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1864.

LIVES

OF

JOHN SULLIVAN,

JACOB LEISLER,

NATHANIEL BACON,

AND

JOHN MASON.

BOSTON:
LITTLE, BROWN AND COMPANY.
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LIFE

OF

JOHN SULLIVAN,

MAJOR-GENERAL IN THE ARMY OF THE REVOLUTION;

BY

OLIVER W. B. PEABODY.

PREFACE.

No full account of the life of General Sullivan has yet been written; and the notices, which have been prepared for biographical dictionaries, enter little into the detail of his public services, while they are almost silent upon the subject of his private history. About fifty years have passed away since his death; and it is not easy, after so long an interval, to find access to facts, which were never recorded, and which can only survive by tradition; for the contemporaries of General Sullivan, in the active period of his career, have followed him to the grave.

The writer of the following pages, however, takes pleasure in acknowledging his obligations to the Honorable John Sullivan, of Exeter, New Hampshire, a grandson of the General, for some interesting information, and for the use of valuable manuscript papers, relating to his civil and military services. Mr. Sparks has likewise permitted him to examine his large collection of letters written by General Sullivan to Washington and other officers of the army, as also of

letters addressed to him, together with other manuscript papers of historical value, illustrative of the events in which Sullivan took an active part. For some facts, not wholly without importance, recourse has been had to the newspapers of the time of the revolution, and of a later period.

In respect to some of the historians of the war of the revolution, it may be proper to remark, that their estimate of General Sullivan's military services has not been very favorable; far less so than they, from a more full examination, seem justly to deserve. This may, perhaps, be partly explained by the fact, that, with the talents and patriotic zeal which he certainly possessed, he appears to have combined a warmth of temperament which led him to express his feelings without the least reserve. In this way he acquired the enmity of persons of note and influence, who were not slow to retaliate, and to communicate their own prejudice to others. There is no other apparent reason why Dr. Gordon, the earliest writer of the history of the revolution, should rarely allude to General Sullivan, except in terms of asperity, which are quite disproportioned to the faults to which they are applied, and which are not unfrequently lavished where he appears justly chargeable with no fault at all. No other historian exhibits the same bit-

terness of feeling; but some, either by silence or cold commendation, leave upon their readers the impression, that they formed a lower estimate of General Sullivan's military character than is consistent with strict justice. Whatever defects there may be in the following sketch, it is at least the result of a dispassionate investigation; and the writer is wholly unconscious of any disposition to bestow unmerited praise, or withhold censure where censure may be justly due. His only aim has been to give an impartial account of the life of one, to whom he considers the country much indebted for honest and effectual service in the hour of her severest trial.

In this view, he is happy to perceive that his opinion accords in general with that of the editor of the "Writings of Washington," as exhibited in the annotations which accompany those writings. His obligations both to the text and the annotations are so frequent, as will be apparent to the reader, that he has thought it better to make this general acknowledgment than to encumber the page with constant references.

JOHN SULLIVAN.

CHAPTER I.

His Birth and Parentage. — His Practice as a Lawyer. — Elected a Delegate to the First Congress. — His Enterprise at Portsmouth. — Elected a second Time to Congress. — Chosen a Brigadier-General in the Army.

It not unfrequently happens, that circumstances occurring in the early life of individuals, though in themselves trivial, are remembered and afterwards become important by their association with a distinguished name. Such is not the fact in regard to the early years of General Sullivan; his biographer finds scarcely any thing of interest to record before the opening of the American revolution, which summoned so much obscure and unsuspected talent into usefu. and conspicuous action. His father, John Sullivan, was born in the year 1692, in the county of Limerick, in Ireland, and died in 1796,

not many months after the death of his distinguished son, at the extreme age of one hundred and four years. His mother was also a native of Ireland, of the county of Cork; her life, protracted, like his, far beyond the ordinary term of human existence, terminated between five and six years after her husband's death. Their acquaintance first began on board of the vessel in which they came to this country as emigrants, in the year 1723; but they were not married until some years after their arrival.

Mr. Sullivan selected Berwick, in the Province of Maine, as his place of residence, where he followed the occupation of a farmer. He was a man of education; and if the intellectual capacity of the parent can be inferred at all from that of the child, he must have been not without talents himself, or, at least, without the ability to guide the minds of others. One of his children was James Sullivan, for many years the eminent Attorney-General, and afterwards the Governor, of Massachusetts, who died while holding the station of chief executive magistrate, and whose name and family are very honorably known in the history of our commonwealth and its metropolis.

John Sullivan, his third son, was born at Berwick, on the 17th of February, in the year 1740. A considerable part of his youth and

early manhood was passed in labor on his father's farm. The schools of that period did not afford many advantages for instruction in the higher branches of education; but their deficiencies in this respect were partially supplied by his father, who was a good classical scholar; and his letters, written some years later, show that he was competently versed in ancient history. It is obvious that he must have fully availed himself of all the privileges of instruction to which he found access, and that he had sufficient quickness and talent to supply the want of some that were denied him. He had not the advantage of what is commonly termed a liberal education. His inclination led him to the profession of the law; and he pursued his preparatory studies in the office of Samuel Livermore, with whom he was not long afterwards associated as a delegate in Congress from New Hampshire, and who, at a still later period, was one of the justices of the Superior Court of that state.

At the conclusion of his studies, he established himself in business at Durham, in New Hampshire, where he continued to reside until his death. His practice soon became extensive. What his reputation as a lawyer was, at this period, can only be inferred from what is known of his character at the bar after his retirement from the army, when he became distinguished as

an advocate; and from the fact, that he was early chosen to stations of the highest influence and responsibility. Probably he had not a profound acquaintance with the science of the law; but he was self-possessed, gifted with strong power of reasoning, a copious and easy elocution, and the effect of these qualities was aided by a clear and musical voice. But the clouds of discord with the mother country had long been gathering and growing darker, and his attention, like that of most of the ardent and able men of his profession, was much withdrawn from his peaceful pursuits to the more exciting subjects of politics and war. He received a commission as major of militia in 1772, and thus began the career which occupied many years of the active portion of his life.

A circumstance, recorded in one of the letters of Alexander Scammel, well known by his high character and his melancholy fate, may be mentioned here, as showing the estimation in which Major Sullivan was held by his fellow-citizens of Durham. Colonel Scammel was at the time a student in his office, and took charge of his professional business when his public engagements compelled him to leave home. On receiving the intelligence of the battle of Lexington, the young men of that quiet village, with the ardent spirit that universally prevailed, had

marched towards Boston. Some of those who remained were haunted with the persuasion, that the British army would not hesitate, on learning this fact, and being apprized of the absence of Mr. Sullivan, to make themselves masters of Durham. In order to prevent such a calamity, guards were set at night; and the village schoolmaster, whose profession led him to chastise refractory persons, ensconsed himself behind a warehouse, and bombarded an inoffensive boat making its way up the river, mistaking it for the van of the enemy's fleet. The alarm and agitation were extreme; and the universal exclamation was a wish that Major Sullivan were there; every one taking it for granted that his presence alone would overawe the invaders, or punish them if they persisted in their evil purpose.

New Hampshire was inferior to none of her sister colonies in attachment to the cause of liberty, nor in the spirit with which she bore herself in the day of trial. At the meeting of her Assembly in 1774, a committee of correspondence was appointed by that body, with the view of forwarding the purpose, then regarded as a most important one, of producing a concert of action throughout the country. The Governor, John Wentworth, was a man of many amiable qualities, and of popular manners; but personal gifts, however winning, availed little in opposition to the

deep, intense, and stern feeling, which was nearly universal, and gave ominous foreboding that the end was near. Like most of the other royal governors, in fact like most other men in authority under such circumstances, he could not comprehend that feeling, but hoped to extinguish the volcanic fires by pouring water on the lava. On being informed of the appointment of this committee, he dissolved the Assembly; but, in obedience to a summons of the same committee, they forthwith met again in the legislative hall.

Irritated by this act of contumacy, Governor Wentworth, attended by the sheriff of the county, entered the hall, declared the meeting illegal, and ordered the sheriff to make proclamation to all present to disperse. The scene was an exciting one; the members had all risen as he entered; and he must have read the lesson in their countenances, that the sceptre of authority was breaking in his grasp. When the proclamation had been made, the Governor withdrew. The members of the Assembly resumed their seats, and appointed by vote another place of meeting. When they next met, they caused letters to be written to all the towns, desiring the inhabitants to elect delegates to a convention to be held at Exeter, in order to choose persons to represent the province in the first General Congress, which was to meet at Phila-

delphia, in September. The convention, consisting of eighty-five persons, assembled in the month of July; and the delegates appointed to represent the province were John Sullivan and Nathaniel Folsom.

Mr. Sullivan was at this time thirty-four years of age. His appointment to a post so honorable, and, in the view of all men of that day, so important, shows that he sustained a high character for general ability, no less than for zeal and vigor, in the patriotic cause. On the 5th of September, 1774, the Continental Congress met at Philadelphia; and its meeting is an event rendered memorable in history, as well by the character of the men of whom the body was composed, as by the energy and dignity of its proceedings. Washington was there; there were also Jay, and Adams, and Peyton Randolph, its President. The fiery eloquence of Patrick Henry, and of Rutledge, pronounced by Henry himself its greatest orator, and the graceful rhetoric of Richard Henry Lee, were there, for the first time, heard in a theatre worthy of their power. What part was taken by Mr. Sullivan in the debates we have now no means of ascertaining. We find his name given as a member of important committees, the duty of one of which was to examine and report the character of the various statutes affecting the commerce and manufac-

tures of the colonies. The session of this Congress terminated in October.

In December of the same year, the people of Portsmouth received by express a copy of a recent order of the King in Council, prohibiting the exportation of military stores to the colonies. They were at the moment constantly expecting the arrival of vessels of war from Boston, which were to bring troops to secure the possession of Fort William and Mary, then the name of the fortress at the entrance of the harbor. The garrison consisted only of five men, commanded by a captain; but they had under their charge considerable military stores, the possession of which was deemed important to the cause of the patriots, as such stores were not abundant, and the ministerial policy appeared to be to make them scarcer still. It was resolved, by the committee of the town, to summon a military force from the neighborhood as secretly as possible, and to seize upon them before the arrival of the reinforcement from Boston, and before any other measures could be adopted for their security.

Arrangements were forthwith made for the enterprise, which was to be conducted by John Sullivan and John Langdon, the latter a name honorably distinguished, like the other, in the history of the state. Assembling at a moment's warning, the small party marched to Newcastle,

took possession of the fort, imprisoned the garrison, and carried away one hundred barrels of powder. The Governor was a resident of Portsmouth, and there were public officers and others in the place, who had no sympathy with the patriots; but he received no intelligence of these proceedings until it was too late to take any measures to prevent them. Next day, fifteen of the lighter cannon, all the small arms, and some other portions of the stores, were removed; and, in order to render them more secure, these were distributed among the neighboring towns, and placed in responsible hands The time was happily chosen for the execution of the enterprise. Scarcely was it effected before the expected ships arrived with troops to take possession of the fort.

This affair may appear in itself to be of no great moment; but it assumes another aspect when we consider the time at which it occurred. It was the first act, which could be regarded as one of open and direct hostility, committed by a military force against the royal government; it was consummated by the seizure of the King's property, and the disarming and imprisonment of his soldiers; and this, too, at a time, when the universal language held in public was that of peace and anticipated reconciliation; and,

if the course of events had been otherwise than it was, it is difficult to see how those concerned in it could have screened themselves from the penalties of treason. It was not until full four months afterwards, that the first blood was shed at Lexington; and later still, that an enterprise, in character not dissimilar, was executed under the command of Patrick Henry, in Virginia.

More than common boldness was certainly required to induce men to venture upon such an undertaking, before the minds of most others were prepared for open collision, and while it was generally hoped that such a crisis might by some means be averted. So thought Governor Wentworth, who immediately denounced the proceeding as an act of treason, and retained the imprisoned garrison as witnesses to prove the guilt of the transgressors. All persons, who were supposed to be implicated, were forthwith dismissed from offices of trust held under the crown, and a proclamation was issued, commanding good citizens to aid in procuring the detection and punishment of the offenders. But the day of executive authority was well nigh passed. It was not long before the Governor, who was thus declaring the destiny of others, himself became a fugitive.

In January, 1775, a few weeks after this oc-

currence, a second convention of delegates assembled at Exeter, partly for the purpose of considering the alarming state of public affairs, and partly with the view of electing representatives to the second Continental Congress. Their choice fell upon Sullivan and Langdon, whose agency in the enterprise just mentioned had probably directed towards them, even more strongly than before, the attention of their fellow-citizens. This Congress assembled almost at the very moment when hostilities had actually begun. Sullivan took his seat on the 10th of May. In the course of the next month, he was appointed chairman of a committee to confer with Charles Lee, whose reputation as a military officer was then such as to encourage greater expectations of his usefulness than were subsequently answered, upon the subject of entering the Continental service. On the 22d day of June, eight Brigadier-Generals were chosen for the new army, of which the higher appointments had been already made. Sullivan was one of the number; the names of Pomeroy, Montgomery, Wooster, Heath, Spencer, and Thomas stood prior to his, and the last, certainly not least, was that of Greene. The military sphere of action was the one to which Mr. Sullivan was directed equally by his own inclination and the

judgment of others. He immediately accepted the appointment, resigned his seat in Congress, and, making the arrangements for his new vocation with the smallest possible delay, proceeded to the camp at Cambridge, where he took command of one of the brigades composing the left wing of the army, which was stationed at Winter Hill.

There was here no opportunity for active military service. All the efforts of all the leading officers were required to maintain the semblance of an army. It was not until a later period, and after much disaster, that men began to understand, that the operations of protracted war are not to be conducted by militia. At the beginning of the war, there was no other kind of force; and it is sad to see how frequently the interests of the country were from this cause put at hazard, and the army itself preserved from ruin only by the inaction of the foe. General Sullivan's vigor and activity were signally displayed in the efforts which he made to prevent the army from disbanding, and to procure new troops to supply the places of those who would not be induced to stay. He was continually urging the necessity of effort and sacrifice upon the authorities of his own state, with a warmth and frankness not always grateful to their feelings, or likely

to render himself popular with them; but this was a consideration which he wholly disregarded, in his anxiety to serve the common cause.

On the 5th of August, he addressed a letter to the Committee of Safety, announcing the fact, sufficiently alarming when it is considered that the army was in the immediate presence of the enemy, that the whole supply of powder in the camp could only furnish half a pound to each man. On ascertaining this fact, he says that General Washington "was so struck, that he did not utter a word for half an hour. Every one was equally surprised. Messengers are despatched to all the southern colonies to draw on their public stores; and I must entreat you to forget all colony distinctions, consider the Continental army devoted to destruction unless immediately supplied, and send us at least twenty barrels of powder with all possible speed. Should this matter take air before a supply arrives, our army is ruined. You, gentlemen, will need no words from me to induce an immediate compliance with this request. You can have no necessity for the powder in the country. There is not the most distant probability, or even possibility, of an attack upon you."

In the course of the autumn, the town of Falmouth was destroyed by the wanton violence

of the commander of a British vessel of war; and this officer, Lieutenant Mowatt, whose name is not associated with any other notable exploit, menaced all the other towns upon the coast to the eastward of Boston with a similar fate. Portsmouth was considered likely to be one of the earliest objects of attack; and General Washington, anxious to comply with the wishes of its citizens, that some preparations might be made for its defence, commissioned General Sullivan to proceed thither, in order to make such provision as circumstances would permit for the protection of its harbor. His appointment was welcome to the citizens, by whom he was much esteemed, and who had already given to one of the forts, which they had erected at the entrance of the port, the name of Fort Sullivan. The alarm, however, soon died away; no attack was made; and General Sullivan, after executing the orders of Washington, relative to the measures to be taken for the security of the place, returned to the camp, and resumed his former station at Winter Hill.

CHAPTER II.

Account of the Formation of the Constitution of New Hampshire, the first in the United States — Sullivan's Views on the Subject. — He is ordered to Canada. — Battle at Three Rivers. — Retreats to Ticonderoga. — Washington's Opinion of his military Qualifications.

NOTHING is more instructive, in the history of our revolution, or tends more to distinguish it from those of other times and countries, than the fact, that the operations of government went on in the several colonies, when authority had wholly ceased to flow from its accustomed sources. Like a lever watch, its movement was continued while the process of winding was going on. There was no confusion, no anarchy; no one expected to find in the difficulties of the time a refuge from the cognizance of the law. In New Hampshire, the courts of justice were for a season closed, and the sword of executive power was committed to its sheath. Meanwhile a large and indefinite authority was exercised, without objection, by the committees of the towns.

In May, 1775, a General Convention assembled, and continued its sittings till September.

This body established post-offices, and appointed a committee of supplies for the army. It also established a Committee of Safety, and invested them with authority like that of the ancient dictators. They were to take into consideration all matters affecting the welfare of the province, or the security of the people's rights; they were also to be careful, almost in the words of the ancient charge, that the republic should sustain no injury. They were, in fact, invested with the supreme executive authority; and, during the recess of the Convention, their orders had all the force and effect of ordinary, formal acts of legislation.

The Convention, however, were persuaded of the necessity of some different provisions, and applied to the Continental Congress for advice relative to the establishment of a form of government for the future. That body, according to a formula adopted in several cases of the kind, recommended to them to establish such a form as would best conduce to the happiness of the people, and most effectually preserve peace and good order; excellent counsel, certainly, but not very definite as it respected the nature of the form to be preferred. The business of making constitutions, which has since been carried on with so much vigor, and with such variety of skill, was then quite new.

Those who engaged in it had scarcely any guide, except the experience derived from the practical operation of the British constitution, and their own old charters, and such hints as their reading could supply. But they were not men at all likely to act like the revolutionists of Naples, who proclaimed the Spanish constitution as the supreme law of the land, at a time when not a single copy of that, or any other, could be found in the country. The subject, one of the highest to which reason could be applied, naturally engaged the earnest attention of the most active and intelligent minds; and it is worth while to note the result, as the constitution of New Hampshire, established in pursuance of this recommendation of the Congress, was the first constitution ever adopted in any of the United States.

When the reply of Congress was received, the Convention resolved, that representatives should forthwith be chosen by the several towns, to meet for the purpose of "assuming government," and to continue in office for the term of a year. No person was eligible as a representative who did not possess real estate of the value of one hundred pounds; a provision which is retained in the existing constitution of New Hampshire; and they were to be chosen by the suffrages of electors possess-

ing real estate of the value of at least twenty pounds. The representative body was convened in December, and immediately proceeded to prepare a constitution, which was adopted on the 5th day of January, 1776. As might be expected, it betrays some indications of the haste with which it was prepared, and of the inexperience of its framers; and it carries on its face the intimation, that it was considered not unlikely to be abrogated by the accommodation of the differences with the mother country.

In the preamble of this instrument, it is set forth, that the establishment of a form of government, to endure until the termination of the present unhappy and unnatural contest with Great Britain, had become indispensably necessary; it is also expressly declared, that the people of the province had never sought to throw off their dependence, and still continued to entertain the hope of reconciliation. It is then resolved, that this Congress, the name assumed by the representative body, assume the name, power, and authority of a House of Representatives, or Assembly, for the colony of New Hampshire. Acting under the persuasion, which has now become nearly universal, that the power of legislation cannot be advantageously confided to a single body, they next provide, that the House of Representatives shall elect

twelve persons, the precise number of the present Senate of New Hampshire, properly apportioned among the several counties, who shall constitute a distinct and separate branch of the legislature, by the name of the Council for the colony, and shall continue in office until the third Wednesday of the following December, the time at which the official term of the representatives was to expire. The Council are empowered to elect a President, and in his absence the senior councillor is to preside. The members of both branches of the legislature are to be annually chosen by the people. No public act is to be considered valid, or, in other words, to have the force of law, until it has been passed by both Houses. All public and civil officers, with a few unimportant exceptions, are to be appointed by the two Houses, as are also the general and field officers of the militia, and all officers of the army. No distinct mention is made of the judiciary, nor of the executive power.

The two Houses, however, proceeded to establish a judiciary system. While they were in session, they exercised the executive authority; and, as the constitution was silent upon the subject, they made provision for its exercise during the recess, by depositing it in the hands of a Committee of Safety, who were invested

with the same general powers previously confided to the bodies which bore that name. To give unity to the system, the President of the Council was constituted the President of the Committee; and it is a circumstance worthy of attention, as indicating the spirit of the time, that the principal agency in the three departments of the government was confided to a single individual. This respectable and unambitious public servant of all work was Meshech Weare, who filled at the same time the offices of President of the Council and of the Committee of Safety, and of Chief Justice of the Superior Court.

The framers of our early constitutions were not "architects of ruin." They did not, like some later codifiers, think of adapting the country to the constitution, but the constitution to the country. Those of New Hampshire found themselves without a Governor and Council; and, instead of availing themselves of the opportunity to concoct a healing balsam for all the evils of the social state, they were contented to supply the actual deficiency, without attempting more.

They asked the advice of those, whose reputation entitled their counsel to respect; and the views of General Sullivan, expressed in reply to an application of this kind, were communicated by him from the camp at Winter

Hill, and have been preserved. They are interesting, as exhibiting the action of a vigorous mind upon a subject to which its attention was earnestly turned, without the benefit of much experience. He was of the opinion, that the Governor and the members of the legislature should be elected for a term not exceeding three years, but thought that annual elections, upon the whole, were to be preferred; that, in the event of official misconduct on the part of the Governor, he should be tried by the two branches of the legislature; and, in case of similar misconduct on the part of any member of the legislature, that the Governor and the two Houses should be his judges, the vote of the Governor being equal to that of a member. All civil officers should be appointed by the legislature, and all military ones by the Governor and Council. If bills, passed by both branches of the legislature, and rejected by the Governor, should be passed anew by a succeeding legislature, they should have the force of law, without the assent of the Executive. In order to preserve the purity and order of elections, he recommended the adoption of a plan, which experience has since shown to be more effectual than any other; that of a registration of the voters, and the use of the register as a check-list, on which the name of each is

marked at the time of depositing his vote. Nothing is said by him, nor is there any provision in the constitution, as to the appointment of the judges, or their term of office; it seems to have been taken for granted, that they were, like other officers, to be appointed by the legislature, and to hold their places, according to the usual tenure, during good behavior.

No important military operations took place during the winter; the occupation, by the Americans, of the Heights of Dorchester, in March, 1776, and the failure of a plan, projected by the British, to dislodge them, made the evacuation of Boston by the enemy a measure of necessity, and, on the 17th of the month, they took their departure. It was the opinion of Washington, that their purpose was to gain possession of the city of New York, and to secure a communication through the Hudson River with Canada. The principal part of his army was sent in the direction of that city. General Sullivan's brigade received orders to march on the 27th; but he was now to enter upon another field of service.

The attention of Congress had been directed towards Canada in the summer of the preceding year, when it was ill provided with the means of defence, and a large portion of the inhabitants were dissatisfied with the British govern-

ment. General Schuyler, a brave and indefatigable officer, whose unpopularity through a large portion of the country it is not easy to explain, was directed to take measures to secure the possession of the lakes, and to cross the Canadian frontier, if circumstances should appear to warrant a measure so decisive. He proceeded to execute these orders with his usual alacrity and vigor; but, in the latter part of the month of September, while engaged in preparation for besieging the fortress of St. John's, he was compelled by illness to relinquish the command. He was succeeded by General Montgomery; one of the few men of genius who find a short and brilliant way to fame, and perish almost at the opening of manhood, with a reputation rarely won by the labors of a life. He soon obtained possession of St. John's and Chamblee, and of the city of Montreal; then, with a force reduced by the necessity of securing what he had already gained, so that it hardly exceeded three hundred men, he advanced towards Quebec.

General Washington, meantime, with his usual foresight, had detached a body of troops, under the command of Colonel Arnold, with orders to traverse the wilderness, and strike the banks of the St. Lawrence at some distance below Montreal. He thought that the British force above

would thus find itself compelled to descend the river, and leave the way open to Montgomery's invading party; or, in the event of its retaining its position, that a successful attack might be made upon Quebec. Arnold and his party accomplished triumphantly their hardy enterprise, though it was attended with difficulties which veteran troops would have contemplated with dismay. They reached the St. Lawrence early in November, and proceeded into the neighborhood of Quebec, but were compelled, by various accidents, to relinquish their plans for its reduction, until the arrival of Montgomery, who was now advancing rapidly to join them. The effective force of both parties, when united, did not exceed eight hundred men. With this small band, Montgomery determined to attack Quebec, which had then a garrison of fifteen hundred, hoping that his deficiency of force might be supplied by bravery and skill. On the last day of the year, he made the assault upon the city, which, though unsuccessful, has been rendered memorable by the chivalrous gallantry of his followers, and his own untimely death.

Notwithstanding the discouraging result of this bold enterprise, the plan of capturing Quebec was not relinquished. The Americans blockaded it until the 1st of April, when they

began the operations of a regular siege, which was continued for some time without effect. Brigadier-General Wooster had assumed the chief command, after the death of Montgomery; but, on the 1st of May, he was superseded by Major-General Thomas, whom Congress, on receiving the intelligence of that event, had appointed Commander-in-chief in Canada. On his arrival, he became at once convinced that the plan of siege would be fruitless, and that it was necessary to retreat without delay. His troops accordingly gave up the siege, and ascended the St. Lawrence, not without loss, to the mouth of the Sorel; there he was attacked by the small-pox, which very soon proved fatal. During his illness, and for a short time after his death, the chief command was assumed by Brigadier-General Thompson, who had been detached, with four regiments, by Washington, some time before, to reinforce the army in Canada. On the 4th of June, Brigadier-General Sullivan, his senior in commission, arrived with an additional force, raising the whole number of the troops to between four and five thousand men; and the command, thus frequently passing into new hands, at length devolved upon him.

In the mean time, the situation of the Americans was becoming very critical. The British

government were now awakened to a sense of the necessity of vigorous effort, in order to retain the province in subjection, and had increased their forces, stationed there, until they numbered about thirteen thousand men. A considerable portion of this force had already reached the Three Rivers, the place appointed for the general rendezvous, and the main body was on its march thither from Quebec. This place was somewhat less than fifty miles distant from the mouth of the Sorel. A few miles above it lay several armed vessels, together with transports filled with troops. The whole American force, in various parts of Canada, did not exceed eight thousand men; and the disposition of the inhabitants, partly from the conviction that it would be impossible for the Americans to prevail over the British, had become far less favorable to them than it was before.

The direction of the military operations in this quarter had thus, in the course of eight or nine months, been exercised by seven officers, only two of whom had been appointed by Congress to the command. It was not surprising that those, on whom it was unexpectedly devolved, having no previous knowledge of the country, or of the character and situation of the hostile forces, or the disposition of the inhabitants, should fall into some errors. The British,

as we have seen, had availed themselves of the facilities afforded by the open navigation of the St. Lawrence, to introduce a force, with which it was impossible for the Americans to contend with the slightest prospect of success; but the Americans would seem to have been unacquainted with this fact.

General Sullivan, on his accession to the command, which took place as soon as he arrived, influenced partly, perhaps, by a temperament naturally sanguine, and partly by erroneous impressions respecting the relative strength of his own force and that of the enemy, appears to have had confident expectations of maintaining his position in Canada; expectations which other officers did not share, and which the result was very far from justifying. Just before he arrived, a corps, consisting of less than seven hundred men, had been detached by General Thompson, under the command of Colonel St. Clair, with orders to attack the British at Three Rivers, if it could be done without too much hazard. St. Clair advanced to Nicolet, where he resolved to wait the arrival of a reinforcement, or until he should receive further orders. It was at this moment that General Sullivan arrived, and, under the impression that the enemy's force at the Three Rivers was less formidable than it proved, ordered General Thompson, at the head

of fourteen hundred men, to join St. Clair, and proceed to the attack, if he should consider it expedient on a closer view of the position.

The detachment, now somewhat exceeding in number two thousand men, fell down the river in the night; and, having passed the armed vessels without occasioning any alarm, General Thompson entertained the hope of carrying the post by surprise; but he did not reach the neighborhood until after daybreak, three hours later than he had expected, and the alarm was given at the instant of his landing. It was necessary for him to make a circuit, in order to avoid the fire of some vessels in the river; and he thus became entangled in a deep morass. This detention gave the British time to prepare for his reception in front; while another party fell into his rear, and occupied the way by which he must return to his boats. The Americans, however, advanced to the attack, but were repulsed, and, finding the road they had previously taken no longer open to their boats, plunged into deep marshes, where the British did not choose to follow them. Their loss consisted of about thirty killed; two hundred were made prisoners, among whom were General Thompson and Colonel Irvine.*

* In a letter, written on the day of this encounter, General Sullivan says, "I find that he [Thompson] has proceeded

After this disaster, the effective force of General Sullivan, at the mouth of the Sorel, did not exceed twenty-five hundred men; and these were disheartened and fatigued, and not in a state of entire subordination. He was nevertheless resolved to defend the post; but his officers and men were opposed to the measure, and he reluctantly gave the order to abandon the place, and begin a retreat. Chamblee and St. John's were in succession also abandoned; at St. John's, he was joined by the garrison of Montreal. When he reached the Isle-aux-Noix, he determined to remain until orders to retreat should reach him; but the sickness prevailing among his troops compelled him to retire to the healthier station of the Isle Lamotte. There he received the orders of General Schuyler to proceed to Crown Point. This movement was soon effected.

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in the manner proposed, and made his attack on the troops at Three Rivers by daylight; for at that time a very heavy cannonading began, which lasted, with some intervals, till twelve o'clock. It is now nearly one in the afternoon. The firing has ceased, except some irregular firing with cannon at a considerable distance of time one from the other. At eight o'clock, a very heavy firing of small arms was heard even here, at the distance of forty-five miles. The distance might have rendered it doubtful, had not the boats down the bay, which have since arrived, confirmed it, and declared that they distinctly heard the small arms for a long time."

During the retreat, the Americans were closely followed by the enemy; but the pursuit was not continued beyond the Sorel. All their baggage, and nearly all the military stores, were saved; but the armed vessels on the river, and the fortifications, were destroyed.

When the critical state of General Thomas's health was known, General Gates was appointed by Congress to command the northern army. He had received the commission of Adjutant-General, with the rank of Brigadier, at the same time that Sullivan was appointed a Brigadier-General in the line of the army. This promotion of Gates gave offence to General Sullivan, who regarded himself a senior in rank, and thought that the promotion and appointment must have been made with the view of superseding him. General Gates, however, took the command of the army at Crown Point; and it was resolved, in a council of war held on the 7th of July, at which both he and General Sullivan were present, that the post was not tenable, and that it was necessary for the troops to retire to Ticonderoga.

Thus ended the invasion of Canada, so promising in the beginning, so unhappy in the result; undertaken with too small a number of troops, from an impression that the regard of the inhabitants for the Americans and their cause would render it needless to employ a larger one; when

the very thing requisite, in order to confirm that regard, was the presence of such a force as might secure the disaffected in the province from the apprehended vengeance of their government. General Sullivan now left the army, and went to Philadelphia, where he tendered to Congress the resignation of his commission; but when the President, in a personal interview, explained to him the motives, which led to the promotion of Gates, he changed his purpose, and continued in the service.

We have already stated the circumstances under which General Sullivan took command of the army in Canada, as affording an explanation of the erroneous judgment he had formed relative to the condition and prospects of the American cause in that quarter; and, when it is considered that the most confident hope of the success of the invasion had been generally entertained, it is not surprising that any officer commanding there should be most reluctant to expose himself to the reproach, which must follow the disappointment of that hope. General Sullivan clung to it to the very last; longer, perhaps, than strict prudence warranted; longer than others, whose judgment was less affected by the sense of responsibility; but, when retreat became indispensable, his measures appear to have been judiciously taken, and it was accom-

plished with scarcely any loss, under circumstances of peculiar difficulty, in the presence of a powerful enemy, and with troops wasted and worn by the small-pox, which then prevailed with great severity among them. His conduct on this occasion, as well as through the period of his command, appears to have won the esteem and regard of those who served under him. On his departure from the army at Crown Point, he received the following address, subscribed by the field-officers of the army, among whose names are those of Hazen, Poor, Stark, St. Clair, and Wayne.

"We, the field-officers of the several regiments now composing the army of the United States in the northern department, having been informed of your Honor's intended departure from hence, esteem it would be unpardonable in us, should we forego this opportunity of rendering the homage due to him, who, upon the late trying occasion, has comforted, supported, and protected the shattered remains of a debilitated army, and, with unwearied care, watchfulness, and attention, has landed the public stores of every kind, without the least diminution, safe at this place. It is to you, Sir, the public are indebted for the preservation of their property in Canada. It is to you we owe our safety thus far. Your humanity will call forth the silent

tear and grateful ejaculation of the sick; your universal impartiality will force the applause of the wearied soldier. Permit us, then, worthy Sir, to take our leave, wishing you every happiness and success your most sanguine inclinations can suggest, or our most fervent prayers procure."

It was not unnatural that General Sullivan should have been solicitous to be confirmed in the command thus accidentally thrown upon him. This desire appears to have been expressed in a private letter to Washington, which was transmitted by him to Congress on the 17th of June, accompanied with some remarks relative to General Sullivan's fitness for the chief command. It should be remembered, that they are written with the unreserved freedom of a confidential communication; and though they exhibit a portrait not without its dark shades, these make far less impression on the eye than the lighter portions.

"Whether he merits it, (the chief command,) or not, is a matter to be considered; and that it may be considered with propriety, I think it my duty to observe that he is active, spirited, and zealously attached to the cause. That he does not want abilities, many members of Congress can testify; but he has his wants, and he has his foibles. The latter are manifested in his little tincture of vanity, and in an over desire of being popular, which now and then lead him into

embarrassments. His wants are common to us all. He wants experience to move upon a large scale; for the limited and contracted knowledge, which any of us have in military matters, stands in very little stead, and is greatly overbalanced by sound judgment, and some acquaintance with men and books, especially when accompanied by an enterprising genius, which, I must do General Sullivan the justice to say, I think he possesses." *

CHAPTER III.

Battle of Long Island. — Sullivan is taken Prisoner. — Bears a Message from Lord Howe to Congress. — Is exchanged, and rejoins the Army. — Takes Command of Lee's Division. — His Command in the Battles of Trenton and Princeton. — Subsequent Movements of the Army.

General Sullivan had now rejoined the army of Washington. Early in the month of August, the British forces assembled at Staten Island consisted of twenty-four thousand men; and it was obviously their purpose to gain possession

* Sparks's *Writings of Washington*, Vol. III. p. 425

of the city of New York. The principal part of the American army, which was far inferior to that of the enemy in numbers and efficiency, was stationed in the Island of New York, at the southern extremity of which the city stands; but a small body occupied the town of Brooklyn, in Long Island, opposite to the city, where extensive works had been erected under the supervision of General Greene, who commanded there. About the middle of the month, he was compelled by illness to relinquish the command, and General Sullivan was appointed to succeed him. Both these officers had been promoted to the rank of Major-General a few days before.

It was anticipated that efforts would be made by the enemy to dislodge the Americans from this post. On the 22d, a portion of their force, in number about ten thousand men, landed at the ferry on the Narrows, and extended itself from Utrecht and Gravesend to Flatland. They were now only from four to six miles distant from the American lines, and, in order to reach them. must cross a range of hills covered with wood. A road, leading from the Narrows along the coast, afforded an easy route to their left wing; the centre might proceed by a road leading directly from Flatbush to Brooklyn, or by another more circuitous, connecting these two places by the way of Bedford. The right wing, proceeding

northward a few miles, would strike a road leading from Jamaica to Brooklyn, passing through Bedford. On the 23d, considerable reinforcements were sent to the American camp at Brooklyn, in preparation for the struggle obviously not far distant, and Major-General Putnam was invested with the chief command. Without the lines, a detachment watched the coast-road by the Narrows on his right; a single regiment was posted on the direct road from Flatbush; two others guarded the circuitous one leading by the way of Bedford; and light parties of volunteers were ordered to patrol on the Jamaica road. This was to have been guarded by the militia of Long Island; but they remained at Jamaica, out of the line of the enemy's approach; and this important pass, by which the decisive movement of the enemy was made, remained quite undefended.

On the evening of the 26th, General Clinton, with the British right wing, advanced towards the Jamaica road, with the view of turning the American left, and gaining the rear of the passes; the other British columns, meantime, were to occupy the attention of the Americans by feigned attacks upon their right and centre. It should be stated, that General Putnam, assuming the command but a few days before the action, had hardly time enough to make himself entirely

familiar with the ground. He had no cavalry which he could employ as vedettes, to inform him of the movements of the enemy; but his chief difficulty was, and it was one which must, under any circumstances, have decided the fortune of the contest, that the force which he could employ without the lines was not more than one third as great as that of an enemy, who could direct his attack to any quarter he might find best suited to his purpose.

The information, which first reached him, of the demonstrations of the British upon his right. induced him to believe that this was intended to be the object of their principal attack. This was shortly after midnight. Before daybreak, Lord Stirling was on his march, with a strong detachment, on the road leading to the Narrows. General Sullivan, who, according to some authorities, commanded all the forces without the lines, or, as he himself said, was in command within the lines under Putnam, went out to observe the motions of the enemy on the central road, leading directly to Flatbush; and, seeing the British centre advancing, placed himself at the head of the single regiment stationed there. But neither the British centre nor left were to push vigorously forward until Clinton should have time to execute his purpose, though warm skirmishing took place, particularly where Lord Stirling encountered them.

