer—St. Leger obliged to raise the Siege of Fort Stanwix—General Gates takes the Command of the American Army in the North—Action at Still Water—Distressed Situation of General Burgoyne—Desertion of the Indians—Retreat to Saratoga—Royal Army nearly surrounded—Convention with General Gates.

THE delays which had been occasioned by the route which general Burgoyne thought proper to take, had afforded time for the Americans to recover their fortitude and to recruit their strength. Where the Mohawk falls into Hudson's River, about eight miles from Albany, is an island in the shape of an half-moon, call Still Water. On this place general Schuyler, who had assembled about two thousand seven hundred men at Saratoga, on receiving a reinforcement of men and artillery, under the command of general Arnold, posted his army, in order to check the progress of colonel St. Leger, who early in June had been detached from Lashene, six miles from Montreal, by the way of Lake Ontario and the Mohawk River, in order, as already observed, to make a diversion in favour of the main army. He had under his command a considerable number of savages, who, in spite of general Burgoyne's address to them, could not be restrained from the commission of se-

C H A P.
XVII.
1777.

C H A P.
XVII.

1777.
Difficulties
experienced
at Fort Ed-
ward.
Colonel St.
Leger's ex-
pedition.

Detachment
to Benning-
ton.

veral acts of ferocity. General Burgoyne still remained in the neighbourhood of Fort Edward, where, on account of the difficulty of bringing the stores from Fort George to Hudson's River, the army began to experience great hardships. At this juncture he received intelligence that colonel St. Leger had advanced up the St. Lawrence, and had commenced his operations against Stanwix, a fort situated on a rising ground at the upper end of the Mohawk River, about three hundred yards from its source, and about half a mile from the source of Wood Creek, which runs into Lake Onida, and through the Onandigo into Lake Ontario. General Burgoyne saw the necessity of co-operating with colonel St. Leger, and of immediately making a rapid movement forward. But this intention could not be carried into execution under the present circumstances. Ox-teams, carriages, and other necessaries, were indispensably necessary; to procure which, the commander in chief resolved to detach a body of troops to Bennington, a place situated between the forks of the Hosick River, and about twenty-four miles to the eastward of Hudson's River. The northern army received supplies of cattle, provisions, and stores, from the New England provinces by way of the Connecticut, Manchester, and Arlington; which supplies were deposited at Bennington. On this expedition the German colonel Baum was dispatched with about six hundred men, mostly Germans, including a detachment of Reidesel's dragoons. This number was in every respect too small. A loyalist who was well acquainted with the road, and had undertaken to accompany colonel Baum, stated to general Burgoyne that the expedition required a force of not less than three thousand men; for the roads were very bad, through a thick woody country, and the tardiness of the German method of marching would, he knew, enable the enemy to prepare for their reception. The general, however, paid no attention to the representation

sentation of this gentleman, whom he piqued on the point of honour. The idea of sending German troops on this service was opposed by some of the officers of the army; but particularly by general Frazer, who, it is said, not only remonstrated with general Burgoyne, but reduced his remonstrance into writing. The Germans were heavy and tardy in marching, and, as usual, were loaded with accoutrements that prevented those exertions which such an expedition required. In the whole army a corps could not have possibly been found so unfit for a service that required rapidity of motion as Reidesel's dragoons. Their very hats and swords weighed very nearly as much as the whole equipment of one of our soldiers. The worst British regiment in the service would with ease have marched two miles for their one. Colonel Baum was a brave officer, but he was totally unacquainted with the country, with the people, and with the language, inasmuch, it was reported, that he hardly knew, when he understood that they were rising in arms, whether to consider them as friends or foes.

C H A P.
XVII.
1777.

Colonel Baum, accompanied by the loyalist as his guide, began his march. On the first day Baum surprised a large body of the enemy who had assembled for the purpose of opposing the progress of his detachment. This body of men, however, were, from a too refined principle of generosity, on the succeeding day liberated by colonel Skeene, the inspector-general, who joined the detachment and superseded the loyalist. This mode of conduct it was supposed would detach them from the American cause. Unfortunately however it produced an effect diametrically opposite; for this very body of the enemy were afterwards the most formidable opponents of the English at Bennington.

On the second day's march of colonel Baum's detachment, they captured some cattle, and routed a small part of the enemy near a village called Cambridge. Here the colonel received intelligence

C H A P.
XVII.
1777.

that the enemy were assembling from New Hampshire, and the borders of Connecticut, for the defence of Bennington. Nevertheless he advanced as far as Walloon Creek, about seven miles from Bennington, where the intelligence he had received at Cambridge was confirmed, and no doubt remained of a formidable opposition. In consequence of this information he thought proper to halt, and to post his detachment in as advantageous a manner as possible. This last measure he was induced to adopt from the representations of a number of loyalists, under the command of a colonel Phister, who joined him, and acquainted him that the enemy were strongly intrenched at Bennington, and that, as soon as they had received a reinforcement of men, it was intended to attack him. Colonel Baum having transmitted these particulars to general Burgoyne, a detachment of five hundred Germans, under the command of lieutenant-colonel Breyman, was sent to his assistance. The roads were bad; nor was the mode in which the Germans marched calculated to promote expedition. They halted ten times in an hour to dress their ranks, which, through the embarrassments attending their march, were liable to be broken at every turn.

The American general, Starke, with a body of one thousand men from New Hampshire and Massachusetts, was at this period on his route to join general Schuyler. Having received intelligence, however, of the approach of colonel Baum, he altered his course, and hastened towards Bennington, where, joining the continental troops under colonel Warner, he set out on the sixteenth of August, and, by ten o'clock in the morning, surrounded colonel Baum at St. Coieck's Mill, on Walloon Creek. The German officer, a stranger to the country, and to the language of the inhabitants, was at first persuaded by the loyalists who had joined him that they were friends. General Starke,

Starke, however, commencing a furious attack upon him on all sides, soon convinced him of their error. Nevertheless he resolved to make a vigorous defence. For upwards of an hour he endured a terrible discharge of musquetry, and during that period drove the enemy several times from the high ground on which they were stationed. But their number increasing every moment, and colonel Baum having lost his artillery, the German troops were under the necessity of retreating into the woods, leaving their commander mortally wounded on the field of battle. The savages who had accompanied colonel Baum behaved in a shameful manner, retreating at the commencement of the engagement. Flushed with this victory, the enemy advanced against the detachment under colonel Breyman, who, ignorant of the defeat of Baum, was advancing to his relief; but the tardiness of their method of marching, added to the obstacles which the roads presented, had retarded their progress in such a manner, that twenty-four hours were spent in marching sixteen miles. The consequence was, that Breyman came up just in time to join the fugitives of Baum's detachment. The Americans began a vigorous attack on Breyman, who was obliged to retreat, after having made a very gallant resistance, and having expended all his ammunition. The loss of men in these two engagements amounted to about six hundred.

This was the first check which the northern army received, and indeed it must be chiefly attributed to the commander in chief. The troops he dispatched on the expedition to Bennington were too few in number, and, being foreigners, improper for it. The general ought to have rectified his mistake, when colonel Baum sent for a reinforcement. Had he sent Frazer's brigade, according to that general's request, the fatal consequences that ensued might in all probability have been prevented. Immediately after the
defeat

C H A P.
XVII.
1777.

Baum and
Breyman
defeated.

C H A P.
XVII.

1777.
Fort Stanwix
invested.

Attempt to
relieve it by
general Har-
kemer.

defeat of colonel Baum, and the retreat of colonel Breyman, the royal army which had advanced to Saratoga, drew back.

In the mean time colonel St. Leger had commenced his attack upon Fort Stanwix, a small square log fort with four bastions and a stockaded covered-way, without any other outworks. It was defended by colonels Gansevert and Willet, and seven hundred men. The commencement of the siege was attended with very favourable circumstances. On the fifth of August colonel St. Leger received intelligence that one thousand provincials, under the command of general Harkemer, were advancing to the relief of the fort. Sir John Johnson therefore, with a party of regulars, and a number of savages, was dispatched into the woods, where he placed his men in ambush. The enemy advanced incautiously, and fell into the trap that was laid for them. A sudden and unexpected fire was poured upon them from behind trees and bushes, and the savages rushing from their concealment, made a dreadful slaughter with their spears and tomahawks. The enemy, though surprised and somewhat dismayed, did not retreat precipitately, but recovered a rising ground, which enabled them, by a kind of running fight, to preserve about one third of their detachment. The number of killed and wounded on the part of the enemy amounted to near four hundred. The besieged being informed of the approach of general Harkemer, made a sally under colonel Willet, which was attended with some success. Having received, however, intelligence of the defeat of the provincials, he and another officer undertook a very perilous expedition. They penetrated at the dead of night through the camp of the besiegers, and traversed a space of fifty miles, through deserts, woods, and morasses, in order to bring relief to the fort. The enemy perceiving that the artillery of the besiegers was too light, and insufficient to make any impression on the defences of the fort, treated

every proposal for a surrender with derision and contempt. On the twenty-second of August a man belonging to the fort purposely conveyed himself into the British camp, and declared that he had escaped from the enemy at the hazard of his life, in order to inform the British commander that general Arnold, with two thousand men and ten pieces of cannon, was advancing rapidly to raise the siege. He also acquainted him that general Burgoyne had been defeated, and his army cut to pieces. Colonel St. Leger was not intimidated by this information; nor did he give much credit to it; but it produced an immediate effect on the savages. The British commander called a council of their chiefs, and endeavoured, by the influence of sir John Johnson, and the other superintendants, colonels Claus and Butler, to induce them not to withdraw their assistance. Every effort however was ineffectual; a large party of the savages departed while the council was sitting; and the rest threatened to follow their example, unless the British commander would immediately make a retreat. To this mortifying proposition he was under the necessity of acceding. The tents were left standing, and the artillery and stores fell into the possession of the garrison. One of the chief causes of the failure of success in this expedition was the inadequacy of the force under colonel St. Leger, and the insufficiency and smallness of the artillery, which were incapable of making any breach on the enemy's works. The superiority of the savages in number over the British troops, was another cause. Their subsequent desertion, and the approach of Arnold, rendered a retreat a measure of necessity, though it certainly might have been conducted in a more regular manner.

With respect to the intimation of general Arnold's approach to the relief of Fort Stanwix, it was in part true. He was advancing up the Mohawk River with two thousand men; but, in order to arrive more speedily at the place of his destination, he had left the
main

C H A P.
XVII.

1777.

St. Leger
obliged to
raise the siege
of Fort Stan-
wix.

C H A P.
XVII.

1777.
General
Gates takes
the command
of the Ame-
rican army in
the north.

main body, and moved rapidly forward with a body of about nine hundred men. He arrived at the fort two days after the siege had been raised. His assistance being now unnecessary, he returned with his army to reinforce general Gates, who had a short time before taken the command of the American army in the north.

General Burgoyne having by unremitting industry collected about thirty days provisions, and a bridge of boats being constructed in lieu of the bridge of rafts which had been carried away by incessant rains, the whole army crossed Hudson's River on the thirteenth and fourteenth of September, and encamped on the heights and plains of Saratoga, with a vast train of artillery. The movements of the army were of course regulated by the advances of the artillery, which were not only retarded by the destruction of the bridges, but by the rains, which had rendered the roads almost impassable. On the nineteenth of September the army advanced in front of the enemy at Still Water in the following order: The right wing was commanded by general Burgoyne, and 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 left wing and artillery were commanded by majors-general Philips and Reidesel, who proceeded along the great road. The nature of the country preventing the enemy from beholding the different movements of the British army, they detached a body of five thousand men to attempt turning the right wing, and attacking general Burgoyne in his rear. Being checked in their design by general Frazer, they made a rapid movement, which the peculiar situation of the country prevented from being discovered, and advanced to attack the British line on the right. The engagement began at three o'clock in the afternoon of the nineteenth of September, and continued till after sun-set. The enemy were led to the battle by
general

Action at
Still Water.

general Arnold, who distinguished himself in an extraordinary manner. Unfortunately, the engagement was only partial on the part of the English. The chief burden of the battle of course lay on the regiments which were posted in the plain. These were the twentieth, the twenty-first, and the sixty-second. They behaved with great gallantry and firmness, receiving and returning the heavy fire of the enemy with equal coolness and intrepidity, for the space of four hours. Several other regiments also distinguished themselves. The twenty-fourth regiment, with the grenadiers and light-infantry, were for some time engaged with great spirit and bravery. The German troops were not much in the battle, on account of their situation, which it was not judged advisable to relinquish. As soon as the battle commenced, major-general Philips contrived to convey through a thick part of the wood some artillery, which was of essential service.

C H A P.
XVII.
1777.

The enemy, during the whole of the engagement, were supplied with fresh men by general Gates, who was posted at a star redoubt. As day-light closed they thought proper to retire, and leave the British masters of the field of battle.

The loss on each side was nearly equal; six hundred being killed and wounded on the part of the British, and the same number on the side of the Americans. It must be confessed that the engagement would have been more decisive on the part of the English, if general Burgoyne had not burdened himself with such a train of artillery as not only rendered his marching tardy, but made it necessary for him to extend his lines more than the nature of his situation rendered prudent. No solid advantages resulted to the British troops from this encounter. The conduct of the enemy had fully convinced every one that they were able to sustain an attack in open plains with the intrepidity, the spirit, and the coolness of veterans. For four hours they maintained a contest hand to hand;

C H A P.
XVII.

1777.

and when they retired, it was not because they were conquered, but because the approach of night made a retreat to their camp absolutely necessary.

The British army lay all night on their arms in the field of battle, and the next day works were erected within cannon-shot of the enemy, the right being fortified by strong redoubts. It is said that, had the lines of the enemy been attacked on the morning after the battle, they would have retreated, their baggage being loaded, and every thing prepared for flight, if the British general had thought proper to have adopted such a measure. It must be confessed, however, that such an assertion is not supported by circumstances or probabilities; for the manner in which the enemy were posted was peculiarly strong. On the right, any approach or attack was impracticable; and on the left not to be made without great hazard. The intrepidity of captain Jones, of the British artillery, who fell in this action, was particularly distinguished. Few actions have been more remarkable than this, for both vigour of attack and obstinacy of resistance.