Clinton, meanwhile, was advancing, almost without opposition, and gaining the American rear; the entire failure to penetrate his purpose, together with the absence of the force designed to close his route against him, left him at liberty to proceed without hesitation or delay. It has been already stated, that there were two regiments stationed on the road leading to Flatbush through Bedford. They constituted the American left, and had no other commanders than their respective colonels. These, together with Colonel Hand's regiment, of which Sullivan took the command, were the only troops without the lines, which were not engaged on the right under Lord Stirling; and the whole number of Americans engaged did not exceed five thousand. When Clinton had accomplished his object, the British advanced in all quarters; Sullivan fought bravely, and made what resistance he could, but, encountering enemies in front and rear, was defeated and taken prisoner. A similar fate befell Lord Stirling, who attempted to force his way back to the camp, but was overpowered by the enemy.

The loss of the Americans has been variously estimated at from one thousand to three times that number.* The British, flushed with their

* The number of prisoners taken by the British on the day of the battle, as returned by General Howe to General

success, were pressing forward to force the lines, and an attack, made at that moment, might have proved successful; but it was prevented by the habitual caution of General Howe, the British Commander-in-chief; and during the night of the 29th, when the enemy were so near that the cry of their sentinels was distinctly heard within the American lines, the American force was withdrawn by Washington in safety across the East River to New York.

A few days after the battle, General Sullivan was permitted to return on his parole, with the view of communicating to Congress the details of a conference which he had held with the British Admiral, Lord Howe, relative to an accommodation of the differences with Great Britain. When he reached Philadelphia, he was desired by Congress to offer this communication; and a resolve was adopted in consequence, that a committee of their body should have an interview with Lord Howe, to ascertain whether he had authority to treat, and the nature and extent of his authority, and to hear any propositions he might deem it expedient to make. General Sullivan was instructed to communicate to him a copy of the resolve. The committee was com-

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Washington, was one thousand and eighty-seven, including officers and privates. — Sparks's *Writings of Washington*. Vol. IV. p. 547.

posed of Dr. Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge; they had an interview with the British Admiral, but the result only served to convince both parties, that there was no longer any hope of reconciliation upon such terms as the British were inclined to offer. The British commander, General Howe, had consented to exchange General Sullivan for General Prescott; this arrangement was carried into effect, and General Sullivan rejoined the army.

By the middle of October, the movements of the enemy had made it necessary for the Americans to evacuate New York. The army was now organized in four divisions, which were placed under the command, respectively, of Generals Lee, Heath, Sullivan, and Lincoln. After the evacuation, General Howe had pressed upon them with unusual vigor, and with an apparent determination to force them to give battle; but when, early in November, General Washington took possession of the heights near White Plains, the plan of the British commander underwent a sudden change. Either convinced that the American post was too strong to be attacked with any prospect of success, or apprehending that, so long as Forts Lee and Washington were not reduced, his possession of the island might be insecure, he suddenly withdrew his force, and retired towards the city of New York. Wash-

ington, who rightly judged that he now contemplated a descent upon New Jersey, took the advice of a council of his officers, who came to the conclusion, that the troops raised upon the western side should cross the North River. General Lee was left upon the other side with the eastern troops, with orders to unite his force with the others, in the event of the passage of the river by the British army.

On the 16th of November, Fort Washington was reduced by the enemy, and its garrison made prisoners of war. The whole loss of the Americans was nearly three thousand men; a serious diminution of their numbers at a period when they were far too small. This disaster made it necessary to evacuate Fort Lee. Before this could be accomplished, a large body of the enemy crossed the river; and, for more than a month, General Washington, at the head of a force continually varying in number, and sometimes diminished to three thousand men, ill-disciplined, ill-provided, and disheartened by the gloomy aspect of their fortunes, was compelled to retire before the British, through New Jersey, where his movements were rendered more hazardous and difficult by the general disaffection of the people. He was at length driven across the Delaware, laboring all the while to protect Philadelphia from the threatened occupation of the enemy.

At this most critical period, when he had enough to do in struggling against a far superior foe, he was beset by other difficulties from a quarter whence they were least to have been expected. His repeated orders given to General Lee to join him were wholly disregarded. That officer, like some other leading officers of the revolution, when removed from the immediate presence of Washington, was more anxious to accomplish some projects of his own, than to facilitate the operations of his chief. He repeatedly received orders from Washington to unite his force with the main army; these orders he repeatedly disregarded, affecting sometimes to misunderstand, and sometimes to comply with them. It was not until the beginning of December that he crossed the Hudson. Even then, he continued to disregard the urgent representations of Washington, whose temper was seldom more severely tried by perplexities to which he ought not to have been exposed.

At length, on the 13th of December, in consequence of his own imprudence, General Lee was made a prisoner by the enemy; and this event, though much regretted at the time, when his reputation was higher than at a later day, can hardly be regarded now as otherwise than fortunate. General Sullivan immediately took the command of his division, and, in a few days, the

union so long desired in vain by Washington was happily accomplished. Had it been delayed much longer, the battle of Trenton, which, more perhaps than any other battle of the revolution, sustained and animated the drooping spirit of the people, could hardly have occurred.

Indeed, the prospects of the patriots in this dreary hour were dark, and to all appearance nearly hopeless. In New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania, a great proportion of the people were ill affected to their cause; and, except from the city of Philadelphia, General Washington could look for little valuable aid. His force, to which could hardly be applied the name of army, was ill calculated to encounter a well-organized and superior enemy, and, as we have said, its spirit was impaired by the ill-success of the campaign. Amidst this scene of gloom and disaster, when the true-hearted began to lose their hope, and the timid were utterly discouraged, the great soul of Washington remained unchanged and serene; there was no shadow of despondency upon his spirit, or of gloom upon his brow. A more noble spectacle was never offered to the moral eye, than the calm, high confidence of such a man, in such an hour. To this commanding quality of his, more than to any other cause, was his country indebted for

her safety; for it hardly will admit of question, that, had he shared the general feeling of the time, her cause would have been lost.

After the return of Lee's division, he received some accession of strength by the arrival of four regiments from Ticonderoga, and the militia of Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania. These were posted from Yardley's Ferry, up to Coryell's, on the left bank of the Delaware. From Yardley's to the ferry at Bordentown were stationed the Pennsylvania flying camp, and militia of New Jersey; and still lower down lay the Pennsylvania militia under the command of General Cadwalader. On the other side, strong bodies of the enemy were posted at Princeton, Brunswick, and Elizabethtown; at Trenton were fifteen hundred Hessians, and a troop of light horse; small detachments were stationed at Bordentown, Burlington, the Black Horse, and Mount Holly; and the rest at various points between the Delaware and Hackensac. It was at this time that General Washington conceived the bold design of recrossing the Delaware at three several points, with the hope of cutting off some of the detached portions of the enemy.

The arrangements for the enterprise were as judicious as the plan was well conceived. It

was determined that it should be attempted on the night of the 25th of December, when the festivities of the occasion might probably impair the vigilance of the enemy. General Washington himself in person, with twenty-four hundred regulars, was to cross the Delaware at McKonkey's Ferry, nine miles higher up than Trenton, and attack the Hessians stationed there; while General Ewing, with a portion of the Pennsylvania militia, was to cross at Trenton, and cut off their retreat, and General Cadwalader, crossing near Bristol with the other portion, was to attack the other British posts along the river. At nightfall on the appointed evening, the main detachment commenced its passage. The cold was very severe, and attended with a storm of sleet and snow.

It had been hoped, that the passage would be completely effected by midnight; but the boats were obstructed by the floating ice, and, owing to the additional obstacles created by the inclement weather and the darkness, it was near four hours later before the troops were all landed on the opposite bank. There they were divided into two columns, under the command, respectively, of Generals Sullivan and Greene. That of Sullivan marched towards Trenton on the river road; the other, accompanied by

Washington in person, on a route nearly parallel, to the left. At eight o'clock, Washington encountered the advanced guard of the enemy; and at the same time the sound of firing on the right announced the arrival of General Sullivan. Both columns now pressed rapidly forward. Colonel Rahl, the gallant commander of the Hessians, was mortally wounded in attempting an unavailing opposition; and his troops, surprised and broken, while retreating on the Princeton road, were intercepted by a detachment ordered to their front by Washington, and were compelled to surrender as prisoners of war. Five hundred of their number only, consisting of the light horse, escaped by the road leading to Bordentown, which was left open by the failure of General Ewing, in consequence of the condition of the ice in the stream, to effect the passage; and the portion of the enterprise intrusted to General Cadwalader failed in like manner, as he found it impracticable to convey over his artillery. The loss of the enemy consisted of about thirty killed and wounded, and about a thousand prisoners. Of the Americans only two privates were killed; but such was the state of the weather at the time, that two others perished by the frost.

The effect of this gallant and well-executed

enterprise was singularly happy. The failing spirit of the patriots at once revived; the disaffected were overawed, and the army resumed its confidence and hope. Men were surprised to see a weak and ill-appointed force, which appeared to exist only by the forbearance of the enemy, gather its strength for a sudden and decisive blow, so little anticipated, that Lord Cornwallis, who had commanded in New Jersey, had gone to take passage for Europe, and Sir William Howe was at the time reposing in New York. Both found themselves compelled to take the field. General Washington, who had recrossed the river on the very day of the battle, resolved now to make an effort to expel the British from New Jersey. With this view, he again passed over, a few days after, and took post at Trenton, where he concentrated his forces, amounting, in the whole, to scarcely more than five thousand men. There he received information that Cornwallis, with a far superior force, was advancing to attack him. On the afternoon of the 2d of January, the enemy's columns began to enter Trenton, and Washington withdrew to some elevated grounds behind the Assanpink a small stream flowing through the town. In the evening, the two armies encamped upon the opposite banks of

the stream, and kindled their respective watch-fires.*

Washington, however, was in no condition, with his very inferior and undisciplined force, to hazard the action which the British now considered certain. He accurately judged, from the apparent strength of the enemy before him, that only a comparatively small number remained in their rear; and he resolved to press on secretly to Princeton, and thence, if possible, to Brunswick, where their principal magazines and stores were deposited. At midnight, having sent his baggage to Burlington, he retired, unperceived by the enemy, leaving his watch-fires burning, and the fords and bridge still guarded, and reached Princeton just after sunrise. Three British regiments were there, of which two were already on their march to Trenton. The seventeenth was the one first en-

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* The position of the hostile armies at this time is faithfully described in the chorus of Shakspeare's Henry V.

"From camp to camp, through the foul womb of night,
The hum of either army stilly sounds;
That the fixed sentinels almost receive
The secret whispers of each other's watch;
Fire answers fire; and through their paly flames
Each battle sees the other's umbered face;
Steed threatens steed, in high and boastful neighs
Piercing the night's dull ear."

countered by the American advanced guard. After a desperate conflict, this was broken and dispersed; but this success was dearly purchased by the loss of General Mercer, who received a mortal wound. The fifty-fifth regiment was next attacked, and, after a spirited resistance, retreated towards Brunswick. The other, the fortieth, took post in the college, but was driven from it with the loss of a considerable portion of its number, who were taken. More than a hundred of the enemy were killed, and about three hundred made prisoners. It had been the purpose of Washington to push forward to Brunswick; but his men were completely exhausted, and Cornwallis, who, on learning his departure at daylight, had penetrated his design, was following closely in his rear. In this action, as at Trenton, General Sullivan, at the head of his line, conducted himself with his usual activity and courage. At its close, the troops retired to Morristown, when they were relieved from further active operations, and were permitted to enjoy a season of repose.

During the residue of the winter, the British army in New Jersey was distributed between New Brunswick and the Raritan. Washington's camp at Morristown was broken up towards the last of May, 1777, when the force under his command was organized in five divis-

ions, which were under the command of Generals Sullivan, Greene, Stephen, Lincoln, and Stirling. In May, Sir William Howe began to make fresh preparations, apparently with a view to the passage of the Delaware; and General Washington placed his army in a strong position near Middlebrook, a convenient situation for observing the movements of the enemy. It was not until the middle of June, that the British army marched from Brunswick, in order to carry into effect the plan of proceeding by land to Philadelphia. The British General could not hope to accomplish it without first striking a blow at the army of Washington, which was by no means in a condition to face him in the open field; he therefore moved towards the Delaware, thinking that the Americans might be induced to leave their strong, unassailable post, and thus be forced into battle; but Washington remained motionless in his camp. Sullivan, at this time, was posted behind the Lowland Hills.

At length, Sir William Howe, finding that Washington was not to be induced to accept his offer of battle on any ground but that which he himself might choose, and deeming it too hazardous to advance towards Philadelphia with such a force in his rear, resorted to another stratagem to effect his purpose. On the 19th, he returned suddenly to Brunswick, and, three

days afterwards, sent his baggage, with a portion of his troops, to Staten Island. The object of this movement was understood by Washington, who detached three regiments to fall upon his rear, and advanced with the main body of his troops from Middlebrook to Quibbletown. The expected crisis appeared to have arrived. Sir William Howe suddenly pushed forward with his whole force to Westfield, in the hope of gaining the strong post, which had been thus forsaken by his cautious foe; but Washington was not to be thus deceived; he returned at once to Middlebrook; and on the 30th, General Howe, having exhausted the resources of his ingenuity in vain to gain his object, withdrew his army into Staten Island.

An incident, which occurred about this time, affords an illustration of the embarrassment created by the engagements made by American agents abroad with foreign officers, as well as of the temper of Congress and the leaders of the army. An arrangement had been made between Silas Deane, at Paris, and a French officer, named Ducoudray, that the latter, on condition of furnishing certain supplies, was to receive a commission as Major-General in the American service, with the command of the artillery; and it was discovered, on his arrival, that he claimed, as a part

of the arrangement, the right of commanding the engineers also. General Knox was then at the head of the artillery; and the idea of superseding him so unceremoniously occasioned much solicitude to Washington, and naturally gave great offence to his principal officers.

It was understood in the camp, that Congress had sanctioned the arrangement; and letters were immediately addressed to that body by Knox, Sullivan, and Greene, inquiring into the truth of the rumor, and tendering, if it should prove to be well founded, the resignation of their several commissions. At this time, no such appointment had been made by Congress, nor had they, in fact, yet acted on the subject. When the letters were received, they resolved, that Washington should be directed to inform these officers, that their communications were regarded as an attempt to influence their decisions, as an invasion of the liberties of the people, and as indicating a want of confidence in the justice of that body; that they were expected to make proper acknowledgments for their indiscretion; but that, if they were unwilling to serve their country under the authority of Congress, they were at liberty to resign their commissions and retire. Here the matter appears to have ended; the arrangement of Deane with Du-

coudray was not confirmed. The proceeding of these officers was somewhat hasty; but it was not very unnatural that those who had been engaged so long in the service, with much personal inconvenience, should be disgusted at learning that they were to be superseded, at the will of our commissioners abroad, for the benefit of an unknown adventurer.

During the campaign of the autumn and winter of 1776, and thus far during the operations of the following year, the labors of General Sullivan had been arduous and unremitted, and his bravery and conduct deserving of applause. His misfortune at Brooklyn was occasioned by no misconduct of his own; and at Trenton and Princeton, he was inferior to none in any of the qualities required by his position. His command was a subordinate one, and makes little figure in history, whose honors are reserved more for the principal leader, than those who follow in his train; but that leader, in the present instance, was Washington, who never denied to any man the credit that might be his due.

CHAPTER IV.

Sullivan's Expedition to Staten Island. — Battle of the Brandywine. — Charges brought against Sullivan. — Those Charges examined. — Statement of Washington and of Lafayette. — Honorably acquitted by a Court of Inquiry.

THE Jerseys were at length free from the presence of the enemy; but it was not easy to conjecture what course they might now think proper to pursue. Intelligence of the movement of the army of Burgoyne towards Ticonderoga had reached Washington; and it seemed probable that Sir William Howe, by operating on the North River, might labor to effect a union of their forces. On the other hand, it was known that transports and other vessels were fitting out in New York harbor; and this indicated an intention on the part of the British to depart by sea, but in what direction, or with what design, could not be ascertained. The vigilant eye of Washington was fixed upon their movements, and he was obliged to hold himself in readiness to act, and to change his measures, as circumstances might unveil their real purpose.

He first despatched a portion of his troops to Peekskill, on the Hudson, intending soon to di-

rect his army thither; but, learning that the troops of Sir William Howe were actually embarked, and, a few days afterwards, that the fleet had put to sea, he became satisfied that Philadelphia was still their object. His steps were now turned towards the Delaware; and the divisions of Sullivan and Stirling, which had crossed the Hudson, were recalled. The fleet was at length seen off the Capes of the Delaware, and the army marched to Germantown; but it now appeared that the squadron had left the Capes, steering eastward; and this mystery became once more as perplexing as ever. Till it should be solved, the army continued at Germantown, with the exception of Sullivan's division, and a few regiments, which took post in New Jersey. That division was stationed at Hanover, not far from Middlebrook.

It was not until after the middle of August, that the design of Sir William Howe was rendered manifest by the entrance of the fleet into the Chesapeake. In the mean time, General Sullivan projected an expedition to Staten Island, where the enemy had left a force consisting of about two thousand regular troops, and half that number of Provincials, whose incursions gave much annoyance to the people of New Jersey. On the afternoon of the 21st of August, with about a thousand men, selected from the

brigades of Smallwood and Deborre, he marched for Elizabethtown, where Colonel Ogden, with his own and Dayton's regiments, and some militia, were to join him in the expedition. It was arranged between them, that Ogden, crossing near the Old Blazing Star Ferry, should attack a detachment under Colonel Lawrence stationed there, and, if successful, should proceed to attack two others at a little distance. Sullivan's party were to cross at a point several miles above, when Smallwood was to attack a detachment, posted near Decker's Ferry, and Deborre another, near the New Blazing Star Ferry. The Provincials were to be the object of attack; and it was hoped, that the purposes of the expedition might be accomplished, before the alarm should be given to the regulars, who were in another portion of the island. Six boats were provided for the passage, three of which were assigned to Ogden's party, and the same number to the other. Both crossed before daybreak, without interruption. Ogden, falling upon Lawrence's detachment, made them nearly all prisoners, to the number of one hundred and thirty; but the other detachments had, meantime, taken the alarm, and fled. Smallwood and Deborre, on landing, left each a party in his rear, to preserve their communications, and arrest those who might escape from

Ogden, and proceeded on their march. In consequence of the error of his guide, Smallwood made his attack in such a direction as gave his enemy the opportunity to escape; so that he only succeeded in taking two or three prisoners, and in destroying a few vessels and some military stores. Deborre's party, which was led by Sullivan in person, assailed the detachment near the New Blazing Star Ferry, which soon fled, leaving about forty of their number prisoners; they then retreated, and, having joined Smallwood, proceeded towards the Old Blazing Star Ferry, to unite themselves with Ogden, of whose movements nothing had been heard.

Sullivan had left orders that his boats should meet him there; but when he reached the place about midday, they were not to be seen. They had been carried off in a different direction, in consequence of an error of those who had them in their charge. Ogden had taken a shallop, in which he transported his prisoners to the Jersey shore; the boatmen, seeing the royal uniform on board, supposed themselves in imminent danger of capture, and conveyed themselves and the boats beyond the reach of danger. Sullivan had been pressed, during his retreat, by General Campbell, who came up, with the British regulars, before the rear-guard of

the Americans could command their embarkation; and these, after a gallant resistance, found themselves compelled to surrender. The number of the British prisoners secured was about one hundred and fifty; the loss of the Americans was represented by General Sullivan to be thirteen killed, and one hundred and thirty-six prisoners. This was considerably smaller than the estimate of General Campbell.

The policy of General Sullivan, in exposing his troops to the hazard of capture, at a time when their preservation was so important, as respected the general plan of operations, may certainly admit of question; but there is little reason to censure the scheme of the expedition, or the manner in which it was executed. It could not be called a successful one; nor, as the loss on each side was nearly the same, could it be pronounced disastrous. But it gave occasion to much complaint; and the enemies of General Sullivan were not slow to represent it in a light unfavorable to his character. We have already alluded to his warmth of temper, which made him more careless than prudence would dictate in provoking resentment, and led him rather to defy than attempt to conciliate his adversaries. They naturally looked for their revenge to the hour of ill success; and General Sullivan was destined, during the residue

of his military career, to experience that they were not without decisive influence over the sentiments of others.

Unfavorable representations of his conduct upon this occasion were so loudly and so generally made, that Congress directed Washington to cause the subject to be investigated by a court of inquiry. This body came to the conclusion, that the expedition was well concerted, and the order for its execution judiciously planned; that it would have succeeded with reputation to the General himself, and the troops under his command, if it had not been rendered in some measure abortive by accidents which he could not prevent or foresee. After mature consideration of the evidence before them, the court expressed the opinion, that General Sullivan's conduct had been such as to deserve his country's thanks, and not its censure, and that he ought to be honorably acquitted. It may be material to state, that this court of inquiry was not held until some weeks after the battle of the Brandywine. On the 20th of October, it was resolved by Congress, that this result, so honorable to the character of General Sullivan, was highly pleasing to that body, and that the opinion of the court should be published in justification of the injured character of that officer.

The design of the enemy had been ascertained; the British fleet had entered the Chesapeake, and was proceeding up Elk River; and orders were given to the several divisions of the army to unite in the neighborhood of Philadelphia. That of General Sullivan, being desired by Washington to move slowly, arrived about the 1st of September. On the 25th of the preceding month, the British army, consisting of eighteen thousand men, landed in Maryland, near the head of the Elk River. The American army had marched through Philadelphia, the day before, to the banks of the Brandywine. Two divisions, those of Greene and Stephen, were considerably in advance of the rest, behind White Clay Creek. The main army, under Washington, pursued its way beyond the Brandywine; but, perceiving that Sir William Howe's object was to turn his right, and cut off his communication with Philadelphia, General Washington retraced his steps, and, on the evening of the 9th of September, took post behind that river at Chad's Ford. There were several fords above, between this and the forks of the river; these were guarded by the right wing, under General Sullivan, which extended for three or four miles above Chad's Ford. Another ford, two miles below, was guarded by the Pennsylvania militia, under the command of General Armstrong. Chad's Ford was six or seven miles

below the fork of the river. Above the fork, the two branches were crossed by Trimble's and Jeffrey's Fords.

Finding the way thus open before him, Sir William Howe advanced towards the Brandywine. At Kennet Square, seven miles distant from Chad's Ford, he halted, and arranged his plan of attack upon the army of Washington. He proposed to form his forces into two divisions; one of these, under General Knyphausen, was to advance to Chad's Ford, in order to engage the attention of the Americans, until the other, led by Cornwallis, and accompanied by himself in person, moving on the Lancaster road, which was nearly parallel to the course of the Brandywine, should cross the branches of the river at Trimble's and Jeffrey's Fords, above the fork, and turn the American right wing. This movement required a circuit of seventeen miles, and, separating, as it did, the two divisions of the army by a march of seven or eight hours, was a most hazardous one to be made in the presence of an enemy, who might concentrate his whole force on one, and overwhelm it, before the other could come to its relief. But it seemed to be the fate of Washington, upon that day, to obtain no accurate intelligence, or, at least, none that gave him an accurate impression. At daybreak, on the morning of the 11th, the British commenced their

march As the advanced guard of Knyphausen approached Chad's Ford, it was gallantly attacked by General Maxwell, who was, however, compelled to retire, and the battle in this quarter was for some hours limited to skirmishing and a cannonade across the river.

Cornwallis's division, which was in motion at the same time with the other, was now far advanced on its circuitous march; and Washington, who had anticipated an attempt to turn his right, was deeply solicitous to obtain information of the enemy's movements. So large a portion of the people of the country were disaffected, that this was not easily procured; but he had been assured, by those on whom he thought he could rely, that the road above the fork could hardly be considered practicable; and he probably thought it quite improbable that the enemy would place one half of his army at so many miles' distance from the other. He appears, therefore, to have expected that the attempt to turn his right would be made by passing the river below the fork; and the first information he received was accidentally calculated to confirm this erroneous impression. It came from Lieutenant-Colonel Ross to General Sullivan, and announced the march of a column of five thousand men in the direction which Cornwallis had actually taken; but Ross's note was dated at eleven o'clock, and thus conveyed

the impression that it was about that hour that Cornwallis had begun his march. If such had been the fact, the attack must have been made below the fork, as the rest of the day would have been required in order to accomplish the circuitous march above. Satisfied, therefore, that the enemy's left wing was advancing directly towards him, General Washington ordered Sullivan to cross the river and attack it, while he himself, crossing at Chad's Ford, should commence an attack upon Knyphausen.

It is not easy now to conjecture what could have induced him to give up the safe line of defence afforded by the river, in order to fight with the river in his rear; a position in which defeat must have been attended with very great disaster. It was now past noon. While General Sullivan was preparing to execute the order, Major Spear, of the militia, came in from the fork of the Brandywine, and reported that no signs of the enemy were visible there. This information was obviously correct, for Cornwallis must by this time have reached the ford above the fork; but, like the intelligence of Ross, it conveyed an erroneous impression, and led Washington to suppose that the attempt to turn his right had been relinquished, and that the British left wing had returned to effect a union with the other. He accordingly ordered Sullivan to suspend his march.

About two o'clock, Sullivan transmitted to Washington intelligence received from Colonel Bland, that two brigades of the enemy were coming down in the rear of his right. The problem at length began to be solved. Cornwallis had accomplished his long march, having crossed the branches of the Brandywine, and was now proceeding down the east side of the river towards Dilworth, within about two miles of the American right wing; but Bland's information, though accurate, did not afford an exact impression respecting the strength of this portion of the enemy, though it showed clearly, that a sudden and unexpected change had become necessary in the disposition of the American forces. While this change was making, the division of Cornwallis was formed on the heights near Birmingham meeting-house, in complete order of battle.

Orders were immediately issued to Stirling and Stephen, who commanded two of the divisions, constituting the American right, to march against the enemy by the most direct routes. Sullivan was also to join them with his division, and take the command of the three. Wayne's division remained at Chad's Ford, to watch the motions of the enemy there; while that of Greene took a central position between the two wings, to act as circumstances might require. Sullivan began his march, and soon

came in sight of the enemy, who were advantageously posted on the eminence already mentioned, near the spot where Bland first saw them. On his own right, in an elevated position, opposite to that of the enemy, were the divisions of Stirling and Stephen. He immediately drew up his own in a line with theirs, on a height about half a mile to the left. Apprehending that the right flank might be turned by the enemy, it was ordered by Sullivan, that his own division should incline to join the others, and that the whole should take a position somewhat farther to the right. Before this movement could be executed, they were briskly attacked by the enemy, and part of Deborre's brigade, in Sullivan's division, gave way, and were thrown into confusion. General Sullivan made great efforts to rally them, but without effect; he then kept up a warm fire from his artillery, to cover the broken troops, and sustain those that kept their ground; and the contest was maintained with spirit and bravery for an hour and a half. The Americans then gave way on every side, and began a precipitate retreat. Knyphausen, in the mean time, assured, by the firing on the left, that Cornwallis had entered into action, advanced to force the passage of Chad's Ford; there he was resisted by Wayne, whose little forces fought resolutely for a time, but were borne down by the weight of numbers,

and could receive no relief from Greene, who was employed in covering the retreat of Sullivan. For this purpose, he took possession of a pass to the northward of Dilworth, where, with his own, and such of the broken troops as Sullivan could rally, the battle was actively maintained until night, when the conflict closed. The Americans retired, without molestation, with their baggage and artillery.

We have entered somewhat at length into an account of the details of the battle, because General Sullivan's conduct upon this occasion, owing to a misapprehension of the circumstances, was made the subject of great and most unmerited censure. It was, perhaps, natural enough, in the first moment of disappointment, that the public sentiment should hold him responsible for the disaster, as commander in the quarter in which it had occurred; but there is reason to believe, that the feeling of dissatisfaction was quickened by the exertions of his personal foes, whose views were favored by the result of the affair of Staten Island, his conduct in which had not yet undergone investigation. It was three days only after the battle, that formal charges were brought against him on the floor of Congress, by Mr. Burke, a delegate from North Carolina, who was present on the field as a spectator, and who laid all the misfortunes of the day to General Sullivan's sole charge.

The most considerable of these charges were the following. 1. That he was several days posted on the right wing of the army, previously to the battle. 2. That he was early in the day cautioned by the Commander-in-chief to be particularly attentive to the enemy's motions, who, he supposed, would cross the river; that he was furnished with light troops for that purpose, and that he suffered the enemy to come upon him by a route he never expected. 3. That he conveyed false intelligence to the General, which caused him to alter his position, and brought on a defeat. 4. That, when his mistake was afterwards discovered, he brought up his troops by a circuitous march, and in a disorder from which they never recovered.

Congress, influenced apparently by the persuasion, that such serious accusations could not be brought against an officer unless they had been well founded, but certainly without investigation, now voted, that General Sullivan should be recalled from the army till an inquiry should be made into his conduct. A copy of this vote was transmitted to General Washington, who deferred giving an order on the subject till he could receive further instructions; alleging that it was impossible to conduct the operations of the army with a prospect of success, if his general officers were removed in the moment of battle;

that the circumstances of the time were such as to prohibit both the inquiry into Sullivan's conduct and the suspension from his command; that the resolution of Congress was, in his judgment, unhappily adopted, and added new difficulties to his present distresses; and that, if it were persisted in, he could not consent to be answerable for the consequences which might arise from a want of officers to assist him. This manly and pointed remonstrance probably induced Congress to reflect, that all judicious men were not entirely of the opinion of Mr. Burke, and they immediately suspended the execution of the resolve.

It is only an act of justice to the character of General Sullivan, to offer a few remarks upon these charges. The first material charge was, that he neglected to comply with the orders of Washington to watch the fords, and that he suffered the enemy to approach by an unexpected route. This was sufficiently refuted by Washington himself, who says, in a letter addressed to General Sullivan, on the 24th of October; "All the fords above Chad's, from which we were taught to apprehend danger, were guarded by detachments from your division; and we were led to believe, by those whom we had reason to think well acquainted with the country, that no ford above our pickets could be passed, without making a very circuitous march." In writing to

General Washington on this subject, General Sullivan observed; "With respect to the first of these charges, your Excellency knows, that, very late in the day before the action, I was ordered to Brenton's Ford, and to send off a party to a ford a mile and a half above me, the name of which I do not recollect, another to Jones's Ford, and another to Buffinton's Ford, a mile and a half above Jones's. Upon my asking whether there were no fords higher up, I was informed, in presence of your Excellency, that there was none within twelve miles, to cross which the enemy must make a long circuit through a very bad road, and that all the light horse of the army were ordered to the right, to watch the enemy's motions in that quarter. I had no orders to take any care above Buffinton's Ford, nor had I troops or light horse for that purpose." In the map accompanying Sparks's *Writings of Washington*, Buffinton's Ford is laid down as the one next below the fork of the river; and this is undoubtedly the place at which Buffinton's Ford was then supposed to be, for it seems quite obvious, from all the circumstances, that the passage of the river by the enemy above the fork was not anticipated by any one.

We have learned, that gentlemen, who have recently examined the field of battle, were informed by aged persons in the neighborhood,

that the name of Buffinton's was never, to their knowledge, applied to any ford below the fork, but to a ford on one of the branches above, although its position seems not to be well ascertained. If it were a fact that Buffinton's Ford was above the fork, it would not prove that General Sullivan was guilty of any negligence, but only that he acted under the influence of a mistake, which was shared equally by others. He was assured, it seems, that Buffinton's Ford was but a mile and a half above Jones's; in which case it must have been below the fork of the river. Jeffrey's Ford would seem to be the one, which was described as being situated twelve miles above Chad's, on the circuitous route, which, according to both General Washington and General Sullivan, the enemy was not expected to take. There are various circumstances rendering it in the highest degree probable, that the ford spoken of as Buffinton's, whether accurately or not, must have been below the fork. We have already remarked, that the passage of the branches above was a hazardous measure, and one which involved a serious separation of the two divisions of the British army; the passage above quoted from a letter from Washington shows, that he anticipated no such circuitous march, and did not propose to watch the fords above the fork; and the language of General

Sullivan implies very strongly, that no ford above was to be guarded, and that Buffinton's, which was guarded, was lower down.

Indeed, so firm was the persuasion of the Americans, that the attempt of the British on their right was to be made below the fork, that they hardly seem to have been apprized, even after the battle, of the route which Cornwallis actually had taken. Colonel Harrison, Washington's secretary, in a letter written to the President of Congress, while the battle was in progress, says, "The enemy halted upon the heights, where they have remained ever since, except a detachment of them, which filed off, about eleven o'clock, from their left, and which has since crossed the Brandywine, at Jones's Ford, between five and six miles above Chad's." This letter was dated at five o'clock in the afternoon; and the language used by Washington, in a letter written on the same night, appears to imply a persuasion on his part, that the British crossed the river below the fork. He says, "Unfortunately, the intelligence received of the enemy advancing up the Brandywine, and crossing at a ford about six miles above us, was uncertain and contradictory, notwithstanding all my pains to get the best."

If General Sullivan were in fault, because he did not anticipate the approach of the enemy by the circuitous route they actually took, the blame

rests equally on Washington and the other officers, who were alike taken by surprise. With respect to the next charge, that of conveying false intelligence to the General, which caused him to alter his position, and brought on a defeat, the first portion of it is completely answered by another passage from the same letter of Washington to Sullivan. He says, "Although I ascribed the misfortune, which happened to us on the 11th of September, principally to the information of Major Spear, transmitted to me by you, yet I never blamed you for conveying that intelligence. On the contrary, considering from whom and in what manner it came to you, I should have thought you culpable in concealing it. The Major's rank, reputation, and knowledge of the country, gave him a full claim to credit and attention. His intelligence was, no doubt, a most unfortunate circumstance, as it served to derange the disposition that had been determined on, in consequence of prior information of the enemy's attempt to turn and attack our right flank; which ultimately proving true, too little time was left us, after discovering its certainty, to form a new plan, and make adequate arrangements to prevent its success. Hence arose that hurry and consequent confusion, which afterwards ensued. But it was not your fault, that the intelligence was eventually found to be erroneous."

We may, however, venture to suggest, with the submission due to such an authority, that this impression, as to the erroneous character of Spear's intelligence, may have arisen from the fact that the British were expected to cross the river below the fork. If they had designed to do so, Major Spear could hardly have failed to find them; but in all probability, at the very time when he was looking for them below, they were actually crossing the fords above; as we learn from Sir William Howe's official account, that the passage of both fords was completed by two o'clock. Spear's information, therefore, may have been correct; and if so, it deserves consideration whether, so far from producing the disasters of the day, it may not have prevented greater ones. If it had not been received, and Sullivan had executed his orders, and had passed the river, he must have sought the enemy in vain; instead of being in his front, they must have been several miles distant on his right, crossing the fords of the branches of the river, while he remained in total ignorance of their position. Before he could have returned to the left bank, might not Cornwallis's division have completed its circuit, have intercepted his return, and cut him off from the rest of the army? Such a result would seem, at least, to have been highly probable. At all events, whether

the intelligence were false or not, or whether or not it occasioned the misfortune of the day, it is clear that no reproach is justly due to Sullivan.

The last charge against him is, that he brought up his troops by a circuitous march, and in a disorder from which they never recovered. In regard to this accusation, Washington is of necessity silent. He says, "Upon the whole, then, no part of your conduct, preceding the action, was in my judgment reprehensible. What happened on your march to the field of battle, your disposition there, and behavior during the action, I can say nothing about, no part till the retreat having come under my immediate observation. I can only add, therefore, that the whole tenor of your conduct, so far as I have had opportunities of judging, was spirited and active." It must be remembered, that the Americans were entirely surprised by the appearance of the British on their right. The peril was imminent, and required an immediate and thorough change in all the dispositions for the battle. Sullivan commanded the right wing; but the orders to Lord Stirling and General Stephen, who led two of the divisions, of which that wing was composed, to march against this new foe, were not transmitted through him, but directly to those officers. They, as well as Sullivan, were to march, each in his own route, and, when united.

he was to command the whole. There seems to have been, on his part, no want of alacrity; and the charge may have been founded on an impression, that he was to direct the march of each of the divisions, and should, therefore, have formed them at once and together into line. This impression was an erroneous one; and the "hurry and consequent confusion," alluded to by Washington, are quite sufficient to account for the difficulty of forming the line, in presence of an enemy far superior in numbers and discipline, who had chosen his ground, and had ample time to make his preparations.

The reproaches, which were thus unjustly poured upon General Sullivan, and which were carried even to the extent of charging him with a want of personal bravery, rendered it necessary for him to appeal to those, who witnessed his conduct during the battle. Lafayette, who was wounded on that occasion, was one of these. General Sullivan received from him the following testimonial.

"At Camp, near Whitemarsh, the 1st November.

"Tnough very far from thinking that Major-General Sullivan could ever want such a certificate, however, it is with the greatest pleasure that, according to his own desire, I repeat here how sensible I have been of his bravery at the

affair of the Brandywine, on the 11th. I can assure him, that such courage as he showed that day will always deserve the praises of every one.

"THE MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE."

Many other testimonials of a similar character might easily be given. But, with whatever faults General Sullivan might be justly charged, cowardice was certainly not of the number. He was afterwards honorably acquitted by a court of inquiry; and though this fact alone might be deemed sufficient for his vindication, some examination of the accusations seemed to be due to the authority of Congress, from which they derived a temporary weight and sanction.

CHAPTER V.

Battle of Germantown.— Sullivan's Conduct there. — Encampment of the Army at Valley Forge. — His Situation, and Application for Leave of Absence.

WASHINGTON might be defeated, but he could not be subdued. It seemed remarkable enough,

that he should be able to bring his inexperienced troops into action at all, against such an army as the enemy had now arrayed against him, far surpassing his in numbers, experience, and all that could give force to its vigor and efficiency; for it may be mentioned as one circumstance, tending to show the condition of the Americans, that more than a thousand of their number performed these marches with bare feet; but it was more remarkable still, that he was scarcely defeated before he was ready again to offer battle. The day after the action of the Brandywine, he retired to Philadelphia. In two days more, he was on his march along the Lancaster road to attack the British army. The armies met, and the contest was actually begun, when a heavy rain came on, by which the ammunition was entirely ruined, and the Americans were compelled to retire. There was now no longer any hope of preserving Philadelphia, which was entered by the enemy upon the 26th of September. Lord Howe, with his fleet, at the same time left the Chesapeake, and came round into the Delaware, intending to force his way through the various defences to the city; and a detachment of the British force was stationed on the river, in New Jersey, to aid him in his operations. The main body was encamped

at Germantown, and a smaller portion occupied the city.

Washington was now at Skippack Creek, about fourteen miles from Germantown; and this division of the British force appeared to offer him the welcome opportunity of striking a decisive blow. The Skippack road, on which his troops were posted, leads through Germantown to Philadelphia, which is about four miles distant. The houses of Germantown were principally built along the sides of this road for the space of about two miles; in the centre was the market-house; there the main street was intersected by the School-house Lane; and at this point the line of the British encampment extended across the village, nearly at right angles, along the lane. At the beginning of the line of houses, near the entrance of the town, stood Chew's house, a building of stone, which was rendered of historical interest by the circumstances of the battle.

On the evening of the 3d of October, Washington, having arranged his plan of attack with the view of surprising the enemy, who were very far from anticipating such a movement, put his troops in motion. Sullivan was ordered to lead his own and Wayne's division, flanked by the brigade of Conway, down the main road to

Philadelphia, to the centre of the enemy. General Armstrong, with the Pennsylvania militia, following a road nearer to the Schuylkill, on the right, was to attack their left and rear. The divisions of Greene and Stephen, moving on the left of Sullivan, by the Limekiln road, which enters the town near the market-house, and there assumes the name of School-house Lane, were to attack the British right; while the Maryland and Jersey militia, by a road still farther to the left, were to attack the British right wing on their left and rear. Stirling's division, with the brigades of Nash and Maxwell, constituted the reserve. The march continued during the night; the morning was overcast, and throughout the whole forenoon so dense a fog prevailed, that, as Washington remarked, it was not easy, at the distance of thirty yards, to distinguish friend from foe.

Just after daybreak, the attack began, and the enemy were completely taken by surprise. Sullivan, passing over Chestnut Hill, drove in the enemy's pickets at Mount Airy, and engaged the British light infantry and fortieth regiment, which were stationed somewhat in advance of the entrance of the village. Wayne's division was now formed on the east of the main road, and separated by the line of houses from the rest of Sullivan's command, which proceeded on

the western side. In this order they went on, driving the enemy before them, until they reached Chew's house. Six companies of the fortieth regiment threw themselves into this building, whence they kept up a galling fire; and, while Maxwell's brigade remained to reduce this post with their artillery, Sullivan and Wayne pursued their march. In a short time, however, Wayne's division, supposing, from the continued fire at this building in their rear, that Sullivan, who was concealed by the fog from their view, had been driven back, retreated to Chew's house, leaving Sullivan's left flank uncovered; but he continued to press on with difficulty through the stone enclosures of the fields, until he had nearly reached the market-house and the centre of the enemy.

In the mean time, the divisions of Greene and Stephen, moving on a somewhat longer route, had come into action about half an hour after Sullivan's attack began. Having succeeded, like him, in defeating the British light infantry, stationed in advance of their left, they proceeded, driving it before them, Greene's division forming the left of their line, and that of Stephen moving on the right. As they advanced, the brigade upon the extreme left of the line was arrested by a heavy fire, upon its flank, from the windows of Chew's house, and, instead of

continuing its march, filed off to the left, and spent some time in playing upon the walls with their artillery. By this unfortunate delay, which produced confusion in the line, the two brigades of Stephen's division were separated from each other, and from Greene's division; but he went on, attacked and broke a portion of the British right, and took many prisoners.

The separation of the various portions of the army, occasioned by the operations at Chew's house, and by the difficulty of discerning objects in the fog, had produced disorder, accompanied with some degree of panic, which it was impossible to remedy; it was impossible, in fact, to ascertain with certainty the position of the forces. Nor could the actual number of the enemy be distinctly seen; some of the troops, finding others in advance of them, believed them to be foes, and those who were in advance were apprehensive that the enemy were in their rear. Sullivan's troops, who had done their duty gallantly, finding themselves unsupported on the left, their ammunition expended, and alarmed by the continual firing at Chew's house in the rear, retired hastily, notwithstanding the remonstrances and efforts of their officers, before a portion of the British right, which was about to fall upon them. Another portion of the British right advanced also upon Greene, who, unsupported by

Stephen's division, was compelled also, after a short conflict, to retreat. It was vain to attempt to arrest these movements. The failure of Wayne's and Stephen's divisions, owing to a natural error, to advance to the attack, had totally deranged the plan of operations, and damped the ardor of the men. Fortunately, the enemy were not sufficiently recovered from their surprise to annoy them on the retreat, which was effected without material loss.

General Sullivan's bravery and conduct upon this occasion are attested by a witness, whose testimony is of the very highest authority. In his official account of the action, transmitted to the President of Congress, General Washington observes; "In justice to General Sullivan and the whole right wing of the army, whose conduct I had an opportunity of observing, as they acted immediately under my eye, I have the pleasure to inform you, that both officers and men behaved with a degree of gallantry, that did them the highest honor." We find an account of the conduct of Washington himself, upon the same occasion, given by General Sullivan, in a letter addressed to Mr. Weare, the President of New Hampshire, shortly after the battle. "I cannot help observing," he says, "that with great concern I saw our brave commander expose himself to the hottest fire of the enemy, in such a manner

that regard to my country obliged me to ride to him, and beg him to retire. He, to gratify me and some others, withdrew a small distance; but his anxiety for the fate of the day soon brought him up again, where he remained till our troops had retreated."

After the battle, Washington returned to his former station, but soon afterwards encamped in an eligible position at Whitemarsh. Various operations took place, which it is unnecessary to describe, as General Sullivan was not actively engaged in them. Late in November, an opportunity appeared to present itself for making an attack on Philadelphia, Lord Cornwallis being then absent in New Jersey with a detachment of about two thousand men. But the strength of the enemy's lines, on the north side of the city, rendered an assault by a force scarcely superior in numbers, and in experience and discipline inferior, a very doubtful measure. Stirling, Wayne, and two other general officers, gave their opinions in its favor; but it was opposed by Sullivan, Greene, and nine others, and was then relinquished. Early in December, Sir William Howe, having been reinforced by the arrival of several regiments from New York, became himself inclined to try the chance of a battle; but it was his policy not to fight at all, unless the enemy would consent to meet him on the spot

he had himself selected; a degree of courtesy which Washington was not inclined to show. On the morning of the 5th of December, having marched from the city on the preceding evening, he took post at Chestnut Hill, already mentioned in the account of the affair at Germantown. Here he remained three days, manœuvring with the hope of drawing Washington from his position; but, finding this to be impossible, he quietly returned to Philadelphia.

The campaign had been attended with much hard service and fatigue; and it had now become necessary to provide for winter-quarters. The spot was selected for this purpose by General Washington, on his own responsibility. He determined to establish a fortified camp at Valley Forge, about twenty miles from Philadelphia; and this was prepared and occupied by the army before the close of December. At this time, the whole number of the troops was about eleven thousand, of whom nearly three thousand were unfit for duty, being, in the language of Washington, "barefoot and otherwise naked." Indeed, their suffering and privations were so great, that it is matter of surprise, that they could be kept together. Many, entirely destitute of blankets, were obliged to sit all night by the fires; many were so imperfectly clad, that they could not leave their quarters. Provisions were scantily

supplied, and sometimes not supplied at all. The condition of the officers was somewhat better, but they had their proportion of hardship and privation. Their compensation was inadequate to their support, and they were compelled to supply the deficiency by drawing on their private property; nor was any provision made for them after their retirement from the service. It was natural, that they should become disgusted with a mode of life attended with so much present inconvenience, and affording little prospect of improvement for the future; accordingly, scarcely a day passed without the resignation of two or three commissions, and Congress was in no haste to adopt measures calculated to remedy the evil.

General Sullivan was one of those, who were compelled to resort to their private property for their support. His fortune was by no means large; it had been accumulated by his professional labors during a few years of practice, before entering the army. He had, moreover, found the service full of hardship; nor was it one of the least of the evils he experienced, that he was the object of more than his fair proportion of censure and reproach, cast upon him in the most public manner, and removed only by late reparation. The following extract from a letter addressed by him to General Washington, in February, 1778,

at Valley Forge, for the purpose of asking permission to return home for a time, presents a picture of some of the inconveniences to which he, in common with others, was exposed.

"It would be tedious for me to mention my necessities in full. Let it suffice for me to say, that I have exhausted my store of cash at home. I prohibited my clerk from calling in the money I have out on interest, when the war began, as I knew the people would be sufficiently distressed without paying debts. My pay in the army has by no means made up for my losses and expenses. I have frequently been obliged to borrow money, and can only repay it out of my private fortune, which must soon fail me, if I dc not attend to it more than I have done for some years past. I need not mention to your Excellency how far sixteen eightpences a day will fall short of maintaining my family, or remind you of my having been four times robbed by the British troops, viz., at New York, Long Island, New Rochelle, and Peekskill. This has reduced me so far, that I have not clothes sufficient for another campaign, nor will my pay enable me to purchase. My own private fortune must make up my losses, and enable me in future to keep the field. This cannot be done while I remain here."

At the desire of General Washington, who

represented to him the inconveniences sustained from the numerous similar applications on the part of the officers he withdrew his application, and consented to remain. It should be observed that General Sullivan was not mercenary; he was, on the contrary, careless of acquiring money, and expended what he had with scarcely prudent liberality. He had, for some time past, acted in a subordinate station; he was now to enjoy a separate command, and to enter upon another field of action.

CHAPTER VI.

Sullivan takes Command of the Army in Rhode Island. — Plan of an Attack upon the British, in Conjunction with Count d'Estaing's Fleet. — Disconcerted by the Departure of Count d'Estaing. — Operations at Newport.

Early in the month of March, General Sullivan received the orders of Washington to take command of the American forces in Rhode Island; a station, which the course of events soon rendered more important than it promised to be at the time of his appointment. The British

force, then quartered in the island, consisted of about six thousand men; most of these were in garrison at Newport, where they were protected by batteries and intrenchments; and there were a few small vessels in the neighboring waters. The head-quarters of General Sullivan were at Providence, where were posted the principal part of the Continental troops under his command.

Early in this year, the Americans were inspired with fresh hope, and animated by intelligence of the conclusion of treaties of friendship and commerce, and of alliance, with the King of France. This was the event, to which they had been anxiously looking as the only thing required to give complete triumph to their cause; and it gave rise to expectations which were fulfilled at last, but were rather more sanguine than cool reflection warranted. On the 13th of April, a fleet, consisting of twelve ships of the line and twelve frigates, with a considerable body of land forces, under the command of Count d'Estaing, sailed from Toulon, intending to coöperate with the Americans against the British squadron in the Delaware, and their army in Philadelphia; but they had been apprized of the preparations of the French, and Sir Henry Clinton, who had succeeded Sir William Howe in the chief command, had formed the resolution to retire from that

position; not so early, however, but that the French fleet might have found them there, had the voyage been as short as usual. But its progress was so long delayed by adverse winds, that it was not until the month of July that it reached the Capes of the Delaware.

Sir Henry Clinton had already evacuated Philadelphia, intending to proceed through New Jersey to New York. On his way thither, he was closely pursued by Washington, and the indecisive action of Monmouth was fought. A few days after, he entered that city, just at the moment when the French fleet, which, disappointed of its expected prey, had proceeded in pursuit of him, arrived off Sandy Hook. General Washington immediately entered into communication with the French Admiral upon the subject of their future operations. Two plans were first suggested; one, an attack on the British in New York; the other, upon the force stationed in Rhode Island. The former, if successful, would have been most decisive in its result; but, foreseeing that the other might be preferred, General Washington, on the 17th of July, wrote to General Sullivan, desiring him to call upon the neighboring New England States for troops sufficient to augment his forces to five thousand men, and to make every other preparation that the exigency might require. It was at

first the design of Count d'Estaing to enter the harbor of New York at Sandy Hook, and to attack the British fleet, then at anchor in the bay; but the depth of water was declared to be insufficient to permit the passage of his largest ships; the pilots were not tempted by an offer of fifty thousand crowns to undertake the task of carrying them in. The project was in consequence abandoned, and attention was immediately turned to the design upon Rhode Island.

Two brigades, under the command of Lafayette, were detached, on the 22d of July, to the aid of Sullivan. General Greene was a native of Rhode Island, and was thoroughly acquainted with the country; his ability, which was afterwards acknowledged by all, was then held in high estimation by his fellow-citizens. It was believed by Washington, that his talent and influence might serve greatly to promote the enterprise; he therefore ordered him to follow Lafayette, and at the same time directed General Sullivan to arrange his force in two divisions, giving Greene the command of one, and Lafayette that of the other. The effect of this arrangement would be, to diminish the regular force under the command of Lafayette; but he at once acceded to it, with his usual disinterestedness and grace.

The plan for the attack on Newport having been completed, Count d'Estaing set sail for that

place, Colonel Laurens preceding him to engage pilots and make other necessary arrangements. On the 29th of July, the fleet appeared; the pilots went on board, and the vessels came to anchor within a few miles of Brenton's Ledge. General Sullivan came from Providence, and met the Admiral on board ship, where a plan of operations was soon concerted between them. It was agreed, that the French fleet should enter the harbor of Newport, and that the French troops, four thousand in number, should land on the western side of the island, a little to the north of Dyer's Island; and that the Americans, crossing over from Tiverton, should land, at the same time, on the opposite side of the island, under cover of the guns of a frigate. So far as depended upon General Sullivan himself, all the necessary preparations had been made; but some of the troops detached from Washington's army, and the expected militia, had not arrived; and it became necessary to defer the execution of the plan until they should come in. This unfortunate delay was the cause of the many vexations that succeeded. They, however, arrived in the course of a few days, and it was determined, that the landing should take place, in the manner already mentioned, on the 10th of August. On the 8th, the French fleet passed up the middle channel, without suffering material injury from the batteries

on shore, and Sir Robert Pigot, the British commander, seeing the preparations for a descent, withdrew his troops from the northern portion of the island, within their lines at Newport. Every thing was now ready, and the expectations of all were filled with assurance of success; when, on the 9th, the British fleet, under Lord Howe, was seen at a distance, sailing towards the harbor; and on the following morning, Count d'Estaing, instead of pursuing the concerted plan of operations, put to sea with all his fleet.

No disappointment could exceed that of the Americans, on witnessing his departure. Their highly-excited hopes were followed by a feeling of distrust and bitterness towards their new allies. This feeling was deepest in the army, which had been confident of striking a blow, that might not remotely be the means of bringing the war to a conclusion; but it was shared by the public generally, and was carried to an extent, which seemed, for a time, to be attended with serious results, and gave occasion to the utmost solicitude on the part of Washington. It is not easy to ascertain the precise motives, by which the French Admiral was actuated.

Chief Justice Marshall, whose character as a military man, and familiar acquaintance with the occurrences and prominent individuals of the time, give high authority to all his statements,

enters into details upon this subject, which may appear to some to afford the true explanation of his conduct. We learn from him, that difficulties had already arisen upon matters of mere punctilio, which, though not very momentous in the view of others, are commonly regarded as all-important by those whom they immediately concern. Count d'Estaing, in addition to his rank as Admiral, had held a commission as Lieutenant-General in the service of the King of France, and of course considered himself superior in rank to Sullivan, who was a Major-General. Some difficulties of the kind had been previously apprehended, but were believed to have been removed by an arrangement, made at the first conference, in regard to the order of attack; that the Americans should land first, and the French, with D'Estaing at their head, immediately after. But this order underwent a change, at D'Estaing's suggestion; and it was then determined, that the allies should land at the same time with the Americans; he, however, declining to command the French in person, but proposing that Lafayette should lead them in his stead, and that a portion of the American force should be added to theirs.

It has been already mentioned, that Sir Robert Pigot, on the 9th, withdrew his troops from the north part of the island into Newport. Sulli-

van, on being apprized of this fact, considering it important to take early possession of the deserted works, and probably never dreaming, that his movement could become an occasion of offence, crossed over to the island without announcing beforehand his intention to D'Estaing. When his letter, mentioning the fact, was received, the French Admiral was so dissatisfied with what he regarded as a breach of courtesy and military etiquette, that he gave it no reply. This was on the day preceding his departure; and the inference arising from the statement is, that the Count's irritation was not without influence in inducing him to set sail, on the appearance of the English fleet.

On the other hand, a letter addressed by him to Congress, about a fortnight afterwards, contains no intimation that he was dissatisfied with Sullivan's movement, but speaks of it in terms of commendation; though it does contain a passage, alluding, in rather a scornful way, to Sullivan himself;* and another letter of his may be found in Johnson's Life of General Greene, in which a similar feeling is somewhat more dis-

* The passage is as follows; "However unexpected, surprising, and miraculous, General Sullivan found the appearance of this [the British] fleet, as he did me the honor to inform me in his letter of the 10th of August, its existence was not the less certain."

tinctly seen. In the letter to Congress, he says, that a large number of his sick had just been landed on Conanicut Island; that he had himself gone on shore to meet General Sullivan, leaving orders to the troops, who were to be employed in the descent, to follow. At this moment, he was apprized of the appearance of the English fleet, no information of whose movements had previously reached him. His own fleet was comparatively disarmed, divided, placed in a most disadvantageous position. Two of his ships were out, two others at the north end of the west channel, his three frigates at a distance in the eastern channel, and the eight ships, with which he had forced the passage of the middle channel, were between the British batteries on Rhode Island and the Island of Conanicut, where the enemy might also establish batteries.

The British fleet was amply provided with fireships, ketches, and all the other means of annoying a squadron at anchor. His own might thus be battered by a cannonade from the land, and then be called to encounter this squadron under the greatest disadvantages. His departure was therefore a measure of necessity, and not of choice, and presented the only means by which he could engage the enemy on equal terms. These reasons seem certainly sufficient

to justify the step, without resorting to the supposition, not very creditable to him, that he was induced by private pique to forget his public duty. It is suggested by Mr. Sparks, with great probability, that the wish to measure his strength with Lord Howe may not have been without its influence; whose fleet, though numerically greater, was in effective force inferior to his own. Perhaps the Americans were a little unreasonable in their expectations. There is no doubt that the King of France was sincerely disposed to give them aid, and that his aid was at all times liberally rendered; but it can hardly be expected of an ally, that he shall share the enthusiastic interest of the party to a controversy, who is ready to encounter great risk and sacrifice to insure the victory. The interests of his own country will naturally stand foremost in his view; and when they clash with those of his ally, the latter will be sure to yield. It was not expected that Count d'Estaing should put his fleet at hazard, or forego the chance of a naval victory, in order to enable the Americans to effect their objects.

General Sullivan, as has been already stated, had crossed over to Rhode Island. His force, by the arrival of the militia, was augmented to ten thousand men, and every thing seemed to promise that the hour of decisive action had arrived,

when he saw, with utter amazement, the sails of the receding fleet. It was impossible for him to form a judgment when it was likely to return, or whether it would return at all. The elements of his force were of an uncertain and fluctuating character; the militia, who generally regard their own convenience as the most important of all considerations, might leave him at a moment's warning. No course was left for him, but to proceed, while the means of doing so were in his power; he resolved, therefore, to undertake the siege of Newport, without waiting for the return of the fleet. Orders were issued for the march of the army on the morning of the 12th of August; but, in the course of the preceding night, a violent storm arose. For three days it continued with undiminished fury. Most of the troops, being wholly unprovided with the means of shelter, lay on the ground, or under fences, exposed to the wind and rain; their arms and ammunition were entirely useless, and their communication with the main-land totally cut off. Such was the severity of the tempest, that a number of the soldiers perished. On the 15th, the sky became clear; and General Sullivan, hoping that D'Estaing, in accordance with his promise, would return, though he found the efficiency of his force considerably impaired by the suffering of the three preceding days, took

post within two miles of Newport, and opened a cannonade upon the enemy's works. They were found too strong to be assaulted without the assistance of the fleet.

The hostile fleets had been separated by the storm, which raged so violently on the shore. Both had suffered severely, and were compelled to return to port. The French squadron re-appeared off Newport on the 19th, and the hopes of the Americans began to revive, that the long-deferred coöperation was destined to take place. It was urged upon D'Estaing by Sullivan with the utmost possible earnestness. General Greene and Lafayette went immediately on board the Admiral's ship, to induce him to render aid at this critical moment; but they exhausted their persuasive powers in vain. He was directed by his instructions, in the event of meeting with disaster, to repair to Boston to refit his squadron. It was believed by General Greene, a keen and judicious observer, that the principal officers of the fleet were the enemies of D'Estaing, being dissatisfied that an individual, accustomed only to land service, should be invested with the principal command; and that they labored, in consequence, to counteract any measures, which might elevate his fame. A council of these officers, availing themselves of the letter of the instructions to vent this unworthy feeling, expressed

a decided opinion against the propriety of remaining; and D'Estaing, whatever his private wishes may have been, found himself compelled to yield to their united voice. He, therefore, on the 21st, wrote to Sullivan, announcing his intention to proceed to Boston.

No considerations, which could be urged, produced the slightest change in his determination. Persuaded that this determination was the act rather of his officers than of himself, and forgetting that, even if such were the fact, it could hardly be grateful to him to have it understood that his own judgment was overborne by others, the principal officers of the army now bethought themselves of a protest against his departure; but the fleet had set sail before it could be prepared; and it was delivered to him by Colonel Laurens, who overtook his ship before he had gone far from the shore. This document bore the signature of all the leading officers, excepting Lafayette. It was strongly tinctured with indignant feeling; and, after an enumeration of the reasons, which forbade the departure of the fleet, protested in the most solemn manner "against that measure, as derogatory to the honor of France, contrary to the intentions of his Most Christian Majesty, and to the interests of his nation, destructive in the highest degree of the welfare of the United States, and highly inju-

rious to the alliance formed between the two nations." Its subscribers hoped to change in this way the decision of the council; they had not thought of the effect of this singular paper upon D'Estaing himself. It was by no means graciously received. "The Count's sensibility," says Colonel Laurens, "was much wounded." "He declared, that this paper imposed upon the commander of the King's squadron the painful but necessary law of profound silence."

Still, whether the protest were judiciously devised or not, its tone fell short of the temper prevailing at the time. This was the first occasion, on which the virtue of the French alliance had been put to the test; and the public, finding that it failed them at the very moment when most wanted, without attaching weight to the considerations which led to this result, became as distrustful of their new confederates, as if they had been guilty of open treachery. This prejudice was shared by many men of influence; and the calmness of Lafayette seems to have been ruffled by the demeanor of those around him, to an extent which was with him most rare. In a letter addressed to Sullivan, a few days after the sailing of the fleet, he says, "I give you, Sir, a public assurance, upon my honor, that I shall be happy to go anywhere, and do anything which will be deemed useful

to my own country, and that country for which, I may venture to say, I have given proofs of zeal. Do not take it amiss, if I avoid occasions of finding myself in numerous companies, where, by taking a false idea of the liberality of the American citizens by the manner of some, I should be disposed to regret the regard I have had for them. Nobody speaks before me, and they are prudent for it; but he will be my friend who will let me know the authors of some very strange discourses against a country, to which America is a good deal indebted."

Nothing, however, could have been more ill advised than such a protest, or the expression of such a feeling, at such a time. Congress at once resolved, that the contents of the paper should be kept secret; that it should be communicated only to the French minister, and to him under an injunction of secrecy; and that General Washington should use all the precautions in his power to prevent it from becoming public. He, however, required no such intimation to induce him to resort to these precautions; the growing alienation between the Americans and the allies had already filled him with uneasiness; his firm judgment was undisturbed by the warmth that animated others, and he saw at once the necessity of allaying this

unhappy feeling, and preventing the ill consequences to which it could not fail to lead.

An unfortunate step on the part of General Sullivan threatened to render it more difficult to bring back harmony. He had, after making the most laborious efforts to insure success, flattered himself with the assurance, that it could not be far distant; the reproach of failure, seldom bestowed on military men with much discrimination, must principally rest on him; and the elements and the allies seemed to conspire together to defeat his wishes. His temper was naturally ardent; though, in this instance, there is no reason to believe, that his feeling was at all beyond that of every one around him. In his general orders of the 24th of August, he said, "The General yet hopes, that events will prove America able to procure that by her own arms, which her allies refuse to assist in obtaining." If the flame had been subsiding before, this promised to rekindle it; the expression gave very deep offence to the French officers of the army; and Lafayette, in particular, was very urgent in his desire, that it might be so explained as to prevent the evil effects which he apprehended it could hardly fail to produce.

With a view, therefore, to counteract any unfavorable impression, the public orders of the

26th contained the following passage; "It having been supposed by some persons, that by the orders of the 24th instant, the Commander-in-chief meant to insinuate, that the departure of the French fleet was owing to a fixed determination not to assist in the present enterprise, and as the General could not wish to give the least color to ungenerous and illiberal minds to make such an unfair interpretation, he thinks it necessary to say, that, as he could not possibly be acquainted with the orders of the French Admiral, he could not determine whether the removal of the fleet was absolutely necessary or not, and therefore did not mean to censure an act, which those orders might render absolutely necessary." This explanation was certainly not very happy; but it appears to have answered the desired end; and from that time the letters of General Sullivan to D'Estaing were of the most conciliatory and amicable character, and there was no longer any apparent want of entire cordiality.

General Sullivan, who had, as we have seen, taken post within a short distance of the enemy's lines, during the absence of the French fleet, continued his approaches, with the intention of carrying them by storm; a hazardous measure, which he was reluctant to undertake without the aid of his allies; but a variety of

cross accidents conspired to prevent him from obtaining this aid. After their first departure, hopes were daily entertained of their return; and he had sent repeated expresses to D'Estaing to urge upon him its necessity. But their second departure, for the purpose of refitting, rendered the prospect of assistance nearly hopeless. A large portion of his force were volunteers, whose continuance in the camp depended only on their own pleasure. These were now entirely disheartened, and went away in masses; so that the army, which had exceeded nine thousand men, was in a few days reduced to less than seven thousand; a numerical force scarcely exceeding that of the enemy; and, of these, not fifteen hundred had ever been in action.

It was no longer possible, under such circumstances, to venture an attack upon strong intrenchments, defended by a nearly equal number of experienced and regular troops; and General Sullivan requested the opinion of his chief officers, relative to the course to be pursued. Their judgment unanimously coincided with his own. It was determined to relinquish the siege of Newport; to remove to the northern portion of the island, where the communications with the main-land might be made secure; and to remain there, until it should be absolutely ascertained, whether any hope whatever

could be entertained of the return of the French fleet. All the heavy stores and baggage had been previously sent to the main-land; and parties had been detached to repair the existing works, and erect some new ones in the north part of the island, and to repair the batteries at Tiverton and Bristol.

These precautions were dictated by the apprehension of the arrival of an English fleet with reinforcements, by which the Americans might be shut up in the island, and might possibly thus experience the same fate, which they had been vainly preparing for the enemy. At evening, on the 28th, the retreat began; the army retired by two roads, having its rear covered by light parties, under the command of Colonel Laurens and Colonel Livingston. No sooner was this movement known to Sir Robert Pigot, than he resolved to assume the offensive; and at an early hour the next morning, his force, divided into two columns, marched out in pursuit of the Americans, and attacked the light corps, who gallantly maintained their ground until they were ordered to retreat to the main body. Sir Robert Pigot advanced very near the Americans on their left, but was repulsed by General Glover. He then took up a strong position on Quaker Hill, at the distance of about a mile from the American lines.

General Sullivan's troops were formed in three columns; the first was in front of the works on Butts's Hill, the second in the rear of the hill, and the reserve about half a mile distant from the first. His rear was covered by strong works, and there was also a redoubt in front, a little to the right. At nine o'clock, the enemy opened a cannonade, which was returned with spirit for about an hour, the advanced parties skirmishing meanwhile. Two British ships of war and some smaller vessels having now gained a station opposite the American right, an attempt was made to turn it under cover of their fire; but their guns were soon silenced by batteries erected on the beach. At two o'clock, the enemy advanced in force, but, after a short and sharp conflict, were driven back to their position. No other general attack was made, though the cannonade and skirmishing continued until night. General Sullivan was desirous of advancing to attack their lines, but was deterred from doing so by the exhaustion of his troops, in consequence of their night-march, succeeded by a day of almost uninterrupted conflict, and by his apprehension that their inexperience in the field might lead to some disaster.

The loss of the British rather exceeded that of the Americans, which was about two hundred.

Indeed, considering the quality of the respective forces, the honor of the day was decidedly on the American side; for it is not often, that an equal number of regulars can be encountered by raw troops without great danger of defeat. During the night, both armies retained their positions of the day before. On the following day, the cannonade was renewed, but no attack was made. The British waited with the hope of reinforcements, which were not far distant. General Sullivan, on the other hand, having been apprized of the departure of a fleet of transports from the harbor of New York, supposed to be destined for Rhode Island, had resolved to retreat to the main-land. This purpose was carried into effect during the succeeding night, so secretly, that the movement was wholly unperceived by the enemy, and, owing to the precautions previously taken, entirely without loss. Like Washington's retreat from Long Island, this was executed with a degree of skill and judgment quite as honorable to a commander as success in battle; and it was no less seasonable than judicious. On the following day, Sir Henry Clinton arrived with four thousand British troops. If General Sullivan had not effected this fortunate movement, he would doubtless have been shut up in the island, and eventually compelled to surrender.

Before the retreat, it had been determined to make a final effort to persuade D'Estaing to return; and Lafayette, at the urgent solicitation of the board of general officers, went to Boston for the purpose. He arrived just at the moment when the French fleet entered the outer harbor. The Council of Massachusetts was convened, and held conferences with D'Estaing and Lafayette upon the subject of supplies for the fleet, and the more important one of reinforcing Sullivan's army. D'Estaing, who appears by this time to have recovered from excited feeling produced by the late occurrences, declared that it was impossible for him, under existing circumstances, to coöperate with his fleet, but said that he was ready to lead a regiment, and place himself under the command of Sullivan, as he had, many years before, fought under Marshal Saxe.

In a letter to General Sullivan, he mentioned this proposition, adding that no offence had been taken, which would have any influence upon his conduct. "To prove this," said he, "is one of the strongest motives, which have determined me to place myself under your orders, as soon as I shall have been honored with a positive answer from the Council. My opinion upon the measures to be taken never need restrain yours. It shall not only be subject to yours, but shall

remain unrevealed whenever you shall not require me to give it." But the proposition offered by no means what was wanted; the regiment, even with a pupil of Marshal Saxe at its head, would have formed an imperfect substitute for the fleet, and, if it could have answered any purpose, must have arrived too late. This letter was dated on the very day of the battle; and Lafayette, travelling with all possible expedition, reached the camp while the army were crossing over from the island; not too late, however, to do good service in conducting the retreat. Since the arrival of Sir Henry Clinton, all further projects of concerted action in this quarter were abandoned. General Sullivan returned to his old quarters at Providence, and Lafayette, with a portion of the army, remained at Bristol.

The conduct of General Sullivan, in this important command, was such as to receive the approbation of all men of judgment. With the exception of the single remark already quoted from his public orders, and which was prompted by a feeling not unnatural, amidst the embarrassments and vexations that surrounded him, it was marked by temper, as well as talent, fortitude, and skill. The issue of this struggle was regarded throughout the country as likely, if it should be favorable, to be decisive of the for-

tune of the war; and there were not wanting some, who were disposed to hold General Sullivan responsible for the eccentric movements of the fleet, and for the various accidents by which most of his plans were defeated, at the moment when they promised most. He underwent the severe trial, which officers in high command are sometimes destined to encounter, that of being urged by violent and unceasing clamor to attempt what their judgment assures them must be ruinous. Restraining the natural ardor of his temper, he resisted the solicitation, and his prudence saved the army. On such a point as this, the favorable testimony of a man like General Greene outweighs the adverse evidence of a cloud of witnesses. A distinguished gentleman of Providence had complained with bitterness of Sullivan's military conduct; and Greene replied to him in a letter, which is equally distinguished by its ability and frankness. We regret, that we have only room to quote the following passage. The letter is dated September 11th, 1778.*

"I have seen as much service, almost, as any man in the American army; and have been in as many or more engagements than any one. I know the character of all our general officers

* See Johnson's *Life of Greene*, Vol. I. p. 198.

as well as any one; and, if I am any judge, the expedition has been prudently and well conducted; and I am confident there is not a general officer, from the Commander-in-chief to the youngest in the field, who would have gone greater lengths to have given success to the expedition, than General Sullivan. He is sensible, active, ambitious, brave, and persevering in his temper; and the object was sufficiently important to make him despise every difficulty opposed to his success, as far as he was at liberty to consult his reputation; but the public good is of more importance than personal glory, and the one is not to be gratified at the risk and expense of the other."

On the 17th of September, it was resolved by Congress, "that the retreat made by Major-General Sullivan, with the troops under his command, from Rhode Island, was prudent, timely, and well conducted, and that Congress highly approve the same;" also, "that the thanks of Congress be given to Major-General Sullivan, and to the officers and troops under his command, for their fortitude and bravery, displayed in the action of August 29th, in which they repulsed the British forces, and maintained the field." The thanks of the legislature of New Hampshire were also presented, and the chief magistrate, President Weare, in a letter accom-

panying the vote, observes, through an error as to the place of his birth, "It is with particular pleasure, Sir, that I enclose to you a copy of the vote of the General Court of this, your native state, by which you will see the sense the people here have of your merit and good conduct in that important command." At a later period, the General Assembly of Rhode Island, after declaring itself "sensible of the abilities and good conduct, as an officer, of the Honorable Major-General Sullivan, since his taking the command of the army within this state, and of the active zeal with which he has exerted the forces under him for the preservation of the state, and the security of its inhabitants," unanimously resolved, "that a committee of the Assembly wait upon him, to return him their sincere thanks, and express the desire of that body, that the mutual harmony which has subsisted between himself and them, in all measures calculated to advance the public good, may be uninterrupted." We have given these testimonials at length, with the view of showing, that the efforts and services of General Sullivan were not always overlooked, or coldly noticed.

Early in this year, the Conciliatory Bills, as they were called, containing proposals on the part of the British ministry for an accommodation with the colonies, were presented by Lord

North in Parliament. They were apparently brought into this amicable temper by the conviction, that the colonies were engaged in negotiations with the court of France; not knowing that the treaty of alliance had been already signed. Before any action was had in Parliament upon the bills, they were sent by the ministry to this country, and orders were at the same time issued to the British officers here, that all possible publicity should be given to them; in the vain hope, so little knowledge had they yet acquired of the feeling of the Americans, that the offered terms of reconciliation would be eagerly embraced. Shortly after Sullivan entered upon his command in Rhode Island, copies of the bills were sent him by Sir Robert Pigot, with a polite request that he would circulate them. In his reply, General Sullivan said,

"Had proposals of this kind been properly and sincerely made to the supreme authority of America, before the wanton cruelty which has marked the progress of the British arms in this country had taken place, or prior to our declaring ourselves independent, and entering into alliances with foreign powers, they would have been received with sentiments of gratitude. But at this time, all proposals, except for a peace upon honorable terms, must be ineffectual.

"If the proposals for an accommodation on

the part of Britain were sincere, they would have been properly authenticated, and laid before Congress; and not copies of an unauthenticated bill be sent, to be dispersed among the inhabitants, to deceive and disunite them. The design of this procedure is so easily discovered, even by the meanest capacity, that you may assure yourself it can never answer the purpose, which Britain has in view. To convince you, Sir, that the American powers wish to hide nothing from a free people, I enclose you a 'Providence Gazette,' in which these proposed bills are published, though not accompanied with the annexed address, signed by you, which, I apprehend, will be looked upon by Americans in general rather as an insult, than a proposal of reconciliation."

Some fear had been entertained respecting the effect of these proposals upon the public mind; but they produced very little impression. In Rhode Island, they were burned by the people at the foot of the gallows. Congress, however, passed a resolution, recommending to the authorities of the several states to issue proclamations, offering pardon to such of their citizens as had joined the enemy, and should surrender themselves before the 10th of June. Governor Tryon had forwarded copies of the bills to Washington, with the same impertinent request which

had been made to General Sullivan. In reply, Washington observed that he had sent his Excellency a number of printed copies of the resolution of Congress, adding, in a tone of quiet sarcasm, which was with him very rare, that the benevolent purpose it was intended to answer, would, he was persuaded, sufficiently recommend it to Governor Tryon's candor.

CHAPTER VII.

Plan of an Expedition against the Six Nations. — Sullivan is appointed to the Command. — Ascends the Susquehanna. — Battle of Newtown. — Advances into the Indian Country. — Return of the Expedition.