Distressed
situation of
general Burgoyne.

Every possible method was now taken to inform sir William Howe and general Clinton of the situation of general Burgoyne, and arguments used that might induce them to make a diversion in his favour. Under the conviction that they would adopt such a mode of conduct, he had crossed Hudson's River, and given up all communication with the Lakes. He had expected that a diversion would have been made before this period. Such a diversion was indeed made about this time, and that without orders, by sir Henry Clinton, against Forts Clinton and Montgomery in the lower parts of Hudson's River.

After the battle of Still Water the savages, as already observed, had discovered a disinclination to continue with general Burgoyne. They had been disappointed in their hopes of plunder, and the

check which the English had received at Bennington and Fort Stanwix had chilled that ardour and enthusiasm which they had at first manifested. The season for hunting was now arrived; and never do they on any pretence forego it. On this account they withdrew their assistance, and deserted general Burgoyne, deaf to every consideration of honour, and unmoved by any representations made to them of the distress in which their secession would involve him. The royal army was by this desertion extremely weakened; but the British general did not think it advisable to retreat from the enemy.

C H A P.
XVII.
1777.

Desertion of
the Indians.

Both armies lay in sight of each other for some time, each fortifying their camp in the strongest manner possible. This delay was extremely beneficial to the Americans, inasmuch as it enabled them to increase their number of men, and to obtain a powerful reinforcement of stores and provisions from the southern provinces. But the American generals were not solely employed in fortifying their camp, or in increasing their resources. They knew the embarrassment of general Burgoyne's situation, and the dilemma to which he was reduced. The only probable means of saving himself from destruction lay in a retreat. An expedition was therefore planned by generals Gates and Arnold, to prevent the adoption of this last sad measure, by cutting off all communication with the Lakes, and by recovering the possession of Ticonderoga and Mount Independence.

This expedition was entrusted to the command of colonel Brown, who with great secrecy and diligence gained the rear of the royal army undiscovered. He arrived on the eighteenth of September at the north end of Lake George, where one small sloop and the boats employed in transporting provisions to the army were surprised and taken, with a number of Canadians and a few seamen. Three com-

Retreat to
Saratoga.

C H A P.
XVII.

1777.

panies of the fifty-third regiment were at the same time made prisoners. Immediately after they had secured the possession of the armed vessels, they began to attack Ticonderoga with two pieces of cannon, which they had obtained from the captured sloop.

Brigadier-general Powel, who commanded the garrison, defended it for four days against the attempts of the enemy, who, at the expiration of that period, were induced to retire, from an apprehension of being intercepted in their retreat by a detachment of troops from Canada. In their way back the enemy made another attempt upon Diamond Island, situated in the southern part of the lake, which was as unsuccessful as that made against Ticonderoga.

Royal army
nearly sur-
rounded.

General Burgoyne's difficulties began now to increase daily. The enemy had augmented their strength in such a manner as to render him diffident of the possibility of making good his retreat. His army was reduced to little more than five thousand men, who were limited to half the usual allowance of provisions. The stock of forage was entirely exhausted, and the horses were perishing in great numbers for the want of it. In addition to these circumstances, no intelligence had yet been received of the approach of general Clinton, or of the diversion which was to be made. Environed thus by difficulty and danger, general Burgoyne resolved to try the disposition of the enemy, to examine the possibility of advancing, and of dislodging them from their posts on the left, which would enable him to adopt the melancholy resource of retreating to the lakes. Pursuant to this determination he detached a body of fifteen hundred men, which he headed himself, being attended by generals Philips, Reidesel, and Frazer. The camp was defended on the high grounds by generals Hamilton and Specht; and the redoubts and parts adjacent to the river, by brigadier Gell. This detachment had scarce formed, within less than half a mile of the enemy's intrenchments,

ments, when a furious attack was made on the left, where the grenadiers were posted. Major Ackland, who commanded the grenadiers, conducted himself with great coolness and intrepidity. His post was extremely difficult and dangerous, and it was not possible to detach any assistance to him from the German corps, because the superiority in number of the enemy enabled them at the same time to extend their line of attack against them. The right had not yet been employed, but it being observed that the enemy were making a movement round their flank to prevent their retreat, the light-infantry and the twenty-fourth regiment instantly formed, in order to frustrate the enemy's intentions.

The left wing in the mean time, overpowered by numbers, was obliged to retreat, and would inevitably have been cut to pieces, but for the intervention of the light-infantry and twenty-fourth regiment. The whole detachment was now under the necessity of retiring, with the loss of six pieces of artillery. Scarce had the British troops entered the lines when they were again impetuously attacked by the enemy, who, notwithstanding a most heavy fire, began a furious assault upon their intrenchments. They were led by the gallant general Arnold, who attacked lord Balcarras's light-infantry with great eagerness. The resistance was firm, and the engagement for a long while doubtful. A wound which Arnold received at length gave the victory to the English, and the Americans were repulsed from this quarter. In another, however, they were more successful. The intrenchments defended by the German troops under colonel Breyman were carried sword in hand. The colonel was killed, and his troops retreated, with the loss of all their baggage, artillery, &c. Night closed the dreadful scene. The English lost, this day, general Frazer, colonel Breyman, and several other officers of note, besides a considerable number of wounded. The Americans took upwards of two hundred officers and

C H A P.
XVII.
1777.

C H A P.
XVII.

1777.

privates prisoners; besides nine pieces of brass artillery, and the encampment of a German brigade, with all their equipage. But what was of the greatest consequence, they obtained from the spoils of the field a large supply of ammunition, under a scarcity of which they had long laboured.

General Burgoyne was now most critically situated. He could not continue in his present position without a certainty of destruction. He therefore resolved to make a total and immediate change of position. With great secrecy and silence the whole army removed, with all their baggage and artillery, to the heights above the hospital during the night. This movement reduced the enemy to the necessity of making a new disposition. On the succeeding day, the eighth of October, several attempts were made to induce the enemy to hazard a battle. They were however ineffectual, and the whole day was occupied in continued skirmishes.

The enemy had refused to hazard a battle because they were preparing to carry measures into execution which would have immediately completed the ruin of the British army. These were to turn general Burgoyne's right, which, if effected, would have inclosed him on all sides. The British general, however, discovered these intentions before they were carried into execution. An instant retreat therefore to Saratoga was now the only alternative left. At nine o'clock on the evening of the eighth of October the army was ordered to relinquish their position on the heights above the hospital. The retreat to Saratoga was effected without loss, and without any obstruction on the part of the enemy; but it was impossible, encumbered as the army was with baggage and artillery, to carry off the sick and wounded from the hospital. General Gates, however, behaved with his wonted humanity, and the unfortunate tenants of the hospital were treated with all imaginable tenderness. General Burgoyne having ordered the roads and the bridges to be broken in their

their march forward, the movement of the army in their retreat was necessarily tardy. The fords of Fish Kill Creek, which are somewhat to the northward of Saratoga, were not passed till ten o'clock on the succeeding morning. The enemy, watching every motion with the most anxious attention, had already arrived at this place before them; but on the approach of the British troops, they retired over the river Hudson, to a larger force, which had been detached there to obstruct the passage of the royal troops.

C H A P.
XVII.
— 1777.

An attempt was now made to retreat to Fort George. A detachment of artificers under a strong escort was accordingly dispatched before the army, in order to repair the bridges and open the road to Fort Edward. The appearance of the enemy, however, prevented the artificers from effecting their purpose, and they were under the necessity of making a precipitate retreat on account of the desertion of their escort. The enemy stretching along the farther shore of the river Hudson, annoyed the batteaux of the royal army in such a manner that they were forced to land the provisions and convey them to the camp up a steep hill, the enemy pouring, during the whole time, a most tremendous fire on the men employed in this service.

Surrounded in this manner by destruction and dismay, general Burgoyne resolved to attempt a retreat by night to Fort Edward, each soldier carrying his provision on his back. The artillery was to be left behind, on account of the impossibility, under the present circumstance, of conveying it away. But even this sad alternative was rendered impracticable. While the army were preparing to march, intelligence was received that the enemy had already possessed themselves of the road to Fort Edward, and that they were well provided with artillery. In the course of the disastrous events here enumerated, large quantities of baggage, provisions, boats, and other articles, fell into the hands of the Americans; both regular troops, called continentals, and militia. The American militia were so eager
after

C H A P.
XVII.

1777.

after plunder, that they would often rob the provincial regulars of what booty they had secured, and sell it on their own account. Irregularities of this kind were carried to such a height, that the American commander, in general orders issued on the twelfth of October, declared “ that he saw so many scandalous and mean transactions committed “ by persons who sought more after plunder than the honour of “ doing their duty, that it was his unalterable resolution to have the “ first person who should thereafter be detected in pillaging the baggage and stores taken from the enemy tried and punished with the “ utmost severity.”

The situation of general Burgoyne had now attained the climax of difficulty and danger. Incessant toil had enervated the whole army. Out of eight thousand men, of which the army consisted after the capture of Ticonderoga, not more than three thousand five hundred fighting men remained, one half of which only were British. Provisions were almost exhausted, and no hope remained of procuring a fresh supply. Added to this, an enemy four times greater in point of number, and increasing every day, almost encircled them. An engagement was studiously avoided by the Americans, on account of their knowledge of the desperate situation of the British troops; and the enemy were posted in so advantageous a manner that they could not be attacked.

Every hope of relief being now at an end, on the thirteenth of October 1777, general Burgoyne ordered an exact statement to be made of the stock of provisions, which was found not to exceed seven or eight days subsistence for the troops.

The general instantly called a council of war, at which not only field officers but every captain was ordered to assist.

Convention
with general
Gates.

After some consultation on the emergency of affairs, it was unanimously resolved to enter into a convention with general Gates. The following were the steps preliminary to it:

No.

No. I.

October 13, 1777.

Lieutenant-general Burgoyne is desirous of sending a field-officer with a message to major-general Gates, upon a matter of high moment to both armies. He requests to be informed at what hour general Gates will receive him to-morrow morning.

Major-general Gates.

Answer.

Major-general Gates will receive a field-officer from lieutenant-general Burgoyne at the advanced post of the army of the United States at ten o'clock to-morrow morning, from whence he will be conducted to head-quarters.

Camp at Saratoga, nine o'clock P. M. thirteenth October.

Lieutenant-general Burgoyne.

No. II.

Major Kingston delivered the following message to major-general Gates, October 14, 1777.

After having fought you twice, lieutenant-general Burgoyne has waited some days in his present position, determined to try a third conflict against any force you could bring against him. He is apprised of the superiority of your numbers, and the disposition of your troops to impede his supplies, and render his retreat a scene of carnage on both sides. In this situation he is impelled by humanity, and thinks himself justified by established principles and precedents of state and war, to spare the lives of brave men upon honourable terms. Should major-general Gates be inclined to treat upon that idea, general Burgoyne would propose a cessation of arms during the time necessary to communicate the preliminary terms, by which, in any extremity, he and his army mean to abide.

No. III.

Major-general Gates's Proposals, together with Lieutenant-general Burgoyne's Answers.

1. General Burgoyne's army being exceedingly reduced by repeated defeats, by desertion, sickness, &c. their provisions exhausted, their military horses, tents, and baggage taken or destroyed, their retreat cut off, and their camp invested, they can only be allowed to surrender prisoners of war.

Ans. Lieutenant-general Burgoyne's army, however reduced, will never admit that their retreat is cut off while they have arms in their hands.

2. The officers and soldiers may keep the baggage belonging to them. The generals of the United States never permit individuals to be pillaged.

3. The troops under his excellency general Burgoyne will be conducted by the most convenient route to New England, marching by easy marches, and sufficiently provided for by the way.

Ans. This article is answered by general Burgoyne's first proposal, which is here annexed.

4. The officers will be admitted on parole; may wear their side arms, and will be treated with the liberality customary in Europe, so long as they, by proper behaviour, continue to deserve it; but those who are apprehended having broke their parole, as some British officers have done, must expect to be close confined.

Ans. There being no officer in this army under, or capable of being under the description of breaking parole, this article needs no answer.

5. All public stores, artillery, arms, ammunition, carriages, horses, &c. must be delivered to commissaries appointed to receive them.

Ans.

Anf. All public stores may be delivered, arms excepted.

C H A P.
XVII.
1777.

6. These terms being agreed to, and signed, the troops under his excellency general Burgoyne's command may be drawn up in their encampments, where they will be ordered to ground their arms, and may thereupon be marched to the river side to be passed over in their way towards Bennington.

Anf. This article inadmissible in any extremity. Sooner than this army will consent to ground their arms in their encampment, they will rush on the enemy, determined to take no quarter.

7. A cessation of arms to continue till sun-set, to receive general Burgoyne's answer.

(Signed) HORATIO GATES.

Camp at Saratoga, October 14, 1777.

No. IV.

Lieutenant-general Burgoyne's Proposals, together with Major-general Gates's Answers.

The annexed answers being given to major-general Gates's proposals, it remains for lieutenant-general Burgoyne, and the army under his command, to state the following preliminary articles on their part:

1. The troops to march out of their camp with the honours of war, and the artillery of the intrenchments, which will be left as hereafter may be regulated,

1. The troops to march out of their camp with the honours of war, and the artillery of the intrenchments to the verge of the river where the Old Ford stood, where their arms and artillery must be left.

2. A free passage to be granted to this army to Great Britain, upon condition of not serving again in North America during the

C H A P.
XVII.

1777.

present contest, and a proper port to be assigned for the entry of transports to receive the troops wherever general Howe shall so order.

2. Agreed to, for the port of Boston.

3. Should any cartel take place, by which this army, or any part of it, may be exchanged, the foregoing article to be void, as far as such exchange shall be made.

3. Agreed.

4. All officers to retain their carriages, bat-horses, and other cattle; and no baggage to be molested or searched, the lieutenant-general giving his honour that there are no public stores secreted therein. Major-general Gates will of course take the necessary measures for the security of this article.

4. Agreed.

5. Upon the march, the officers are not to be separated from their men; and in quarters the officers shall be lodged according to rank, and are not to be hindered from assembling their men for roll-calling and other necessary purposes of regularity.