General Sullivan remained in the command at Rhode Island during the following winter, and until the spring of 1779; but no important military movements took place; the plans of the last campaign having been utterly disconcerted by the failure of the French to render the expected aid. Early in this year, Congress directed Washington to take the most effectual measures in order to insure protection to the inhabitants

of the western and north-western frontier, and to chastise the Indians for their continued depredations. The word "depredations" was a gentle term to be applied to the ravages of these ferocious enemies; whose incursions, as, for example, those at Wyoming and Cherry Valley, were generally attended with sickening atrocities. General Washington determined to execute the commands thus given him, by sending a powerful force into the country of the Six Nations, to lay waste their settlements, destroy their crops and orchards, and to do them all the injury that the time and circumstances might allow. He hoped that the want of sustenance and shelter would drive them from the fastnesses, whence they sallied forth upon our frontier with fire and blood, and compel them to take refuge in the British territory.

By far the most formidable of the Indians on our frontier were those constituting the confederacy, which was known, before the addition of the Tuscaroras to their number, by the name of the Five Nations. After this addition, the name applied to them by the English underwent a corresponding change; and they were thenceforth the Six Nations, comprising the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, Senecas, and Tuscaroras. It was to them that the French applied the name of Iroquois.

From the conclusion of the peace of 1763, they had lived upon amicable terms with the British; and these relations had been rendered firmer by their attachment to Sir William Johnson. At the opening of the American revolution, he had lived among them for more than thirty years, and, during a considerable portion of the time in the character of general superintendent of Indian affairs; and, partly by his personal qualities, partly by a judicious use of the influence to which his office naturally led, he had acquired a greater power among them than was ever exercised by any other foreigner. At this period he died; not, as is believed, without some foresight of the difficulties which must attend a choice between the rival parties in the coming controversy; a choice which his successors made, and by it sacrificed possessions, which, a few years after, might have constituted a domain of royalty.

His title descended to his son, Sir John Johnson; and his nephew, Guy Johnson, succeeded to his office. Both were led by their inclination, as well as by some irritation against the leaders of the patriots, who regarded them with not unnatural jealousy, to take part with the British; and they exerted themselves successfully to induce the Indians to embrace the same cause. This task was rendered easier by the circum-

stance, that the British government did not spare the presents, which were the most effectual means of securing their fidelity. The Americans, on the other hand, were too poor to purchase aid; it was scarcely within their ability to make such provision for themselves as was demanded by the crisis. We would willingly believe that they were actuated by a higher motive. Of all the abominations, which make one regard some of the proceedings of nations bearing the name of civilized with a feeling of despair, this employment of the Indians as allies in war, is one of the worst and darkest, and, if possible, is rendered more criminal by the wretched pretexts by which it is attempted to disguise or palliate its atrocity. General Burgoyne, when accused, as he might well be, of the crimes committed by the savage herds whom he carried in his train, defended himself by affirming that he had expressly charged the Indian chiefs in his employ to conduct themselves with mercy and discretion; he might as well have charged the tiger to be gentle when his prey was in his grasp.

It is impossible with truth to say, (would that it could be said,) that our fathers were wholly free from a stain like this. On this occasion, however, they adopted the manlier as well as better part; they used every effort in their power,

at the beginning of the controversy, to induce the Six Nations to remain absolutely neutral; but their own poverty was so strongly contrasted with the lavish bounty of the British, that the sense of interest aided the force of habits; and, with the exception of a portion of the Oneidas, and a few others, these Indians became the inveterate and deadly foes of the Americans, and gave evidence of their hostility by many a bloody deed. They seem even to have been stimulated, by some of the loyalists, to go beyond their own impulses in cruelty; many of these left the Indians far behind them in bitterness and hate. Such was the ill-fated race, on whom the bolt of vengeance was about to fall.

The subject had long employed the thoughts of Washington; indeed, the intelligence of the massacres of Wyoming and Cherry Valley had rung like a death-knell through the country. He had been for some time making preparations for an expedition against these Indians, and had studied, with much care and labor, the means of bringing it to a successful issue. General Schuyler, whose thorough knowledge of the country gave his judgment a title to respect, expressed the opinion, that the most eligible route for an invading party would be found by ascending the Mohawk River, and thence pro-

ceeding to the country of the Senecas, and, if possible, to Niagara, the British post, where the most effectual aid and shelter were given to the Indians, in their inroads on our frontier. This was a comprehensive plan, and, if successful, would have driven the Indians most effectually within the British border; but the difficulty of providing for such a force as would be requisite, combined with other reasons, rendered it expedient to proceed upon a smaller scale.

General Washington finally concluded to adopt another route. He determined, that the main body of the invading army, consisting of three thousand, assembling at Wyoming, as a place of rendezvous, should ascend the western branch of the Susquehanna, and go thence to the country of the Senecas; and that they should be joined, upon the way, by a body, consisting principally of New York regiments, proceeding from the Mohawk River. It was a part of his design, that another body should coöperate with them, coming from Pittsburg by the Allegany River; but this part of the plan was afterwards abandoned. With his usual disregard of personal conditions, he offered the chief command of the expedition to General Gates, with whose want of courtesy towards himself, and unworthy conduct in the wretched intrigue known to fame as the "Conway Cabal," he had little

reason to be pleased; but the offer was declined by Gates, in a letter by no means creditable to himself or courteous to his superior. This gentleman seems to have been led by circumstances, principally perhaps by the flattery of those who wished to use him as their instrument, to entertain an opinion of himself entirely unwarranted by his real capacity, and which has thrown a cloud over his fame. In the event of his refusal, it had been resolved to place General Sullivan at the head of the expedition, and by him the offer was at once accepted.

General Washington's instructions to him, relative to the conduct of the enterprise, were dated on the 31st of May. The immediate objects of the expedition were there set forth at large; they were, the total devastation and destruction of the settlements of the Six Nations, as well as of their adherents and associates, and the capture of as many prisoners as possible of every age and sex. The troops to be employed under Sullivan's command were the brigades of Clinton, Maxwell, Poor, and Hand, and the independent companies raised in the state of Pennsylvania. Clinton's brigade was to rendezvous at Canajoharie, subject to Sullivan's orders, either to unite with the main body on the Susquehanna, coming by the way of Otsego, or to ascend the Mohawk River, and then coöper-

ate in such manner as should be considered most advisable. The main body was to rendezvous at Wyoming, and thence proceed to Tioga, from which place they were to take the nearest practicable route into the heart of the Indian settlements.

Having established some central post, Sullivan was to detach parties "to lay waste all the settlements around, with instructions to do it in an effectual manner, that the country may be not merely overrun, but destroyed." Until this should be thoroughly done, he was not to listen for a moment to any proposals of peace.

It must be owned, that orders like these come strangely from the pen of Washington. The most tender mercies of war are sufficiently cruel, when softened by all the mitigations which have resulted from the improved sentiment and feeling of modern times. These mitigations are not unlike the rules of chivalry, which made it dishonorable to strike at particular portions of the body, while each combatant was at perfect liberty to murder his opponent by hard blows on all the rest. But to ravage flourishing settlements with fire, to destroy them so effectually that, as in ancient times, the plough might pass over the places where they stood, and that not a trace of sustaining vegetation might remain in fields whitening to the harvest, can hardly be

thought of without emotions of pain and horror; they are the dark calamities of war, from which the heart turns shuddering away.

But we are not to forget that they were designed to fall upon a foe, whose path was always to be traced in blood; against whose fury neither the helplessness of infancy, nor feeble age, nor the defenceless state of woman, could afford the least protection. We have already mentioned their atrocities at Wyoming and Cherry Valley; these had awakened a deep and universal conviction, that the only security against such enemies was to be found in driving them completely from the haunts, where, urged on by British agents, or by loyalists more savage and relentless than themselves, they came forth to the work of death. They obeyed the impulses of their wild education, which converted cruelty and revenge into virtues; and the responsibility of the measures adopted against them must certainly rest upon those by whom they were stimulated to aggression, with a full knowledge of the consequences that must follow.

It is enough to show how strong must have been the sense entertained of the necessity of such measures, at the time, when we see them planned and ordained by Washington; the last man to devise or desire anything which bore in his view the aspect of wanton cruelty. If more

testimony in regard to this persuasion is required, it may be found in the words of Marshall, a man singularly mild in temper, and with a judgment not likely to be led astray by the prejudice of others. He says, "The devastation of the country has been spoken of with some degree of disapprobation; but this sentiment is the result rather of an amiable disposition in the human mind to condemn whatever may have the appearance of tending to aggravate the miseries of war, than of reflection. Circumstances existed, which reconciled to humanity this seeming departure from it. Great Britain possessed advantages, which insured a controlling influence over the Indians, and kept them in almost continual war with the United States. Their habitual ferocity seemed to have derived increased virulence from the malignity of the white men, who had taken refuge among them; and there was real foundation for the opinion, that an annual repetition of the horrors of Wyoming could be prevented only by disabling the savages from perpetrating them. No means in the power of the United States promised so certainly to effect this desirable object, as the removal of neighbors, whose hostility could be diminished only by terror, and whose resentments were to be assuaged only by fear." *

* Marshall's *Life of Washington*, 2d ed. Vol. I. p. 323.

Whoever may be disposed to censure General Sullivan for the part, which he bore in this enterprise, ought in justice to remember, that he did only what was demanded, as well as justified, by the deliberate sentiments of the best and wisest of his day; that the expedition was regarded not only as a judicious measure, but as one of absolute necessity; the result of which, as we shall see, was hailed throughout the Union with joy and exultation.

The operations of the invading force were for a time delayed by various embarrassments and difficulties. It was found that the Pennsylvania independent companies could not join them, and the deficiency was to be supplied by sending a detachment under Colonel Pauling to unite itself with Clinton at Oghkwaga. A still more serious difficulty arose, in consequence of the imperfect provision which had been made for the supplies of the army. As an illustration of this, General Sullivan wrote, on his arrival at Wyoming, that "of the salted meat on hand, there was not a single pound fit to be eaten;" and he was compelled to wait some weeks here, says Gordon, "for more men, and for provisions to supply the loss of what had been spoiled through the villany or carelessness of the commissaries." We have alluded to this circumstance, because General Sullivan has been censured for the tardy

movements of the expedition; though we may be pretty sure that the fault is not his, when Dr. Gordon, who rarely loses an opportunity of blaming him, attributes it to others.

He, however, and some other historians, have stated that General Sullivan's requisitions for provisions were so extravagant, that they gave general dissatisfaction. It is difficult now to ascertain the precise truth in regard to this matter. Certain it is that General Sullivan was not slow to express his opinion respecting the proceedings of the commissaries; and the board of war, who considered his censures as indirectly aimed at them, were, at a later period, moved by indignation to bring their grievances before the eye of Congress. In vindicating themselves, they were not sparing of invective against him; and they doubtless did much to excite unfavorable sentiments towards him at the seat of government. But the fact already stated seems to show beyond all question, that there was a deficiency in the supplies; and this was shown more clearly by some later circumstances in the progress of the enterprise. Perhaps he expressed his sentiments with greater freedom than was warranted by prudence; but it was natural enough that he, who must be answerable in character for the success of the expedition, should be solicitous and urgent, on the subject of a deficiency, by which its issue

was made very doubtful. If the fault were in the commissaries, and all proper measures were taken by the board of war to insure an adequate supply, but were defeated by the fraud of their inferior agents, they must have been deeply exasperated by reproaches, which appeared to them to be unfounded.

The arrangements were at length completed; and the army began its march on the 31st of July, along the banks of the Susquehanna. One hundred and fifty boats conveyed its stores and artillery upon the river. The quiet of the solitudes had not before been broken by an armament like this On the 11th of August, they reached the point of confluence of the Tioga with the Susquehanna; and on the following day, the work of devastation was begun. A detachment was sent forward to Chemung, twelve miles distant. After dispersing a body of Indians, with the loss of seven of their number, they burned the village, and returned the next day to the army. A little more than a mile above the place of union of the rivers, by a bend in their course, their waters are nearly made to meet, forming a peninsula below.

Here a fortress, called Fort Sullivan, was erected, below which the army lay, enclosed in the peninsula. In this position, it was determined to await the arrival of General Clinton.

He, after opening a road from Canajoharie to the Otsego, a small lake of romantic beauty, had encamped at its southern extremity, to await further orders. General Washington had expressed some dissatisfaction at the extent of the supplies, which, according to Sullivan's instructions, he had taken, fearing that the progress of the expedition might in this way be delayed; but such was not the effect, and these supplies proved indispensable. Having floated his boats into the narrow outlet of the lake, first clearing it of all obstructions, General Clinton had caused a dam to be erected, by which the waters of the lake were raised to the height of several feet above the usual level. On the 9th of August, he received his orders to proceed; his flotilla was borne triumphantly along by the accumulated waters, which, at the same time, produced wide devastation among the plantations of the Indians at Oghkwaga, and in its neighborhood. The cause of the overflow was to them a fearful mystery, occurring, as it did, at an unusual season of the year. Having been joined by Pauling's detachment on the way, General Clinton went onward to Tioga, where he arrived on the 22d of August; and here the principal operations of the expedition were begun.

The army now consisted of the brigades of

Clinton, Hand, Poor, and Maxwell, Proctor's artillery, and a corps of riflemen, numbering, in all, about five thousand men. So much time had been occupied with the preparations for the expedition, that all its movements were well known to the enemy; and every precaution was adopted to guard against surprise. On the 26th of August, it began its march. A strong advanced guard of light infantry preceded the main body, which was protected, also, by large flanking parties. The artillery was in the centre. In this order they proceeded. Two days afterwards, they destroyed an Indian settlement, together with the growing harvest. On the following day, General Sullivan became aware of the presence of the enemy, near Newtown, at a short distance from the mouth of Butler's Creek. There they had determined to encounter the hazard of a battle, in order, if possible, to divert the storm, which was about to sweep over the land.

Their force was composed principally of Indians, under the command of the celebrated Joseph Brant, who combined many of the attainments and improved sentiments of civilization with the stern qualities of the race from which he sprang; with whom history and poetry have dealt more harshly than his real character deserved. To these were added some regular

troops and rangers, led by one or both of the Johnsons, Captain Middleton, and Walter Butler, the last a personage more truly savage than any of his Indian friends. They had chosen their ground with skill and judgment.

A breastwork, half a mile in length, had been constructed, so protected by a bend of the river, as to be open to attack only in front, and on one of the flanks; and this flank rested on a sharp ridge, nearly parallel to the river, and terminating just below the breastwork. Farther to the left arose another ridge, running in a direction parallel to that of the former, and leading to the rear of the Americans. Their works were partially concealed by pines and shrub-oaks, which abounded on the spot, and had been cut and arranged in their front as if naturally growing there. The road by which the Americans marched ran parallel to the breastwork, in such a manner as to expose their flank to a destructive fire, if, as had been hoped, they should pass on without discovering the enemy's position.

At eleven o'clock, General Hand, who led the van, perceived them, and at once understood the advantage of their post. He immediately formed the light infantry in a wood in front of the breastwork, at the distance of about four hundred yards, and engaged in a skirmish only without hazarding a general attack. As the

main body advanced, Sullivan ordered General Poor, with his brigade, to make a circuit to the right, and gain the rear of the enemy's left flank, while he, with the artillery, should attack the breastwork. Both these movements were successfully executed; but both were resisted by the enemy with persevering gallantry. In front, they withstood, for two hours, an incessant and well-directed fire of the artillery; meantime, the possession of the ridge was warmly disputed with Poor, who pressed on slowly, but with sure step, until he had effected his purpose, and uncovered the enemy's rear.

This success decided the fortune of the day. Brant, who understood perfectly the importance of the movement, rallied his forces, and, with the aid of a battalion of the rangers, did all that bravery could do to check the progress of the advancing column; but in vain. The works had now become untenable, and were precipitately abandoned; the enemy fled in confusion across the river; the pursuit was continued for about two miles. Owing to the efforts, habitually made by the Indians, to conceal the extent of their loss in battle, the number of their dead and wounded could not be ascertained; there was reason to believe, that it must have been considerable; while, on the part of the Americans, five or six only were killed,

and from forty to fifty wounded. Nor was it possible to ascertain the number of the enemy who were engaged. General Sullivan, from a careful examination of the extent of their lines, was of opinion, that they could not have been held at all by a smaller force than fifteen hundred. It was stated by the prisoners at eight hundred; but this was probably too small, as they appear to have mustered as many soon after the battle. In addition to five companies of rangers, all the warriors of the Senecas and six other tribes were on the field.

The Americans encamped at night upon the spot where the action had been fought. On the following day, the Indian village in the vicinity was burned, and the fields of corn laid waste. It was here ascertained, that General Sullivan's apprehensions in regard to his supplies had not been groundless; on examination, the store of provisions was found to amount only to twenty-two pounds of flour and sixteen pounds of beef for each man; and as the expedition must yet occupy a considerable time, and the extent of country which would be traversed must depend upon the supplies, the deficiency became a source of serious embarrassment. It may be supposed that they might have found a resource in the corn they were destroying, and something of the kind was attempted; but they were too imper-

fectly provided with the means of preparing it for use to render it of material value. Something, however, must be done, or the objects of the expedition be left unfinished.

General Sullivan, in his public orders, announced the fact of the deficiency, declaring, at the same time, that he had used every effort to obtain a competent supply, without success, and, as it was now certain that the actual supply could not, without the utmost prudence, be made adequate to their necessities, proposing to the soldiers, that they should consent to a reduction of their daily allowance. The proposition was cheerfully acceded to by all. On the same night, he sent his heavy artillery down the river to Tioga, reserving only four small pieces, and resolved to push forward with the greatest possible expedition. Next morning, he began his march towards Catherine Town, near the southern extremity of the Seneca Lake. The path was a difficult one; narrow and dangerous defiles were to be traversed; streams were to be forded; a swamp, covered with a thick hemlock forest, was to be passed, and a road cut through it for the passage of artillery. Fortunately the enemy were not sufficiently recovered from the effect of their defeat to attempt to interrupt the passage, which was nearly accomplished on the 1st of September; but the rear-guard were com-

pelled to remain in the swamp during the night, and joined those in advance the next day. On the way, a small settlement, called Knawahola, was destroyed, with the cornfields round it, and a detachment was sent forth to extend the circle of devastation. Catherine Town was laid in ashes on the 3d of September, its orchards were cut down, and its fields laid waste.

The work of havoc was now entered upon in earnest; and that beautiful region, on which the coldest traveller could not look without emotion, soon became a black and dreary spectacle of desolation. The Indians fled before the Americans, as they went northward up the easterly side of the Seneca Lake. On the 5th, they reached Kendaia, presenting the appearance of an old village, with about twenty decent houses, some of which were painted; the monuments, especially those of the chief warriors, were made of highly-colored boxes of plank, laid upon the graves. All were burned, and all the vegetation, as far as possible, destroyed. There they found an inhabitant of Wyoming, who had escaped from captivity among the Indians; from him they learned that Brant and Butler, with their followers, who had been engaged at Newtown, to the number of eight hundred, had been at this village, a few days before, suffering severely from the scarcity of

provisions, and complaining much of their loss in the late battle. From this it would appear, that the enemy's force engaged in the action was greater than they represented. It was also thought, that the chief of Kanadaseaga was slain there; General Sullivan was persuaded, from the description given of his person, that he had seen his body on the field.

Next day, the army crossed the outlet of the Seneca Lake, and, moving in three divisions, came to Kanadaseaga, the capital of the Seneca tribe. This was a town consisting of sixty houses, and was situated near the northern extremity of the lake. It had been General Sullivan's purpose to take it by surprise; but the intelligence of his approach had gone before him, and, like the rest, it was deserted by its inhabitants. Parties were thence sent forth to ravage and destroy; but there is a dreary uniformity in this narrative of desolation, and it is needless to detail the particulars at large. After completing the devastation here, the sick were sent back to Tioga, and the army proceeded on its march. In two days more, it came to Canandaigua, on the beautiful lake which still bears that name. The houses of this village, twenty-three in number, were destroyed, and the army went on to Honeoye, a small place, which was also laid in ashes. Here a

post was established, where one piece of artillery and the heavy stores were to be left, while the army should march to Genessee, the capital of the western tribes.

It was considered all-important to destroy that settlement, though the failure of provisions rendered it a task of doubt and difficulty. Many of the pack-horses and cattle had been lost in the passage of creeks and rough defiles. General Sullivan, however, continued his march, and, on the second day, came to a town of twenty-five houses, called Koneghsaws, which was destroyed by a part of the troops, while the rest were employed in throwing a bridge over an unfordable creek, which the army was to pass. On the preceding evening, that of the 12th of September, General Sullivan had ordered Lieutenant Boyd, of the rifle corps, to go out, accompanied by three or four riflemen, one of the guides, and an Oneida chief, to ascertain whether it might not be taken by surprise. He, however, took with him twenty-six, a larger number than had been intended; but his guides, not perfectly acquainted with the country, mistook the route, and conducted him to a place at the distance of about six miles from Genessee. Here several Indians were found, of whom two were killed; the others made their escape.

From this place runners were despatched to

General Sullivan, with intelligence of Boyd's proceedings, and giving him to understand, that the party was returning. Somewhat later, when the bridge was nearly finished, additional intelligence was received, that Boyd's party were surrounded by a body of several hundred Indians. Some of his men, who had been sent out to secure his flanks, had escaped; but he, with fourteen of his party and the Oneida chief, forming the centre, was shut in on all sides, and placed in a situation of the most imminent danger. The light troops of the army and the flanking divisions were sent forward with all speed to his relief; but they arrived too late; the enemy had destroyed the small detachment, and retired.

The defence made by Lieutenant Boyd against this overwhelming force had been not the less gallant because it was entirely hopeless. In his extremity, he had taken post in a small grove, with a considerable open space around it; there he continued to defend himself while the enemy were so near that the defenders were burned by the powder of their muskets; and the conflict was continued until all the men had fallen, except one, who, with Lieutenant Boyd, himself most dangerously wounded, was made prisoner. Many of the enemy had also fallen. The Indians, according to the statement of General

Sullivan, had taken an advantageous position, in order to attack him as he approached, but found their design frustrated by the appearance of Boyd's party in the rear. This gallant officer was put to death with the most inhuman torture.

The army continued its march to the place which Boyd had entered. The enemy appears to have gathered resolution to resist their progress; and Clinton's brigade was ordered to make a circuit to gain their rear; but they retired with precipitation, without hazarding or waiting for an attack. Next morning, General Sullivan drew out his troops in battle array, expecting that the effort would be made; but, no enemy appearing, he commenced his march, and in a few hours entered upon the valley of the Genessee. There was spread out a spectacle of beauty, which was gazed upon with delight by the rudest soldier; such a feeling as that of the traveller, who now sees for the first time those magnificent gardens of nature, the prairies of the west.

The name of Genessee became thenceforth but a new appellation for the perfection of fertility and beauty. This valley extended along the borders of the Genessee River for about twenty miles, covered with the luxuriance of alluvial vegetation, the whole expanse scarcely broken by

a single tree. On their way to the river, it was crossed by the army. Ascending on the opposite bank, they soon reached the town of Genessee, a settlement of one hundred and twenty-eight houses, beautifully situated in the midst of an extensive plain, bright with the rich verdure of the early autumn. This scene of quiet beauty was soon transformed into a black and dreary waste.

Having now accomplished the principal object of his expedition, General Sullivan, on the 16th of September, recrossed the Genessee, and commenced his homeward march on the same route by which he came. Four days afterwards, having passed the outlet of the Seneca Lake, he proceeded on the direct way to Tioga, sending out, however, detachments at intervals to destroy what had been previously spared. One of these, under Colonel Zebulon Butler, was ordered to pass round the Cayuga Lake, and burn the Indian villages upon its eastern shore. Three of them, including the principal one, were destroyed. The friendly Oneidas had interceded with General Sullivan in behalf of the Cayugas, on the ground that they observed an entire neutrality, but in vain; and the fallacy of the pretext was shown by the scalps discovered by Colonel Butler in their villages; and he said that the Oneidas

then admitted that their intercession was justly disregarded.*

Other detachments were also ordered to destroy the villages on the southwestern shore of the same lake, six of which were laid in ruins, as well as on the Tioga and its tributary streams. Another was commissioned to destroy the Mohawk Castle, and capture the Indians there; but the information given to General Sullivan in regard to these Indians had been erroneous; they had faithfully adhered to their pacific engagements; and the execution of the order was happily prevented by the intervention of General Schuyler. On the 30th of September, the army returned to its former station at Tioga. Three days afterwards, having destroyed the fort they had erected there, they resumed their homeward march, and, on the 15th of October, arrived

* It may not be amiss here to relate an incident, which is recorded by President Dwight. A Seneca chief, named *Great Tree*, whom he describes as a man of lofty character and dignified deportment, had strenuously urged his countrymen to observe a strict neutrality, but without success. This chieftain stood with others on an elevated spot, and saw his own possessions destroyed. "You see how the Americans treat their friends," said some of those around him. "What I see," calmly replied the chief, "is only the common fortune of war. It cannot be supposed, that the Americans could distinguish my possessions from yours, who are their enemies."

at Easton, in Pennsylvania, having travelled from the Genessee about three hundred miles.

In this expedition, the account of which it gives little pleasure to read or to relate, forty towns were reduced to ashes; beautiful and extensive orchards uprooted and destroyed; and corn, in quantities hardly to be estimated, left to perish on the soil. The country of the Onondagas, the Cayugas, and the Senecas, the three western tribes, was made entirely desolate. Their villages were the castles, whence they descended on the frontier settlements in a tempest of blood and fire. It had been thought, as we have said, that, by rendering them dependent for subsistence on their British friends, the white settlements would be safe in future from their ravages. This hope was only partially fulfilled; the relief proved to be but temporary; but the sufferings of the Indians were neither light nor few.

The winter, which followed, is still remembered by the aged as one of unparalleled severity; and it was passed by the fugitive Indians in the neighborhood of Fort Niagara. Provisions were not abundant, and the unusual food they were able to procure produced diseases, which proved fatal to very many. A few only returned to rekindle the extinguished fires upon the hearths thus cold and desolate. Some of them obtained

permission to settle in the remote western parts of the state of New York; and the traveller may yet see their descendants, lingering like spectres around the scenes, which once witnessed the greatness and power of their fathers.*

We have already seen that the subject of the supplies provided for this expedition had given occasion to some unpleasant feeling between General Sullivan and the board of war. His public orders, announcing the necessity of reducing the allowance of the troops, moved that body to unusual wrath. On the 1st of September, they addressed a communication to Congress, enclosing a copy of the orders, which they regarded as containing unjust reflections on themselves, and representing that their characters had been made very free with in General Sullivan's army; "who, being under a deception, censured them with great bitterness." They therefore desired, that a committee might be appointed to investigate the subject; and the

* The above narrative of the campaign against the Indians has been drawn not only from the printed accounts, but from original letters of General Sullivan, and other manuscript materials, particularly a journal kept by an officer of the expedition, to which is attached a map of the country, exhibiting the various marches of the army, distances, lakes, rivers, and localities, sketched at the time.

committee was appointed; but we find no mention made of their report.

These complaints, added to the influence of those members, who were before unfriendly to General Sullivan, were probably not without effect on the subsequent proceedings of Congress with respect to him. But his mode of conducting the expedition appears to have given great satisfaction to the public, and to the troops under his command; whose regard for him was warmly manifested by complimentary addresses. General Washington's letters give frequent evidence of the satisfaction, with which he contemplated the result. On the 14th of October, the thanks of Congress were presented to him for directing, and to "Major-General Sullivan, and the brave officers and troops under his command, for effectually executing, an important expedition against such of the Indian nations as, encouraged by the counsels and conducted by the officers of his Britannic majesty, had perfidiously waged an unprovoked and cruel war against these United States, laid waste many of their defenceless towns, and, with savage barbarity, slaughtered the inhabitants thereof." It was at the same time resolved, that it would be "proper to set apart the second Thursday of December, as a day of general thanksgiving in these United States." As a further illustration of the prev-

alent feeling of the time, it may be mentioned, that this was one of the causes of gratitude to Providence, enumerated in the proclamation issued upon this occasion, "that He hath gone out with those, who went out into the wilderness against the savage tribes; that He hath stayed the hand of the spoiler, and turned back his meditated destruction."

CHAPTER VIII.

Sullivan asks Leave to retire from the Service. — His Request granted by Congress. — He informs Washington of the continued Efforts of the Cabal. — Elected a Member of Congress. — His Proceedings as a Member. — Elected President of New Hampshire.

At the termination of this expedition, General Sullivan resolved to retire from the military service. Some writers, with that charity which hopes little and believes nothing, have intimated that this determination was hardly a voluntary one; but they have not clearly explained what his real motive, according to their judgment, could have been. One can hardly suppose,

that it had any connection with his differences with the board of war. He must have been prepared to meet all the evils, which might flow from their hostility. Nor can it well be attributed to any general dissatisfaction with the results of the expedition; these seem to have been as decisive as any one anticipated. If it can be conceived possible, that a public man should be influenced by the motives he himself assigns, General Sullivan's own account of the matter affords a sufficient explanation of his course.

In his letter to Congress, desiring permission to retire, he placed the application on the ground, that his health was much impaired by the fatigue and privation of his long-continued service. It met with a reception, which was certainly not flattering; why it should have been of that description, is not very obvious; his services had been arduous and unremitted, as well as useful, and seemed to be entitled to a courteous requital; but a large portion of the members were plainly not his friends. We are aware of no better reason for their hostility, than the trait in his character, to which we have more than once alluded; the freedom with which he expressed opinions, which others construed into imputations on themselves, and the warmth of temper, which rejected the means of reconciliation.

The letter was read in Congress on the 1st of November; and a motion was made, that General Sullivan be allowed to retire from the service, so long as he might think expedient for the restoration of his health. The subject was then referred to a committee, who, in a few days, presented a report in favor of accepting the resignation. A motion to amend the report by substituting the proposition already mentioned, was rejected by a small majority, and the resignation was accepted without any qualification. A resolution was, however, passed, returning him the thanks of Congress for his services.

One circumstance is worthy of notice here, as illustrative of his feelings towards General Washington, and those of Washington in regard to him. The efforts of the *Cabal*, which had labored so zealously to remove that great man from the station which hardly any other man could have filled, had been defeated with disgrace some time before; but the enmity in which it had its origin survived, and, though not venturing to show itself by day, was still busy in the dark. In a letter addressed to him by General Sullivan, giving assurances of his respect and deep regard, and saying, that he could no longer be suspected of interested views in giving them, his military career being at an end, we find the following passage, showing that the

faction still survived, and awaited only a favorable moment to reappear.

"Permit me to inform your Excellency, that the faction raised against you, in 1777, into which General Conway was unfortunately and imprudently drawn, is not yet destroyed. The members are waiting to collect strength, and seize some favorable moment to appear in force. I speak not from conjecture, but from certain knowledge. Their plan is to take every method of proving the danger arising from a commander, who enjoys the full and unlimited confidence of his army, and alarm the people with the prospect of imaginary evils; nay, they will endeavor to convert your virtues into arrows, with which they will seek to wound you."

It was not to be expected that those, who had before entered into this wretched scheme, should become persuaded of its fatal tendency. They might, however, have learned that it was a hopeless one. They had found so little support or sympathy in any quarter, that their efforts had only tended to raise Washington, if that were possible, in the general esteem. It might seem, therefore, notwithstanding the confidence with which General Sullivan speaks upon the subject, that his impressions were erroneous, were they not confirmed by similar ones on the part of General Greene a few months later.

But, whatever may have been the schemes on which they were founded, the inquiries of Mr. Sparks have afforded him no trace of them. We give the reply of Washington at length, to show that the feeling of Congress towards General Sullivan was not shared by his commander, who had known him long and well, and whose esteem, never hastily or lightly given, will be regarded by posterity as a sure testimony to the merit of the man, on whom it was bestowed.

"Morristown, 15 December, 1779.

"My dear Sir,

"I had the pleasure of receiving, a few days since, by Captain Bruin, your letter of the 1st instant. I assure you, I am sensibly touched by so striking an instance of your friendship, at a time and in a manner, that demonstrates its sincerity, and confirms the opinion I have always entertained of your sentiments towards me. I wish you to believe that your uneasiness, on the score you mention, had never the least foundation. A slender acquaintance with the world must convince every man, that deeds, not words, are the true criterion of the attachment of his friends, and that the most liberal professions of good-will are far from being the surest marks of it. I should be happy, if my

own experience had afforded fewer examples of the little dependence to be placed upon them. I am particularly indebted to you, for the interesting information you give me of the views of a certain party. Against intrigues of this kind, incident to every man in a public station, his best support will be a faithful discharge of his duty, and he must rely on the justice of his country for the event.

"I flatter myself it is unnecessary for me to repeat to you how high a place you hold in my esteem. The confidence you have experienced, and the manner in which you have been employed on several important occasions, testify the value I set upon your military qualifications, and the regret I must feel, that circumstances have deprived the army of your services. The pleasure I shall always take in an interchange of good offices, in whatever station you may hereafter be placed, will be the best confirmation of the personal regard with which I have been, and am,

"Very sincerely, dear Sir," &c.

On a review of General Sullivan's military career, we can see no reason why it should be mentioned in terms of indifference or coldness; much less in those of censure, of which some have thought it worthy. We have endeavored

to speak of it with the impartiality of a calm observer, and are conscious of no influence, which is likely to lead us to over-estimate its merit. He was brave, ardent, and active; full of enthusiasm in the cause, and ready to use every effort, and make any sacrifice, to promote its success; ambitious, as were all the other general officers, of being employed in a separate command, but fulfilling the duties of subordinate ones with fidelity and zeal.

In those instances, in which he conducted the operations of a separate army, though opposed by many adverse circumstances, he conducted himself judiciously and well; with a degree of prudence, which shows that his feelings were under entire control, whenever the interests of his country were concerned. If he was occasionally unsuccessful, it should be remembered, that misfortune is not always the consequence of inferior talents or mistaken judgment; in the instances where he was most so, his conduct received the entire approbation of those by whom it was examined, with a view to ascertain its character; and if merit is to be proved by uniform success, there was not a leading officer of the revolutionary army who would not be equally found wanting. Upon the whole, he is fairly entitled to the reputation of an able general and ardent and high-minded patriot; nor is that a

dark page in his country's history, which bears the record of his labors.

General Sullivan was not rich at the time of his retirement from the army. The fortune acquired by his professional labors before he entered it, had been diminished by the necessity of resorting to it to supply the deficiency of his compensation. His disposition was always liberal, and he was careless, and even wasteful, in managing his property. He was now compelled to return to the practice of the law, in which he easily acquired distinguished eminence. We have already alluded to his former reputation as an advocate; and in this line, his larger experience soon gave him more distinction than before. But he was not long permitted to pursue these labors without interruption; he was called on by his fellow-citizens to serve them anew in the station which he had formerly held, that of a delegate in Congress; and, yielding to their wishes, he was elected, and took his seat in the autumn of 1780.

There are no means of ascertaining what part was taken by General Sullivan in the proceedings. Little is to be learned from the journals, which serve, in most instances, rather to excite, than to gratify, the reader's curiosity; presenting a statement of certain facts in the most summary manner, and leaving others, of much in-

terest, to the inquirer's fancy. But there is reason to believe, that the art of making speeches was not then carried to the same alarming extent that it has been since. At that period, it was the usual practice to say little, and do much; the more modern system, which cannot be regarded as an improvement on the other, is to do less, and say more. We were informed by an aged man, himself a member of one of the early Congresses, that a distinguished gentleman, shortly after he had taken his seat, favored his brethren with a specimen of his rhetorical powers, which was listened to with composure, and in deep silence; he was tempted, by the favorable reception of his first speech, to regale them with a second; when the members, with a happy anticipation of the means resorted to in later times, became at once so absorbed in various important occupations, that not a solitary listener was left; and as there were no reporters in those days, to bestow upon the public what the members did not incline to hear, he relinquished the enterprise in despair.

General Sullivan, however, found employment in the long-standing subject of Vermont, or the New Hampshire Grants, which was then under the consideration of Congress. This territory, for twenty years, had been claimed both by New Hampshire and New York. This is not the

place to enter upon a history of the controversy, which was for a long time a very serious one; the people of the disputed territory having constituted themselves a third party, by declaring themselves independent, and establishing a state constitution. New Hampshire relied very much on General Sullivan to vindicate her claims before Congress, and to this business a large portion of his time was given.

We find his name in the journals, however, as a member of various important committees, and at the head of one, whose duties were more than commonly important. It was on the 1st day of January, 1781, that the mutiny broke out among the Pennsylvania troops near Morristown. The insurgents proposed to march to Philadelphia, and compel Congress, at the bayonet's point, to redress their grievances. They had actually proceeded as far as Trenton, on the way; and General Washington, thinking it not prudent to use force against them in the first instance, as their complaints were really not without foundation, advised General Wayne, who had previously commanded them, to obtain a statement of the grounds of their dissatisfaction, and to engage that it should be laid before Congress, and the authorities of Pennsylvania.

It was with the view of making an arrangement with the revolters, that the committee first

mentioned was appointed. They went to Trenton, and, together with the President of Pennsylvania, made certain proposals, which the mutineers accepted, and laid down their arms; and the difficulty, which threatened for a time to produce the most alarming consequences, came to a fortunate and early close. With the view of preventing any erroneous impressions respecting the extent and nature of the controversy from being diffused among our allies abroad, General Sullivan addressed a letter to the minister of France in this country, in which he gave a full and lucid history of the transaction.