5. Agreed to, as far as circumstances will admit.

6. There are various corps in this army composed of sailors, batteau-men, artificers, drivers, independent companies, and followers of the army; and it is expected that those persons, of whatever country, shall be included in the fullest sense and utmost extent of the above articles, and comprehended in every respect as British subjects.

6. Agreed to in the fullest extent.

7. All Canadians and persons belonging to the establishment in Canada to be permitted to return there.

7. Agreed.

8. Passports

C. H. A. P.
XVII.
1777

8. Passports to be immediately granted for three officers, not exceeding the rank of captain, who shall be appointed by general Burgoyne to carry dispatches to sir W. Howe, sir G. Carleton, and to Great Britain by the way of New York, and the public faith to be engaged that these dispatches are not to be opened.

8. Agreed.

9. The foregoing articles are to be considered only as preliminary for framing a treaty, in the course of which others may arise to be considered by both parties; for which purpose it is proposed that two officers of each army shall meet and report their deliberations to their respective generals.

9. This capitulation to be finished by two o'clock this day, and the troops to march from their encampment at five, and be in readiness to move towards Boston to-morrow morning.

10. Lieutenant-general Burgoyne will send his deputy adjutant-general to receive major-general Gates's answer to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

10. Complied with.

(Signed) HORATIO GATES.

Saratoga, October 15, 1777.

On the following day the subsequent articles of convention between lieutenant-general Burgoyne and major-general Gates were settled.

1. The troops under lieutenant-general Burgoyne to march out of their camp with the honours of war, and the artillery of the intrenchments to the verge of the river where the Old Ford stood, where the arms and artillery are to be left; the arms to be piled by word of command from their own officers.

2. A

2. A free passage to be granted the army under lieutenant-general Burgoyne to Great Britain, on condition of not serving again in North America during the present contest; and the port of Boston is assigned for the entry of transports to receive the troops whenever general Howe shall so order.

3. Should any cartel take place by which the army under general Burgoyne, or any part of it, may be exchanged, the foregoing article to be void, as far as such exchange shall be made.

4. The army under lieutenant-general Burgoyne to march to Massachusetts Bay by the easiest, most expeditious, and convenient route; and to be quartered in, near, or as convenient as possible to Boston, that the march of the troops may not be delayed when transports arrive to receive them.

5. The troops to be supplied, on their march and during their being in quarters, with provisions, by major-general Gates's orders, at the same rate of rations as the troops of his own army; and, if possible, the officers' horses and cattle to be supplied with forage at the usual rates.

6. All officers to retain their carriages, bat-horses, and other cattle; and no baggage to be molested or searched, lieutenant-general Burgoyne giving his honour that there are no public stores secreted therein. Major-general Gates will of course take the necessary measures for a due performance of this article. Should any carriages be wanted during the march, for the transportation of officers baggage, they are, if possible, to be supplied by the country at the usual rates.

7. Upon the march, and during the time the army shall remain in quarters in the Massachusetts Bay, the officers are not to be separated from their men, as far as circumstances will admit. The officers are to be quartered according to their rank, and are not to

be hindered from assembling their men for roll-callings, and other necessary purposes of regularity.

C H A P.
XVII.
1777.

8. All corps whatever of general Burgoyne's army, whether composed of sailors, batteau-men, artificers, drivers, independent companies and followers of the army, of whatever country, shall be included in the fullest sense and utmost extent of the above articles, and comprehended in every respect as British subjects.

9. All Canadians and persons belonging to the Canadian establishment, consisting of sailors, batteau-men, &c. are to be permitted to return there; they are to be conducted immediately by the shortest route, to the first British port on Lake George, are to be supplied with provisions in the same manner as the other troops; and are to be bound by the same condition of not serving during the present contest in North America.

10. Passports to be immediately granted for three officers, not exceeding the rank of captains, who shall be appointed by lieutenant-general Burgoyne to carry dispatches to sir William Howe, sir Guy Carleton, and to Great Britain by the way of New York; and major-general Gates engages the public faith that these dispatches are not to be opened. These officers are to set out immediately, after receiving their dispatches, and are to travel the shortest route, and in the most expeditious manner.

11. During the stay of the troops in the Massachusetts Bay, the officers are to be admitted on parole, and are to be permitted to wear their side-arms.

12. Should the army under lieutenant-general Burgoyne find it necessary to send for their clothing, and other baggage from Canada, they are to be permitted to do it in the most expeditious manner, and the necessary passports granted for that purpose.

13. These

C H A P.
XVII.

1777

13. These articles are to be mutually signed and exchanged tomorrow morning at nine o'clock; and the troops under lieutenant-general Burgoyne are to march out of their intrenchments at three o'clock in the afternoon.

HORATIO GATES, Major-general.

Camp at Saratoga, Oct. 16, 1777.

To prevent any doubts that might arise from lieutenant-general Burgoyne's name not being mentioned in the above treaty, major-general Gates hereby declares that he is understood to be comprehended in it as fully as if his name had been specifically mentioned.

HORATIO GATES.

General Gates's conduct in this melancholy event was peculiarly generous and humane. It is said that when the British troops piled their arms he would not suffer his own men to be witness to the sad spectacle.

The number of men who surrendered, amounted, including Canadians and Provincials, to near six thousand. The sick and wounded in the hospitals amounted to six hundred; and it was computed that the loss in killed, taken, and deserted, subsequent to the capture of Ticonderoga, was near three thousand men. The artillery taken, consisted of thirty-five pieces of different dimensions.

Such was the melancholy event of a campaign from which the most important benefits were predicted. The tardiness of movement, however, occasioned by the large and superfluous train of artillery which general Burgoyne carried with him, certainly contributed not a little to produce those disasters and distresses which at length overwhelmed him. But tracing the failure of his expedition further back, it will be found to have been occasioned also by other causes, which,

though

though when considered singly, may be deemed only remote, yet, condensed into one general prospect, they will be found to have immediately produced that fatal consummation which has already been recorded.

C H A P.
XVII.
1777.

During the winter of 1776 no steps whatever were taken in Canada to provide horses, carts, or forage, for the expedition that was to take place in the ensuing year: It was not till the tenth of June 1777 that any contract was made for those articles. This tardiness of conduct delayed the movement of the army for three weeks, and rendered every subsequent operation equally slow; for the carriages for the transport service being constructed in haste, and of fresh unseasoned wood, were insufficient for the purposes for which they were designed, and were almost all destroyed on the road to Fort Edward. This circumstance detained the army so long at Fort Edward, that it ultimately occasioned the unfortunate, ill-conducted expedition to Bennington. The defeat of colonels Baum, Breyman, and St. Leger, enervated the British cause in an extraordinary degree. There were several of the inhabitants who were not attached to either party by principle, and who had resolved to join themselves to that which should be successful. Those men, after the disasters at Bennington and Fort Stanwix, added a sudden and powerful increase of strength to the Americans.

General Burgoyne, it was generally thought, after his disappointment, and the defeat at Bennington, ought not by any means to have crossed the Hudson. Any attempt to proceed to Albany was then improper. The distance from Fort Edward was sixty-four miles; the road was difficult and dangerous, being commanded by high and strong grounds, where an active enemy, well acquainted with the country, had many advantages, even with an inferior force. General Burgoyne should have posted himself, it was said, on the heights of Fort Edward; which would have secured a com-

C H A P.
XVII

1777.

munication with Canada, and enabled him to advance or to retreat according to contingent circumstances. He was censured also for remaining so long at Skenesborough, and consuming eighteen days in making roads through morasses and swamps. Had he returned to Ticonderoga, and crossed Lake St. George, he would have reached Fort Edward at least ten or twelve days sooner. He should have detached general Frazer from Skenesborough to Fort George; by which means a quantity of provisions and stores, destined by the Americans for Ticonderoga, would have been secured, as well as a supply of carts, waggons, and draft bullocks. This conduct would have enabled him to have penetrated to Albany before the enemy were sufficiently powerful to oppose him. Another cause of the failure of the expedition was the want of a system of co-operation between general Burgoyne and general Carleton, and the neglect of sir William Howe to take any steps to facilitate the operations of the northern army. When general Burgoyne found himself under the necessity of relinquishing the communication with Canada, he wrote to general Carleton, requesting, in the most pressing terms, that he would send a regiment to garrison Ticonderoga, that he might take the regiment then on duty there with him, and thereby endeavour still to preserve a communication with Canada. This favour, however, was positively refused. General Burgoyne was also disappointed in not receiving an increase of strength by the junction of a body of loyalists on his advancing beyond Ticonderoga. Offended with general Carleton for refusing to invest Ticonderoga in the preceding year, they resolved to remain inactive, and to afford no assistance to the British army. But indeed the grand cause was the appointment of general Burgoyne in preference to general Carleton. Of the former, it must be allowed that he possessed courage, a tolerable degree of military knowledge, with much address. The latter had many of these qualities,

qualities, with the addition of a knowledge of the country, its resources, and its local strength and weakness. He was likewise well acquainted with the temper and disposition of the inhabitants.

C H A P.
XVII.
1777.

The unfortunate Burgoyne, reduced from the lofty language of his proclamation to the style of defence and recrimination, endeavoured to lay the blame of his miscarriages upon sir William Howe, for not having sent a force for co-operation up the North River to Albany; on lord George Germaine, the British secretary of state, for having tied up his hands by orders positive and unqualified, in instances where latitude should be given to a general to act according to circumstances; and on the slowness with which the Germans had marched to Bennington, the centre and source of his misfortunes. But it was urged, in answer to all the general's excuses, that the force put into his hands for the intended march through Canada, was nearly, if not fully, equal to what he himself had demanded: That he ought not, on any doubtful prospect of a co-operating army from New York, to have given up his communication with the Lakes; and that his conduct, in sending so small a detachment to Bennington, and this consisting of foreigners, and of all foreigners the slowest in their motions, was an absurdity bordering on infatuation.

It was also contended, on the issue of Burgoyne's unfortunate expedition, that he had carried along with him a quantity of artillery totally incompatible with that celerity of movement on which his success entirely depended. If a juncture afterwards arose which seemed to demand this formidable apparatus, it was the very movement of that apparatus that created the necessity of employing it. The army was confined in its operations to the motions of the artillery; and the enormous delays, occasioned in a great degree by

C H A P.
XVII.

1777.

the slowness of its progress, gave time to the provincials to recover from their panic, and again to collect that army which had been completely dispersed. Whereas, had he advanced rapidly, without incumbrance or delay, he would neither have found men to oppose nor works to interrupt his progress through the country. But not only had general Burgoyne embarrassed himself with every incumbrance that could retard the progress of an army; he had adopted a route calculated to add to every delay, and to augment every difficulty. Instead of the direct and common road to Hudson's River, by the way of Lake George, he had thought proper, at the expence of much time and labour, to cut a road through an extent of country the most difficult and impracticable. If general Gates himself, it was said, had directed his operations, he could not have planned measures more conducive to the completion of his own views. The flight from Ticonderoga had made such an impression on the spirits of the Americans, that it was impossible immediately to collect an army, or to inspire them with that confidence which is necessary to ensure success; but in time that impression would wear off, unless it should be continued or renewed by the rapid movements of the king's troops. When, instead of such movements, they saw those troops wasting days, weeks, and months, without making the smallest progress, it is no wonder that they recovered their spirits, and assembled in much greater force than ever. In the whole of general Burgoyne's vindication, it was observed, his method was to state a necessity for every one of his measures taken singly, and not as links of one chain or system of action, taking care to pass over one material circumstance, that *that necessity* invariably originated, on his own part, from some previous omission or blunder. The deportment of this commander, after the surrender of his army, was as pitiful as his conduct before that melancholy event was weak and unfortunate. He refused, having been
set

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C H A P. XVIII.

Expedition up the North River under Sir Henry Clinton—Reduction of the Forts Montgomery and Clinton.—Burning of Æsopus.

C H A P.
XVIII.

1777.
Expedition
up the North
River under
Sir Henry
Clinton.

A BODY of recruits arrived from Europe at New York about the close of September 1777. This reinforcement enabled Sir Henry Clinton to undertake an expedition which he could not before have attempted, without leaving the defences of New York too feebly guarded. It may here be observed, that the situation of New York, commanded in a variety of points, which were thence of necessity to be occupied by the British, had a very unfavourable influence on the conduct of the war; for the protection of that great depositary of our stores required so considerable a number of men as most materially cramped exertion in the field. The object of Sir Henry Clinton's expedition was to take possession of the forts which forbade the passage of our vessels up to Albany; and the ulterior view in the measure was not so much to create a diversion in favour of general Burgoyne (the necessity of which was not suspected), as to open a communication which might have been important when that commander should have fixed himself at Albany. The enterprize was entirely spontaneous on the part of Sir Henry Clinton, and was conducted with more energy than most of the military operations that took place in America. A force amounting nearly to three thousand men was embarked on board craft of different kinds, convoyed by some ships of war under the command of commodore Hotham. This armament proceeded up the Hudson
to

to Verplank's Point, on the east shore of that river (forty miles from New York), which station of the enemy lord Rawdon had some time before been dispatched to reconnoitre in a frigate. The landing-places being defended only by slight breastworks with two twelve-pounders, and the corps stationed there being fearful that their retreat might be cut off at the neck of the peninsula, the debarkation was made with little or no resistance, and the first troops who landed, pursuing rapidly the flying enemy, obliged them to abandon one of the twelve-pounders. Sir Henry Clinton passed the night upon this peninsula. This feint had the effect which it was hoped it might produce; for it inspired general Putnam, who commanded in that district, with the opinion that sir Henry Clinton meant to push through the eastern highlands, in order to co-operate with Burgoyne. Putnam, under this persuasion, hastened with two thousand men, principally drawn from the forts, to occupy the passes on the eastern shore. On the sixth of October at day-break, two thousand one hundred men, without any artillery, were transported to Stoney Point, on the western bank of the river; the remainder of the troops being left to secure Verplanks. The only road from Stoney Point to the forts (at least the only one without a prodigious circuit) was a path across the Donderberg, a very steep mountain, which with its precipices overhangs the North River. As the path would not admit above three men to march abreast, and by its windings would have exposed the troops, during their passage, to be destroyed at the pleasure of any force stationed at the top of the hill, the most trifling guard would have been sufficient to have rendered the attempt of the British abortive. The very difficulties however of the attempt secured the passage to sir Henry Clinton; this having induced the Americans to suppose that it was superfluous to watch it; and a small advanced guard, sent forward to explore if
the

C H A P.
XVIII.
1777.