Mr. Burke, of North Carolina, was at this time a member of Congress; the same gentleman, who had brought against General Sullivan the charges, which have been already mentioned, for his alleged misconduct in the battle of the Brandywine. Some letters had been interchanged between them upon that occasion, the tenor of which, as may be conceived, was very far from amicable. Mr. Burke had assured General Sullivan, that he considered it a part of his business, as a member of Congress, to see that the generals did their duty; that he had no feeling of prejudice or hostility to gratify; but that, though General Sullivan might be a very worthy man in other respects, he was wholly unfit for a military commander; as he, being on the field as

an eye-witness, had ascertained to his perfect satisfaction. To this communication General Sullivan replied in no very soothing terms.

There the matter ended for the time; but their relations were not such, on meeting again as members of Congress, as to make their intercourse agreeable to either. The friends of the parties, however, desired to effect an accommodation of the differences, and happily succeeded in doing so; Mr. Burke declaring that his opinion of General Sullivan had undergone a change, and the latter, on his part, withdrawing any offensive expressions which the heat excited by the charges might have drawn from him. A letter of General McDougall, who acted as the friend of Sullivan on this occasion, expressed entire satisfaction with his conduct through the whole transaction.

General Sullivan took his leave of Congress in the summer of 1781, and returned to his residence at Durham, where he occupied himself with his professional pursuits. He was for some time Attorney-General of New Hampshire; the same office which was afterwards held for several years by his son, a gentleman whose eloquence and honorable character are held in respectful remembrance by many, and who died, but a few years since, at Exeter, where he had for many years resided, esteemed and honored by his

fellow-citizens. He also took a part in the labors of the Convention, which formed the constitution of New Hampshire, in 1783; he was a member of the first Council chosen under it; nor was it long before he was withdrawn from his private occupations to fill the highest stations, being elected, in 1786, to the office of President of the state.

CHAPTER IX.

Origin of the Insurrection in New Hampshire. — Proceedings of the Legislature. — Sullivan's prudent and judicious Conduct. — Again elected President of the State, and President of the New Hampshire Convention, which adopted the Constitution of the United States. — Chosen Governor. — Appointed District Judge. — His Death and Character.

There is commonly nothing of so great moment, in the local politics of the several states of the Union, as to excite much interest beyond their limits; but at the period when General Sullivan occupied the chief executive office in New Hampshire, an event occurred, which, but for his firmness, and the good judgment of the

legislature, might have been attended with serious and lasting evil. Requisitions had been made by Congress, as well as by the states, in order to discharge the debt accumulated during the revolutionary war. There was scarcely any source of revenue but taxation; the power of Congress, under the confederacy, to draw it from commerce being very limited, if it could be said to exist at all.

In the state of the country at the time, the pressure of taxation was severely felt; and, as in all such cases, the evil is at once attributed to a deficiency of the circulating medium, a general demand arose for the emission of paper bills, to be secured by a pledge of real estate, and lent on interest. The legislature of New Hampshire was harassed with applications for this purpose. Some attempts were made to satisfy this demand by partial concessions; but these naturally were not relished by those, who understood neither the real nature of the disease nor its proper remedies. The mere emission of paper was not enough; something must be done to make it circulate; it must be made a legal tender in discharging debts.

In Massachusetts, where the trouble was more serious, it had been enacted, that executions, issued for private demands, might be satisfied by cattle and certain other articles, at a value fixed

by sworn appraisers. There was a call for the like enactment in New Hampshire; and the legislature provided, that, whenever a debtor should tender to the creditor a sufficient amount of real or personal estate to satisfy the execution, his body should be exempted from imprisonment, and the debt bear an interest of six per cent. The creditor might then elect whether to receive the estate thus tendered, at a value fixed by three appraisers, or to keep the demand alive by taking an alias execution within a year after the return of any former one, and levying it on such estate as he might chance to find. An attempt was also made to lessen the cost of suits at law by enlarging the jurisdiction of justices of the peace, before whom litigation might be conducted on cheaper terms than in the courts.

These laws were made to relieve the people in their capacity of debtors; but something more must be done for their benefit as tax-payers. The clamor for paper money grew daily louder; those who objected that such paper must depreciate in proportion to the freedom with which it should be issued, were met with the answer, that nothing was easier than to punish the refractory, who should lessen by any means its value, with banishment and outlawry. Meantime the number of the disaffected increased, and they began to give concentration to their

strength by holding county conventions. The better portion of the people had little share in these proceedings, having too much intelligence not to perceive that the disease was preferable to the remedies called for by the disaffected; but they were borne down by the violence of the current.

Petitions having been laid before the legislature from the county conventions and several of the towns, it was resolved, if possible, to ascertain the real sentiment of the people on the subject. A bill was accordingly introduced, authorizing the emission of paper to the amount of fifty thousand pounds, to be lent at four per cent on the security of real estate, and receivable as a tender in payment of state taxes, and fees, and salaries of public officers. Copies of the bill were sent to the several towns; and the electors were desired to express their opinion of it by a vote in open town meeting. But neither this nor any other proposed alleviation had power to allay the excitement; probably an entire concession of the popular demand would have given little satisfaction, excepting for the moment. The example of armed intervention which had been already set in Massachusetts, was at length followed in New Hampshire, but with this difference; the insurrection there was

aimed at the judicial courts; here it was its purpose to overawe the legislature.

On the morning of the 20th of September, 1786, about two hundred persons assembled at Kingston, in the county of Rockingham, at the distance of six miles from Exeter, the place where the legislature was sitting. One third of the number was provided with firearms, and the rest with swords and clubs. Some officers of the militia, who joined their ranks, assisted them in organizing something like a regular force; and, having chosen their leaders, and procured a drum, they proceeded on their march.

In the afternoon, they reached Exeter, and halted at some distance from the centre of the town. Thence they despatched a paper to the legislature, demanding an answer to the petitions which had been formerly presented. On receiving it, the House of Representatives appointed a committee of three, to be joined by a committee of the Senate, to take the subject into immediate consideration. The President of the state was, by the provisions of the constitution, a member and presiding officer of the Senate. That body at once, and very properly, refused to concur in the vote of the House of Representatives. While these proceedings were going on, the insurgents had pursued their march to the meeting-house,

then occupied as a legislative hall, where they found the two branches assembled in convention to consider the subject of their disagreement; and, as the doors were not closed, many of them entered.

President Sullivan opened the convention by a speech, in which he stated the grounds which had induced the Senate to decline entertaining the petitions; set forth the inconsistency and folly of the application, declaring that it ought never to be complied with, when thus enforced by violence; and assured the insurgents, who were present, that no considerations of personal hazard would render the Assembly forgetful of its public duty. His speech was cool and deliberate; but it served only to exasperate the insurgents, who, as soon as it was concluded, retired from the hall. Orders were then given, that all the muskets should be loaded with ball; sentinels were set at the doors, and the members were assured, that they should not be permitted to retire, until the demands of the insurgents should be granted.

The legislature proceeded with their business until the usual hour of adjournment in the evening. The President then attempted to retire, but could go no further than the steps; his further progress was barred by a close column of the rioters. Some called out to others to fire

upon him; but he, with great composure, told them, that he had had too much experience of powder to be afraid of theirs. In an address of some length, he then expostulated with them upon the madness and folly of their course; assuring them, that it could only bring ruin on themselves, without tending in the slightest degree to accomplish their object, and that they should be resisted by the whole force of the government, so long as he continued at its head. He was answered only by menaces and reproach. Just at this moment, a drum was beaten at a little distance by some citizens of Exeter, and a cry was raised, that a body of artillery was coming up; when the whole force of the insurgents took incontinently to their heels, scarcely waiting to hear the orders of their leaders, that they should assemble again at nine o'clock the next morning.

The legislature forthwith resumed its session, and authorized the President to resort to military force to suppress the insurrection. His orders were issued with such promptness, and were so well obeyed, that companies of militia began to arrive in the course of the night. Early in the morning, they had assembled to the number of several hundred men, and were ordered by the President to march forthwith against the insurgents. They found the princi-

pal part of them assembled on an elevated spot, beyond a small stream, that crosses the Kingston road, about a mile from the central part of Exeter. Others remained upon the opposite bank; these retired across the bridge on the approach of the party of light-horse, and, joining their comrades, seemed determined to dispute the passage. As the military came up, the insurgent leaders gave orders to their followers to fire. Fortunately, the command was disobeyed; and the officers of the militia, rushing in among them, seized the most active, and made them prisoners, to the number of about forty; while the rest were successfully employed in effecting their escape.

The subsequent conduct of the government was equally judicious and humane. Six of the prisoners underwent an examination before the President and Council, when they generally professed sincere repentance; and it was quite obvious, from their language and demeanor, that they had acted less from their own impulses, than the evil influence of others. These men only were detained, and, with two others who had escaped, but were apprehended in their own houses, were indicted and arraigned before the Superior Court, which was then in session at Exeter. All but one, with some hesitation, pleaded "not guilty," and he acknowledged his guilt. They then gave

recognizances for their appearance at the next term of the court, when, as no further proceedings seemed to be required, they were dismissed unpunished; and the insurrection was thus completely suppressed, not only without loss of blood, but without injury to any person.

It should be mentioned, to the credit of the state, that a majority of the voters disapproved the bill for the emission of paper money, which had been submitted to them by the legislature. Two other questions were submitted to them in like manner; one, whether, consistently with the provisions of the constitution, paper money could be made a tender in discharge of previously existing contracts; the other, whether it ought to be emitted in conformity with any plan, which had yet been suggested. Both these inquiries were answered in the negative.

The conduct of President Sullivan, in this emergency, was such as to receive the entire approbation of his fellow-citizens. It was alike prudent and dignified; the authority of the government was maintained in the most effectual manner, and with the least possible injury to the misguided persons, who rose in arms against it. None of the accidental diseases of a state demands more cautious treatment than this. In this instance, the people were suffering severely, and attributed their suffering to wrong

causes, being unable to trace the real one; and no wonder. In all the convulsions, which have at times been felt here, as well as elsewhere, annihilating or transferring property, destroying the profits of business, and depriving large classes of employ, hardly any two political economists agree precisely, either respecting the sources of the evil, or its most effectual remedy; and it can hardly be expected that they, whose pursuits are wholly foreign to such inquiries, should reason accurately in relation to them. They know that they suffer; and their first impulse is to charge their suffering to the action or inaction of the government. The authority of government must doubtless be maintained; and it is a happy circumstance, if it can be vindicated without heavy penalties or blood.

The insurrection in New Hampshire, though its armed manifestation was not formidable, had its origin in a very wide-spread feeling, which might have been fraught with lasting evil, if met by the government with violence or pusillanimity. There seemed to be a disposition, on the part of the House of Representatives, to mitigate it by concession; but this was seasonably prevented by the energy and firmness of the President and Senate; and the authority of the government was fixed on a firmer basis than before. The

bearing of General Sullivan, on this occasion, was worthy of all honor.

In 1787, he was again elected to the same important office; his term expired in the summer of the following year. The attention of all men was at this time engaged by the subject of the constitution of the United States, which had been prepared by the Convention assembled for the purpose, and was sent to the state legislatures, in the autumn of 1787, that it might be submitted, in each state, to a Convention of delegates elected by the people. It was not to take effect until it should be ratified by nine of these conventions. The period was an anxious one; all the efforts of its friends were everywhere required to answer the multiplied objections brought against it, and to render it acceptable to the people. They who now speak lightly of the value of the union appear to have forgotten the difficulty with which it was established then, and the still greater difficulty which would attend the formation of any other, should this be cast away.

By the spring of 1788, the constitution had received the assent of eight states; and the course of New Hampshire, whose convention was to meet in June, was watched by all with deep solicitude. Much was expected from the influence and efforts of General Sullivan, by the

friends of the new constitution in other parts of the country; nor was this expectation disappointed. On the 17th of June, the Convention of New Hampshire met, and General Sullivan was elected President. No time was lost by the members in accomplishing the business before them; there was a strong feeling of hostility, on the part of many, to some of the provisions of the instrument, and other objections arose, on the ground of the omission of some points, which they regarded as essential. We have been informed, by an aged man, that General Sullivan was at this time suffering from hoarseness arising from a severe cold. Some plausible objection was started; all the members were silent, until the President, expressing his regret that no one would relieve him of the task, addressed them with decisive eloquence and power.

On the 21st of June, the constitution was adopted; but the Convention, like that of Massachusetts, accompanied their assent with a recommendation of certain amendments, which they considered necessary in order to render it entirely unobjectionable. But the assent was given; the constitution thenceforth was established beyond the fear of change; and the intelligence of the event was everywhere received with the utmost enthusiasm. Ministers of the gospel an-

nounced it from the sacred desk, as a fit subject of religious gratitude; festivals were held in the chief towns and cities; and, with a prophetic foresight of the blessings that were to follow, the whole nation was animated with the spirit of gladness and of hope.

General Sullivan was again elected to the chief magistracy in 1789. The constitution of the United States had now taken effect, and it provided that the judicial power of the Union should be vested in a Supreme Court, and such inferior courts as Congress should establish. By the act of Congress, District Courts were established, with one judge in each state. The office of judge for the district of New Hampshire was offered, by President Washington, to General Sullivan, who accepted it, and took the usual oaths on the 11th of November. He was then, of course, withdrawn from all other public employments. The office was not one demanding much labor, or admitting of the display of much legal ability, the amount of business then transacted by the District Court being small. He continued to hold it until his death. This event took place at his residence in Durham, on the 23d of January, 1795, when he had nearly reached the age of fifty-five years.

We have already alluded to the circumstances, which render it impossible for us to present a

view of the course of General Sullivan's private life; no record of his history having been prepared by any of his family, and it being too late to attempt to supply the deficiency by the memory of his contemporaries, of whom very few survive. But many of his years were passed in public occupations; he is well known as a public man; and it has been the object of this sketch to present a view of him in that capacity. His qualities as a military leader and an executive magistrate have been already dwelt upon; we have also spoken of his professional ability and eloquence; but the general impression made by these is most clearly shown in the various marks of confidence extended to him by his fellow-citizens. We have only to add a few particulars, which we have not yet found occasion to notice.

General Sullivan was about five feet eight or nine inches in height, erect in person, with broad shoulders, and full chest, inclining somewhat to corpulency. In his movements, he was quick and elastic. His eye was dark and piercing; his hair black, and somewhat curled; his complexion was dark, with some color in his cheek. When he was unoccupied, the expression of his countenance was grave and tranquil; but when interested, it was lighted up with anima-

tion. His manners, as he is remembered by those who knew him late in life, were dignified, but easy and graceful. He conversed freely and with fluency, and his engaging address made the stranger at once at ease in his presence. In his temper, he was usually mild and amiable, and not inclined to irritation; but when his resentment was awakened, it was fierce and violent; it was, however, transient, leaving behind it no feeling of bitterness; a single conciliatory word would readily disarm his anger. He was not without fondness for display, and at all times exercised a liberal hospitality. In his dealings he was scrupulously careful of the feelings as well as rights of others; always generous, and more careless of his own interest than his friends could have desired.

His talents must have been of no ordinary kind. Without many advantages of early instruction, he rose, at an early period of life, to high distinction at the bar, and in a few years entered the military service. Little time could have been spared from these engagements to devote to subjects unconnected with his principal pursuits; but he appears to have been familiar with political science; and his letters, the only productions of his pen which survive, are written in a clear, vigorous, and manly style.

Upon the whole, General Sullivan may be regarded as one of those, to whom his country was much indebted in the hour of peril, and whose character and services should be remembered with respect and honor.

THE

ADMINISTRATION

OF

JACOB LEISLER,

A CHAPTER IN AMERICAN HISTORY.

BY

CHARLES F. HOFFMAN,

AUTHOR OF "GREYSLAER," "A WINTER IN THE WEST," "VANI ERLYN," "WILD SCENES IN THE FOREST AND PRAIRIE," &c

JACOB LEISLER.

The singular revolutionary episode, which embraces a history of the political fortunes of Jacob Leisler, is so much detached from all other portions of American history, that it fitly claims a chapter by itself. The assertion of popular freedom, to which he ultimately fell a martyr, unlike other political throes for the enlargement of provincial liberty, supplied no step in the advancement of the North American colonies towards general independence. It can be associated neither with the early influences of the "Pilgrim spirit" of the east, nor with that arrogant love of liberty, which Burke ascribes to the descendants of "the Cavaliers" at the south. It is affiliated with neither of these sectional characteristics in its origin, nor can its consequences be traced down to a later day, so as naturally to be interwoven with the general history of the country.

I am aware, indeed, that, in the ardent pursuit of that popular theory, which would make every

ray of our political light emanate, in the first instance, from Plymouth Rock and Bunker Hill, writers have ascribed the revolution in New York, under Leisler, to a Puritan influence among its people, and thus linked this local convulsion for popular rights to the series of historical events, which they would bring together in the same metaphysical chain. But notwithstanding the all-important part enacted by those, who inherited the principles of "the Pilgrim fathers" in establishing our present institutions, the idea of tracing all modern liberty to this same influence is too great an assumption to take permanent root in minds of a liberal cast. The reformation begun by Luther has been well termed "an insurrection of the human mind against the absolute power of spiritual order." The vigorous but narrow creed of Puritanism, which was among its earliest fruits, was but another form of the same spiritual despotism. It proved, not the disenthralment, but only the energetic action, of the human mind. It taught, that the pendulum was in motion, by the very wideness of its oscillations; but it was itself only an oscillation, and not the moving principle of the machine. It was, indeed, the spiritual cordial which nerved the soul of the New Englander, gave him his muscular intelligence, and stern, fibrous love of liberty. It was the main element of his might

in wresting his franchises, as a man, from the hands of power; but, out of New England, the spirit of Puritanism is nowhere recognized as liberty itself; nor have even its numerous brave and desperate struggles with other forms of despotism commended it to the world, as either originating or conserving the seminal principles of true freedom.

The revolution in New York, then, under Leisler, had no further connection with Anglo-Saxon Puritanism, than what is now quaintly called "the temperance *excitement*" has with Mahometanism; though abstaining from wine is a leading article of both creeds. It was wholly local, both in its development and its termination; born of, and returning to, the people from whom it sprang; a people not intelligent enough to originate, nor sufficiently quick-minded to adopt, the far-reaching dogmas of their ingenious and better educated neighbors; but withal, a sturdy-hearted and liberty-loving people; a people influenced more by customs than by laws; more remarkable for habitudes of conduct than trains of thinking; ill versed in speculations about public liberty, but vehement assertors of individual freedom, when suspecting an attempt to encroach upon it, by virtue of that mystical inquisition, so well known, in our day, under the name of "public opinion;" finally, a people

singularly tenacious of both personal and local partialities; and, though hospitable, and even affectionate towards strangers, yet so intrenched in prejudice or stolidity as to recoil, with suspicion and alarm, from the interfering philanthropic zeal of others, even when it appeared under the form of well-meant efforts to enlighten them.

These strong, and, therefore, not uninteresting traits of the colonial population of New York are so rapidly passing into oblivion, that no apology will be required, either for recalling them on this occasion, or for hastily tracing the sources whence they sprang.

The resident planters of the colony of New York consisted almost equally of Dutch, French, German, and British emigrants; or rather, of people who traced their origin to these four different stocks. The partial fusion of these distinct races commenced previously to their migration across the Atlantic; for Holland still continued to be the nursery of the colony, long after the conquest of New Amsterdam by the English; and Dutch, even among the new comers, was the prevalent language of the province down to the Revolution of 1776. Now, as we well know, while Holland was strong in hard-won political freedom, and so liberalized socially by her wide-spread commercial connections, as to

be tolerant of every religious denomination, it was, at the period of the settlement of this country, the asylum alike of the English, the Scotch, the French, and the German sufferers for religion's sake.

Many of these exiles were resident for a full generation upon her fenny but hospitable shores, before they migrated to form new ties of country in the valley of the Hudson. When they did migrate, they came to found a home, not a temple of doctrine; to lay an humble hearthstone for the affections, not to raise an altar for any politico-religious system; and while the veritable Pilgrim fathers avow, as one cause of their leaving Holland, that otherwise "their posterity would, in a few generations, become Dutch," * such was the utter absence of what is now called "the *Puritan* Anglo-Saxon stock" among the colonists of New York, that the settlers of English descent, with the exception of a handful of emigrants, who crossed from Connecticut to the east end of Long Island, were either members of the English Episcopal church, or Presbyterians, who, eschewing the narrow spirit and severe discipline of the Puritan conventicle, sought a more genial worship, and a less despotic

* *New England's Memorial*, Judge Davis's ed. p. 19.

tone of religious association, in the Dutch Reformed and Lutheran churches of New York.

Moreover, the prominent English families scattered along the south side of Long Island, through West Chester county, and on the banks of the Hudson, were either of Cavalier origin, or sprung from men, who, after sharing for a while in the republican movements, which preceded the rise of Cromwell in England, had recoiled from the religious fanaticism, which there imbittered political feeling, and proved the meddling spirit of Puritanism to be scarcely less intolerant than the Popery which called it into being. Some of these originally zealous sectaries were long resident in Holland; where, when we read of their compatriots assigning, as the very first cause of their leaving the country, "insomuch as in ten years' time, whilst their church sojourned amongst the Dutch, *they could not bring them to reform anything amiss among them*," we can readily imagine them, if not alarmed for their own personal privileges at the indications of this usurping spirit of interference thus displayed towards their Dutch entertainers, yet to have been detached from their especial communion by a liberal interchange of opinions with the refugees from every corner of Christendom there congregated.

The early emigrants to New York, then, of every nation, came thither, as we have seen, chiefly through the ports of Holland. They spoke her language; they intermarried with her children; and they brought with them associations springing from these ties of blood and language, which were due alike to the protection which they received from the once powerful flag of that country, and to their freedom from all personal molestation, whatever their religious sentiments might be, in a Dutch community on either side of the Atlantic. When it was proclaimed, therefore, upon these shores, that WILLIAM OF ORANGE was to be their King, the spontaneous rising of the people of New York to hail the new government requires no ingenious metaphysical theory of the present day to explain it. The elevation of the Protestant Prince to the British crown was, indeed, hailed with hopeful enthusiasm by the friends of liberty throughout all our northern colonies. But while, in Boston, the reception of the glad tidings called out an instant movement among the *leaders* of the people, it was in New York, that THE PEOPLE themselves rose in their might, and, with one voice, created the first really republican ruler that ever attained to power in America.

That man of the people, the first and only political martyr, that ever stained the soil of New York with his blood, was JACOB LEISLER.

The new moral associations induced by the flood of New England emigration, which poured into New York, immediately after the close of the Revolution, have, while invigorating incalculably the character of her population, overlaid, if not almost obliterated, her early colonial traditions. Yet, turning from the loosely-written annals of this colony, it is to tradition only, that one can refer for many particulars which would be all-important in writing the life of a man, who, for two years not the least memorable in the history of the province, administered her government; a man, who attained to power in the first instance, and was afterwards driven from it, under circumstances so remarkable, that it would seem almost as if the hand of design only could thus effectually efface those personal records, which could alone furnish the materials for a memoir of his life. The absence of these very important data for a complete biography of Leisler suggested the less comprehensive title of the narrative, which I have thus ventured to introduce to the general reader, by calling his attention to certain local considerations, which have been too long overlooked.

The year 1688–9, as all readers of American history are aware, was marked by great political excitement throughout the colonies gen-

erally. The province of New York had been grievously harassed by the misgovernment of the broken-down courtiers, whom the profligate Charles, and his feeble-minded brother, had sent to rule over it. Andros, the last of the race, had, for the present, been disposed of by the spirited Bostonians. Nicholson, his Lieutenant-Governor, held the reins of power in his stead; an object of suspicion to the people from his connection with the unpopular government of James the Second of England, but strongly supported by the richest and most influential men in the province, who, filling its prominent offices, held them by the same tenure.

The public mind was in a state of strange agitation. There were rumors of popish plots, rumors of republican cabals. Those in authority complained, that the revenue could not be collected, and that the government officials were insulted. Those out of power believed, that the minions of power were busy in strengthening its hands. There were reports of men marching upon the city of New York from the east end of Long Island, to seize upon the fort, and hold it for the Prince of Orange. There were reports of men being already within the walls of the town, who, on an appointed day, would rise upon the people, when collected in their churches, and, by a general massacre, give

the most desperate proof of their adherence to King James.*

Where should the people find one whom they could trust, to counsel and guide, to lead and govern them, in their present extremity?

There was a merchant of New York, whose personal qualities and public conduct, on several occasions in past years, while raising for him more than one powerful personal enemy, had endeared him alike to the esteem and the affections of the province generally. This man, unlike other enterprising characters of that period, instead of attempting to build up an estate for himself and family, by the acquisition of a large landed property, with the attendant grant of manorial rights, the great prize of provincial ambition at that day, had devoted himself to commerce with equal energy and success, and had become one of the principal proprietors of merchant ships trading with Europe, at that time owned in New York.

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* MSS. *in the New York Historical Society's Collections*; also, "*A Modest and Impartial Narrative of several Grievances and great Oppressions, that the peaceable and most considerable of their Majesties Province of New York lie under, by the extravagant and arbitrary Proceedings of Jacob Leisler and his Accomplices.* New York and London, 1690." In this pamphlet, these popular agitations are all attributed to the "turbulent mind" of "our Masaniello," as Leisler is contemptuously called by the Jacobite writer.

The first mention of the name of JACOB LEISLER by the historian belongs to the year 1675. He was at that time a resident of Albany, where, probably, as was the case with many of his compatriots, the basis of his fortune, which he afterwards came to New York to improve, was laid in the fur trade, of which Albany was then and long afterwards the emporium, as Montreal and St. Louis have been in later times.

Leisler was, it seems, at that date, one of the magistrates of the present capital of the state, and, in connection with other associates in the commission of the peace, had incurred the displeasure of Sir Edmund Andros, the Governor of the province, for the high-handed measures he and his associates ventured to adopt, to prevent, as they thought, the spread of Popery, the great political bugbear of the day. The associates of Leisler conciliated the Governor by promptly giving the bail that was required of them for their interference with his authority; but Leisler preferred being led to jail to the abandonment of what he considered a principle.

The firmness evinced in this affair was, from the circumstances under which the trait of character was called out, calculated to make its full impression upon the popular mind. But Leisler also exhibited personal qualities of an equally

spirited and more endearing description, upon an occasion less questionable, and which, in a community small as was that of New York at that time, sank deep into the affections of men.

A family of French Huguenots was landed on Manhattan Island, so poverty-stricken, that a public tribunal decided they should be sold into slavery, in order to pay their ship charges. The original respectability of the parties, and the touching relation of a widowed mother and her only son, could not shield these forlorn strangers from the dreary destiny which threatened them. But the benevolent spirit of Leisler came between them and their fate. He did not wait till they should have suffered the humiliation of being exposed to sale like cattle, and then brand them with the doubtful obligation of being manumitted as *his* property. He forbade the sale by purchasing their freedom before it could begin: and the family thus rescued from this cruel species of degradation subsequently enrolled among its members some of the most valuable citizens of New York.

These incidents, as I have related them, were well calculated to affect the dispositions of men both kindly and strongly towards the spirited and liberal merchant, who thus set at nought both his person and his purse in the assertion of either public or private liberty.

Years passed on, and Leisler, unconnected with public employment, save when, for a brief period, he held the office of Judge of Admiralty, and aloof from the petty intrigues, which were continually going forward, for the aggrandizement of particular families by means of sycophancy towards the Governor, or of political countenance from abroad, grew steadily in favor with his townsmen. He was one of the very few men in the province, who, raised above the mass by their wealth, still sympathized with them in their interests, and in their strong local pride and home attachments; the sentiment of *inhabitiveness*, once so characteristic of New Yorkers, and still most marked among those descendants of its early settlers, who nestle in many a quiet nook along the tide waters of the Hudson. Again, the men whose equal personal qualities and superior attainments might have made them the successful rivals of Leisler in the popular favor, were, for the most part, continually looking towards England as the source of honor and power; and, instead of seeking to identify themselves with the land in which their lot was cast, it was their pride to claim *there* a matrimonial and political connection with persons of rank and influence. Moreover, official station in provincial governments, where the appointing power resides in the parent country, always lifts the

incumbent above the sympathies and beyond the confidence of his brother colonists. Now, the representatives of almost all the leading fam ilies of that day in New York, and not a few of their junior members, were more or less connected with and dependent upon the obnoxious government of James the Second. Leisler, the merchant, seemed the only prominent individual perfectly identified with the community of which he was a member, to whom that community could look as its representative and its leader in the impending struggle.

There is yet one relation in which I have not viewed Jacob Leisler, and which, though of slight import now, had, doubtless, in those times, its full influence in placing him in the elevated station where we shall shortly be called upon to judge his actions and character.

The military force of the city of New York, in the year 1689, consisted of five free companies, embraced in a colonel's command. These citizen soldiers were, with the exception of a sergeant's guard of royal troops, which garrisoned the fort, the only defence of the town. Nicholas Bayard, the commandant of this regiment, who likewise filled a prominent civil station, was deemed, if not hostile to the people, a favorer, at least, of the party of King James. Leisler was the eldest, as well as the most

popular, of the five captains, who were ranked under Colonel Bayard; and upon him, as will be seen hereafter, the others, with one consent, conferred the full command when the moment for action had arrived.

We thus see, that to energetic talents for business, unflinching firmness of principle, and liberality of feeling far in advance of his day, Leisler united a degree of that military *prestige* which is so highly important to the leader of popular movements.

In none of these attributes did he afterwards prove deficient. But his mental attainments were by no means commensurate with these substantial qualities of character. Credulity, suspicion, and blind confidence will ever, by turns, distract the councils of honest ignorance in high position; and talent itself often becomes mischievous to the possessor, when not guarded by intelligence. Leisler himself was fully sensible of this deficiency, and has left a simple record of his vain effort to supply it by reposing upon some more enlightened friend.* Still, embar-

* Upon a medal, still in possession of one of his descendants, he scratched with his knife, while in prison, the popular distich,

"Remember well, and bear in mind,
A faithful friend is hard to find."

rassed as he was by this defect of education, his errors, his failures, and his fate, so far as his memory is responsible for them, can be mainly traced to those very qualities, which so commended his character to the esteem and affection of his partisans; the stubborn firmness of his will, and the confiding benevolence of his disposition.

It was on the evening of the 2d of June, 1689, that the people of New York, roused and excited by the circumstances already detailed, (the confusion at the custom-house,* the movement of the Long Island forces, the rumors of the seizure of the fort by the adherents of King James, and the report of the threatened massacre,) rose as if by one consent, and, with tumultuous action, assembled in arms to overthrow the existing government. Their numbers and unity of sentiment gave instant energy to their purpose. Their act was one of revolt merely; but it carried with it, at its very inception, all the vigor of revo-

* "There was much popular feeling called out by the collector of the port, 'a Jacobite and Papist,' being continued in office; but Captain Leisler did even with him make entry in the custom-house for his wines, and engaged to pay the customs to such as should be legally qualified to receive them, which (since the change to a Protestant dynasty) the Papish Plowman was not." *Collections in the N. Y. Hist. Society.*

lution. No orator was needed to stir them to patriotic action. No demagogue was there to pervert the single-minded intention that hurried them forward by one impulse. There was no machinery of party, no jugglery of committee-men, in that primal meeting of "the democracy" of New York. Their councils were announced by acclamation. Their movement was that of one big heart, where a thousand pulses beat the alarum for action.

They would seize upon the fort, they would place their most valued citizen, the oldest captain of the train-bands at their head, and he should lead them on to the citadel. "*Tot Leisler, tot Leisler, tot het huys von Leisler!*" "To Leisler, to the house of Leisler!" was the cry; and, clashing their arms as they rushed through the streets, the thronged multitude were soon pressing around the house of the merchant. The door was thrown open, and the light from within fell first upon the features of a few grave citizens, who, surrounded by the rabble, stood there, cap in hand, to address him. But even as he uttered his words of refusal to share in a movement so tumultuous,* the tramp of the free companies, who marched in the rear of the multitude, was heard

* "However it was, it seemed not good to this champion to venture himself." *A Modest and Impartial Narrative, &c.*

approaching, and silent as was their tread, the gleam of corselet and harquebuss gave a sterner animation to the scene.* Leisler withdrew to arm himself, and, within the hour, received the keys of the fort, of which his townsmen had meanwhile taken possession.

The next movement is singularly characteristic of the confidence of the people in their leaders. It was that night determined, that the five captains of the city bands should alternately relieve each other, and garrison the fort from day to day with their respective companies. And how completely these captains acted in concert, and with the approbation of the citizens, was sufficiently proved on the morrow, when, their colonel venturing to appear upon parade, and ordering them to disperse, his authority was set at nought, and he himself compelled to consult his safety by withdrawing. Alarmed at this successful outbreak of popular feeling, Lieutenant-Governor

* "The first who appeared in arms were some under Leysler's command, who (as a plot was laid) went to the house of their captain, and threatened to shoot him if he would not head them." *A Modest and Impartial Narrative*, &c. "'Most of those who appeared in arms were drunk,' says the writer of a Jacobite pamphlet; to whom a Leislerian quaintly replies, 'These revolutioners must either be very sober or loving in their drink, or these Jacobites had never scaped being *Dewitted* by a sufficiently provoked people, who had the power, but more grace than to use it.'" *Collections of the N. Y. Hist. Society.*

Nicholson convened his council, and, calling upon all public magistrates to unite with him, he demanded the government money, which, being kept in the fort, was now in possession of the adherents of King William.* But the friends of Leisler were fully prepared to maintain the ground they had so boldly taken. Of those in arms, four hundred men unanimously signed an agreement to hold the fort "for the present Protestant power that reigns in England," while a committee of safety, composed of ten freeholders of the city, whose names, as they have come down to us, represent, in equal ratio, the Dutch, the French, and the English population of that early period, assumed the powers of a provisionary government, of which they declared Jacob Leisler to be the head. They constitute him "captain of the fort or citadel;" they proclaim, that "the said Leisler shall have all aid from the city and county, to suppress external and internal enemies of the peace, and preserve the order of the province of

* "And now the people being exasperated by the delay of the Governor (Nicholson) to declare for the Prince, the greater body of the militia, with their officers, did seize on the fort, and, *since they had taken the government on them*, they did seize what public money they could find, which, with great prudence, they did expend for the safety and defence of the revolution." *Loyalty Vindicated, being an Answer to a late false, seditious, and scandalous Pamphlet*, &c. Boston, 1698.

New York; and they authorize him to use the power and authority of Commander-in-chief, until orders shall come from their majesties; and he is authorized to do all such acts as are requisite for the good of the province, taking counsel with the militia and civil authority as occasion may require."

And now, after receiving a congratulatory deputation from New England, who, in their recorded approval of his acts, address him as the "loyal and noble Captain Leisler," he proclaimed King William, by sound of trumpet, to the rejoicing people.

While such was the attitude of the now dominant popular party, the Jacobites were by no means disposed to acknowledge the new ascendency without a struggle. Love of power and jealousy of the people were, with them, emotions full as strong as loyalty to a prince. They felt, that they had too long deferred the acknowledgment of the House of Orange, and were overwhelmed with confusion and dismay at the vigorous measures of Leisler and his associates. Still, they determined to make yet an effort to retain the public offices. Governor Nicholson, as we have seen, convened his council in the midst of the disturbances, and demanded the public moneys, which were kept in the fort. The same council, according

to one of their own witnesses, "about a week after the reports came from Boston,"* acted upon "his majesties proclamation, and pursuant thereto, Matthew Plowman, being a Papist, was forthwith suspended;" and they appointed three commissioners, Bayard, Richards, and Haynes, to receive the revenue, until orders should arrive from England.

"These worthy commissioners of the revenue," says a contemporary writer, "sate in the custom-house; but Captain Leisler, with the inhabitants, who had got possession of the government and the fort, demanded of them by what authority they pretended to act; who refusing to give Captain Leisler any account, they offered to turn him out of the custom-house by force; on which tumult, (made by those Jacobites,) a guard of inhabitants from the fort came to defend their captain. And the people in the streets were so enraged at Colonel Bayard, (who, they knew, was as inveterate as any Papist against the revolution,) that they had certainly torn him to pieces, had not the good temper of Captain Leisler been his protection, who was the only person capable of saving him in that extremity, and favored his escape, and

* Pamphlets in the *N. Y. Hist. Society.*

let him live to have afterwards a hand in the murdering his deliverer." *

Bayard, who was a man of education and fashion, fled to Albany, after this rough handling by the populace, while Nicholson, leaving his other adherents to take care of themselves as they could, got on shipboard as quickly as possible, and sailed for England.

The next act of Leisler was to write a private letter, with his own hand, to the King, giving him an account of everything that had been done, describing the present state of affairs and future prospects of the province, stating the repairs he had deemed necessary to commence in the fortification of the city, and detailing the consequent expenditures of the public money that he had found. Among other things, he told the King, that, foreseeing the war with France, that must ensue from William's accession to the throne of England, he had, for the protection of

* "Leisler had, on a previous occasion, guarded Bayard, and other dignitaries of the old *régime*, from insult, by privately suggesting, that they should withdraw from a public feast of 'the revolutioners,' where some of his partisans were getting excited in their cups. Yet Bayard's animosity towards Leisler, 'the Philistine,' 'the arch rebel, and his hellish crew,' as he calls them in his letters, was inextinguishable." *Collections of the N. Y. Hist. Society.*

the harbor against the enemy's cruisers, erected a new battery of six guns to the south of the fort.*

This letter of Leisler, by those who delight to denounce him as a usurper, has been sneered at for some defects in its English phraseology. The manly openness, the business-like directness, and truthful accountability of the writer are wholly overlooked; his Dutch honesty is forgotten in his Dutch idioms.