C H A P.
XVIII.

1777.

Reduction of
the Forts
Montgomery
and Clinton.

the pass was undefended, having made a signal that the coast was clear, the main body of the British ascended the hill with all possible expedition. Having rested a while, they traversed the summit, and descended on the opposite side, at the bottom of which they stumbled upon a detachment sent too tardily for the defence of the pass. The dispersion of this small corps destroyed the hope that the forts might be surprised; but the enterprise was not thence prosecuted with less resolution. The distance from Stoney Point to the fort is twelve miles; but the nature of the country rendered the march so slow and fatiguing, that it wanted but about an hour of sunset when the British arrived within a mile of their destination. They separated into two columns: The one, consisting of nine hundred men, under lieutenant-colonel Campbell of the fifty-second regiment, was destined for the attack of Fort Montgomery; whilst the remainder, under the immediate command of sir Henry Clinton, were to storm the stronger post of Fort Clinton. The two forts were only divided by a creek called Poplop's Kill, which empties itself into the Hudson's River, communicating by a wooden bridge of considerable length across that stream. The assault was made upon both forts at the same instant. The point assailed at Fort Montgomery, was not very strong, either from situation or works, nor did the enemy make a very obstinate resistance; so that the fort was carried by our troops with little loss, excepting that the death of so valuable an officer as lieutenant-colonel Campbell must be considered as material in the balance against the success. Almost all the garrison, consisting of eight hundred men, made their escape.

Against Fort Clinton the enterprise was more serious; the fort was built upon a rocky elevation, the only approach to which, for the British troops, was over a species of pass of about four hundred yards square, between a lake and a precipice which overhung the

the Hudson's River. This spot was covered with felled trees, so that the approach of the assailants could not be conducted with rapidity or with much regularity, and ten pieces of artillery bore upon that narrow pass, whilst the British had not a single cannon to cover their assault. Their only chance consisted in pressing forward with as much velocity as the ground would admit; and the troops were strictly ordered upon no account to fire. The flank companies of the seventh and twenty-sixth regiments, with a company of Anspach grenadiers, led the attack upon one point, whilst the sixty-third regiment endeavoured to penetrate at another.

In no instance during the American war was more invincible resolution exhibited than in this attack. The British and foreign troops pressed forward silently, under a dreadful fire, and arriving at the foot of the work, actually pushed one another up into the embrasures. The garrison, consisting of four hundred men, for a little while longer contested the rampart. Some of our men were killed in the very embrasures, and several were wounded with bayonets in the struggle; so that it must be admitted the Americans defended themselves courageously. At length the rampart was cleared. The Americans retiring to the other side of the esplanade, discharged a last volley, and threw down their arms. Notwithstanding this provocation, there was not a single man of the enemy put to death, except such as fell in the actual struggle upon the rampart. This fact we mention, not only as displaying a most generous moderation on the part of the victors, contrary to what usually happens in such assaults, but as refuting an impudent assertion advanced in some of the French accounts, that the whole garrison had been put to death by their conquerors. We are happy in rescuing from the shade which the magnitude of general Burgoyne's misfortune at the time threw over it, an enterprise equally worthy of atten-

C H A P.
XVIII.

1777.

C H A P.
XVIII.

1777.

tion for its boldness and the degree of injury that it did to the enemy.

The loss on the part of the assailants was not so severe as might have been expected, for it amounted to only one hundred and forty killed and wounded. About three hundred of the Americans were killed, wounded, and taken prisoners.

The small loss of the British is only to be accounted for by the dusk, and by the American artillery being served with more attention to quickness in firing than accuracy in pointing. Captain Stewart, who commanded the grenadiers, and major Sill, who led the sixty-third regiment, were killed upon the spot, both pierced with many wounds. Count Graboufky, a Polish nobleman, who had crossed the Atlantic on purpose to make a campaign as a volunteer with the British, likewise fell on this occasion. But his death was attended with a little circumstance which ought to be mentioned in honour to his memory. He had advanced to the storm in company with lord Rawdon amongst the grenadiers, but was separated from him amongst the felled trees, which forced every man to find a path for himself. Arriving at the foot of the work he fell, after having received three balls: When giving his sword to a grenadier, he conjured him, with his expiring voice, to deliver it to lord Rawdon, and to assure his lordship that he died in a manner becoming one who had shared the dangers of such gallant troops.

It is not amiss here to correct an error which has crept into former accounts, from an expression used by sir Henry Clinton, with a view of doing justice to the zeal of the squadron under commodore Hotham. In the Annual Register it is mentioned as one of the circumstances which shook the courage of the Americans, and slackened their resistance, that the British galleys advanced so near as to strike the walls of the fort with their oars,

Missing page.

C H A P.
XVIII.
1777.

happened to be so adverse, that it was soon found impracticable to complete their escape; upon which the crews quitted the vessels in their boats, previously setting fire to the frigates and gallees. The flames suddenly broke forth; and, as every sail was set, the vessels soon became magnificent pyramids of fire. The reflection on the steep face of the opposite mountain, and the long train of ruddy light that shone upon the water for a prodigious distance, had a wonderful effect; whilst the ear was awfully filled with the continued echoes from the rocky shores, as the flames gradually reached the cannon. The whole was sublimely terminated by the explosions, which again left all to darkness.

No sooner was the reduction of the Forts Montgomery and Clinton known, than Fort Constitution, on a rock some miles higher up the river, was demolished without the orders of the governor, and without a removal of the artillery and stores*.

Not far from the forts, thus reduced or demolished, lay a new settlement called the Continental Village, which contained barracks for fifteen hundred men. These, besides several store-houses and

* Return of Cannon, Stores, Ammunition, &c. taken and destroyed upon the Expedition up the North River, October 6, 1777.

Cannon.—Thirty-two pounders 6; eighteen pounders 3; twelve pounders 7; nine pounders 3; six pounders 41; four pounders 3; three pounders 2; two pounders 2. Total 67.

Two frigates built for 30 and 36 guns were burnt by the Americans on the forts being taken. The guns aboard them, and two gallees which were likewise burnt, amounted to above 30. One sloop with 10 guns fell into our hands. The whole loss therefore is above 100 pieces.

Powder.—54 casks; 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ barrels; 12,236 lb. exclusive of what was aboard the vessels.

Cartridges fitted.—1852 cannon; 57,396 musquet.

Cannon shot.—9530 round; 886 double headed; 2483 grape and case; 36 cwt. 1 qr. 15 lb. langridge.

For musquets.—1279 wt. of ball; 116 wt. of buck-shot; 5400 flints.

Every article belonging to the laboratory in the greatest perfection. Other stores, such as port-fires, match, harness, spare gun carriages, tools, instruments, &c. &c. in great plenty.

loaded waggons, of the articles contained in which no account could be taken, were destroyed by a detachment under major-general Tryon.

C H A P.
XVIII.
1777.

A service was now completed, which, it was imagined, might open essential communication with general Burgoyne; of whose distress the most remote suspicion was not then entertained.

Whilst the fleet was on its passage from New York to the forts, an officer from general Burgoyne, who had made his way through the country in disguise, reached sir Henry Clinton; but the object of his mission was only to solicit the facilitation of general Burgoyne's progress by some such expedition as that in which the officer found sir Henry Clinton engaged.

The day after the capture of the forts another officer from the northern army reached sir Henry Clinton, and his representation also amounted only to this point, That if general Burgoyne did not hear of co-operation by the tenth of October, he should, on that day, be constrained, by the terror of wanting provisions, to return to Fort Edward. The ignorance of the difficulties which at that time surrounded general Burgoyne's army is the less to be lamented, as it does not appear that it would have been practicable for sir Henry Clinton to have taken any steps which could at all have succoured that army.

October.

A flying squadron under sir James Wallace was now sent up the river, destroying a number of vessels as they sailed along. Under cover of this naval force, general Vaughan, on the thirteenth of October, with a detachment from the little army under sir Henry Clinton, landed at Esopus Creek, where he found two batteries; one of two, another of three guns; and an armed galley at the mouth of the Creek. The Americans made little resistance; but, abandoning the batteries and row-galley, took to flight.

From

C H A P.
XVIII.

^{1777.}
Æfopus
burnt.

From this place the general continued his march about five miles farther to the town of Æfopus; which, having been fired at by some people as he entered it, he reduced to ashes with a vast collection of stores and provisions. A few of the townsmen, and some of the country people, assembled; but, after making some shew of opposition, drew back.

Sir James Wallace at the same time destroyed the shipping and small craft that had taken shelter in the creek which leads up to the town. Our troops, having performed these services, re-embarked for New-York.

C H A P. XIX.

*Expedition under the Command of Lieutenant-colonel Mawhood—
Action at Quintin's Bridge—At Hancock's Bridge—Ingenious Stratagem of an American Loyalist—Colonel Abercrombie's Expedition against the Americans under Lacey near Crooked Billet—Colonel Maitland's Expedition up the Delaware.—Attempt on La Fayette.
—1778.*

WHILE the British army lay in winter-quarters at Philadelphia, the efforts made for their own conveniency, and for annoying the enemy, were as follow :—

C H A P.
XIX.
1778.

In the beginning of March, lieutenant-colonel Mawhood, with a detachment from the main army, consisting of the twenty-seventh and forty-sixth regiments, and New Jersey volunteers, made a descent on the coast of Jersey, near Salem, for the purpose of procuring forage, of which the army stood in great need, and of opening a communication with the loyalists of that part of the country, groaning under the tyranny of Livingston the governor. Colonel Mawhood carried with him spare arms to put into the hands of such as chose to repair to his standard. This detachment embarked on board transports on the twelfth of March, fell down the Delaware, and landed safely at the place of their destination.

Expedition under colonel Mawhood.

Colonel Mawhood, being reinforced on the seventeenth by the queen's rangers, consisting of about two hundred and seventy infantry, rank and file, and thirty cavalry, gave directions for the forage to take place on the eighteenth, accompanied by the strictest charge against plunder.

The

C H A P.
XIX.

1778.

The town of Salem, near to which, as has just been observed, our detachment landed, lies upon a creek of that name, falling into the Delaware nearly opposite to Reedy Island. The Alewas Creek runs almost parallel to that of Salem, and falls into the Delaware to the south of it. Over the Alewas Creek three bridges were extended: Hancock's Bridge the lower; Quintin's that in the centre; and Thompson's the farthest up. Between these Creeks, then, on the Delaware, forming a peninsula, at its greatest seven, and at its least four miles in width, the foraging was to commence. The provincial militia was posted at Hancock's and Quintin's Bridge, which they had defended by breastworks. Colonel Mawhood made detachments to mask these bridges, and foraged in their rear.

Action at
Quintin's
Bridge.

The officer who commanded the detachment at Quintin's having sent information that the enemy were assembled in great numbers at the bridge, and would probably pass over it whenever he should quit it, in which case his party would be in great danger, colonel Mawhood marched with the queen's rangers to his assistance, and by a successful feint and ambuscade, first drew a division of the enemy over the bridge, and then vigorously attacked them. Not a few of them were taken prisoners, but the greater part were drowned in the Alewas Creek. Among the prisoners was their commanding officer, who proved to be a Frenchman. The rangers had one hussar mortally wounded. Here we shall give place to an anecdote, authenticated by the authority of colonel Simcoe, who commanded the rangers, that affords a specimen of that base and ungenerous spirit with which many individuals in the American armies shewed themselves in the course of the war to be actuated. The hussar was wounded by a man whom, in the eagerness of the pursuit, he had passed, and given quarters to him without disarming him. The villain was killed by another hussar.

The

The Americans, who had for a moment quitted the bridge, but who, when they perceived that colonel Mawhood did not think it to his purpose to pass it, returned, still occupied the posts at Quintin's and Hancock's Bridge, their numbers gradually increasing. Colonel Mawhood determined to attack them at Hancock's Bridge, where, from all reports, they were assembled to the number of four hundred men. This enterprize was entrusted to major Simcoe, who embarked with the rangers on board flat-bottomed boats on the twentieth at night. He was to be landed at an inlet seven miles below Alewas Creek, when the boats were to be immediately returned; and by a private road he was to reach Hancock's Bridge, opposite to which major Mitchell was to co-operate with him, at the head of the twenty-seventh regiment. Major Simcoe, though the enemy were nearly double his numbers, and his retreat was cut off by the absolute orders to send back the boats, considered that every thing depended on surprise, and reposed just confidence in the silence, attention, and spirit of the corps under his command. By an oversight in the naval department, when the boats arrived off Alewas Creek, the tide set so strong against them, that, in the opinion of the officer of the navy, they could not reach the place of their destination till mid-day. Major Simcoe determined, however, not to return, but to land at the mouth of the Alewas Creek on the marshes. They soon found out a landing-place, and, after a march of two miles through marshes up to the knees in mud and water, at length arrived at a wood upon dry land, where the major formed his men for the attack. There was no public road that led to Hancock's Bridge but that of which the rangers were now in possession; but a bank or dyke, on which there was a footway, led from Hancock's to Quintin's Bridge. This dyke captain Saunders, with a party, was sent to ambuscade, and to take up a small bridge that was

C H A P.
XIX.

1778.

At Han-
cock's
Bridge.

upon it, as the enemy would probably flee that way, and if not pursued too closely, would thus be the more easily defeated.

There was at Hancock's Bridge a large brick dwelling-house, called Hancock's House, around which were many stone houses, and some few cottages. Captain Dunlop was detached to the rear of Hancock's House, in which it was presumed the American officers were quartered, and directed to force, occupy, and barricade it, as it commanded the passage of the bridge. Different detachments were allotted to the small houses in the rear of Hancock's, supposed to be the enemy's quarters. Having mastered these, they were ordered to assemble at Hancock's, which the light-infantry who were in reserve reached by the road, and forced the front door at the same time that captain Dunlop, by a more difficult way, entered the back door. As it was very dark, these companies were on the point of falling on one another. The surprise was complete, which it would have been, even if the whole of the enemy's force had been present; but, fortunately for them, they had quitted it the evening before, leaving a detachment of twenty or thirty men, all of whom were killed.

The roads that led to the country were immediately ambuscaded, and lieutenant Whitlock was detached to surprise a patrol of seven men who had been sent down the Creek, which he completely effected. On their refusal to surrender he was obliged to fire on them, when only one made his escape. It was the firing on this small party that communicated to the twenty-seventh regiment the success of the enterprise: Two days after, the queen's rangers patrolled Thomson's Bridge. The enemy, who had been posted there, were alarmed at the approach of a cow the night before, fired at it, and then fled. They also abandoned Quintin's Bridge, and retired to a creek, sixteen miles from Alewas Creek.

Major Simcoe continued to drive the small parties of the enemy before him, wherever he went for the protection of the foragers: And even the main force of the enemy, in those parts, assembled at Cohansey, might have been easily surpris'd; but colonel Mawhood judged, that, having completed his forage with perfect success, his business was to return to head-quarters, which he did accordingly. The troops re embarked on board the boats, and returned, without any accident, to Philadelphia.

C H A P.
XIX.
1778.

Though patrols were made now as regularly as ever, as spring approached the enemy's cavalry came nearer to our lines, and owed their escape more than once to the fleetness of their horses. Some of these that fell into the hands of our parties were decorated with eggs, women's shoes, and other articles, of which they had plundered the country-people coming to and returning from market; and thus accoutred, were paraded through the streets to prison. A number of loyalists in arms under the command of Mr. Thomas, their captain, with Hoveden's and James's troops of provincials, made excursions into the country, and carried off from the Americans, provisions, clothing, and other articles of use to the British army and their adherents. On such excursions they were usually supported, and their return to their friends secured, by the queen's rangers.

A stratagem for procuring provisions for our army at Philadelphia, equally pleasant and successful, was played off by one of the loyalists against the Americans. General Washington drew his supplies of fat cattle from New England. A drove of this kind was met about thirty miles from Philadelphia, between the Delaware and Schuylkill, by a friend of government, who passed himself upon the drivers for one of general Washington's commissaries, billeted them at a neighbouring farm, and then immediately galloped to Philadelphia, from whence a party of dragoons were sent for the cattle, and the whole drove was safely conducted to Philadelphia.

Ingenious
stratagem of
an American
loyalist.

C H A P.
XIX.

1778.
Colonel
Abercrom-
bie's expedi-
tion against
the Ameri-
cans under
general La-
cy near
Crooked
Billet.

About the beginning of May, a great part of an American brigade, not less than one thousand men, commanded by brigadier Lacy, general of the Pennsylvania militia, took post at a place called the Crooked Billet, about seventeen miles from Philadelphia, on one of the great roads of communication between that town and the country. From this station the Americans, in small parties, overawed and impeded the country-people in their approaches with provisions to the Philadelphia market. By the way of Crooked Billet lay the main road between Philadelphia and New York; and, at less than half a mile from it, on the Philadelphia side, there was another road which led, by the way of Horsham Meeting, to general Washington's camp. Major Simcoe, who had been the first that gave intelligence to the commander in chief of the situation, strength, and probable views of brigadier-general Lacy, proposed that he should march with the rangers, and, by a circuit, get to the road in the rear of the Crooked Billet; and that a detachment should march, and ambuscade themselves in a wood (for according to his intelligence there was one adapted to the purpose) on the road which led to Washington's camp, by the Horsham meeting-house. This party was to remain in ambuscade till they should hear the firing of the queen's rangers. It was presumed that, if the surprise should not be complete, the ambuscade would ensure success, by supporting the rangers if they should be checked, and by intercepting the enemy if they should attempt to retreat, as they probably would, and that towards their main army. This plan being adopted, lieutenant-colonel Abercrombie, on the night preceding the fourth of May, was detached to the place of ambuscade, with about four hundred light-infantry, a large party of light dragoons, and horses to mount part of his infantry for the greater expedition.

Major Simcoe's march was difficult, as he judged it necessary to make many circuits; in order to avoid places where the enemy had

posts or patrols. He was well guided; and fortunately had information about twilight that prevented him from committing a disastrous error. The armed refugees under their leader captain Thomas, had been sent by Mr. Galloway to escort some of his furniture into Philadelphia. Hearing by some means or other of the present expedition; they were encouraged to seize the opportunity which it afforded of effecting their object with the greater certainty and safety. They marched up the roads which the rangers had so carefully avoided, but without meeting with any interruption or alarm. They fortunately passed a house at which major Simcoe called; otherwise he would certainly, when he overtook them, have mistaken them for the enemy. This little adventure of the refugees, with the narrow escape they made from a fatal onset by their own friends, serves, among many other instances with which the history of war is replete, to shew the necessity of different military operations going on at the same time, being concerted and carried on under the direction of one mind. The refugees were directed to keep themselves undiscovered, and the rangers marched on as fast as possible. Although daylight appeared, major Simcoe was under no apprehensions of discovery, nor yet of colonel Abercrombie's having met with any accident, as the parties were within hearing of each other's fire, and none was heard. He was therefore, as he had now quitted the road, in order to make his last circuit to reach the Billet, informing his officers of his plan of attack, when all of a sudden a slight firing was heard.

Colonel Abercrombie, although assisted by horses, could not arrive at his post at the appointed time, before day-break. But, being anxious to support major Simcoe, he detached to the place of ambuscade his cavalry and mounted light-infantry. The officer who commanded this detached party patrolled as far as Lacy's out-post, and being fired at by the centinels did not retire. Lacy, rightly judging

C H A P.
XIX.
1778.

C H A P.
XIX.

1778.

judging that he was supported by a force adequate to such confidence, collecting his strength, began to retreat up the country. At this crisis, the rangers arrived nearly in his rear, upon his right flank. They stopped, and turned some smaller parties who were making their escape from the light-infantry, and who were killed; but the main body retreated in a mass without order, and in great precipitation; nor could our infantry, by their utmost efforts, overtake them. The hussars of the rangers were unfortunately left at Philadelphia, their horses having been fatigued by a long course of duty, and a severe patrol the day before. Thirty dragoons, who were with the rangers, were sent to intercept the baggage-waggons, and staid to guard them. As the enemy were passing through a wood, major Simcoe, galloping up to the edge of it, summoned them to surrender: They were in great consternation, but continued to press forward. The major then gave the word of command, "make ready," "present," "fire," hoping that the intervening fence and thickets between him and them might lead them to suppose that he was accompanied by a body of men, and that they might halt; in which case a few moments would have been decisive. At the word "fire," they crouched down, but still moved on, and soon got out of all reach*.

Our

* In the History of Great Britain, from the Time of Cromwell to the Accession of George I., by Mr. Alexander Cunningham, the tutor and the companion of John duke of Argyle, in his campaigns in the Netherlands, which is generally admitted to contain a more particular, clear, and intelligible account of the conduct, stratagems, and incidents, of war, than any history in the English language, we read the following passage relating to the celebrated earl of Peterborough, commander of the British troops in Spain in the war of the succession:

"The earl of Peterborough had alarmed all the country, far and near, with dreadful rumours and messages of his approach; and, carefully concealing the small number of his troops, caused reports to be spread that the confederates had a large army. It is said he had not above twelve hundred men, who were reduced to great weakness, when he thus, by stratagem, put to flight seven thousand of the enemy [under the condé de las Torres, who had laid siege to the town of San Mattheo, which had submitted to king Charles]."

" After

Our troops returned to Philadelphia. The commander in chief ^{C H A P.} ordered the baggage to be sold for their benefit, which produced a ^{XIX.} dollar a man. This excursion, though it failed of that success which ^{1778.} was expected, had the full effect of intimidating the militia, who never afterwards appeared but in small parties like robbers. The success of the expedition would have been more signal, had not our

“ After this he thought it worth his while to attempt the town of Nules, which the inhabitants held out for king Philip ; but as he neither had soldiers, nor any thing in readiness necessary for war, he himself rode full speed up to the gate of the town, and calling for one of the magistrates or priests, demanded the town to be surrendered to him. He told them that if they would yield immediately, they might expect good terms ; but that if they refused, he would instantly give orders to his army to plunder the town, allowing them only six minutes time to consult, and return their answer ; at the same time calling out aloud for his cannon (although he had none) to be planted against the walls. As great revolutions are brought about by small accidents, the word was no sooner said, than the town was delivered up : And other places also he went and took with the same celerity, all which he added to the dominions of king Charles. By this manner of making war, the earl of Peterborough, in a short space of time, performed such wonderful exploits in Spain, that the Spaniards even began to give credit to all the fabulous stories of the valour and achievements of Don Quixote ; and the English also thought his praises an obscuration of the duke of Marlborough's glory. He farther pretended to be furnished with horses as it were sprung out of the earth, and drew brigadier Mahoni into a conference, in which he dexterously operated on his mind, and managed his passions as it suited his own purpose. Then he took Molviedro, and seized Valencia, and, by his ruses and spies, caused the Spaniards to make war upon one another, and defeated the duke d'Arcas. And, lastly, he supported the priests by his liberality, and such of the country people as would take up arms for king Charles.”

“ In a word, the earl of Peterborough, in the history of his conduct, is styled the father of stratagems, and Fortune is said always to have attended his undertakings.”

Had the chief command of our army in America been placed in the hands of such a man as the earl of Peterborough, whose vigilance, invention, and celerity of action on a scene not altogether dissimilar to the divided state of the American colonists, form a direct contrast to the slowness, and circuitous movements of sir William Howe, it is extremely probable that the issue of the American war would have been reversed. Neither military genius, nor alertness of conduct, nor promptitude of action, were wanting in the British army ; nor is major Simcoe the only instance in which these qualities were displayed in a very conspicuous manner ; though not in that station in which they could produce the greatest and most decisive consequences.

troops

C H A P.
XIX.

1778.

Expedition
up the Dela-
ware under
Major Mait-
land.Attempt on
La Fayette.

troops been too much fatigued by the very great length of the march, which favoured the enemy in their flight, and had our cavalry pushed on when they first discovered the American centinels.

A joint attempt was made, on the seventh of May by sea and land to destroy the galleys and other vessels that had escaped up the Delaware after the reduction of Mud Island, and the shipping that the enemy had in the river between Philadelphia and Trenton. This enterprise was effectually accomplished by the skill and activity of captain Henry of the navy, and major Maitland of the marines. A considerable quantity of stores and provisions was also destroyed; and a number of the enemy, who made no great opposition, were killed. Not fewer than forty-four American vessels were burnt, some of them of considerable value.

About the nineteenth of May 1778, General Washington detached the marquis de la Fayette to take post with nearly three thousand men upon Barren Hill, a position seven miles advanced from the camp of Valley Forge; but upon the opposite or eastern side of the river.

The object of this step is not very clear. The position was still too distant from Philadelphia to give any interruption of consequence to such supplies as were carried into that city by the neighbouring country. Possibly, as the intended evacuation of Philadelphia was now well known, general Washington might have thought that it would keep up the spirits of his party if he seemed to press upon the British in their retreat; for he must have been aware that his then force could not allow him to expect that he should make any real advantage of such an attempt: And the distance of Barren Hill from Philadelphia appeared to secure the detachment from any hazard. This supposed security proved illusive. On the night of May the twentieth, five thousand of the choicest troops in the British army set out from Philadelphia, marching by the road which keeps close

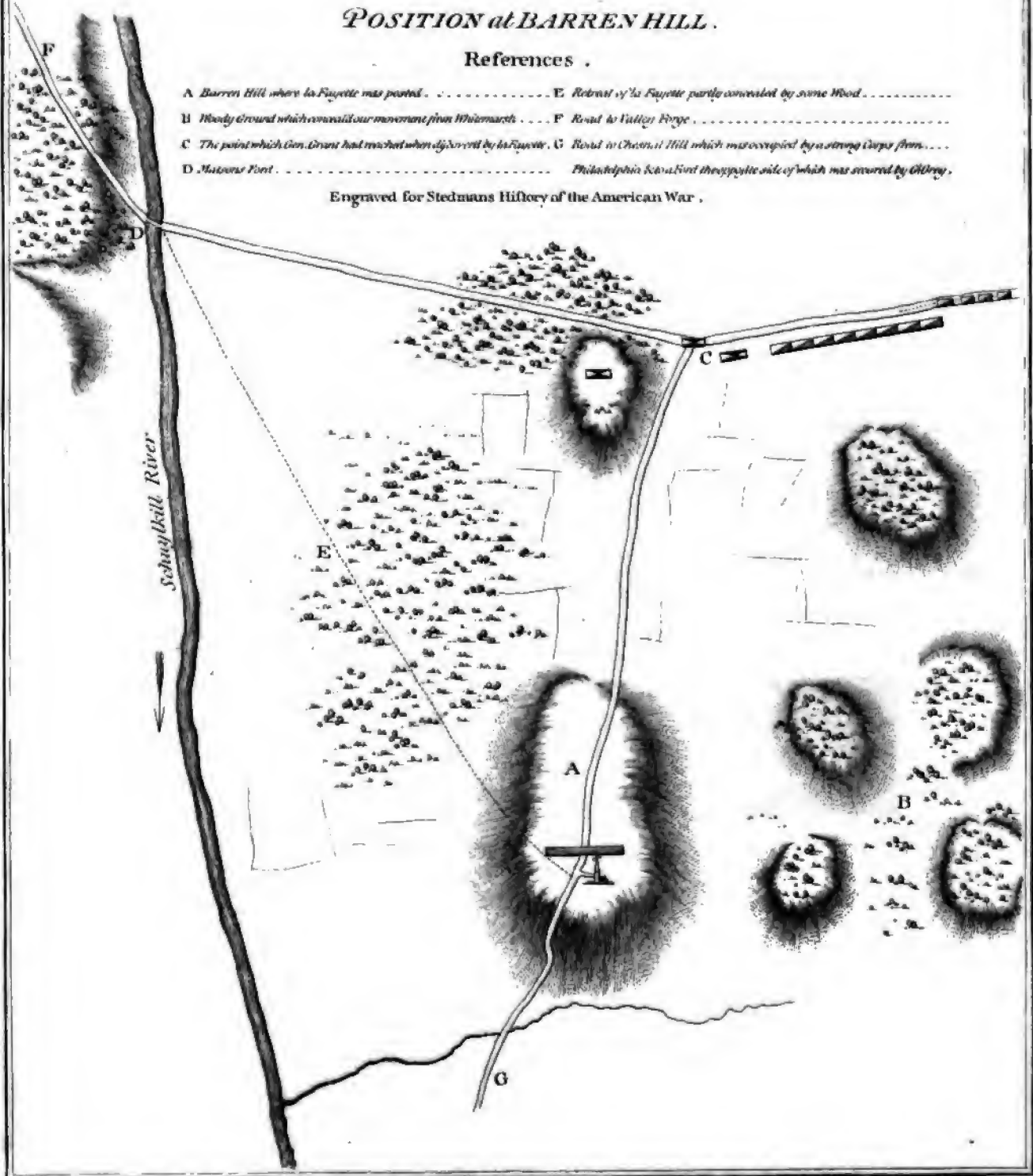
to

Sketch of
FAYETTE'S
POSITION at BARREN HILL.