But Leisler, who has been called a *boor* by the historian, was at least *courtier-like* enough, when writing from an English province to an English King, to use the language of those whom they had been mutually called to govern; though, if this "boorish provincial usurper," who held his power by the very same right by which his countryman, William of Orange, filled the throne of England, had addressed his sovereign in the language of their father-land, neither the Dutch Governor nor the Dutch King had reason to be ashamed of it before the people, who, in both instances, had called these honest men to preside over them.

But these unmanly sneers at the literary at-

* From that battery, the noble promenade, which the city of New York thus incidentally owes to Leisler, derives its name.

tainments of the sturdy merchant were but a single feature in that systematic depreciation of his character, with which Smith and Hutchinson, and other Tory writers, have hunted down his memory, until even the liberal-minded Grahame, in his "History of the United States," has unwittingly been misled by the partisan spirit which animates their pages, and aided in consigning the gallant name of Leisler to reproach, if not to infamy.

Henceforth, however, the people's Governor was less likely to offend those, whose estimation of a brave man's acts was measured by their ability to criticise his parts of speech. Colonel Milbourne, an Englishman, and the son-in-law of Leisler, arrived from England about midsummer, and was straightway appointed secretary to the Commander-in-chief. The rank and position of Milbourne made him the fitting representative of Leisler in the north. The city of Albany was, at that time, agitated with fears of a threatened invasion of the French and Indians from Canada. She had applied to New York for assistance of men and money; but, as all the officers of Albany, both civil and military, had been commissioned under James the Second, Leisler instructed Milbourne to withhold the assistance which he carried with him, unless his followers were admitted in the name of King

William, and he himself recognized as an officer of the provisionary government below.

Colonel Milbourne embarked upon his delicate mission; but a voyage to Albany was a different affair, in those days, from what steam has made it now. Colonel Bayard and Major Van Cortlandt, with other leading Jacobites, who had refused to submit to the popular voice, and uphold the rule of Leisler, were in Albany, fomenting public feeling against what they termed the usurpation of the Governor. The first Robert Livingston, who held some three or four offices under the old provincial government of Andros, used all his active talents, his ample means, and commanding opportunities, to oppose the executive appointed by the people. Albany was filled with rumors of armed men, who were coming up from New York to make themselves masters of the fort and the city, and exercise martial law on its inhabitants. The gallant SCHUYLER, though declaring for William, was so wrought upon by the local excitement, that he brought his bands of friendly Indians into the town, as if to garrison it against foreign invasion. A convention of citizens of Albany, appointed from the different wards, was daily in session, and the public agitation had reached its height, when, one evening, about sunset, a messenger announced, that three vessels filled

with armed men, and one of which bore the King's jack at her mast-head, were descried from the heights, and were rapidly cleaving their way among the islands below the town.

A committee, consisting of four members of the convention, was deputed to board the foremost vessel, and ask of its commander, "*on what account they had come.*" Milbourne replied only by asking another question, "was the fort open for his men to march in that night." The answer was, "No;" that the Mayor of the city had possession of the fort, and was then commander. Milbourne, however, though now he must have known how untoward were the circumstances under which he made his appearance, did not hesitate to land alone; and, accompanied by the committee, to introduce him to the convention, he entered the City Hall, where the deputies were assembled, and a crowd of people gathered to listen to their discussions. Though armed, he stood there alone among the multitude, and, undismayed by the coldness of his reception, he addressed them in terms, which, though familiar to us now, were probably then for the first time heard in North America. He told them, that the charter of the city, being given by King James and his servant Andros, was *null;* that now "the people had the power to choose their officers, and that their present

officers, holding by an illegal tenure, ought to be subjected to a *free election.*"

This bold appeal involved a principle so startling that it met with no response from the burghers of Albany; and in the absence of the Mayor, who refused to leave his post at the fort, Milbourne presented his credentials to the Recorder. They were embraced in a letter, purporting to be from a committee chosen by the *free and open elections of the freemen* in their respective counties, stating that they, the signers, had sent "Colonel Milbourne with a military force suitably armed, for the defence of his majesty King William's forts and subjects, that the enemy may not take advantage of any disputes or differences among the people of the province."

Milbourne's men were then duly billeted among the citizens. But the differences between the representative of Leisler and the official powers at Albany by no means ended here; and circumstances which occurred during this visit of Milbourne had, perhaps, much to do in further exciting that acrimony of feeling, which ultimately so fearfully manifested itself in the most cruel judicial sacrifice, that our country has ever witnessed.

The city of Albany was at that time surrounded with a wall of palisades, one of the gates of which opened opposite to the fort, the nearest bastion of which was within musket shot of

the town. Flinging open this gate, Milbourne stepped without the protection of the walls, and, advancing near enough to the fort to be heard, commenced reading a paper addressed to those who held it. His men, drawn up behind him, offered too tempting a mark for Schuyler's Mohawks to resist the opportunity of shedding blood. They insisted upon firing on the New Yorkers, and Schuyler had such difficulty in restraining them, that Milbourne was compelled to withdraw, with his followers, to avoid bloodshed between those over whom the worst horrors of foreign invasion were at that time hovering. I allude to the terrible massacre of Schenectady, that most fearful event of all our border wars, and which is so clearly traceable to the internal dissensions of the province at that time.

It was evident to Milbourne, that the military power at Albany was opposed to the pretensions of his party in New York; and of the civil officers, the sheriff alone seems to have taken the popular side; and he it was, who, after Milbourne's return to New York, wrote a letter to him, which, when communicated to Leisler by his secretary, induced those decided measures, upon the part of the acting Governor, which, through the vindictive foes they created, ultimately brought him to the scaffold. The language of the worthy sheriff is so characteristic of

the political gossip of the times, that I shall quote the most important passage *verbatim.* "About the beginning of April last past, Robert Livingston told me, 'there was a plot of robbery gone out of Holland into England, and the Prince of Orange was the head of it; and he might see now he got out of it, and should come to the same end as Monmouth did.' This I can testify." This letter, which is signed by Sheriff Pretty, bears date January 15th, 1690. It induced Leisler to issue a warrant against Livingston as a rebel. Livingston at once fled to New England; nor, though excessively active in intriguing against Leisler, does he afterwards appear upon the scene, except to receive the bitter reproach and unearthly challenge of Milbourne at the scaffold.

Against Colonel Bayard, Leisler instituted criminal proceedings, upon grounds that must have come more nearly home to himself. The letter, which Leisler had written to King William, had never been answered; * but while it was on its way across the Atlantic, the government of William had addressed an official despatch to "Francis Nicholson, Esquire, or, in *his absence,*

* Ebeling says, that the reason why William never replied to Leisler was, that it was represented to him, that Leisler was actuated more by hatred to the established church, than by zeal for the King. *Hist. of N. Y.* Hamburg, 1796.

to such as, for the time being, takes care for preserving the peace, and administering the laws, in His Majesty's province of New York, North America." Bayard, having heard of such a letter being in possession of a King's messenger, lately arrived in New York, managed to enter the city in disguise, and had a clandestine interview with Riggs, the bearer of the government despatch. Riggs refused to acknowledge, that either Bayard or his friends, who were thus skulking from observation, had the power to open a public document of such a character, and, in presenting his despatch to Leisler, on the next day, he denounced those who had thus attempted to tamper with him; and Bayard was forthwith arrested, and thrown into prison, "upon the charge of high misdemeanors against his majesty's authority."

The warrant for his apprehension is signed "Jacob Leisler," and is headed, "By the Lieutenant-Governor and his Council." And from this moment, Leisler assumed the full military and civil authority, as governor of the province, which had been enjoyed by his predecessors in the office. He forthwith ordered a free election to be made for a mayor and aldermen of Albany, and appointed a day of public thanksgiving throughout the province.

From this time, the opposition to Leisler's government seems to have assumed an organized

shape; and New York was soon divided into two great parties, whose fierce struggle for political power wrought wide injury to the country, and brought misery and death to many a happy fireside.

The attention of King William being principally directed to the war in the Netherlands, his American provinces attracted but little notice, and the power of his government was only interposed to heal the still smouldering animosities between the Leislerians and Anti-Leislerians, when the principal sufferers from the unhappy feud were cold in their graves.

We now behold the province of New York thrown upon her own resources, with a governor, the choice of her own people, at the head of affairs; and Leisler, in the teeth of the virulent opposition, which stopped at nothing to thwart his plans, began to exhibit an energy in the conduct of his administration, which was equally new and startling to those whose ideas of a provincial executive were derived only from the broken-down courtiers, who had hitherto been sent from England to rule over them.

The French had already made a bold attempt upon Albany. They had penetrated from Canada to the Mohawk, at mid-winter, after nearly a month's march of almost indescribable hardship, through wild and continuous forests, and through

mountain defiles blocked with the snows of a northern winter; they had surprised the city of Schenectady, destroyed the fort and soldiery, fired almost every dwelling in the place, and made an indiscriminate slaughter of its inhabitants.

The whole province was aghast with consternation; but the moment it recovered from its bewilderment, they, whose political dissensions were the cause of the frontier being left unguarded, were the first to cry out against Leisler; they charged the blame of that horrid massacre upon the Governor, whose rule they had refused to acknowledge, and whose efforts to unite the people against the common foe they themselves had spared no means to frustrate.

In strange contrast with the conduct of this "rule-or-ruin" faction, was that of the Five Nations inhabiting the western counties of New York; and no writer should touch upon this dismal tale of massacre, without pausing to pay a passing tribute to those noble Iroquois, so long the bulwark of New York against the French, and to recall their conduct upon this occasion, at once so wise, so spirited, and withal so feeling. Governor Colden, in his "History of the Five Nations," tells us of some of them instituting an instant and successful pursuit of the combined invading force of French and Hurons:

of some aiding the few survivors of the massacre to bury their dead; of others beating the surrounding forests to succor the bleeding and half-frozen fugitives, of whom twenty-five only were found, some of them, through the severity of the frost, having lost one or more of their limbs upon that fearful night; and there still survives a list of the sachems who hurried to Albany, armed and in their war paint, pledging themselves to the terrified inhabitants, who were about abandoning their homes, that they would fight for them till the last. The appeal of their leading sagamore to the people of New York is still extant. It is a speech as spirit-stirring as ever roused resistance against an invading foe; and more than one witness has recorded his testimony as to its success in cheering and rousing the despondent colonists.

The blow struck at Schenectady was properly regarded by Leisler as only the precursor of some more formidable invasion, the object of which would be to wrest the province of New York from the British crown; an invasion such as that attempted by Frontenac about two years afterwards, when he poured battalion after battalion of the veteran troops of Louis the Fourteenth into the western wilds of New York. The *remedy of Leisler was none other than to conquer Canada itself;* to strike at the root of the mischief, by

expelling the French from the continent. He at once addressed letters to the Governors of the other provinces, urging a combination among them for the purpose. To Connecticut, as the nearest, he despatched three commissioners, with power to agree with the commissioners she might appoint, on any measures for the furtherance of his object, and for the public good generally.

The Jacobite or Tory party still preserved its ascendency in Albany. But its leaders, by this time, saw the necessity of acting in conjunction with the executive of New York, at least for the defence of the province, if not for the carrying out of the whole of his scheme; and Jersey and Maryland, as well as Connecticut, seemed to favor the enterprise.

The brilliant success of Sir William Phips and of the arms of Massachusetts in the east lent new life to the exertions of Leisler, and he straightway armed and equipped the first man-of-war ever fitted out in the harbor of New York; and, in a short time, a fleet of three vessels sailed from the bay. It was commissioned against the French generally, but ordered to proceed immediately to Quebec, and coöperate with the land forces that should advance by the way of the northern lakes.

Of the part that Leisler took personally in

these active preparations, we have his own letters to bear testimony. Those letters speak as well, too, for his disinterestedness as his energy. The morning after the fleet sailed from New York, we find him writing to the Governor of Connecticut, hoping that Major-General Winthrop might be obtained for the command of the land forces, and saying, that he had sent a blank commission to Albany, to be filled up by the confederated commissioners. He mentions the successes of Sir William Phips to the eastward, and rejoices in them; and says, he has intelligence that the French were fitting out eight ships of war, to conquer New York. He speaks of the Iroquois allies mustering at Albany; "One half are to proceed to Cadaraqui to make canoes, the remainder to go the Canada path. The news of Phips's victories will hasten them."

As we are not writing a history of this colonial era, we must refer the reader to other authorities for the particular incidents of this intended invasion. The disastrous return of Phips's armament is familiar to the reader of American history. The squadron from New York, which united itself to his fleet, haply, when the others were scattered by tempests, returned to the harbor, bringing in several prizes. But the land forces, to the command of which General Win-

throp had been elected by the commissioners at Albany, never reached the shores of Champlain. The troops were stricken down by sickness in their camp at Wood Creek. The intriguing enemies of Leisler were busy in Winthrop's councils, and he returned with his army to Albany, the men disheartened, discouraged, and discontented. The officers of the allied forces, of course, threw the blame mutually upon each other. Milbourne and Allyn, the two secretaries of New York and Connecticut, both of whom were attached to the expedition, had long been hostile to each other, and private bickerings were added to the aggravation of disappointed hopes and sectional divisions.

The conduct of Leisler, who, indignant at Winthrop's retreat, went in person to Albany, and ordered the Connecticut General under instant arrest, increased the general clamor and ferment of feeling, made him the common target for public opinion, and, united with other causes, collected the different currents of dissatisfaction into one great torrent, which ultimately swept away his power.

Leisler, as we have seen, had fitted out a fleet, had raised and provisioned an army, considerable for that day, and the resources of the colony, which he governed. Had the expedition been successful, the advantages to the province

would have been incalculable, and the plaudits of all men would have crowned the administration of Jacob Leisler. But to equip that fleet, and to marshal that army, taxes had been imposed, and collected with rigor. And now, all had failed. The province was exhausted, the enemy triumphed and threatened, and every ill was attributed to his dishonesty or incapacity.

And now, too, the faction, which had thus far hesitated at no means to frustrate the patriotic councils of Leisler, and paralyze every exertion he made for the public good, began to show their venom, as well as their vigor. The moment was at hand, when the deer stalker could leave his covert, and strike openly at the unconscious quarry. In January, 1689, Sloughter, an English stranger, had been commissioned in London, as Governor of the province of New York. In January, 1691, he had not yet made his appearance upon our shores. Lieutenant-Governor Leisler knew nothing of his appointment, nor had the province been in any way officially informed, that such a commission had received the signature of the King; a fact, which sufficiently proves how completely the internal affairs of this remote colony were overlooked amid the more pressing concerns, which engaged the cabinet of William.

The first notice of Sloughter's appointment

was received through Richard Ingoldsby, a captain of foot, who arrived here, with his company, in advance of Sloughter, and who, being immediately seized upon by the party opposed to the existing administration, or the Anti-Leislerians, as they called themselves, had the presumption, backed by their influence, to demand from the acting Governor instant surrender of his authority. Leisler, in reply, requested to see his commission, and also the order from the British ministry, or from Governor Sloughter, upon which Ingoldsby was presumed to base so arrogant a demand.

The commission was produced, but "order" Ingoldsby had none. Leisler was, however, so closely hedged in by enemies, that he was compelled to overlook the insolence of the semi-official, while paying proper respect to the commission which he bore. He therefore issued a proclamation, giving notice to the colony, that Colonel Sloughter had been appointed Governor of the province of New York, and that, on his arrival, the fort and government should be cheerfully surrendered to him. "In the mean time," says the proclamation, "Major Richard Ingoldsby having a considerable number of his majesty's soldiers under his command for the service of the colony, which cannot be otherwise accommodated than in this city, until his Excellency appears,

therefore the inhabitants are commanded to receive Captain Ingoldsby and all his people with respect and affection." Signed, "Leisler. Done at Fort William, February 3d, 1691." The dignity and unquestioned legal propriety of Leisler's proceedings had, however, no effect upon the powerful faction, who were bent not only upon insulting the acting Governor, through Ingoldsby, but upon driving him, through the same instrumentality, to some act which should embroil him with the King's troops, endanger his character for loyalty, and thus compromise the safety of his person under the new order of things, which was at hand.

Nor did Ingoldsby lack the impudence to carry out their nefarious designs. He again demanded the surrender of Leisler's authority, and, strengthening his ranks by such militia-men as he could drum together from among the Anti-Leislerians, besieged the fort. The firmness of Leisler, who still refused to surrender it, save under the legal forms, did not prevent his summer friends from falling away from him; though the Mayor and Common Council still endeavored to uphold his authority. Ingoldsby grew daily stronger, and once more Leisler issued his proclamation to the people. It says, "The Major, by flagitious counsellors, who, to carry on their accursed designs of mischief, and gratify their revengeful spirits,

depending upon his majesty's gracious indemnity for their said crimes, which already have been, and may be, committed by such pernicious instigation, has presumed to levy forces by his own authority, and likewise has dignified himself by the sovereign title of *us*, by which means outrages are committed by sundry persons, who have been instigators, ringleaders, and promoters of mischief; therefore the Lieutenant-Governor again declares, that, while Ingoldsby shall have accommodation for himself and others until the Governor shall arrive, or orders be received for surrendering the fort, which the Lieutenant-Governor promises to do on the arrival of Colonel Sloughter, or such orders as shall justify him in them, he commands all persons, on their peril, not to obey said Ingoldsby, and warns him to desist from his proceedings."

But the audacity of Ingoldsby and his friends was not thus to be checked. The ship, which brought him and his soldiers to our shores, had sailed in company with the vessel which carried Sloughter. They had parted from each other in a tempest; and, as weeks wore on without the appearance of the royal Governor, Ingoldsby began to question whether he ever would arrive at all, and must certainly have found no slight temptation in the condition of things around him, to seize upon the chief authority, and retain it for

himself. A portion of Leisler's men, about one hundred, held possession of a block-house, (two or more of which strengthened the palisaded wall, which extended across the island, from river to river, on the north side of what is now known as Wall Street;) and these men, cut off from their comrades in the fort, were, after some delay, induced to surrender their post, upon the condition that they might still retain their arms. This success still further imboldened Ingoldsby, and he again summoned the fort. This demand produced no effect upon Leisler, save to draw forth from him and his council a protest against Ingoldsby and his confederates, "by whom the city had been disturbed and the inhabitants insulted; the said Ingoldsby having undertaken to call out, command, and superintend the militia of the city, though he bore no commission save that of a captain of foot, with orders to obey the Governor for the time being." Among the names of the councillors attached to this paper, we find that of Peter de la Noye, the first man that was ever elected by the freeholders and freemen of New York to the office of Mayor.

The obnoxious term of *rebel* was now freely fulminated against the adherents of Leisler. But he and his council were still firm in the position they had taken, and which, it will be seen, they maintained till the last. In another procla-

mation, the last ever issued by them, they assert, "that they will not be turned from their duty to God and the King, by fear of the term *rebels*, hurled against them for fairly offering, that all things should remain until the arrival of the Governor, or further orders from England." They denounce once more the violent and arbitrary acts of Ingoldsby and his soldiery, and conclude with these noble words;

"Wherefore, we, not being willing to deliver ourselves and our posterity to such slavery, do hereby resolve, to the utmost of our power, to oppose the same by joining and assisting the Lieutenant-Governor and one another to the hazard of our lives." The resolution displayed by these undaunted men began at length to make its impression upon the opposite party. "The confederates were somewhat daunted," says Dunlap, "by this last proclamation of Leisler, and the long detention of Sloughter, of whom they made sure as a friend and ally; but all their anxiety was relieved by his arrival on the 19th day of March, 1691." The scenes which follow crowd upon each other like those in the last act of a *written* drama. They bear with them, too, as terrible and touching an interest as attaches to any *living tragedy*, that illustrates our political history.

Sloughter, a man licentious in his morals,

needy, and avaricious, fell at once into the hands of what, in England, would be called the high Tory party, and was guided by their councils * The most vindictive enemies of Leisler had got his ear by visiting him on shipboard, and his council seems to have been chosen from among them even before he touched the shore.

On landing, he immediately published his commission by outcry, in front of the City Hall, and sent Ingoldsby to demand the keys of the fort. Leisler, with ready caution, the instant he received the message, selected one of his officers, who had been acquainted with Sloughter in England, and sent him back with Ingoldsby to identify the person of Sloughter, and to ascertain the truth of the report, that the long-expected Governor was actually installed. This officer was brought back by Ingoldsby, with a verbal message to Leisler, from the new Governor. Sloughter's

* The power of wealth and family was in the main opposed to the rule of Leisler from the first, though we find some of the most prominent Dutch and Huguenot names of the province upon the list of his friends. But the leading Scotch and English families, by their intermarriages with the former, even at this early period, controlled many an influential connection among the older settlers of a different race. With the exception of those of Bayard, Philipse, and Van Cortlandt, however, none but British names appear among the closing persecutors of Leisler. His eight judges were all Englishmen.

council, as it seems, were not yet sworn in, and Leisler, either intent upon proceeding according to rule in matters of such high moment, or unwilling to place himself in the hands of Ingoldsby, despatched Colonel Milbourne, his secretary, and Mr. De la Noye, the Mayor, to confer with his successor about the proper form of making a transfer of the government, and also to procure some guaranty for the safety of himself and his friends. The officials of Leisler were at once ordered to the guard, when they came into the presence of the imperious Sloughter; and once more, the determined Leisler refused to surrender the citadel, when summoned by Ingoldsby. On the next day, Sloughter, for the first time, got his full council together, when, for the first time also, they were sworn in as such by taking the customary oath to the King and government.

And now Leisler writes promptly to the Governor, explaining the causes of his conduct, and inviting him to take possession of the fort. Among other characteristic passages, which we find in this document, is the following manly declaration.

"The joy I had by a full assurance from Ensign Stoll of your Excellency's arrival has been somewhat troubled by the detention of two of my messengers. I see now well the stroke

of my enemies, who are wishing to cause me some mistakes at the end of the loyalty I owe to my gracious King and Queen, and by such ways to blot out all my faithful service till now. But I hope to have cause not to commit such error, having, by my duty and faithfulness, been rigorous to them.

"Please only to signify and order the Major, in relieving me from his majesty's fort, that, when delivering up to him his majesty's arms, and all his stores, he may act as he ought with a person who shall give your Excellency an exact account of all his actions and conduct; who is, with all respect, your Excellency's most humble servant,

"JACOB LEISLER."

On the same day that this letter was written, Jacob Leisler was brought before the Governor as a prisoner, and, with nine others of his friends, was coolly turned over to the common guard; and there they lay for several days, before Sloughter and his council could find time even to examine them. The legal proceedings which follow are chronicled with shame, even by those writers who have been most willing to cast every slur upon the career of Leisler. A special commission of oyer and terminer was issued to try the prisoners for rebellion. The Governor was empowered to name the eight judges, that

were to sit upon the lives of these gallant men. He named them about equally from his own officers and the old political enemies of the accused.

Leisler, when arraigned, exhibited his wonted directness of character in rejecting the authority of a court thus constituted. He said, "he was not holden to plead to the indictment, until the power be determined whereby such things have been acted."* But the insolent mockery of justice proceeded, and he and Milbourne were condemned to death as rebels and traitors; rebels to the laws, whose dignity Leisler had, to the last, so nobly asserted in his own person; traitors to the King, whose standard he had been the first to rear among his subjects far away.

The customary confiscation of his property, and attainder of his blood, which is part of the English law of high treason, was duly pronounced, in connection with the sentence against his life. And now, the foes of Jacob Leisler, having thus far wrought his ruin, were greedy for the consummation of their judicial sacrifice. But the weak-minded Sloughter, their passive instrument thus far, hesitated to give the necessary order for his execution. He feared to exasperate still further the adherents of a man so much beloved

* MSS. *in the N. Y. Hist. Society.* "Leisler, in particular, could not acknowledge the authority of the court." *Ebeling.*

by his friends. He trembled to incur the displeasure of his King, for an act thus irrevocable, against so zealous a partisan of the Protestant succession as Leisler had approved himself.

But the debauched habits of the official profligate gave those near him means of influencing his actions, of which they did not hesitate to avail themselves. They steeped his senses in wine, and the hand of the inebriate, even at the festal board, was made to trace the death-warrant. The historian Smith, a favorer of the party which wrought the destruction of Leisler, has recorded the detestable act in these dainty words; "They, therefore, when no other measures could prevail with the Governor, invited Sloughter to a feast on occasion of his intended voyage to Albany, and when his Excellency's reason was drowned in his cups, the entreaties of the company prevailed upon him to sign the death-warrant." The carouse went on; a cold storm of sleet and rain, such as often makes a May day miserable in our climate, raged without. But, though those charged with the fatal missive had slipped away from the revel, and conveyed it, as quietly as possible, to the sheriff, yet the soldiers of Ingoldsby, who were drawn up to overawe the populace, gave note to them of the dreadful act that was about to be consummated. They thronged around the place of execution,

which, I may mention, was at the lower end of what has been since called the Park, where the spray of the fountain has succeeded the blood-stain of the martyr.

Leisler and Milbourne stood there upon the scaffold together; and there too, within hearing of their voices, stood more than one of those who had brought them to this pass. The high spirit of Milbourne could hardly brook the insulting presence of men, to whom he owed this fate of ignominy; and, turning to one gentleman, whom he deemed personally most hostile to himself, he exclaimed, "Robert Livingston, I will implead thee at the bar of Heaven for this deed." Leisler, however, seems to have been more moved by the untimely fate of his son-in-law than by his own, while utterly indifferent to the gaze of those who stood there as if to triumph over his dying moments. "Why must you die?" said he to Milbourne; "you have been but as a servant doing my will, and, as a dying man, I declare, before God, that what I have done was for King William and Queen Mary, the defence of the Protestant religion, and the good of the country." He then submits, and prostrates himself before his Redeemer with hope. "He doubts not that he has committed errors, some through ignorance; some through jealous fear, that disaffected persons would act against the govern-

ment; some through misinformation, and misconstruction of people's intentions; and some through rashness or passion." For every offence he asks pardon, first of God, and, next, of all persons offended. He prays, that all malice may be buried in his grave, and forgives the most inveterate of his enemies. He repeats, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do;" and, as his last words, declares that, as to the matter for which he is condemned, his purpose was for the good of his fellow-creatures, according to the best of his understanding and ability, which God had given him.

A prayer for the good of the province, and one "for the family to which he *did* belong," concluded the dying devotions of Leisler; and, turning to the sheriff, he exclaimed, "I am ready, I am ready." At that moment, the tempest, which had for a while suspended its fury, burst upon the multitude in redoubled wrath.* The sky grew dark, as if scowling upon the expiring agonies of a martyr. Witnesses of the scene, whose written details I am now quoting, tell of the torrents of rain that instantly descended, as

* "Milbourne remarked to Leisler, on the scaffold, 'We are thoroughly wet with rain; but in a little while, we shall be rained through with the Holy Spirit.'" — MSS. *in the N. Y. Hist. Society.*

if to wash away the blood of the sacrifice. "The faintings and screams of the women," says one writer, "were seen and heard in every direction." "The shrieks of the people were dreadful," says another; "some were carried away lifeless, and some, rushing forwards, almost ere the life of their beloved ruler was extinct, cut off pieces of his garments as precious relics, and his hair was divided, out of great veneration, as for a martyr."

Thus perished "the loyal and noble Captain Leisler of New York;" so loyal to his King, so noble to his compatriots. That King and Parliament, by reversing the act of attainder, when Leisler was in his grave, did what they could to speak their sense of that "loyalty." But his compatriots, what have they done to evidence their recognition of his "nobleness"? His memory, still fresh in the public mind at the period of the Revolution, and still revered by one faction, as it was detested by the other, is almost extinct in that community, in which the party names of "Leislerian" and "Anti-Leislerian" long carried a far more serious political import with them, than did ever those of "Clintonian" and "Anti-Clintonian," in our day. But Leisler erected no monument of internal improvement, developed no new moral or physical resources of the colony; he lived only in

the passions and affections of men, and his memory soon mingled with the dust of that perishable mausoleum. I know not how it strikes the reader, but to me, there is something inexpressibly sad in the thought, that, while genius and intellect always stamp their own immortality, while "mind ever calls unto mind," through ages of conflicting light and shadow, till their gathered voices are lost, or answered in eternity; the more endearing qualities of *character*, unless embalmed in some mental graces, have no similar echo, no remote response in the hearts of men; but that, when tradition has once loosed her feeble grasp upon them, they are either lost entirely, or take their place only as weaknesses upon the page of the historian.

If, therefore, something more of a partisan spirit than becomes the soberness of history is apparent in this sketch, I would ask the reader to forego with me the dignified position of the annalist, and, from a more humble point of view, regard the subject of it only as a mere MAN. Now, singularly enough, while we have the most perfect internal evidence in the letters, sayings, and actions of Leisler, of his simple and sturdy honesty, his earnestness and warmth of feeling, his opponents, with strange inconsistency, represent him, in the same breath, as an ingeniously

malignant, plotting scoundrel, and a stupid, ignorant boor.* The testimony against his character, therefore, never rises even to the dignity of an opinion; while the distempered prejudices of one class of Leisler's contemporaries are so counterbalanced by the zealous partiality of others, that they, who would most favor the memory of this "arrogant usurper," may be content to leave it with the associations attached to the epithet, when his enemies, in the bitterest spirit of vituperation, surnamed him "THE MASANIELLO OF NEW YORK."

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* *Narrative, &c.*, in possession of Jared Sparks; also, Pamphlets, series A, Vol. I. *in the N. Y. Hist. Society.*

NOTE.

The flagrant outrage upon justice, consummated by the judicial murder of Leisler, is so coolly dismissed by some of our early colonial writers, that those who have not read Mr. Dunlop's convincing statement, in his "History of New York," may need some recapitulation of the facts set forth in the foregoing narrative. The political charges made against Leisler are ultimately narrowed down to the two offences, which were the nominal grounds for bringing him to the scaffold; first, usurpation of the government; and, secondly, an act of presumption, amounting to positive rebellion, in insisting upon holding to his office after the arrival of an accredited servant of his King. The charge of usurping the government, it will be evident to every one who has followed me in this narrative, is too preposterous for serious refutation. The people, as an act of *necessity*, not one of *rebellion*, placed him in authority, when the rulers appointed by a monarch who had been driven from his throne had, with that monarch, lost equally the right and the power to govern.

But why, ask they who make the second charge, that of presumption and rebellion, on the part of Leis-

ler, at the close of his career, why did he not at once deliver up the keys of the city to an accredited officer of the reigning King? Is it not seen here, that Smith, and the other writers who take this view of the subject, at once beg the whole question? How could Leisler know officially, that these persons were agents of the King, until they exhibited their credentials to him? He had, for the space of nearly two years, received and acted upon the government despatches directed "to Francis Nicholson, Esquire, or, in his absence, to such as, for the time being, takes care for preserving the peace, and administering the laws, in His Majesty's province of New York."

Was it his duty, now, in the most momentous act of his government, that of transferring it to another; was it his duty to take common rumor as his warrant, when a written instrument ought to be, and was, at hand to give the necessary official formality to an official act? Would not the lowest non-commissioned officer, who, by the death of his superiors, or other chances of war, was left in charge of a petty garrison, require a similar warrant for the act of yielding his post to a general officer of his own colors, that came to assume the command? Would not the merest counting-house clerk exact a similar guaranty from one, who came to ask for the books and papers of a commercial house, in the name of the head of the firm? "Who are you, and from whom do you get your instructions to supersede me?" would be the reply of the soldier. "Show me your power of attorney to act as my principal," would be the answer of the clerk.

Leisler receives a summons from Ingoldsby to admit his soldiers into the town, and to deliver to him the fort. "Show me your commission as a British officer," is Leisler's reply, "and I will give you quarters for the soldiers." The commission was shown, and they had their quarters.

Again Ingoldsby summoned the fort. "Show me your authority from Governor Sloughter, and I will give you the fort." Ingoldsby had no document to show, and the fort was withheld. And now, Sloughter himself, the duly appointed Governor, appears, and he demands the citadel. "I am rejoiced to hear of your Excellency's arrival," writes Leisler; "one of my officers has identified your person, and when you are duly installed, I shall be happy to give you up the citadel, trusting that you will observe the usual formalities of sending an officer to examine the condition of the works at the time I give them up to you, and to bear witness to my King, that the public property has not suffered in my charge."

I have spoken before of the stubborn firmness of Leisler's character, as being the immediate cause of his fate. The tenacity with which he adhered to this view of his duty has been sufficiently shown, from the first summons of Ingoldsby to the final surrender of the fort to Sloughter. Several weeks afterwards, we find him steadily adhering to the ground which he had taken at the outset. It seems unaccountable, that any candid mind can have a doubt, that the ground was as properly taken, as it was nobly maintained.

And what is the language of the act of Parliament, reversing the attainder of Leisler? William the Third

never replied to the letters of Leisler, while living, because, according to Ebeling, it was represented to him, that Leisler was actuated more by hatred to the established church than by zeal for the King; yet, when the patriot and royalist was no more, the alleged political offences for which he suffered are thus briefly dismissed, in the preamble of a solemn act of the British Parliament.

"Whereas, in the late happy revolution, the inhabitants of the province of New York did, in their General Assembly, constitute and appoint Captain Jacob Leisler to be Commander-in-chief of the said province, until their majesties' pleasure should be known therein; and the said Jacob Leisler was afterwards confirmed in the said command by his majesty's letter dated, &c., and, the said Jacob Leisler having the administration of the said government of New York, by virtue of the said power and authority so given and confirmed to him as aforesaid, and being in the exercise thereof, Captain Ingoldsby, arriving in the province in the month of January, A. D. 1690, did, without producing any legal authority, demand of the said Jacob Leisler the possession of the fort at New York; but the said Jacob Leisler, pursuant to the trust in him reposed, refused to surrender the said fort into the hands of the said Richard Ingoldsby, and kept the possession thereof until the month of March following; at which time Colonel Henry Sloughter, being constituted Captain-general and Governor-in-chief of the said province, arrived there in the evening; the said Jacob Leisler, having notice thereof the same night, (though very late,) took care to deliver the said fort to his order,

which was done very early the next morning." *Anno sexto et septimo Gulielmi III. regis.* Upon the publication of this act of Parliament, the remains of Leisler were exhumed, and deposited, with great ceremony, in the burial-ground of the South Dutch Church; which was broken up and built over after the great fire of 1835.

Chalmers says, that, in procuring this act of Parliament, "the son of Leisler was powerfully assisted by the agents of Massachusetts." Again he adds, tnat it was asked in Massachusetts, in reference to the revolution, which had recently brought William and Mary to England, "If what Leisler did be ill, how came the King and Queen to sit upon the throne?" *Introduction to the History of the Colonies*, pp. 220, 226. Sir Henry Ashurst, who was then the agent for Massachusetts, writes to Increase Mather, May 5th, 1695, "The reversing of Leisler's attainder hath, I hope, a train of good consequences. I shall never do New England so much good as by getting this bill passed." Constantine Phips, afterwards Lord Chancellor of Ireland, says, in a letter to Increase Mather of the same date, "I drew a bill for reversing the attainder of Captain Leisler, Mr. Milbourne, and Mr. Gouverneur, which passed the Lords without opposition; but when it came to the Commons, Dudley, having notice of it, made all the opposition to it imaginable, which was the thing we desired; for, by that means, we had several hearings before a full committee of the Commons, and had the opportunity of giving a full account of those proceedings, and letting the world see how great a part he acted in

that tragedy." Hutchinson's *History of Massachusetts*, Vol. II. Ch. 1. It is also stated by Hutchinson, that Lord Bellamont, subsequently Governor of New York, "was one of the committee of Parliament to inquire into the trials of Leisler and Milbourne, and told Sir Henry Ashurst that those men were murdered, and barbarously murdered." *Ibid.* In the above censure upon Dudley, much allowance should, doubtless, be made for party feeling and personal hostility. Dudley was one of Sloughter's council, and at the same time Chief Justice of New York.

A

MEMOIR

OF

NATHANIEL BACON;

BY

WILLIAM WARE.

PREFACE.

THE popular movement in Virginia, commonly called *Bacon's Rebellion*, was one of the most remarkable events in our colonial history. For a long time, historians repeated one from another a most erroneous account of this transaction, particularly in regard to its origin and the motives of the actors, betraying bitter prejudice or willing ignorance. Beverley's representation is distorted and partial. He was followed by Chalmers, both in his "Annals" and in his "Introduction to the History of the Colonies," a work, which the author himself suppressed before it was published, but a few printed copies of which were preserved. Chalmers was honest and patient in research; but his political principles were such as compelled him to regard all the attempts of the colonists to maintain their liberty and rights, even to the end of the revolution, as so many acts of violence done to good government, and to the tender mercies of the mother country.