References .

- | | |
|---|--|
| A Barren Hill where La Fayette was posted | E Retreat of La Fayette partly covered by some Wood |
| B Bloody Ground which was our movement from Whitmarsh | F Road to Valley Forge |
| C The point which Gen. Grant had reached when diverted by La Fayette . G Road to Chesham Hill which was occupied by a strong Corps from | |
| D Mifflin's Fort | Philadelphia Cavalry the opposite side of which was secured by Olney |

Engraved for Steedman's History of the American War .



to the Delaware, and which, therefore, diverges from the direction of Barren Hill. After the detachment had proceeded some miles, it turned to the left, and passing White Marsh soon after day-break, it reached at length its destined point, without having fallen in with any patrol or out-post of the enemy. This point was directly in the rear of La Fayette's position, consequently was between him and the camp of general Washington. The road here forked; one branch led to the camp of La Fayette, at the distance of a short mile; the other went to Matson's Ford across the Schuylkill, at about the same distance. In the course of the night a strong detachment, under the command of general Grey, had marched from Philadelphia along the western branch of the Schuylkill, and stationed themselves at a ford two or three miles in front of La Fayette's right flank, whilst the remainder of the British army advanced to Chestnut Hill.

C H A P.
XIX.
1778.

The retreat of La Fayette was thus cut off from every passage but Matson's Ford; and as the line from La Fayette's position formed the base of an obtuse-angled triangle with the two roads above mentioned, it was obvious that his distance from it was much greater than that of the British. When general Grant arrived at the point above described, the confused galloping of some of the enemy's horsemen, who advanced to reconnoitre, intimated that the approach of the British was then first perceived. At the same time the column was discovered by glasses from the camp of general Washington, who, by the firing of cannon, attempted to give his detachment notice of the danger. Considerable time seems to have been lost in making a disposition for the intended attack, during which delay a corps of cavalry, that had formed the advanced guard on the march, took possession of a hill between the two roads. From this elevation the corps of La Fayette was discovered retreating towards Matson's Ford through the low woody grounds which border the river. The disorder and precipitation, apparent in the rear of that column, suf-

C H A P. XIX. 1778. ficiently indicated the terror with which they were attempting their escape. Information of this circumstance is said to have been given to general Grant, and his superior proximity to Matson's Ford is reported to have been urged to him, and even pointed out in the strongest manner; but under the persuasion that this was only a part of La Fayette's troops, detached for some unaccountable reason, the general persisted in his resolution of advancing to Barren Hill, notwithstanding the strong remonstrances of Sir William Erskine against that measure. This post was unluckily concealed from view by intervening trees, otherwise the desertion of it by the enemy would have been perceived. The British having advanced to the church, and found the camp abandoned, undertook the pursuit of the enemy by the very track which La Fayette had taken. In the mean time that officer had reached the Ford; but his troops, being overcome with apprehension, had hurried across the river, leaving behind them the six field-pieces which they had brought from camp to the bank of the river. La Fayette having formed his battalions on the other side, and perceiving that the British did not approach by the road in which he apprehended them, sent a corps across for his cannon, ordering some small parties to be advanced into the woods to retard the progress of the British advanced guard, should it approach whilst the artillery was in the river. The cannon were dragged over, but before the parties of observation could retire, the British cavalry fell upon them, and killed or took about forty. The British generals advancing to the Ford, perceived that La Fayette was so advantageously posted on the other side of the river, with his artillery on the high and broken grounds which arose from the water's edge, that nothing further could be attempted against him. Thus unfortunately failed the object of the expedition. It is said general Washington thought the case so hopeless, that he broke his bridge from Valley Forge across the Schuylkill, lest the success should

be pursued against himself. It is obvious that he could not attempt to succour La Fayette; because, as he had but four thousand men remaining in his camp, the British detachment was of itself equal to give him battle, could he possibly have joined La Fayette; and that was a stake which every interest forbade. But as the body of the British army was at Chesnut Hill, at hand to give general Grant immediate support, general Washington could not have interfered without every probability of incurring ruin.

C H A P.
XIX.
1778.

As the time approached when the army was to move from Philadelphia, American patrols were passed over the Delaware from the Jerseys. One of these, after a long chase, was taken by the huffars belonging to the queen's rangers. The quarter-master-general, sir William Erskine, being in great want of horses, commissaries were sent to procure them, escorted by the rangers under major Simcoe. The major entered on this office with much regret, as the horses were to be taken from people whom he had hitherto uniformly protected.

C H A P. XX.

Sir William Howe resigns the Command of the Army—Festival called Miscbianza, in honour of Sir William Howe—He is succeeded in the Command of the Army by Sir Henry Clinton—Returns to England—Complains of Defamation, and solicits and obtains a Parliamentary Inquiry into his Conduct.—1778.

C H A P.
XX.
1778.

THESE, then, with occasional parties sent out to cover the loyalists, were the only movements made by the British commander in chief while he lay in his winter-quarters, from October 1777 to June 1778, at Philadelphia.

It would seem, however, that sir William Howe imagined that all that could be done for the royal cause had been now performed: For to a deputy sent to the commander in chief from the magistrates, on a rumour of the intended evacuation of Philadelphia, requesting his advice how to act, he said that the best thing they could do would be to go over and make their peace with general Washington. And as he himself was on the eve of quitting the army, he told them to go to sir Henry Clinton, his destined successor, for a flag of truce in order to go out to Washington for that purpose. The deputy accordingly went to sir Henry Clinton, who said that he could not grant a flag on such an occasion; that the game was not up; that the war was not over, but would still be
vigor-

vigorously carried on; and that they ought not by any means to entertain a thought of going over to the enemy.

Sir William Howe had formed the resolution of resigning his office so early as the month of October. In a letter of his of the twenty-eighth of that month, he wrote to the secretary of state for the American department, lord George Germaine, as follows:—

“ From the little attention, my lord, given to my recommendations since the commencement of my command, I am led to hope that I may be relieved from this very painful service, wherein I have not the good fortune to enjoy the necessary confidence and support of my superiors, but which I conclude will be extended to sir Henry Clinton, my presumptive successor. By the return of the packet I humbly request I may have his majesty’s permission to resign.” That permission he received on the fourteenth of April 1778; but in the same letter which conveyed leave to resign, he was ordered by his majesty, while he should continue in command, to lay hold of every opportunity of putting an end to the war, by a due exertion of the force under his orders.

The commander in chief’s letter, in which he alleges, as the ground of his resignation, the want of necessary confidence and support on the part of administration, was matter of equal astonishment and indignation to the parties against whom that charge was made; while it inevitably led the unprejudiced and impartial spectator to contrast the languor and reluctance too visibly apparent in the whole conduct of sir William Howe with that alacrity and zeal with which the ministry, and particularly the minister for American affairs, provided and furnished the means of carrying on the war, and that disposition which they manifested to invite and reward the efforts of the general by all possible encouragement. When mea-

fures

C H A P.
XX.

1778.
Sir William
Howe resigns
the command
of the army.

C H A P. fures for reducing the revolted colonies were resolved on, and fir
 XX:
 1778. William Howe was appointed to the command of the army, such
 was the disposition of government to gratify him in whatever he
 should desire, that the secretary for the American department de-
 clared, "the measures of force should be the wishes of the ge-
 neral." The general, who was then in America, and had the
 state of the war under his eye, was the best judge of what force
 would be competent to its suppression. On his judgment, therefore,
 government relied; but instead of stinting, they surpassed his wishes.
 In his letter to lord Germaine*, after long and mature deliberation,
 he only requires nineteen thousand men; which, he says, will be
 "adequate to an active offensive campaign on the side of New
 York and Rhode Island." Instead of nineteen thousand men, he
 was furnished with thirty-one thousand four hundred and seventy-
 six. And, although he expected to meet a force of thirty thousand
 men, the whole American army did not amount to eighteen thou-
 sand. With the force now sent, amounting to eleven thousand
 men more than he required, the general appeared to be more than
 satisfied, and declared his utter astonishment at the uncommon ex-
 ertions of government. He acknowledged, in his letter to govern-
 ment †, that the successes of the army under his command had in-
 timidated the leaders of rebellion, and nearly induced a general sub-
 mission;—an admission which was strictly just; for farther opposition
 was universally despaired of by all America, except a few desperate
 men in general Washington's army; and that army was reduced to
 a number not exceeding four thousand men. And yet, at that pe-

* Of the 26th of November 1775.

† Of the 30th of November 1776, and the 20th of January 1777.

riod, we find him making a demand, first of fifteen thousand, and then of twenty thousand rank and file. The general, it is true, did not make this extravagant demand without assigning reasons for it; but these reasons were ill-founded. In his letter of the twelfth of February 1778 he informed the secretary of state that "the rebels had prospects of bringing into the field more than fifty thousand men. They are most sanguine in their expectations," says he, "and conscious that their whole stake depends upon the success of the next campaign, use every compulsory means to those who do not enter voluntarily into their service." We know however, that, instead of fifty thousand men, they were not able to bring into the field, when the general met their force at Hillsborough, more than eight thousand men; and even at the Brandywine, not more than sixteen thousand, militia included, after he had, contrarily to all policy, given them two months, by every possible exertion, to recruit their feeble army. It thus appears, that if the reinforcement required on this occasion fell short of that which was demanded by the general, the expected reinforcement of the Americans, which was the reason assigned for that requisition, failed in a much greater proportion. More than one half of the force required was sent, and not more than one fifth of that of the Americans was raised. The account of the armed force in 1777 stood thus: British, forty thousand eight hundred and seventy-four, veteran troops. American regular army at Hillsborough, eight thousand; at Brandywine, eleven thousand; and, in the spring, at Valley Forge, not four thousand undisciplined troops. With what justice, then, it was said, could the general complain of his want of force? and how extravagant his attempt to throw the blame of his own misconduct on that administration which had, by such uncommon exertions,

C H A P.
XX.
1778.

C H A P.
XX.

1778.

exertions, thus gratified him in all his wishes. The longer contemplation was indulged on this subject, the more were the minds of men inflamed with warm emotions.

“ While the friends of the colonists,” it was said, “ were bringing their plot to maturity in Britain ; while the natural resources of this country were cried down, to the great encouragement of our foreign enemies, and a national despondency was generally effected ; while the opponents of administration were advising and contending in both houses of parliament for withdrawing the troops from America, and, at the same time, opposing every measure which was necessary for the recovery of the revolted colonies, the slowness and procrastination of the general accorded but too well with those sentiments, and contributed not a little to render administration more and more odious to the people, whose disgust and indignation rose in proportion as the minister demanded more and more supplies, and as the general neglected to improve the great opportunities, that were at different times presented, of putting an end to the war.”

The violence of opposition on the one part, and the extreme tenderness of sir William Howe towards the Americans on the other, seemed to many observers to be linked together by a kind of connection somewhat similar to that between cause and effect. He certainly suffered the enemy, with less than four thousand men, to re-conquer a province which he had lately reduced, and to lay a kind of siege to his army in his winter-quarters. He unfortunately wasted the season of military operation, giving them time to recruit their reduced force. Though the spirit of revolt was occasionally depressed by the valour of our troops, it was uniformly revived by the misconduct of the general.

Such

Such were the observations that were very generally made on the conduct of sir William Howe, when he not only resigned his office without attaining, in any degree, the end for which he took it upon him, but endeavoured to shift his want of success from his own shoulders upon that of the secretary of state for the American department.

C H A P.
XX.
1778.

The same or similar observations were made, and re-echoed with still greater energy over all the British empire, on another unfortunate occasion, which, like the grounds alleged for the resignation of his office, induced and provoked men to compare the importance of his services with the merit he assumed, and the gravity with which he sustained the most excessive praise and adulation. It is to the famous *Mischianza* that we allude, or festival given in honour of sir William Howe, by some of the British officers at Philadelphia, when he was about to give up his command, and to return to England. This entertainment not only far exceeded any thing that had ever been seen in America, but rivalled the magnificent exhibitions of that vain-glorious monarch and conqueror, Louis XIV. of France. All the colours of the army were placed in a grand avenue three hundred feet in length, lined with the king's troops, between two triumphal arches, for the two brothers, the admiral, lord Howe, and the general, sir William Howe, to march along in pompous procession, followed by a numerous train of attendants, with seven silken knights of the blended rose, and seven more of the burning mountain, and fourteen damsels dressed in the Turkish fashion, to an area of one hundred and fifty yards square, lined also with the king's troops, for the exhibition of a tilt and tournament, or mock fight of old chivalry, in honour of those two heroes. On the top of each triumphal arch, was a figure of Fame, bespangled with stars, blowing from her trumpet in letters of light, *Tes lauriers sont immortels* *.

Festival called *Mischianza* in honour of sir William Howe.

* Thy laurels are immortal.

C H A P.
XX.

1778.

This romantic triumph, after so many disgraces and disappointments, did not escape the severest satire, both in private conversation and in printed papers; among which a letter addressed to sir William Howe in a publication called *The American Crisis*, by Paine, the author of the pamphlet styled *Common Sense*, was most distinguished for shrewdness of remark, vigour of conception, and energy of expression.