Within the present century, however, much new evidence has come to light concerning the

revolt in Virginia, which exhibits that event under a totally different aspect. Original papers have been published, which were written either by persons who took a part in the transactions, or by contemporaries. Amongst these is a "Narrative of the Indian and Civil Wars in Virginia, in the Years 1675 and 1676," first published by the Massachusetts Historical Society, from a manuscript furnished by Mr. William A. Burwell, of Virginia; also, a tract, entitled "The Beginning, Progress, and Conclusion of Bacon's Rebellion," printed from the copy of an original manuscript procured by Mr. Rufus King, while he was Minister Plenipotentiary at the court of London; and another, entitled "An Account of our late Troubles in Virginia, written in 1676, by Mrs. Cotton." These two tracts were first published in the *Richmond Inquirer*, and afterwards, in Mr. Force's "Collection of Tracts." In the second volume of Burk's "History of Virginia" is, likewise, a series of important documents illustrating this subject; and Mr. Hening, in his "Statutes at Large," or complete collection of the laws of Virginia, has published, for the first time, the statutes known as *Bacon's Laws*, being the acts passed by the Assembly which sat during his brief ascendency.

From these sources, in addition to the general histories of that period, have been drawn the

incidents which constitute the following narrative, and the views which the writer has been led to take of them. He has been guided irresistibly to the conviction, expressed by Mr. Hening, "that Bacon, instead of deserving the epithet of rebel, was in truth a patriot;" having struggled to relieve the people from grievances and burdens, with which they were heavily oppressed, and of which, after repeated remonstrances and complaints, they despaired of obtaining any mitigation, either from the justice or the fellow-feeling of their established rulers.

NATHANIEL BACON.

The period, in the history of Virginia, which elapsed between the years 1660 and 1676, is one of peculiar interest. Before that time, her annals present, for the most part, the same class of events, that were common to all the colonies during the earlier years of their settlement. There is the usual variety of ill-conducted expeditions, with abortive attempts at colonization, incompetent or mischievous management on the part of the crown, or of incorporated companies, intestine quarrels and commotions, Indian wars and massacres. The character and conduct of Smith, indeed, from first to last, but especially as seen in the striking episode of Powhatan and Pocahontas, offer a scene of romantic charm, to which no parallel can be found in the early events of either of the other colonies. They fill the most attractive page, not only in Virginia, but in colonial ante-revolutionary history. But from that time down to the commencement of the controversy with the mother country, which

terminated in the successful rebellion of 1776, no incidents occur, that will bear comparison, either for their importance or their interest, with those of the period alluded to.

In the annals of Virginia, this period is designated as that of the "Grand Rebellion." Of the personal history of the very remarkable man, who was the hero of the day, little is known. Those who wrote of the times in question seem to have concerned themselves very little about him, except so far as he was an actor in the particular events they relate. Information only the most meagre was collected and recorded by them concerning his early life and character, so that it is often difficult to explain the actions and motives of a later period. It is a singular omission, in the present instance, when it is considered that, even at the date of the rebellion, there was much difference of opinion as to the real character of Bacon, and the motives by which he was actuated.

All that can be gathered is, that he was a native of London, and emigrated to Virginia, at about the age of thirty, in the year 1673; that he was a man liberally educated, (whether at either of the universities does not appear,) and, being destined to the law, had kept his terms at the inns of court. Why he came to this country is not told, if it were certainly known.

That he came with some higher object, than that of a mere adventurer in pursuit of wealth, may be supposed from the circumstance that he was, from inheritance, a person already of some estate, that he had married more than he inherited, and that he was the acknowledged heir to the estates of an uncle, bearing the same name, who was reputed rich. But, whatever brought him to the American shores, he was soon established as a citizen of the country, by the purchase and cultivation of an extensive landed property. As he became known, his wealth, his talent, his education, his connections, gave him great consideration in the eyes of the colony, and he was almost at once placed at the board of the Governor's Council.

At the time of his arrival, he found the country in a state of great depression in its trade, and struggling, however vainly, to emancipate itself from restraints imposed by the government at home, the true source of the evils from which it was suffering. Being a person of quick discernment and ardent feelings, he was not long in learning, by his own investigations, where lay the secret of the troubles which oppressed his adopted country, nor slow to express the resentment he felt at the unwise and selfish policy of the parent state, by which they were inflicted. Indian disturbances, murders, and robberies were,

at the same time, an additional cause of excitement, as they were undoubtedly the immediate occasion, but only the occasion, of the outbreak which ensued; the true causes were in the laws of the empire.

Suffering and distress, occasioned by an intolerant legislation, was no new thing to the colonists of Virginia. Long before the rebellion broke out, and before the emigration of young Bacon, who was destined to act the principal part in it, the colony had been driven almost to desperation by the oppressive enactments of the Parliament of England. All, however, had gone on in comparative quiet and prosperity, down to the period of the sitting of the Long Parliament, by which was originated the aggrandizing policy of the famous Navigation Act, which, immediately, without doubt, was the occasion of large accessions to the wealth of the kingdom, but to which are also to be traced evils and losses more than enough to counterbalance any such advantages; as, among others, the gradual irritation, alienation, and final insurrection and independence, of the American plantations. It was, however, from the reënactment of this fatal measure under Charles the Second, with many fresh prohibitions, that Virginia chiefly suffered.

The agricultural interests of Virginia, always its great interests, had hitherto prospered through

their close alliance with a free, unfettered commerce. It is in vain to till the earth for harvests in the hope of wealth, or even of a comfortable independence, if the farmer may not be permitted to sell his crops. Having to this time been left free, not only to cultivate the land in what manner, and with what crops, they judged to be most for their advantage, but also, when their harvests were gathered, to sell to whom and where they could to the largest profit, driving their bargains among a crowd of competitors, not only in Europe, but in the northern colonies as well, Virginia had steadily advanced in population and in wealth. Her tobacco, the most famous in the world, had found its way to all the principal ports of Europe, in ships of every nation, being hindered in its progress no more by Parliamentary interference than by the "Counterblast" of King James. The taste for this idle weed had grown by what it fed on; the demand increased with every exported shipload, and the rich returns were fast elevating to a condition of substantial independence the planters of the wilderness.

Slavery, too, as early as 1620, had been introduced, which, whether at first it were done with the good-will of the inhabitants, or against it, chimed in too agreeably with men's natural indolence to be rejected, even if any principle

of morals had, at that day, called for its rejection, and helped not only to increase the amount of annual product, but to attach the people more and more to a form and condition of society, which, beside bestowing wealth, raised them also above the necessities of personal labor At the period we are speaking of, the colony numbered not far from fifty thousand souls, a large proportion of whom, especially, we may suppose, those of middle life and most active habits, were natives of the soil, bound to it by the strongest ties of interest and affection, and by their hopes of what it was destined to become in the opening future.

Here was a state of things, comprising, in the apprehensions of the people, many of the elements of the highest happiness and prosperity. There was certainly a present actual prosperity, that might well afford occasion for the warmest self-congratulation. But all this was totally and suddenly changed, and universal distress brought upon the land, by the new restrictive clauses added to the original Navigation Act, by the first Parliament of Charles. By the act of the Long Parliament, it had been simply provided, that foreign vessels should import into England no other products than such as were grown or manufactured in their own country; a shaft aimed principally at the Dutch,

who, while they produced little or nothing themselves for exportation, were, at the same time, the general carriers of Europe. This, however, touched not the colonies. But the hint first started by the sagacious, foresighted legislators of the Commonwealth, was immediately perceived to be available to a much greater extent than had been originally conceived, to the aggrandizement of the nation; and by Charles's Commons this first hint was accordingly expanded into a voluminous code of monopolizing enactments, by which the trade of the world was regulated on the principle of grasping for England every possible commercial advantage, and inflicting upon all other nations the greatest possible commercial injury. Such was the political economy, not of England alone, but of all civilized nations at that day; they legislated on the axiom, that nations are natural enemies each of the other. Upon the colonies, one and all, this cruel policy bore with a weight which almost crushed them, and, but for their Saxón blood, made more Saxon in the atmosphere of the wilderness, would have effectually done so.

From 1660, when this monopolizing policy took its beginning, the discontent of the people increased day by day, as each new prohibition was proclaimed. Commerce lay dead. Tobacco would no longer pay for its cultivation, much

less enrich the laborious planter; manufactures, as that of silk, after being attempted, failed to bring the hoped-for relief, and there seemed no prospect but starvation and ruin.

What wonder that mischief lay brewing in the hearts of a people, who, for their almost slavish loyalty, met only these thankless returns of injury and injustice; for the Virginians of that day were monarchists in the full meaning of the term. They cherished with strong affection the idea of their relation to, and dependence upon, the crown of England, and rejoiced in the rule of her kings. The greater freedom of the New Englanders was far from their thoughts. "The New Englanders," they said, "imagine great felicity in their forms of government, civil and ecclesiastical, under which they are trained up to disobedience to the crown and church of England; but the Virginians would think themselves very unhappy to be obliged to accept of, and live under, a government so constituted, although they might therewith enjoy all the liberties and privileges the New Englanders do, or whatsoever greater they might be put in hopes of." *

Nor was there any of that protection extended toward these loyal and obedient chil-

* Burk's *Hist. of Virginia*, Vol. II. Appendix, p. 53.

dren, to make them feel, that, while they were so distinguished for their filial piety, the parent, on her part, had the feelings which became that sacred relation. On the contrary, England neither defended them by land nor sea; she built neither forts on the coast, nor outposts on the borders of the wilderness; she employed neither armies nor navies, nay, not so much as a soldier or a ship, in the protection of her distant subjects; not even against the savages of the wilderness, who swept off the poor colonists by the hundred in their cruel massacres, did she ever raise a finger. This had all, in the comparison, been well enough, if, at the same time, she had laid no claims of service and affection in return. But, in the language of a familiar phrase, it was adding insult to injury, first, to withhold all aid of men and money in times of the deepest distress and most urgent danger, and then, as prosperity began again to dawn, to send over her tax-gatherers to distrain upon the increasing wealth, till the dawning prosperity was, by a spirit of the most unrelenting exaction, again broken down into poverty and ruin. Such, in her dealings with all the colonies, were the spirit and principle of the colonial policy of England. All that can be said in its defence is, that, after all, it was the most liberal policy of the age.

Other causes conspired with these purely po-

litical ones to bring the public mind of Virginia into such a state of deep exasperation as to find its relief only in insurrection. Of these, one was particularly a source of irritation; namely, the grants of vast tracts of territory, made by the wasteful and profligate King to his needy and profligate favorites, made wholly irrespective of present owners and occupiers, who were transferred, like serfs of the soil, to any great patentee to whom the caprice of Charles chose to consign them. Among those who were thus unceremoniously changed from one owner to another, and reduced from a state of independence to one of virtual vassalage, were some of the principal land-owners of the colony, who, from the extent of their possessions, and the freedom of their position, had been accustomed to consider themselves almost as an order of nobility.

Such acts of arbitrary injustice served still more to inflame the public mind. The people saw themselves, their public prosperity, and their private property, the sport alike of an oppressive government, and of a wasteful, thoughtless sovereign. The repeated remonstrances of agents sent to England for the purpose produced no effect. What remained but despondency for the future, for themselves and their children, in a country where, with all the unavoidable dangers and terrors arising from the proximity of hordes

of barbarous natives, they were to be exposed likewise to the depredations and systematic oppressions of the mother country?

It serves to justify these assertions, that political causes alone laid the foundation of the grand rebellion, to know, that, so early as 1663, before the most oppressive of the various acts of Parliament had been promulgated, and when the Indians neither gave nor threatened any disturbance, a conspiracy was planned under the leading of one Berkenhead. Some soldiers of Cromwell, it is related, who had fled to the colony on the restoration, fancying the state of things here to resemble what it had been in the old country, and to offer an opportunity to play once more, on a smaller scale, but with more prospect of success, the same game that had been played and lost in England, gathered around them a large number of disaffected spirits, and, after much manœuvring, had actually appointed the day and hour for the final move, when the courage of the leader gave way, or his conscience interposed its remonstrances, and he revealed to Sir William Berkeley, the Governor, the whole plot. It was, of course, easily defeated. The militia were called out, and reaching, by secret movements, the place of rendezvous at the very moment of the arrival of the chief conspirators, they were, without oppo-

sition, arrested and committed to prison, and their followers dispersed. The Governor commenced here the system of blood and revenge, which, after Bacon's affair, made his name infamous. "Four of the rogues," in the words of Beverley, "were hanged."

This happened, it is to be noted, so early as the year 1663. Though, as it chanced, this rising of the people was easily suppressed, yet was it symptomatic of disease in the public mind. To suppose that a few idle, disbanded soldiers could create an insurrection, unless they were able to ingraft their selfish purpose upon the stock of some general disaffection, would be to judge the men of those days by some standard applicable only to themselves. Whatever views of personal ambition Berkenhead and a few of the other leaders may have entertained, nothing can be clearer than that it was the general discontent under the oppressions of government, that led the people to give them any countenance. Had the community been a prosperous and contented one, subject to a wise and equal legislation, it would have taken more than a few lawless spirits, such as these, to throw the country into the ferment and confusion of a civil war. But in this case, as afterward in that of Bacon, it was the people who were uneasy, and who rose.

In both instances it was the people who found and made the leader, not the leader who agitated and roused the people. The movement in 1676, especially, began not slowly, nor at a single point, as in the case of a conspiracy, but everywhere, simultaneously, as in a resistance against a common oppressor. Twice more, in the year but one preceding the great rebellion, were there partial insurrections, in one of which Bacon himself was implicated, but received the pardon of the Governor.

The occurrence of events like these shows, that the feverishness of the times was too general, and too deeply seated, to be traced to the arts or influence of a few individuals. When industry is at a stand, and the minds of men have little other employment than to brood over their misfortunes, and compare their actual condition with what it might be, and ought to be, any cause is sufficient to rouse them into action; and to whatever subordinate point their action may at first be directed, it will not be long before it will find out, and be concentrated upon, the real grievance. The proximate cause of Bacon's movement was to be found in the aggressions of the Indians, and the first action was against them; but the real causes were those that have been already named, and the

principal action was directed, not against the Indians, but against the government.

Since the death of Powhatan, there had been peace with the surrounding tribes, a peace of nearly forty years. The dreadful massacres of 1622 and 1639, which nearly annihilated the settlement, seem to have glutted the savage appetite for revenge, and a general security had been enjoyed, even on the remotest and most exposed plantations. All at once, in the spring of 1676, the calm was disturbed. Historians of the period affirm, that it was occasioned by the unprincipled instigation of the English at Manhattan, who had just succeeded in subjugating the Dutch.* In order to engross to themselves the entire Indian trade of the coast, they took pains to prejudice against the planters of Virginia the minds of some of the roaming tribes, who, passing in the rear of the settlements on the seaboard, brought to the north the peltries of those latitudes. It was by these wandering tribes, and not by the native tribes of the soil, it is affirmed, who had so long been on terms of friendship with the planters, that the murders and robberies, which had alarmed the country, had been committed.

* Beverley's *History of Virginia*, p. 67. Burk Vol. II. p. 156.

However this may be, various outrages were first committed by the Indians, on whom the whites, as usual, retaliated; murder answered to murder, burning to burning, till, throughout the whole border country, were kindled the flames of an exterminating Indian war, accompanied by all its peculiar horrors. In the excited state of the public mind, these new calamities were laid at the door of the government. "Why are we not protected against the savage?" was the general cry; "why are we left to be the victims of the tomahawk and the scalping-knife? Oppressed by taxes unequally levied, our commerce dead, our tobacco not worth the planting, yet we receive from our mother country, who profits by our losses, not so much as a single company of soldiers to stand between us and our terrible enemy." They called loudly on the Governor for defence and protection; they importuned him to come to their relief. But, loudly as they called, the Governor did not hear, or he put them off with vague promises, which he did not keep. No troops were raised, and the horrors of the border warfare increased daily.

It is difficult, or rather impossible, to account for the dilatoriness of the Governor, and for his absolute refusal to stir a finger for the relief of the planters, without admitting the justice of the charges more than whispered against him,

nay, distinctly mentioned by Beverley, and affirmed by the King's commissioners, who came out, at the close of the rebellion, to examine into his conduct. The charges are, that, being personally interested, to a large amount, in the profits of the Indian trade, he would not permit it to be interrupted, and would rather that a retaliatory partisan warfare should go on, till it should end itself, than that all commercial intercourse with the tribes should be cut off by a general war, to which the government should be a party.

On the other hand, it is not to be concealed, that similar accusations were made against Bacon, of a desire to secure to himself the advantages of the same great monopoly, as the motive which impelled him to the steps he took. But there is nothing, in all that is related of the character of Bacon, to afford to this accusation the slightest foundation of truth. He might, with some show of reason, be charged with ambition; with a rash, restless, or reckless spirit; with a love of popularity, and a desire to supersede Berkeley in the affections of the people. It is said, that Sir William, before the troubles broke out, was jealous of his influence. But with the mean vice of avarice he cannot be charged, with any color of justice. He was young; and avarice is not the vice of youth. Moreover, he was

already rich, with the prospect of a large inheritance in the wealth of his uncle. With the character of Berkeley the accusation is more congruous. Whatever he might have been in his younger days, as he grew old, he grew avaricious of estates. The testimony to this point is direct and full; and, at the close of the rebellion, he showed himself very little scrupulous as to the means used, by which he swept into his own treasury the property of obnoxious individuals, but much of which he was compelled by the commissioners of the King to restore. Nor is it difficult to see how he might reason himself into the conviction, that the course of peace, which he was disposed to take, was better for the interests of the colony than a general war, and so pursue, with comparative innocence, the guiding of self-interest under the illusion of patriotism.

But, whatever his motive, the course he took was most unfortunate for the colony and for his own reputation. If he thought he had good reasons to give, why Bacon should not be put in commission, as general against the Indians, that was his own affair; he was at liberty to appoint whom he would; but it was no reason why he should make no appointment at all. Any show of sympathy on his part would have quieted a people, all whose instincts were loyal. But

for absolute inaction, for total neglect and abandonment, the people were not prepared, and to these, in the excited state of their minds, they could not submit. It is not easy to conceive the deep indignation, with which the absolute refusal of the Governor to aid them must have been regarded. How could the mere forms of government keep their reverence, when their life was evidently gone out. The terrors of an Indian war were, of themselves, enough to drive the people to extreme measures, under circumstances of such abandonment on the part of the government; but, coming so immediately, as they did, on the back of so many other causes of disaffection, insurrection and rebellion were almost the natural and necessary consequence.

Bacon, himself a resident in one of the more exposed districts on the borders of the wilderness, was among the sufferers from Indian depredations, and he sympathized with the general distress of the country. It is fair to suppose, that, as one of the Governor's Council, as one of the most distinguished citizens of Virginia, he had made the state of the country a topic of frequent debate, and had pressed on the attention of the Governor the measures by which alone the district could be quieted, and the fears of the people relieved. No representations, however, of any kind, had power to prevail;

and, though promises were made that something should be done, the promises were not kept.

The people went so far as to engage that, if the Governor would only commission a general, whomsoever he would, they would "follow him at their own charges." Still they were not heard. Under such circumstances of neglect and excessive irritation, they took the case into their own hands, and turned their eyes in search of a person capable of leading them, and willing to lead them, though no commission should be obtained of the Governor. At once, and with no difference of judgment, their choice fell upon Nathaniel Bacon, who, not less irritated than themselves, and equally interested in the common welfare, acceded promptly to their wishes, and declared that, on the occurrence of a single other outrage, "he would march, commission or no commission."

This happened in the month of April, 1676. As soon as Bacon's consent to lead them was known, the people, throughout the border plantations, flew to arms, and flocked to his standard. In a few days, their General found himself at the head of a numerous army, of five hundred men, impatient for immediate action. The occasion, and prescribed condition for action, at the same time presented themselves, in the murder of the overseer of Mr. Bacon's plantation by a band of

marauding savages. Before, however, setting out on the expedition, it was deemed right and prudent once more to apply to Berkeley for the commission, which he had never absolutely refused. Bacon sent a full account of the rising, stating the cause of it, declaring frankly its objects, and expressing his earnest desire that, to what was an irresistible popular movement, and, as was believed, in self-defence, against great and increasing dangers, there might be made no opposition, but, on the contrary, that his free and full consent might be obtained to the measures taken.

To these representations no immediate answer was returned, save a civil assurance of a due consideration of the subjects submitted. While waiting a few days, in the hope of some proper answer to their request, Bacon lost no opportunity of haranguing the people who had drawn around him, and presenting to their minds, with the effect, it is reported, of a very commanding eloquence, all their grievances, not only as connected with the Indian hostilities, but of every other kind from which they were suffering; their decayed and dying trade; their depressed and unproductive agriculture; the unjust seizure, and transfer to other hands, of territories long possessed and cultivated; their taxes excessive and insupportable, and unequally imposed, especially

the late additional burdens laid upon them for defraying the expenses of a new commission to England, and for the building of forts by the river, ostensibly for the protection of the people against the Indians, but, as was believed, really for the command of the colony's commerce, and the enforcing of the various provisions of the Navigation Act.

It is in what are well known to have been the topics of Bacon's addresses, that we see how plainly the feeling against the Indians was but one of the most inconsiderable of the elements, in the general mass of discontent, which had driven the country to arms. The rising of the people at this particular moment was, indeed, occasioned by apprehensions of the Indians. Perhaps, without this accidental cause, the rebellion had never had its existence. It seems quite possible, that the other difficulties would have been submitted to, as they had been so long, in the hope that remonstrance might eventually procure redress. At this very time, three of the principal citizens of Virginia were in London, and, though they had been delayed and trifled with for twelve months, were negotiating, with some prospect of success, as it afterwards appeared, for a restoration of lost privileges, a general redress of grievances, and the obtaining of a charter

which snould effectually secure them against future usurpations.

Partial risings there might be, as in 1674 and 1675; but hardly, as now, of the whole people, with a united heart and a common object. But, finding themselves once in arms, under the conduct of a man like Bacon, intelligent, active, popular, the minds of the multitude turned, not to one only, but to all their burdens; they called up all their griefs; and one can hardly doubt, that, with the sense they must have had of their power, as they surveyed their well-appointed ranks, they may have hoped, through their imposing attitude, to force from the apprehensions of the Governor what they could not obtain from his justice.

That either the people or Bacon dreamed of independence, or placed it before them, earlier or later, as a distinct object, cannot for a moment be supposed. Bacon, at least, was a man of too much sense to yield to such a delusion. Though such a movement might stand justified to his reason, it would not to his prudence. There could not have been the faintest prospect of success in such a struggle. It would have been the case of the mouse against the lion, the mole against the elephant. The most, probably, that occurred to any was, if the worst came to the

worst, to seize the Governor, as formerly they had done their Governor Harvey, and ship him for England; and that not so much out of hatred of him, (for he was, on the whole, popular,) as a sign of their general discontent.

The moment of Bacon's first application to Berkeley for a commission was the moment which a man, either of wisdom or humanity, would have seized to hear with patience the story which the people had to tell, to weigh in the balance of justice their complaints, and to constitute himself a medium of communication, for the ends of peace and the common good, between the malcontents and the government of England. A little moderation, and a little sympathy with suffering, would at once have calmed the angry passions that were now raging, and have easily provided and applied the needed remedies. But it was not in the character of Sir William Berkeley to take such a view of the duty imposed by his office, nor even to discern very clearly where lay the path of the wisest policy. He was a genuine representative of the Stuarts; self-willed, imperious, obstinate, temporizing; with all the vices, and some of the peculiar virtues and graces, of the man of birth and long-enjoyed authority. He was little fitted to manage men wisely and well. For thirty years he had reigned a little king over a little kingdom, and his pride

was touched at the position in which he now stood before his subjects. A generous mind would have shown him what to do, and how to do it. But he was deficient in magnanimity. It was himself for whose dignity he was to care; and it could never consist with dignity to make concessions to inferiors, however much their happiness might be promoted, whatever sore and bitter evils might be averted by doing so. He pretended to receive with some favor the messages of Bacon, and promised attention to them, and a prompt reply; but he did not intend to keep his word. He wanted time to determine how to act.

On the return of the messengers with the Governor's smoothly-turned but ambiguous reply, it was instantly resolved to proceed upon the expedition without further delay; a hope yet remaining, that the commission would be sent, and that their movement would be sanctioned by the letter of the law. With an army of five or six hundred followers, Bacon took up his march against the Indians. As soon, however, as the news reached James Town, that Bacon had actually gone upon his enterprise, the Governor, urged not only by his passions, but, we are told, set on also by certain persons about him, who were jealous of Bacon, and wished for his ruin, suddenly, by proclamation, declared Bacon a

rebel, required that he should be delivered into his power, and commanded his followers to disperse, under the heavy penalties of the law. If he believed Bacon to be a traitor, he was right to denounce him as such, and seek his apprehension. This was, so far, all in the way of his duty. But, in going beyond this, and taking the step he next did, the Governor laid himself open, and justly, to the charge, afterwards alleged against him, of commencing and fomenting a civil war.

This act of raising an army, and starting in pursuit of Bacon, was, in every point of view, a most unfortunate one, and drew after it the most disastrous consequences. It was eminently a blunder, and served to divide the wrong, at least, between himself and Bacon. To this point the Governor had kept clearly within the letter of the statute-book; he was free not to listen to the complaints of the rebels, if he thought that the best way to treat them, and serve the colony; it was competent for him to proclaim them all rebels, and place them within reach of a halter; but, having done this, it was then a more legal as well as a more politic course, to put the business into the hands of the sheriff and the county. It may well be questioned, whether it lay within the circle of the Governor's powers or privileges to "begin and foment" a civil

war. The passions of the Governor, however, as was natural, prevailed; and, summoning such forces of the militia as he could raise on the emergency, he hastened on the track of the enemy.

He had reached no further than the falls of James River, the seat of Bacon, when his further progress was unexpectedly interrupted by news of a most alarming character from below, news which convinced him, that the evil, against which he was contending, was wider and deeper than he had thus far been willing to believe. This was, that an insurrection had broken out in the middle counties; that the people were in arms, under leaders of their own; that they had entered James Town, and seized upon the government. Here was seen at once the fruit of this ill-advised expedition.

The accounts of these transactions state, that this was a rising of the very mass of the people of the central counties; not only of the freemen and the lower classes, but of the freeholders, the planters, the persons of chief estate, and high in office, members of the Assembly and the Council, officers of the government as well as its subjects. No more convincing evidence could be asked than this to show, that Bacon was a rebel in no other sense, than that in which the whole people might be termed so. That is to say, the rising

now changes its character from an insurrection, with some mere personal and selfish object, to a rising of the entire people, for the securing of objects which they considered absolutely essential to their well-being or existence. Bacon, after all, was but one of the multitude; the multitude were each a representative of Bacon. A weight of oppression was bearing on all alike, and all alike rose to throw it off.

On reaching the scene of action, in the neighborhood of his capital, the Governor found, that his authority had entirely passed from his hands, and was completely in those of the people. Even his own army, resolving itself into citizens, turned round upon him, and repeated the demands that came up from all the rest of the people. Under such circumstances of universal desertion, there was, to a man like Berkeley, overbearing in prosperity, feeble in adversity, but one course to pursue, that of a general compliance with the demands so clamorously made, as the only price of peace.

This rising of the centre put an entirely new aspect on the whole affair. Before, no intimation had been given, that the insurgents had any object in view, beyond defence against the Indians; nor does it appear, from anything they had done, that they had. Even in what he had attempted, Bacon had aimed to do all under a

warrant of the state. But here was a political revolution on the part of the whole, instead of a military insurrection, if so it be just to term it, on the part of a few. It was now a bold demand of relief against bad government, not, as with Bacon, a mere hurried, irregular expedition against the enemy on the borders. It was now demanded, that the Assembly then sitting should be dissolved, and warrants issued for a new election, and that the sentence against Bacon and his followers should be reversed. There is no evidence to show, that there was any concert between Bacon and the leaders of the revolt in the lower counties. It seems to have been news in the strictest meaning of the term, when he heard of the rising; which goes to convince us how general was the spirit of discontent.

The resolute conduct of Bacon and his adherents, and their departure on the expedition, had given the greatest satisfaction to all the inhabitants, and had served to quiet them, by presenting an object of interest, and which promised relief; and, but for the rash conduct of Sir William Berkeley, the rebellion might have ended where it began. But to stand idle, and to witness the raising of an army of their fellow-citizens to attack their other fellow-citizens, gone out upon an enterprise of danger and patriotism, to see these treated by the Governor as enemies

of the country, was more than could be borne; and as soon, accordingly, as the Governor had turned his back upon the capital, the people, as one man, rose and seized upon the government. By their numbers as well as by their determination they were irresistible, and easily obtained from their humbled and terrified ruler whatever they asked. Having extorted compliance with their principal demand, that warrants should be issued for a new election, upon a system, too, of a wider and more popular suffrage, by which they hoped to bring all else right, they appear to have scattered again to their homes.

The Assembly, for which an election had now been decreed by the Council, was held about a month afterwards. Bacon was sent as a member from his county. It was this Assembly which passed what in the Virginia statutes are termed *Bacon's Laws*, laws which show not only how many abuses had crept into the government, that greatly needed correction, but prove, also, the wisdom and moderation of a body, which had come into power in so irregular a manner, in a period of so great excitement These laws, though afterwards abrogated in a mass by the British government, were, the most important of them, reënacted, in nearly the same words, by succeeding Assemblies.

While these things were doing in the lower

counties, Bacon was in full pursuit of the Indians on the frontiers. He is reported, in the very imperfect narratives of these events which have been preserved, to have taken Indian towns, to have engaged in several skirmishes, with mutual losses in killed and wounded, and to have made many prisoners. But he had hardly commenced his work, or, as others say, was returning from it, when he heard of the civil commotions that had broken out in the centre, and of his proscription as a rebel. With characteristic promptness and decision, he set his face at once toward the capital, that he might be at hand for service in the greater scenes, which had unexpectedly opened, on a more conspicuous stage.

About the precise order of events, there is here some discrepancy among the different historians. What, upon the whole, appears best established, is, that Bacon, in his impatience to reach the new seat of war, left his army, already much reduced by the return of many to their farms, in the charge of subordinates, while he himself hastened on with a few followers. Reaching the river, he embarked on board of a small vessel for James Town. But he had hardly set sail, when he was almost immediately discovered and pursued by an English armed vessel in the interest of the Governor. and, in spite of every

effort to escape, was finally taken prisoner, and carried to the city.

Other accounts state, that he had completed his Indian expedition, had disbanded his forces, and returned to his farm, before he started for James Town; that the object of his going thither was to take his place in the Assembly, as a member for Henrico county, and that he was arrested by Sir William Berkeley as he was descending the river for this purpose. The discordance is, in this instance, of little moment. According to both statements, though arrested with this show of violence, he was received with politic courtesy by the Governor, and, as the new Assembly, the 1st of June having come, was now gathering, his offences were overlooked, and he was admitted to his seat in the House.

A more material disagreement exists, in regard to the true cause of the next outbreak, which was followed by consequences so serious. On the one side, it is affirmed, that Bacon, having publicly acknowledged his errors in the steps he had taken, and pledged his word now to keep the peace, suddenly, and without provocation, broke his word, secretly fled from James Town, and once more drew around him his scattered forces. On the other hand, it is admitted as a fact, that Bacon broke his parole, and fled secretly from the city; but, in his justification, it

is said, that, on his confession and submission, the Governor had promised not only a full pardon of all past offences, but the long-desired commission of general against the Indians, which last, however, after much delay and many fair promises, Bacon and his party were persuaded would never be granted; and not only so, but it was ascertained, that, as soon as Bacon's followers, whose presence had intimidated the Governor, had left the city, supposing that all was now placed again on an amicable footing, a warrant was secretly lodged in the sheriff's hands for the reapprehension of Bacon as a traitor, and this coming to the knowledge of Bacon through the interest of his uncle, a member of the Council, he had no choice but to make his escape on the earliest information.

Direct testimony here weighs in favor of Bacon; and, in addition, there is his general character for truth and frankness, while the Governor had shown himself quite capable of both ambiguous language and conduct. But, wherever the fault lay, Bacon suddenly left the city before the Assembly had closed its sittings, was received with enthusiasm by what remained of his army, which was soon swelled, by accessions from the neighboring plantations, to over six hundred men.

Enraged at the duplicity of the Governor, it

was instantly resolved to obtain by force what could be had in no other way; and, in four days from the time of leaving the city, Bacon was on his way thither again, at the head of a powerful army. The Governor, informed of his advance, summoned, by proclamation, the militia to the defence of the capital; but the militia would not come. The great insurgent, therefore, without opposition, entered the capital as its uncontrolled master, and deprived the inhabitants of such arms as they had. The Assembly was still holding its session. The soldiers surrounded the building where they sat, and from the Governor, Council, and the House of Burgesses, a commission for Bacon was clamorously demanded. With this they would be satisfied, and depart as they had come. Berkeley is reported to have come forth, to have bared his breast, and called upon the insurgents to fire, if they would; but as for their request, it should not be granted. Bacon is also reported to have replied, "I will not hurt a hair of your head; we only want a commission to go against the Indians, which you have often promised, but now we will have it."

The House of Assembly and the Council, overawed by the imposing array of Bacon's forces, or, rather, being, for the most part, of his own way of thinking, applied themselves, by every

various representation, to conquer the obstinacy of the Governor. They succeeded eventually in all they attempted. The Governor was prevailed upon to make out, and sign, a commission of General for Bacon, to sign many acts passed in relation to the war, and necessary to its successful conduct, and, more humiliating than all, to put his name to a document to be transmitted to the King, highly commendatory of Bacon and his conduct in all these transactions, and bespeaking for him the favorable consideration of the Parliament. It is in vain to speak of the chivalry of the old Cavalier after these weak and timid evasions. He might not, by another course, indeed, have saved his life, though we cannot believe, that it would have been in the least danger; but he would have saved his honor. It was at this period, we may suppose, while Bacon and his army were quartered upon the city, that most of those statutes were enacted, which have been designated as Bacon's laws.

When all was completed according to his wishes, the General, acting now under a commission from the Governor, as a great officer of the state, set off a second time, at the head of his forces, for the wilderness. But as soon as he was sufficiently distant to relieve the Governor and his friends from their fears, all that had been granted was revoked; a proclamation

was issued, again denouncing Bacon as a rebel, setting a price upon his head, and commanding his followers to disperse. Information of this being conveyed to him, when he was already far on his march, and, also, that the Governor was in force, through the fear of some of his adherents, he wheeled about, without a moment's delay, and retraced his steps to the capital. The Governor, having failed, after the most strenuous efforts, to raise an army wherewith to oppose the enemy, was compelled to fly; and receiving, at this juncture, an earnest request from the inhabitants of Accomac, nominally a distinct territory, to take up his abode with them, he gladly accepted the offer, and abandoned his capital.

While at Accomac, though invited with great apparent cordiality, and by persons considered well affected toward the government, it is remarkable, and not to be overlooked in considering the causes of these troubles, that, by these same loyal inhabitants of a distinct territory, as soon as the Governor was fairly among them, petitions were presented, praying for precisely the same objects, to obtain which Bacon was in rebellion, and the whole people of the colony had risen with him; so that, almost without exception, or if any, at least of only some twenty gentlemen of large estate, the whole people of the colony were on the side of the insurgents.

Bacon, on reaching the capital by forced marches, found himself, without opposition, in quiet possession of it, the Governor and all the functionaries of his state having fled, some in one direction, some in another. The government, abandoned by the retreat of those to whom its reins had been intrusted, could be considered no otherwise than as at an end. It was necessary, with all possible despatch, to enter upon its reconstruction. For this purpose, not apparently remembering, that the power which he held in his hands might so easily be employed for selfish ends, had the desire been felt to do so, Bacon threw himself upon the original source of political authority, the people, and summoned a convention of the inhabitants of the colony, to meet at the middle plantation, on the 3d of August, to take into deliberation the state of the country, and devise the steps necessary to the re-establishment of its government.

The summons was everywhere obeyed. This assembly, composed of the most substantial citizens of the colony, came together at the appointed time, and performed with dignity the duties for which it had been assembled. The result of its deliberations was the issuing of a public declaration, in which, after the manner of the more famous declaration published just one hundred years afterwards, the public grievances which

had prompted, and appeared to the people to justify, the extraordinary measures they had resorted to, were duly set forth. This declaration the reader will be pleased to see at length, as it stands recorded in the pages of Beverley. The oath, says that historian, was word for word as follows;

"Whereas the country hath raised an army against our common enemy, the Indians, and the same, under the command of General Bacon, being upon the point to march forth against the said common enemy, hath been diverted, and necessitated to the suppressing of forces, by evil-disposed persons raised against the said General Bacon, purposely to foment and stir up civil war among us, to the ruin of this his majesty's country; and whereas it is notoriously manifest, that Sir William Berkeley, Knight, Governor of the country, assisted, counselled, and abetted, by those evil-disposed persons aforesaid, hath not only commanded, fomented, and stirred up the people to the said civil war; but, failing therein, hath withdrawn himself, to the great astonishment of the people, and the unsettlement of the country; and whereas the said army raised by the country, for the causes aforesaid, remain full of dissatisfaction in the middle of the country, expecting attempts from the said Governor, and the evil counsellors aforesaid; and

since no proper means have been found out for the settlement of the distractions, and preventing the horrid outrages and murders daily committed in many places of the country by the barbarous enemy; it hath been thought fit, by the said General, to call unto him such sober and discreet gentlemen as the present circumstances of the country will admit, to the Middle Plantation, to counsel and advise of reëstablishing the peace of the country. So we, the said gentlemen, being, this 3d of August, 1676, accordingly met, do advise, resolve, declare, and conclude, and for ourselves do swear, in manner following;

"First, That we will at all times join with the said General Bacon and his army against the common enemy, in all points whatsoever.