We shall here insert a very excellent letter, which corroborates many of the facts stated by us, written in 1777, by M. Du Portail, minister at war in France to the constituent assembly in 1791 and 1792, but at the period of the letter being wrote, a colonel in the French service, and acting as a brigadier-general in the American army †.

Sir

† (COPIE.)

A Monseigneur le Comte de St. Germain, Ministre de la Guerre (pour vous seulement, Monseigneur.)

Du Camp de White Marsh, à quatre lieues de Philadelphie,
le 12me Novembre 1777.

MONSEIGNEUR,

J'AI eu l'honneur de vous rendre conte des batailles de Brandywine et de German Town, et de vous en envoyer les plans; ainsi que celui de Philadelphie, avec ses environs, à cinq lieues, à la ronde; afin que vous puissiez juger de la situation du général Howe. J'espère que tout cela vous sera parvenu. Jusqu'à présent le général Howe n'est pas encore maître des deux petits forts, qui sont dans la riviere, et qui empêchent ses vaisseaux de remonter jusqu'à la ville; ce qui le réduit à ne communiquer avec eux que par le petit chemin que j'ai marqué sur la carte; chemin que nous pouvons bien lui couper cet hiver, quand nous aurons reçu un renfort des troupes victorieuses du nord. Nous comptons aussi mettre un corps de deux ou trois mille hommes de l'autre côté de la Schaykill. Il y a déjà des troupes dans le Jerseys; de cette façon le général Howe sera bloqué dans Philadelphie, et en danger de mourir de faim; à moins qu'il ne se rembarque; mais pour dire la vérité, nous ne l'esperons pas. Il prendra probablement les forts, s'il les attaque bien; et il aura alors une communication sure avec ses vaisseaux, quoiqu' il en soit, Monseigneur, vous voyez que pour des gens battus deux fois,

nous

Sir William Howe, soon after receiving the splendid testimony of esteem which has been just described, set sail for England, leaving the

C H A P.
XX.
1778.

nous ne sommes pas en trop mauvaise posture. Nous devons cela à ce que les Anglois n'ont que très peu de cavalerie ; de sorte qu'ils ne peuvent poursuivre leur victoire. Nous le devons encore plus à nos bois, et aux obstacles de toute espèce d'ont le pays est défendu. Maintenant d'après l'expérience de cette campagne, il est naturel, de se faire cette question : Les Américains réussiront-ils à se rendre libres, ou non ? En France, où l'on ne peut juger que par les faits, on jugera pour l'affirmative. Nous, qui avons vu comment les choses se sont passées, ne penserons pas de même. A parler franchement, ce n'est pas par la bonne conduite des Américains, que la campagne en général s'est terminée assez heureusement ; mais par la faute des Anglois. Ce fut une faute capitale du gouvernement Britannique, de vouloir que le général Burgoyne traversât plus de deux cens lieues de pays, et presque désert, pour se joindre aux généraux Howe et Clinton. Ce plan pouvoit paroître grand dans le cabinet de Londres ; mais misérable aux yeux de ceux qui avoient une exacte connoissance de la nature du pays. Mon observation n'est pas en conséquence de l'événement ; car vous vous rappelerez peut-être, Monseigneur, que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous écrire, il y a deux mois que j'étois bien aise que les Anglois, ne nous opposassent ici que dix mille hommes, & que j'espérois beaucoup que la jonction des généraux Burgoyne et Howe n'auroit lieu que quand la campagne ne seroit plus tenable ; et que même son armée seroit détruite de la moitié, par la faim, la fatigue, la désertion, et les pertes qu'ils essuyeroient tous les jours par nos troupes, et nos milices postées dans les bois. L'issue a surpassé mon attente. Si les Anglois, au lieu de s'amuser avoient dirigé leur attaque contre le général Washington, avec dix-huit ou vingt mille hommes, je ne fais pas trop ce que nous serions devenus ; parceque si nous avions doublé le nombre de nos troupes, nous n'aurions pas doublé nos forces ; mais triplé nos embarras.

Si nous jettons les yeux sur le plan de campagne, en examinant la conduite du général Howe ; nous verrons qu'il n'a pas même fait, tout ce qu'il étoit en son pouvoir de faire : Comme j'ai eu l'honneur de vous le mander après la bataille de Brandywine. Car s'il eut profité de ses avantages, il ne seroit plus question de l'armée du général Washington ; et il a mis depuis dans toutes ses opérations une lenteur et une timidité, qui m'ont toujours étonné. Mais il peut se raviser, & l'on peut envoyer un autre général de Londres ; alors nous ne pourrions peut-être pas si bien nous tirer d'affaire. Auresse puisque les événements qui dépendent de l'habilité des généraux ne peuvent se prévoir ; ils ne doivent pas entrer dans les conjectures qu'on peut faire à l'avenir. Faisons seulement attention au nombre de troupes ; et j'oserois dire que si les Anglois pouvoient avoir ici trente mille hommes ; ils pourroient réduire le pays. Une seconde cause qui pourroit hâter cette réduction, et même l'opérer seule, c'est le manque de munition de guerre, et des choses nécessaires à la vie. A l'égard des choses nécessaires pour la continuation de la guerre, il leur manque presque tout. Il n'ont ni drap, ni linge, ni sel,

C H A P. the command of the army to sir Henry Clinton, of whose actions
 XX. in the course of the present war we have already made mention;
 1778. but

ni eau de vie, ni sucre; et ces derniers articles sont plus importants qu'on ne le croiroit d'abord. Avant la guerre, les peuples Américains sans vivre dans le luxe, jouissoient de tout ce qui est nécessaire pour rendre la vie agréable et heureuse. Ils passioient une grande partie de leur tems à fumer et à boire du thé, ou des liqueurs spiritueuses. Telles étoient les habitudes de ces peuples. Il ne seroit donc pas surprenant que le changement d' une vie efféminée, transformée subitement en celle de guerrier, qui est dure et pénible, leur fit préférer le joug des Anglois, à une liberté achetée aux dépens des douceurs de la vie. Ce que je vous dis ne peut que vous surprendre, Monseigneur, mais tel est ce peuple, qui, mou, sans énergie, sans vigueur, sans passion pour la cause dans laquelle il s'est engagé ne la soutient que parcequ'il suit l'impulsion qu'on lui a premierement donnée. Il y a cent fois plus d'enthousiasme pour cette revolution dans quelque cassé de Paris que ce soit qu'il n'y en a dans les Provinces Unies ensemble. Il est donc nécessaire, pour achever cette revolution, que la France fournisse à ce peuple tout ce qui lui est nécessaire; afin qu'il trouve la guerre moins dure à soutenir. Il est vrai qu'il lui en coutera quelques millions; mais ils seront bien employés en anéantissant le pouvoir de l'Angleterre qui dépouillée de ses colonies, sans marine, et sans commerce, perdra sa grandeur, et laissera la France sans rivale. Cependant quelques personnes pensent (entr' autres l'Abbé Réynal) qu'il ne seroit pas de l'intérêt de la France donner la liberté aux colonies Angloises, et qu'elle risqueroit de perdre les siennes. Mais pour ceux qui connoissent ce-pays-ci, il est evident, qu'il se passera bien des années avant qu'ils puissent être en état de mettre une flotte en mer, pour faire des conquêtes. La jalousie entre les provinces (dont on voit déjà le germe) les aura divisés en tant de différens intérêts, qu'aucune d'elles ne sera à craindre.

On pouroit demander, si pour opérer plutôt la révolution en Amérique, il ne seroit pas plus prudent que la France fit un traité avec les Etats Unis, et que de concert avec eux, elle fit passer ici douze ou quinze mille hommes. Ce seroit là le moyen de tout gâter. Le peuple ici, quoiqu' en guerre avec les Anglois (nous le voyons journellement), et malgré tout ce que la France a fait, et à intention de faire pour eux, préféreroit de se réconcilier avec les Anglois, plutôt que de recevoir des forces de ceux qu'ils ont le plus raison de craindre: Ou s'ils y consentoient d'abord, bientôt après l'antipathie naturelle entre les deux nations, se manifesteroit par les plus terribles dissensions. Quiconque habite ce pays-ci doit favoir que la chose est impracticable.

Il y a encore un projet à examiner. La France, dans le cas où elle seroit de faire la guerre aux Anglois ouvertement, ne pourroit-elle pas de concert avec le congrés tenter de prendre le Canada? Par l'observation précédente, il est naturel de supposer que le congrés ne voudroit pas accéder à une telle proposition. Le voisinage des François les dégouteroit entierement de cette liberté qu' ils croiroient n' être pas capable de garder long-tems; et dépendance pour dépendance.

but concerning whom, for gratifying our readers, it may be proper farther to remark, that he had in the war with France from 1754 to 1763,

C H A P.
XX.
1778.

pendance, ils aimeroient mieux dépendre des Anglois. Mais feroit-il avantageux pour nous d' avoir le Canada? Je sens que pour discuter ce point, il faudroit avoir une connoissance exacte des productions du pays; ce que je n'ai pas. Enconsiderant la chose en général, il me paroît que ce qui se passe maintenant en Amérique doit dégouter les Européens, d' avoir aucune affaire à démêler avec les colonies de ce continent. Car soit que les colonies se rendent à présent indépendantes ou non il n'y a pas de doute qu'elles ne le soient dans cent ans; et avec elles toutes les parties septentrionales. C'est se préparer a une guerre certaine, que d' avoir des établissemens ici; il me paroît donc plus avantageux pour la France, d' avoir des isles qu'elle puisse plus aisément contenir sous sa domination. Parmi ces isles, je choisirois celle dont les productions ne sont pas naturelles à la France; et qui cependant lui sont essentiellement nécessaires, comme le sucre, le café, &c. Car d' avoir des colonies qui ne produisent que du blé, quoi de plus inutile à la France? Elle n'a qu' à bien cultiver son terrain, défricher celui qui a été laissé inculte, et elle créera chez elle-même des colonies qui ne lui conteront rien à defendre. Je crois par toutes ces raisons, que si la France déclare la guerre à l' Angleterre, ce n'est pas le Canada qu'elle doit attaquer; mais la Jamaïque, et les autres possessions Angloises de cette nature. Si elle ne déclare pas la guerre, celle doit employer tous les moyens que la politique lui suggerera pour empêcher les Anglois d' avoir jamais plus de vingt cinq mille hommes ici. Nous n'avions durant toute cette campagne, que trente mille hommes, savoir, l' armée de Mr. Washington qui n'a jamais excédé quinze mille hommes, celle du general Putnam cinq ou six mille; et celle de Mr. Gates dix mille. Si l' on trouvoit qu'il fût nécessaire d' augmenter le tout d' un tiers, je ne crois pas que la chose fût possible.

Je suis peut-être Monseigneur, entré dans un trop grand détail; mais vous pardonneriez la longueur de mes dissertations, causée seulement par l' envie que j'ai eue de satisfaire vos desirs, et de rendre mon séjour ici aussi utile qu'il m'est possible.

J'ai l' honneur d' être,

MONSIEUR,

Votre très humble et très obéissant Serviteur,

DU PORTAIL.

Le congrés m' a élevé au rang de brigadier-général.

TRANS-

C H A P. 1763, been aid-de-camp to prince Ferdinand of Brunfwick, by whom
 XX. he was held in the higheft estimation. Thus he was undoubtedly
 1778. bred

T R A N S L A T I O N.

To the Count de St. Germain, Minifter of War (for you only, Sir).

Camp at White Marfh, four Leagues from Philadelphia,
 12th November 1777.

S I R,

I HAD the honour to fend you an account of the battles of Brandywine and German Town, together with the plans, as well as that of Philadelphia and its environs to the extent of five leagues, that you might be enabled to judge of the fituation of general Howe. I hope they have come to hand. Hitherto general Howe is not mafter of two fmall forts in the river, which prevent his veffels from coming up to the city, and his communication with them, except by means of a by-way I have marked on the map, and from which we fhall cut him off in the winter, when we have received a reinforcement of victorious troops from the north. We purpofe, likewise, to poft a body of two or three thoufand men on the other fide of the Schuylkill. There are already troops in the Jerseys, fo that general Howe will be blocked up in Philadelphia, and in danger of dying with hunger, unlefs he reembarks. But, to fpeak the truth, we do not expect quite that. He probably will take the forts, if he attacks them properly, and will then have a communication with his fhipping. Be that as it may, you fee, Sir, for people who have been twice beaten we are not in fo very bad plight; for this we are indebted to the fmall number of Englifh cavalry, which prevented the enemy from following up their victory, and ftill more to the woods and other obftacles by which the country is defended. Now, after the experience of this campaign, it is natural to put this queftion, Will the Americans fucceed in obtaining their liberty, or no? In France, where you can only form your judgment from the facts, you will answer in the affirmative; we, on the fpot, who have feen how things have gone, think differently. To fpeak plain, it has not been owing to the good conduct of the Americans that the campaign, upon the whole, has terminated rather fortunately, but to the fault of the Englifh. It was an egregious error in the Britifh government, to direct general Burgoyne to traverfe about two hundred leagues, of a wretched and almoft defert country, to join the generals Howe and Clinton. The plan might appear grand in the cabinet of London, but miferable in the opinion of thofe who had paid attention to the nature of the country. The obfervation is not in confequence of the event; for you will probably, Sir, call to recollection that, two months ago, I had the honour to write you word, I was well pleafed the Englifh oppofed us here with only ten thoufand men; and that I was in great hopes that general Burgoyne would not effect a junction with general Howe, till it would be no longer
 poffible

AMERICAN WAR.

391

C H A P.
XX.
1778.

bred in one of the first military schools in Europe. With such personal merit, the advantage of being of the family of Newcastle, and also

possible to keep the field, and even then with his army half destroyed by famine, fatigue, and desertion, and the daily loss he would necessarily sustain from our troops, and the militia posted in the woods. The event exceeded my expectations. Had the English, instead of making so many diversions, directed their attack against general Washington with eighteen or twenty thousand men, I do not very well know what would have become of us; because, in doubling the number of our troops, we should not have added double strength to our army, and our embarrassments would have been increased threefold.

In looking over the plans of the campaign, if we examine the conduct of general Howe, we shall find he has not even done that which he had it in his power to do, as I had the honour to write you word after the battle of Brandywine; for, had he followed up the advantages which that gave him, there had been an end of general Washington's army; and, since that, all his operations have been carried on so slowly, and with so much timidity, they have become the object of my astonishment: But, perhaps, he may recollect himself; perhaps another general may be sent from London, and then possibly we may not extricate ourselves so well. However, since the events which depend on the skill of generals cannot be foreseen, they should make no part of the conjectures we may form for the future; let us pay attention solely to the number of troops, and I would hazard my opinion, *that, if the English could have here thirty thousand men, they ought to reduce the country.* A second cause, which might hasten that reduction, and even operate alone, is the want of warlike stores and the necessaries of life. With respect to the requisites for carrying on war, the Americans want almost every thing; and as to other matters, linen, salt, brandy, sugar, &c. are wanting; and these last articles are of more importance than one is at first aware. Before the war, the American people, though they did not live in luxury, enjoyed in abundance every requisite to make life comfortable and happy; they passed great part of their time either in smoking, drinking tea or spirituous liquors. Such was the disposition of these people. Sore against the grain then, as it must be of a sudden, the transform into soldiers, reduced to lead a life of hardships and frugality, it would not be surprising that they should prefer the yoke of the English to a liberty purchased at the expence of the comforts of life.

You will be astonished, Sir, at this language; but such are these people, that they move without spring or energy, without vigour, and without passion for a cause in which they are engaged, and which they follow only as the impulse of the hand that first put them in motion directs. There is an hundred times more enthusiasm for this revolution in any one coffee-house at Paris, than in all the Thirteen Provinces united. It is necessary then that France, to accomplish this revolution, should furnish these people with every requisite to lessen the hardships of war. True, it will cost some millions; but they will be well laid out in annihilating the
power

C H A P. also the next in command to sir William Howe, sir Henry Clinton
 XX. was naturally appointed, on the resignation of sir William, to the
 1778. chief command of the British army.

Sir

power of England, which, when bereft of her colonies, without a navy and without commerce, will lose her consequence in the world, and leave France without a rival.

Nevertheless, there are some, and amongst them the Abbé Raynal in his publication, who think France would not find her account in liberating the English colonies, that she would run a risk of losing her own; but, to any one acquainted with this country, it is evident that ages must pass before she would be in a condition to send out a fleet to make conquests. The jealousies between the Provinces (the seeds of which are already sown) will have divided them into so many different interests and states, that no one of them will be to be feared.

It may be asked, whether, to bring about the revolution in America, it would not be advisable for France to make a treaty with the United States, and, in concert with them, cross over twelve or fifteen thousand men? That would be the way to mar all. The people here, though at war with the English (we see it every day), and, in spite of all that France has done and means to do for them, would prefer a reconciliation with the English rather than receive in force the men in the world they most fear; or, if they should consent at first, it would not be long ere the natural antipathy between the two nations would break out into the most terrible dissensions*. Whoever inhabits this country must know the thing to be absolutely impracticable.

There is yet another project to examine. In the event of France being obliged to carry on the war openly against the English, might not she, in concert with congress, attempt Canada? From the preceding observation, it is natural to suppose congress would not accede to such an arrangement. The French neighbourhood alone would give them a disgust to that liberty which they would apprehend themselves not long able to preserve, and dependance for dependance, they had rather be dependant on the English.

But, would it be very advantageous for us to have Canada? I am sensible, to discuss this point, a most minute and accurate knowledge of the produce of the country is necessary, which I have not; yet, to consider the thing in general, it appears to me, that what is now going on in America ought to disgust every European power from having any concern with colonies on this continent. For, whether the English colonies become independent or not at present, a century hence, no doubt, they will; and, with them, all the northern parts of this continent. It is laying the foundation of certain war to have establishments here. It appears to me, then,

* In confirmation of what M. du Portail has here advanced, we recollect having heard, whilst we were in America during the war, and from good authority, "that, upon some disagreement with the French, the Americans disliking the manner in which they conducted themselves, the people were clamorous for putting arms into the hands of general Burgoyne's soldiers, and making a cause common with them to drive the French out of the country."

Sir William Howe, upon his arrival in England, found that his conduct was generally condemned, and threw himself for protection and exculpation into the arms of a party, the opposition to government in parliament, who received him with gladness, and boldly vindicated his conduct both in and out of the senate. Anonymous charges against the general were carried into parliament, that thereby the way might be prepared for a parliamentary inquiry into his conduct. He complained, in the house of commons, that many severe censures had been thrown out against him, and that ministers had been silent. He alleged, among other charges against administration, that he had not the cordial confidence and support of ministry; that

C H A P-
XX.
1778.

Complains of
defamation;

more advantageous for France to have islands, which she can easily defend from this contagion of independence; and, amongst the islands, I should chuse that whose productions were not natural to France, and which, nevertheless, are become essentially necessary; such as sugar, coffee, &c. &c.; for to have colonies producing only corn, what could be of less use to France? She has nothing to do but well till her own lands, to put under the plough those which have hitherto lain uncultivated, and she will create at home colonies which will cost her nothing to defend.

For all these reasons, I think, should France declare war against England, it is not to Canada, but Jamaica and other English possessions of that sort, she should direct her attacks. If she does not declare war, she should employ the best means which policy may suggest to prevent the English from ever having more than twenty-five thousand men here. We had no more than thirty thousand in the whole of this campaign, to wit, the army of Mr. Washington never exceeded fifteen thousand, that of general Putnam five or six thousand, and that of Mr. Gaten ten thousand. Should it be found necessary to increase the whole a third, I do not know that it could be done. I have perhaps, Sir, in my letter exceeded what you required; but pardon the length of the dissertations I have gone into, from a desire to satisfy your wishes, and render my stay here as useful as in my power to make it.

With the most profound respect,

I am, S I R,

Your most humble and most obedient servant,

DU PORTAIL.

Congress has promoted me to the rank of brigadier-general.

C H A P.
XX:

1778.

his orders from government had not been clear, but ambiguous, and such as might be easily explained away in case of any adverse accident arising from their execution; and that they had concealed from parliament the true state of our affairs in America, promising success when they knew there was no reason to expect it. Lord George Germaine had said, that he had learned from his intelligence the difficulties the Americans were under in raising troops; that he hoped that he (sir William) should be able to get a sufficient force in Pennsylvania for the defence of that province; and that he still hoped that this campaign would be the last, "so that, in spite of my "positive assurances," said the general, "from the spot, the minister's "delusive hopes and conjectures were to influence him in opposition "to my certain knowledge." In the animation of debate, the allegations of the general were placed in a stronger point of view. Ministers were charged with having "treacherously and traitorously deceived "this country; inasmuch as they had declared to the house of "commons, that they had reason to expect a successful campaign, "when they had it in their pockets, under the general's own hand, "that nothing was to be expected."

With regard to the first of these charges, respecting confidence and support, the vast exertions of the minister for the American department were recapitulated, and the letters of sir William Howe acknowledging them. With regard to the second, it was proved, by the correspondence between the general and the secretary for American affairs, that every plan proposed by the former was sure to meet with the approbation of the latter; and that stronger proof of confidence in a general could not be given by those who employed him, than that he should be left unconstrained by particular instructions, uncontrolled by superior power, at entire liberty to follow his own plans, and prosecute a war according to his own ideas; nor was it ever before made a matter of serious complaint against a minister, that he
did

did not furnish military plans in detail to a commander in chief, especially when repeated proofs were given of a sincere disposition to co-operate with the military commander, and furnish the means of executing whatever plan he might judge to be the most expedient for the public service. The secretary of state for the American department, in a letter of the twenty-second of October 1776, expressly says, "His majesty does not intend that the general, in his plans of operation, should be confined to any particular province: His choice of situation must in that respect be governed by his own judgment." How many times, it was farther urged on this subject, did sir William Howe alter his plan for the campaign of 1777 in the course of a few months? Between the months of November and April no less than four plans, essentially different from each other, were proposed, and yet, by the general's own account, each of them, in its turn, was approved of. The minister for American affairs, in a letter to the general of the third of March 1777, says, "I am now commanded to acquaint you that the king entirely approves of your deviation from the plan which you formerly suggested." And again, May the eighteenth, "As you must, from your situation and military skill, be a competent judge of the propriety of every plan, his majesty does not hesitate to approve the alterations which you propose." The nature of the American service, indeed, required that the general should be at liberty to vary his plan of operations according to the varying circumstances of the war: And accordingly, as appears from the whole of the official correspondence on the subject of the American war, the fullest confidence was placed in sir William Howe from the time of his appointment to the chief command to that of his asking leave to return to Britain. Not only was he supported by the whole weight of government, but was indulged in all his wishes for himself and his friends. On this head, therefore, they who saw more matter

C H A P.
XX.
1778.

C H A P.
XX.

1778.

of accusation in the inactivity and blunders of fir William Howe, than in the conduct of lord George Germaine, which seemed, on the whole, to be well designed, and towards the general full of confidence and generosity, enjoyed a complete triumph. It was with greater plausibility that fir William and his friends insisted on the third charge, just mentioned, against the minister; that his hopes and conjectures, respecting the state of America and the issue of the war, were more sanguine and favourable than the general's correspondence warranted him to entertain. Yet, even here, it was shewn from their correspondence, that the minister's intelligence was not materially different from that of the general, nor his hopes of success on the whole much less lively.

Still, however, the friends of fir William Howe, the members of parliament in opposition to administration, with his concurrence, insisted on a public inquiry into the conduct of the American war, that our national disgraces and misfortunes might be traced to their real source. Lord Howe, in a speech in the house of commons, April the twenty-ninth, 1779, demanded an inquiry into his own and his brother's conduct, for the following reasons: They had been arraigned in pamphlets and in newspapers, written by persons in high credit and confidence with ministers, by several members of that house, in that house, in the face of the nation; by some of great credit and respect in their public characters, known to be countenanced by administration; and that one of them in particular, governor Johnstone, had made the most direct and specific charges. Their characters, therefore, so publicly attacked, and in such a place, were to be vindicated in the great councils of the state, and no-where else.

In vain did the ministers of the crown, who had employed him, declare, that they had no accusations against either the general or admiral. They, with their friends, insisted on a public examination, which was obtained, and in which they, for some time, took the lead.

But,

and solicits
and obtains a
parliamentary
inquiry into
his conduct.

But, at length it plainly appeared that, under pretence of vindicating the general, their real design was to condemn the conduct of administration. The parliamentary inquiry that had been instituted, the ministry and their adherents considered as a factious intrigue.

C H A P.
XX.
1778.

It was, perhaps, imagined that his majesty, alarmed at the dangers that began, by this time, to threaten Great Britain, not only in America, but in other quarters, would change his confidential servants, and commit the conduct of government to those very hands that hitherto had been employed in various attempts to baffle its designs, and frustrate all the measures that had been taken for carrying them into execution. But the king, amidst multiplying distresses, with proper firmness withstood their machinations, determined to continue his countenance to those who wished not to frustrate nor procrastinate the war*, but to bring it, as soon as possible, to a safe and honourable conclusion. The opposition, therefore, disappointed in their expectations from the highest quarter in the state, seriously intended, what they loudly threatened, to impeach the servants of the crown, and by that means to drive them from their places by a kind of violence.

Administration, easily penetrating this design, resolved no longer to permit their opponents to run in the race of examination alone, but to vindicate the measures they had taken. Many gentlemen of undoubted reputation, perfectly acquainted with the conduct of the war, and the state of America, were summoned to give evidence respecting those subjects. Of this the movers of the inquiry were apprized, and they soon began to lose courage. Only two witnesses were examined, on what may be called, in the language of judicial trials, the side of administration: Major-general Robertson, who had served twenty-

* It is believed that the king on some occasions went so far as to suggest his ideas of the proper plan for carrying on the war, which were very judicious, and which, had they been adopted by the general, might probably have been productive of good effects.

C H A P
XX.

1778.

four years in America as quarter-master-general, brigadier and major-general; and Mr. Galloway, a gentleman of Pennsylvania, of fortune and consequence, as well as good abilities, who was bred to the law, and had been a member of congress, but who had come over to the royal army in December 1776. But such was the circumstantiality, credibility, and weight of their evidence, that the movers or managers shrunk from the inquiry; as, the more it was carried on, the more parliament, as well as the nation at large, seemed to be convinced that the conduct of administration, in respect to the American war, was on the whole justified. The friends of the general and admiral, therefore, moved to dissolve the committee which they had been so studious to obtain; and it was dissolved accordingly.

But although sir William Howe, as well as his friends, was disappointed in his hopes of something even more than exculpation, from an indulgent house of commons, he neither wanted a sufficient number of partisans to keep him in countenance amidst all that censure that was poured on his conduct, nor political friends of sufficient consequence to compensate for that censure by an honourable and lucrative station which he now holds under government: Nor is this the only instance in the history of Britain at this period, of great inequality in the public distribution of rewards and punishments. When we reflect on the different and even opposite reception given to successful genius actuated by the purest patriotism on the one hand, and to monotonous mediocrity, not only unsuccessful, if success is to be measured by effects conducive to the public good, but even of ambiguous intentions; what are we to think of the spirit which influences and directs the public councils?

In the decline of free governments we ever observe the influence of faction to predominate over ideas of patriotism, justice, and duty, on which alone liberty is founded, and a propensity in the citizens to range themselves under the banners of a Marius or a Sylla, a

Pompey or a Cæsar. Hence the servants of the state are apt to become less and less sensible to honour, and the voice of fame, the great incentives to glorious actions, well knowing that their conduct, however meritorious, may still be condemned, or however exceptionable, still be palliated, and even applauded, to advance the views of faction and ambition; while the great body of the people, distracted and confounded by the opposite opinions and declarations of their superiors, who are supposed to have the best means of information, know not where to place their hopes, their confidence, or their fears.

It is the province of the historian to correct these errors, and to animate the patriot, the sage, and the hero, under temporary neglect or detraction, by carrying an appeal in their behalf to a tribunal more candid than their misguided cotemporaries, and that, raised on a theatre more extended than their native country.

C H A P.
XX.
1778.

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