"Secondly, That, whereas certain persons have lately contrived and designed the raising forces against the said General, and the army under his command, thereby to beget a civil war; we will endeavor the discovery and apprehending of all and every of those evil-disposed persons, and them secure until further order from the General.

"Thirdly, And whereas it is credibly reported, that the Governor hath informed the King's majesty, that the said General, and the people of the country in arms under his command, their aiders and abettors, are rebellious, and re-

moved from their allegiance; and that, upon such like information, he hath advised and petitioned the King to send forces to reduce them; we do further declare and believe in our consciences, that it consists with the welfare of this country, and with our allegiance to his most sacred majesty, that we, the inhabitants of Virginia, to the utmost of our power, do oppose and suppress all forces whatsoever of that nature, until such time as the King be fully informed of the state of the case, by such person or persons as shall be sent from the said Nathaniel Bacon, in the behalf of the people; and the determination thereof be remitted hither. And we do swear, that we will him, the said General, and the army under his command, aid and assist, accordingly." *

This is a declaration, rather in a spirit of loyal devotion to the person and government of Charles, than in that of an unscrupulous rebellion; a declaration of persons who might be termed rash and violent reformers of a misgoverned realm; of persons, who, in some things, might have mistaken the best measures by which to attain their objects, but who entertained sincere and patriotic designs, who, evidently, had no quarrel with the form of the government over

* Beverley's *Hist. of Virginia*, p. 73.

them, but solely with the manner, in respect to themselves, in which it had of late been administered; and who felt assured, that, could a full and ungarbled statement of their motives and conduct go before the King himself, they would stand justified and approved. It is the language of persons opposed to certain conduct of their rulers, not to certain theories of government.

Besides issuing this declaration, writs were made out for a new election of burgesses, to meet in Assembly at Middle Plantation, in October, to whom should be committed all further provision for the government. What beside these were the acts of this Convention we do not learn; no record of its sittings seems to have been preserved; none such, at least, is mentioned, or referred to, by the writers of the period.

When the Convention had closed its sittings, Bacon turned his attention immediately to prosecuting, as he now might hope to do without hinderance, the great object for which he had taken arms. Once more, accordingly, with large and well-appointed forces, and now backed by the authority of the colony, he advanced toward the frontiers, leaving, as it would seem, no sufficient protection of the central counties against any attempt which the Governor might be disposed to make for the recovery of his dominion; a neglect followed by the most disastrous

consequences. For, as in the former instance, as soon as the enemy was fairly withdrawn, the Governor, who had, probably, been deemed utterly helpless, encouraged and aided by a few determined followers, began to stir himself. By some well-managed manœuvring on the river, to his own amazement, he soon found himself in possession of all the waters and the shipping, and was at once engaged in a series of skirmishes by land and water with the enemy. Inspirited by this unlooked-for success, he left no means untried to increase the numbers of his land forces; and what with promises of plunder and large pay, he collected about him a motley crowd of sailors, foreigners, adventurers, and idlers, amounting in all to some eight hundred men, and resolved to make an effort for the re-establishment of his authority.

Although small detachments of men had been left by Bacon at different points about the city, yet there was no force at James Town, nor in its immediate neighborhood, capable of resisting the large body of troops which Sir William Berkeley could now bring to the attack; so that, crossing over with his fleet, he had only to disembark at the docks of the city, to find himself again at home, reëstablished, in the semblance at least, if not in the reality, of power. He at once reorganized the government on its ancient

foundations; again he set a price on the head of Bacon, again called on his followers to abandon him and return to their allegiance, under the pains and penalties of treason. Well aware, however, now, whom he had to deal with, having already had some experience of the promptitude and decision of his movements, he lost no time in putting the city into the best possible posture of defence, by filling it with his armed followers, and throwing up such military defences as its position and the time would allow.

Hardly were these hasty preparations completed, before he heard of the rapid descent of Bacon, from the upper country, at the head of an army flushed with conquest, and bearing with them the trophies of their Indian victories. The battle of Bloody Run had been fought and gained; and, though the work, for which arms had been taken, was by no means finished, yet the news of the recapture of James Town did not permit the delay of an hour in going to its rescue; for now, it was not to be denied, the securing of the general liberties of the colony against the attempts of a vain and incompetent Governor was paramount even to its defence against the dangers of an Indian war. The Indian, with all the horrors of the scalping-knife and tomahawk, was less to be dreaded than the white man with his taxes and his paper bonds.

The march of Bacon, at this time, is described as presenting an imposing spectacle in itself, beside the intense interest that must have been excited by the expected collision, in civil war, of the largest forces that had yet met in battle on the western continent. By one of the Virginia historians it is said, that "the march of the insurgents to James Town, although rapid, exhibited rather the spectacle of a triumph, than the appearance of an army preparing for battle. Their Indian captives, together with the arms and plunder which had been taken, were placed in the centre, and displayed with all the gaudy parade of military pomp, the evidence of past achievement and the pledge of new victories. The women and children, as they passed, poured out their blessings on their heads, and offered up prayers to Heaven for their safety and success. The General himself, with a countenance that bespoke and inspired assurance of success, appeared on horseback, now in the van, and occasionally in the wings and rear, chasing away despondence wherever he appeared, and reviving hope by the ardor of his manner, and the contagious spirit of his discourses." *

But, though much bloodshed was naturally apprehended from the meeting of such considerable

* Burk's *Hist. of Virginia*, Vol. II. p. 182.

forces, there was too great a predominance of that element of valor, which consists in discretion, on the part of the Accomac Virginians, as the sequel shows, to permit such a result. Bacon is reported to have done all that became a vigilant, brave, and intelligent commander. He had reached the city with but about one hundred and fifty men, the rest of the army having melted away, as his citizen soldiers, on emerging from the forests, had approached their homes; yet those few men were so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of their leader, that they felt themselves to be, and so doubtless were, as the event proved them, equal to many times their own number. Intrenchments were hastily thrown up, and the place invested. Many days and nights they were engaged in these arduous labors, their General directing them, and sharing all their privations and fatigue.

But these labors were destined to a speedy termination. Only a few days had passed before the fate of the Governor was decided, and the war in truth ended, by an unfortunate sally which he made at the head of the flower of his troops. These troops became panic-struck, as soon as the actual fight came on, and fled in confusion back to the safe retreats of the wooden walls of the city. It ended, in a word, in the total discomfiture of Sir William, notwithstanding the great

disparity of numbers. "He sent forth," says a contemporary annalist, "seven, or, as they say, eight hundred of his Accomackians, who, like scholars going to school, went out with heavy hearts, but returned home with light heels; thinking it better to turn their backs upon that storm, that their breasts could not endure to struggle against, for fear of being galled in their sides, or other parts of their bodies, through the sharpness of the weather." * His soldiers, if such they could be called, are said to have exhibited every conceivable evidence of cowardice, and to such a degree, that Berkeley, though not without much effort to avert the disgrace, saw that his safety was to be found only in a timely retreat. Having still at his command the shipping of the river, he accordingly, on the night following their rout, embarked the whole of his troops, and dropped down a distance of about twenty miles below the city.

The morning disclosed to Bacon the full extent of his success. The town was wholly deserted. He immediately entered, and took possession of, the forsaken capital. By his orders, it was instantly burned to the ground. This was done in order that, as it could not be garrisoned and

* *The Burwell Narrative*, Mass. Hist. Coll. Vol. I New Series, p. 53.

made to serve any purpose for himself, it should not be of any advantage to the enemy. In a strictly military point of view, the act might be defended. But seeing, that the war was not one of conquest and extermination, but rather a mere civil broil for the obtaining of certain moral and political rights, it is obvious, that these ends should have been sought at the least possible damage to a community, which was soon to be united again under the same laws and government. A stronger reason, than throwing a temporary embarrassment in the way of Sir William Berkeley, should have been required for such a measure.

Besides, without this additional blow, the enemy was already reduced to straits so desperate, that there could be no reasonable apprehension entertained of any further resistance that could not easily be subdued. The whole country, that is to say, was with Bacon, and merely a crowd of cowardly adventurers about the Governor Nothing would seem, at this moment, to have stood between Bacon and the undisputed, absolute control of the colony, had no unforeseen event interposed, as it did, to change the whole aspect of affairs. Sir William Berkeley himself was entirely at the mercy of the great rebel. A few moves more, and he would have found it necessary either to take refuge in some of the

other colonies, to have returned to England, or to have yielded himself to his more powerful and successful rival.

The name alone of Bacon, after this series of successes, carried with it a power equal to victory. Immediately on the reduction of James Town, news was brought of the rapid approach of a Colonel Brent, at the head of a thousand men, to support the cause of the old government; to meet whom, though still suffering from the exposure and fatigue of the siege, the general and his army prepared themselves in the temper of persons who feel in themselves the confidence inspired by victory. The soldiers demanded with acclamation to be led instantly to battle. But the opportunity could not be given them to signalize their courage by fresh conquests. For no sooner had information of the capture and burning of James Town, and the defeat of the Governor, been conveyed into the interior, and come to the ears of the forces under Brent, than, like the "Accomackians," struck with terror at the mere rehearsal of such terrible things, they threw away their arms, and slunk into the shelter of their homes; and to Bacon, already two or three days on his march to meet them, the news was brought "post haste, that Brent's men (not soldiers) were all run away, and left him to shift for himself."

This voluntary dispersion of the affrighted soldiers of Brent extinguished the last ray of hope that the Governor's course could be any longer maintained, and left Bacon supreme. He now turned his thoughts to the proper method for securing the power he had gained, for preserving the peace and order of the colony, till news could be had from England of the King's pleasure; and, further, to the preparations necessary for meeting the Assembly in the Middle Plantation, which was to convene on the 1st of September. Meantime he passed over into Gloucester county, to increase his strength there, by visiting the inhabitants, and by obtaining the subscriptions of the people to the declaration and oath which had been published by the convention in August.

But all his plans were here suddenly defeated by the hand of death. This event took place in January, 1677, at the house of a friend where he was residing. Some mystery attaches to the manner of it. It is affirmed by some that it occurred as the consequence of a cold, taken in the camp before James Town, while exposed to rain and the fatigues incident to the very severe services which then devolved upon him. This is the statement of the earlier writers without exception. But by Hening the suggestion is thrown out, that Bacon, and, together with him.

one Cheeseman, and Hunt, his associates, were taken off in prison by violence of some kind; that Bacon was poisoned, and the others made away with in that or some other manner.* The authority, however, on which this statement is made, will hardly appear sufficient to justify so serious an accusation. All that is produced in support of it is the language of the act of attainder, (32d Charles the Second,) in which his death is spoken of as "infamous and exemplary;" very singular language, certainly, to be used of any one who was believed to have died in his bed under the hand of Providence; while it must be admitted to be very much such language as a royalist would be likely to use of a rebel, who had fallen by the hand of an assassin. But, then, it is quite impossible to suppose, that, in a great parliamentary document, any, the remotest, allusion would be made to a crime like the one imputed, had the government caused it to be committed. No such phraseology as could lead to the least suspicion that the government had authorized such an act would be found there. And why it is there, is not easy to be explained.

Hening uses one more argument to sustain his conjecture of poison, but of no more weight. He says, "When we see, by the instructions of

* Hening's *Statutes at Large*, Vol. II. pp. 374, 460, notes.

the King to Sir William Berkeley, that Bacon was to be taken at all events, that both force and design were to be employed, the conjecture will not be deemed an overstrained one." But the instructions referred to by no means sustain such an inference. The language of that paper is, "But if the said Nathaniel Bacon shall refuse to render himself, then the proclamation which you shall receive with these instructions shall be immediately proclaimed, and all ways of force and design used to surprise him; and to the end he may not easily make his escape, we have caused our letters to be directed to our most dear brother James, Duke of York, or the Commander-in-chief under him of New York, as also to the Lord Baltimore, or the Commander-in-chief under him of Maryland, to seize the said Bacon, and return him prisoner to you in case he should retire to either of these places."*

This cannot be construed to authorize any violence beyond capture; "he is to be returned prisoner." If his destruction by foul means had been intended to be connived at and sanctioned, a single loose general expression, such as "that he must by no means be permitted to make his escape," an expression which would have excited no suspicion, would have covered

* Hening's *Statutes*, Vol. II. 426, 460.

and justified any deed of violence by which he might have been taken off. But by the King he is required to *be delivered up a prisoner.* It was not in the character of Charles, supposing him to have read or known of the instructions issued in his name, to have so much as winked at a deed like this imputed to him. His vices were many and gross; but cruelty was not one of them. And in this respect his government was like himself; it was profligate, but not cruel or revengeful.

But, however and wherever Bacon died, it could never be discovered where he was buried, nor what disposition had been made of his body. It was sought for diligently, that Sir William Berkeley might wreak upon it the poor vengeance of hanging it upon a gibbet; but it could never be found.

The death of Bacon was, in effect, the restoration of Sir William Berkeley to his lost authority, and the termination of the war; there being not an individual, among either his counsellors or officers, of capacity sufficient to make good his place; especially, not one that could pretend to any portion of his influence over the people. Ingram did in some sort succeed him in his relations to the army, but he is spoken of even contemptuously by some of the historians. He was aided by Drummond, Lawrence, Walklate, and

others, who for a time kept together a remnant of Bacon's army, and carried on a skirmishing warfare with the Governor. But Berkeley, gradually subduing all opposition, and making prisoners of many of the prime movers of the revolt, in a short time saw the authority of his government completely reëstablished.

The biography of Bacon, which is no other than a recital of the events of these few months of civil disorder, might with propriety close here, were it not that something would be wanting to a just estimate of earlier transactions, without the light thrown back upon them by the conduct of Sir William Berkeley after his return to power.

The historians of the period inform us, that no less than twenty-five persons were executed during the closing period of the rebellion and the few next succeeding months! Several were hung under martial law, as they fell into the power of the Governor, before the war was ended. The rest fell before the vengeance of juries and courts, that, in their treatment of the prisoners, violated every principle of law as well as of mercy. They knew what Sir William's will was, and it seems to have been their only aim to gratify it. "Before these partial and vindictive tribunals," says Burk, "which were filled by the most violent partisans, by a sort of general proscription,

the great body of the people were brought in succession, and punished according to the degrees of their rebellion.

"To such a pitch of injustice and indecency had they arrived, that they reviled the prisoners at the bar in all the bitterness of rage and revenge. They are represented by the King's commissioners to have proceeded 'with that inveteracy as if they had been the worst witnesses, rather than judges of the commission, accusing and condemning at the same time.' The Governor himself often attended these trials, and gave countenance to their bloody and inhuman proceedings." *

The case of Drummond, one of Bacon's principal advisers, and formerly a Governor of the colony of South Carolina, was one that showed most malignant cruelty on the part of Berkeley. In the petition of his widow, afterwards, to Charles, for the restoration of confiscated property, she says, "that before that time (of his arrest) the Governor, on some private grudge, had declared that the petitioner's said husband should not live one hour after he was in his power." And when he had fallen into his power, the petition says that he was "taken, stripped, and brought before Sir William Berkeley, and by him imme-

* Burk's *History of Virginia*, Vol. II. p. 200.

diately (though in time of peace) was, without anything laid to his charge, sentenced to die by martial law; although he never bore arms nor any military office; not being permitted to answer for himself, or received to trial according to the laws of England; but, within four hours after sentence, being hurried away to execution by the said Governor's particular order." *

So shamefully unjust were all the proceedings in these trials, that the King's commissioners say, "None did escape being found guilty, condemned, and hanged, that put themselves on their trial. There happened to be so much guilt or fear in most men, that there was not a man who would not much rather have a fine imposed on him before he would venture to stand his trial; so, at last, this was the question to criminals, Will you stand your trial, or be fined and sentenced as the court shall think fit?" † Tyranny, injustice, and the spirit of extortion, could go no further in wickedness than this. Giles Bland, a person of character and estate, was summarily tried, condemned, and executed, though he "pleaded that Sir William Berkeley had his pardon, with the royal signature, in his pocket." The Governor was also charged with having, contrary to all law, confiscated and ap-

* Burk, Vol. II. p. 201. † Ib. 202.

propriated to his own uses the estates of many of the rebels, of which he was compelled, however, to render an exact inventory to the crown, by the King's commissioners.

So alien are such proceedings as these to the laws and institutions of the present day in this country, that it seems hardly credible that they can possibly have happened at any period on this western shore. It is a pleasure to know, that the Governor's conduct excited the utmost indignation in England, and especially in the mind of the good-natured King, who is said to have exclaimed, on hearing of these doings in Virginia, "that the old fool had taken away more lives in that naked country, than himself had taken for the murder of his father." * It is difficult not to believe, that a character like this of Berkeley, in a thousand previous corresponding acts of violence and pride, must have had a material influence in aggravating the political causes, as well as in creating others, that led to the rebellion; and so, on the other hand, we cannot but think, that, under a magistrate of an opposite temper, though the great political evils might not have been abated or removed,

* Williamson's *History of North Carolina*, Vol. I. p. 229.

the people would have remained faithful to their allegiance.

Obstinacy, jealousy, pride, avarice, were the vices of Berkeley's narrow mind, which prevented him from listening to the cry of the people; and the remonstrances of Bacon, when the Indian disturbances first commenced. Bacon's movement will always stand justified, as will the general feeling of the colony at that period, until it can be shown, that Sir William Berkeley had good and sufficient reason for withholding his permission to go against the Indians, for closing his ear to a cry that went up from the whole country. No such good and sufficient reason has ever been suggested; jealousy of Bacon, and regard for his Indian monopolies, are those only, which have been named.

As he will stand condemned for this act, which was the immediate cause of the rising, without which, notwithstanding political wrongs, it might never have happened, so will he be held responsible, also, for taking that other first step, fatal in all its effects, which gave to the rebellion its character of a civil war, the raising of an army, and pursuing Bacon to the Falls of James River. This, too, had its origin in the character of the Governor, in a proud and passionate temper, over which, in a state of ex-

citement, the control of reason, and even of policy, was never felt. To these two acts of Berkeley, not to Bacon or the people, are we properly to trace the unhappy events of this period.

Selfish and ambitious motives have been imputed to Bacon, and designs that would not have been satisfied until he should have entirely supplanted Sir William Berkeley, and reigned in his stead. Selfish and ambitious he may have been, though it has never been made to appear; but, if views of personal aggrandizement were the principal objects of his actions; if he engaged in a violent controversy with the Governor only, or chiefly, for the promotion of his own advantage; if he marched against the Indians, and afterwards against his neighbors and friends, in the array of war, only for the achieving of his own greatness, and his rising into political power as the head of a new and independent state, whether republican or any other; if such were his aims, it must be confessed he not only took very extraordinary steps to promote them, but was strangely forgetful of the conduct and the measures, on several conjunctures, which would surely have been those of a mere selfish adventurer. Power was repeatedly in his hands; at several times he had Sir William Berkeley and the colony completely at his disposal; yet there is no evidence of any such purpose existing

in his heart. At those very moments, he turned his back upon all such prospects, and again returned to the frontier to wage war with the savage.

There can be little doubt, that he was disgusted with the administration of Sir William Berkeley, and longed for a change. He could not regard the interests of the colony as well served in his hands. Moreover, there can be no doubt, that he was even more offended by the rapacious and oppressive administration of affairs in Parliament, than even by the selfish inaction of the Governor. And he might reasonably hope, that at least this good might come of an insurrectionary movement, even if he and some others should be sufferers, that the attention of the distant government would be awakened to consider their grievances, or be made, at length, to believe them real ones, and induced to extend the relief which it was so easy for them to do. The people, risen with arms in their hands, would weigh, perhaps he might think, as a stronger argument than paper remonstrances in the hands of an accredited agent.

If it should be thought, that he was particularly unjustifiable in taking the course he did, at the time he did, since commissioners were at that moment in London negotiating for a charter,

it must be remembered that they had been there already a full year, at an immense charge to the colony, and had accomplished nothing. Moreover, past oppression and injustice, past neglect of remonstrances and petitions, left little hope that any new attempts would be attended by different results.

In considering the motives by which Bacon was governed, it is to be lamented that so little light can be brought to bear upon the subject from contemporary documents, biographical or historical, which supply any knowledge by which an idea may be formed of his personal character. But nothing has been written of him, nothing, at least, that has been preserved, except the narratives of the events of the insurrection; our knowledge begins and ends here, with the transactions of only a few months. Were letters to be discovered, a correspondence with friends either at home or abroad, private papers of almost any kind, some certain information would hardly fail to be gathered concerning the particular objects he had in view, the real extent of his designs, how far his later steps were premeditated, and how far they were the accidental results of circumstances unforeseen, or the natural effects of the first movement.

As far as information extends, there seems no good reason to doubt the purity of his motives,

the singleness and simplicity of his character. The steadfastness with which he adhered to the original object of his appearing under arms, and constantly returned to it, as often as by circumstances he was diverted from it, instead of turning aside to any mere personal object, when, if he had been chiefly actuated by a low ambition, the opportunity for its gratification was absolutely thrust upon him again and again, would seem to settle this question. His quarrel with the Governor was not of his own seeking; it originated in the opposite quarter. The only doubt in the case would, it is probable, hang over the later events and movements of the rebellion.

What, then, were his designs ultimately, when circumstances were altered, when, upon coming into unexpected collision with the Governor, he found his successes to have given him, in fact, absolute power in the colony? That he, even then, had no exclusively personal aim, seems proved, in the most satisfactory way, by his at once calling a convention of the people. This makes it clear, that he was with the people, and for the people, and desired nothing which they did not or which they would not sanction. And beyond this, the language of the document issued by that convention shows pretty distinctly what both his and their views were.

And were they not, though looking towards reform of many abuses, yet, at the same time, loyal? That document, indeed, seems to place the character of Bacon in an elevated point of view. It shows a manly, bold, independent spirit, yet not reckless, and merely revolutionary, nor the spirit of a demagogue. It denounces the Governor, but not the government. It binds by an oath to resist all mere oppression, and even the forces of the King, should they join the Governor as allies, and before they could make their case known, by their own organ, to the King himself.

Ideas, theories, and designs of abstract liberty and independence, seem not to have occupied his thoughts any more than purposes of mere personal power and rule. It was justice, an equal and fair administration of the existing government, relief from intolerable burdens, the suppression of manifest abuses, for which he had risen, and for which he was willing to contend. Had his efforts failed here, supposing his life to have been spared; had the government refused to hear, and persisted to consider and treat him as a rebel; then, from what appears of the determined elements of his character, it can hardly be doubted, that it would have come to a contest, hopeless as it might have been, with the mother country; then was he the very man to fight to

the last gasp for liberty and right; then would his position have been precisely that of the leaders of the revolution in after times, and himself a counterpart of our own great deliverers.

LIFE

OF

JOHN MASON,

OF

CONNECTICUT;

BY

GEORGE E ELLIS.

PREFACE.

The following narrative, from the nature of the subject, partakes as much of the character of history as of biography. The life of Major John Mason is interesting and important, only as connected with great public concerns, and especially with one of the most absorbing and saddening stories in our early history, the exterminating war waged against the Pequot Indians. The policy and righteousness of that measure my limits have forbidden me to discuss. I have endeavored faithfully and accurately to harmonize the various representations of it, and to tell the story in the simple way which best becomes it. I should have highly prized any materials or authorities, which would afford particulars of the parentage and early life of Mason, of his European experience, and of his more private and personal history. It is possible that such materials may exist, but I have not succeeded in finding them.

The sources, from which the information contained in the following pages is chiefly derived, are these. The manuscript records of the Col-

onies of Massachusetts and Connecticut; the printed and manuscript records of the Four United Colonies, of which there is in the State House at Hartford a more complete manuscript copy than that used by Hazard; the records of several towns; the registers of probate; the printed histories of Captain Mason, Lieutenant Gardiner, Captain Underhill, and P. Vincent, all republished in the Massachusetts Historical Society's Collections; the narratives of Johnson, Hubbard, and Mather; Winthrop's Journal; Hutchinson's Collection of Papers; Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society; various papers in the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society; the Trumbull Manuscripts; and Trumbull's History of Connecticut. I have visited the scenes signalized by the events, which are so imperfectly portrayed in the following pages. With due deference to the General Court or Assembly of Connecticut Colony, the substitution of English for the Indian names of rivers and tracts of country may be deplored. No works of the hands of the natives of New England remain, excepting a few implements of war and some of their simple pottery. They reared no enduring structures, they planted no landmarks. We might have preserved from their language the generally beautiful and appropriate names, which they affixed to their ancient territory.

JOHN MASON.

CHAPTER I.

Low Country Soldiers in New England. — John Mason comes over as one of the Dorchester Company. — His military Education under Lord Fairfax. — Engaged in the Expedition against the Pirate Bull. — Made a Freeman. — Employed upon the Fortifications at Boston and Castle Island. — Represents Dorchester in the General Court. — Joins the Emigrants to Connecticut.

Among the early English emigrants to New England were many bold and enterprising men, who had been bred to arms in the religious and political wars of the Low Countries. At the opening of the seventeenth century, as for some time previous, England had connected herself by many close sympathies with the United Provinces of Holland. Religious fellowship between scholars and divines, and mutual hostility to the

ambition and cruelty of Spain, shared by the rising spirit of republicans, drew large numbers of the English into the Low Countries. The military training there received was the best which the age afforded; it exacted rigid subordination, and required the military virtues of heroism and endurance.

Men who had been under this discipline were, above all things, needed to meet the emergencies of the early settlement of our colonies. They were essential to the success of the bold undertakings here commenced, to the protection of helpless widows and children amid the perils of the wilderness, and to the work of drilling the yeomen, who constituted the majority of the colonists, into soldiers. That was indeed a strange change in the fortunes of our famous military leaders, which transferred them from the castles and forts, the blockades and sieges, the mathematical calculations, and the complicated movements of European warfare, to the desultory strife of the wilderness and the woods, the stratagems of bush-fighting, of ambuscades in the grass, and of retreats in the swamps, and to the teasing wounds and the cruel tortures inflicted by the savages. But the change was readily made by men of nerve and muscle.

Of the names that occur in our annals as designating our famous leaders, who had mingled

in the wars of the Netherlands, we are familiar with those of Captain Miles Standish; of Captain John Underhill, who had "spoken freely to Count Nassau;" * of Captain Daniel Patrick, who had been in the Prince's guard in Holland; of Lieutenant Lion Gardiner, "engineer and master of works of fortification in the legers of the Prince of Orange, in the Low Countries;" † and of Captain John Mason. The last named individual is the subject of the present biography. It is possible that he had been the companion in arms with some or all of the above-mentioned soldiers in Holland, as he was with all of them, and of others of the same class, whom I have not named, in these colonies.

Captain John Mason was to Connecticut what Captain Miles Standish was to Plymouth colony, the main earthly stay of dependence in a periled cause, the wise and brave leader in formidable battles, and the individual to whom all eyes turned in the most trying emergencies attending the settlement of a savage wilderness, and its defence from savage hostility. Both of these courageous men had frequent opportunities for the exercise of their remarkable abilities, and

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* Welde's *Short Story of the Rise, Reign, and Ruin of the Antinomians, &c.* p. 41.

† Gardiner's *Pequot Wars*, Mass. Hist. Coll. 3*d Series*, Vol. III. p. 136.

for the display of their prowess; but Mason was called by circumstances to a more famous service than fell to the lot of Standish. The Connecticut Captain, honored afterwards as a distinguished civil magistrate, was the leader in the most important single affair in all the early warfare of the colonists with the Indians; he was the ruthless destroyer of the Pequot tribe, the exterminator of the Pequot name.

I can discover nothing in regard to the parentage, or the birthplace, or the early life of Mason, save that he was born in England in the year 1600. He was associated with the first settlers of Dorchester, Massachusetts, who came chiefly from the counties of Devon, Dorset, and Somerset, in England, and his connection with them may imply his previous intercourse as a friend or a neighbor.* Neither does the precise date of his arrival in this colony appear on record. Very many of the name of Mason are mentioned on the church and town books of Dorchester and Watertown; and Hugh Mason, of the latter place, was made a freeman of the colony on the same day as the Captain.

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* The diligent and accurate Prince seems to have been ignorant of Mason's origin and family. He mentions (*Mass. Hist. Coll. 2d Series*, Vol. VIII. p. 122,) that Mason "is said to have been a relative of Mr. John Mason, the ancient claimer of the province of New Hampshire."

The first settlers of Dorchester landed on Nantasket beach, May 30th, 1630; and, after a short stay at Watertown, they commenced their work at Dorchester in the early part of June. Roger Clap, who, in his brief "Memoirs," has left us such an ingenuous and affecting narrative of the straits and fortunes of that company, of which he was one, does not mention Mason as belonging to it. He says, "Our Captain was a Low Country soldier, one Mr. Southcot, a brave soldier."* Had Mason been with them, he would scarcely have been omitted by Captain Clap in the list which he gives of the chief men of the first company. His name, wherever it occurs in our annals, is mentioned with credit and respect. He had been trained as a soldier under Sir Thomas Fairfax, in the Netherlands; and by espousing

* *Memoirs of Roger Clap*, edition of 1844, p. 18. Nor is Mason mentioned as belonging to the first company at Dorchester in Blake's MS. *Annals*, a copy of which is in the cabinet of the Massachusetts Historical Society. The only notice of Mason, in the Dorchester Church Records, is that he had land "on the right hand going to Fox Point." Trumbull (*History of Connecticut*, Vol. I. p. 337) says that Mason came over with the first company to Dorchester in 1630. In this statement, he has been followed by Allen, (*Biographical Dictionary.*) Neither, however, gives his authority. In the *Account of Dorchester*, by the Reverend T. M. Harris, (*Mass. Hist. Coll.* Vol. IX. p. 154, *note*,) Mason is mentioned as belonging to the congregation, but not in full communion with the church.

that service he proves to us his Protestant zeal, and leaves us free to suppose his republican predilections. As we shall see in the course of our narrative, he once refers to his military experience in "Belgia." After Fairfax returned to England, he united himself by domestic and political relations to the anti-royalist party in church and state, and was General of the parliamentary forces. Remembering the good service of Mason, he wrote to him, desiring him to go back to his native country, and to push his fortunes there by espousing the rising cause.* But Mason was already identified with the exciting scenes and the absorbing interests of the settlement of Connecticut, and could not be prevailed upon to sacrifice his chief part in them, though he might have found a congenial work at home.

The first notice of Mason, which is found in our annals, is in the winter of 1662 – 3, and associates him with John Gallop, an intrepid and enterprising man, in an expedition sent by the magistrates of Massachusetts against a company of pirates.† A worthless fellow, by the

* Prince, in *Mass. Hist. Coll. 2d Series*, Vol. VIII p. 124.

† Savage's *Winthrop*, Vol. I. pp. 96 – 104. Captain Gallop afterwards went to Connecticut, and was associated with Mason in several exploits against the Indians, as were also their children after them, each having a son bearing

name of Bull, with fifteen or more of the English, left the business of honest trading to Piscataqua and the eastward, to take up that of plundering the planters on the coast, and of capturing vessels. He had proceeded to great lengths in his nefarious course, when Governor Winthrop received intelligence of his movements by a letter from the eastward. To undertake his capture or defeat was as necessary as it was formidable; and such an exploit, under existing circumstances, required prudence and courage. It was in the dead of winter that he had committed his atrocities, and the severe cold delayed the measures for bringing him to justice. John Gallop and John Mason spent two months in searching for him with their pinnace, but were compelled to return without having intercepted him. His men deserted him, "and Bull himself got into England; but God destroyed this wicked man." * For this service Mason received remuneration, and the order of court which grants it to him is the first mention, which I have been able to find of him in Massachusetts. The order gives him the title of Lieu-

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the name and title of the father, the one killed and the other wounded in the famous Narragansett *swamp fight* in 1675. Gallop, the father, seems to have been employed as a pilot. An island in Massachusetts Bay bears his name.

* Roger Clap's *Memoirs*, p. 36.

tenant, which, we may suppose, he brought with him from abroad.*

Mason's early removal to Connecticut, which identified him with the emergencies and the struggles of that infant colony, was doubtless a great loss to Massachusetts; for, though he never won any high distinctions in matters appertaining exclusively to quiet and peaceable times, his talents and abilities were such as could not fail to be continually employed for the public service. Through his whole life, he appears to have avoided all those collisions of private and of public interests, and especially of theological speculation, in one or another of which even his companions in arms, Endicott, Stoughton, Underhill, and Patrick were involved. Massachusetts showed a disposition to use his military skill so long as it was available to it, and in all the ways which the straits of its condition required. It was considered a great object to draw hither from Europe men, who had been trained in the Continental wars, and who were qualified to drill and discipline others, where all the males of full age needed to be soldiers. Captain Patrick came over with Governor Winthrop for this purpose;

* *Massachusetts Court Records*, Vol. I. p. 101, under date July 2, 1633. "Order is given to the Treasurer to deliver to Lieutenant Mason £10 for his voyage to the eastward, when he went about the taking of Bull."

he and Captain Underhill received salaries from the colony as military teachers. Mason was at least their equal in talent and enterprise. I find no record on the "Court Book" of his commission as a Captain, but that he commanded a company in Massachusetts may be inferred from the appointment of an Ensign under him.*

The importance of fortifying the peninsula of Boston on all points, both towards the main land and the harbor, was regarded by the magistrates from its first settlement. It would appear that even the ministers were brought into the consultation with the Governor and the assistants about the matter.† Mason was employed in this service. By the General Court of the colony held at Newtown, (Cambridge,) September 3d, 1634, he was put upon a committee with Captains Underhill, Patrick, Trask, and Turner, and Lieutenants Feaks and Morris, for seeking out "the convenientest places for situation, as also to lay out the several works for fortification at Castle Island, Charlestown, and Dorchester," and also to appoint what additional work should be done at

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* *Court Book*, Vol. I. p. 105, under date November 5th, 1633. "Serjeant Stoughton is chosen Ensign to Captain Mason."

† Savage's *Winthrop*, Vol. I. p. 137.

the fort in Boston.* The island in the harbor which is dignified with the epithet of Castle, and which employed the skill of Captain Mason, was thought to be a position essential to the defence of the colony in its infant state, and, from first to last, a great amount of labor has been expended upon it. The first erection was a very simple fortification of clay, which stood several years. When the walls of mud failed, a structure of pine-trees and earth was substituted; and when that, in a little space, became useless, a substantial erection of brick followed.†

At the General Court assembled at Newtown, (Cambridge,) March 4th, 1634 – 5, Captain Mason appeared as one of the representatives of Dorchester. The Captains had, up to this time, been maintained by their several companies; but at this court it was ordered that they should be maintained out of the treasury of the colony. Mason likewise represented Dorchester in the General Court at Newtown, September 2d, 1635. The following order shows that he was still employed upon the fortifications; "Captain Mason is authorized by the court to press more carts to help towards the finishing of the fort

* Court Book, Vol. 1. p. 123.
† Roger Clap's *Memoirs*, p. 31

at Castle Island, for all manner of work that is to be done there." *

From this period Mason's fortunes are identified with the colony of Connecticut, both before and after its union with its sister colony of New Haven. The application to the court of Massachusetts by the inhabitants of Dorchester, for leave to remove to Connecticut, was made on the 3d of June, 1635, at an adjournment of that court, in which Mason first appeared as representative. The result of this application is given in these words; "There is like leave granted to the inhabitants of Dorchester for their removal, as Watertown hath granted to them; also there are three pieces granted to the plantations that shall remove to Connecticut to fortify themselves withal." In the September following, we find that "two drakes, six barrels of powder, and two hundred shot, are lent to the Connecticut planters."†

The liberty which had a short time previous, and within the year, been granted to the inhabitants of Watertown and of Newtown, to remove themselves, was under the condition that they should not go out of the jurisdiction of Massachusetts. The application had been re-

* Court Book, Vol. I. pp. 137, 140, 159.

† Ibid. pp. 151, 159.

peated before this allowance was obtained. There was a strong opposition in Massachusetts to the removal of so many families and ministers; for, though large numbers of religious and of enterprising persons continued to arrive here, they might be attracted to different and distant localities, if such were to be so soon occupied, and thus a conflict of interests would at once arise. It seems difficult for us to conceive the necessity of such a dispersion at so early a period. But the large number of cattle kept by the planters, the hard and rocky soil of the neighborhood, and the expected arrival of many of their friends from abroad, made our fathers feel straitened for room. As we are now to follow Mason to Connecticut, we must turn over the pages of its early history.

CHAPTER II.

Mason's Enterprise. — Early History of Connecticut. — Indians request the English to occupy it. — The first Explorers of the Territory. — Contest between the Dutch and the English. — Plymouth Colony aggrieved by the Motion of Mason's Company. — Arrival of John Winthrop, Jr. — Emigration from Dorchester. — Lieutenant Gardiner at the Mouth of the Connecticut. — Sufferings of the first Settlers.

THE enterprise of Captain Mason, which led him to be a principal agent in the settlement successively of three towns in Connecticut, would doubtless make him a prime mover in the meditated emigration to the borders of the fair river which had, to our first planters, all the real charms of El Dorado. That river, with its broad meadows, was the first portion of the territory, now comprehended within the limits of Connecticut, which was discovered by Europeans. Whether the discovery was made by the Dutch from the New Netherlands, or by the English from New Plymouth, is doubtful; both parties laid claim to it, and both occupied portions of it almost simultaneously. According to Bradford,*

* Prince's *Annals*, ed. of 1826, p. 434.

the Dutch had suggested to the English at Plymouth to remove from their barren quarters to what the former called "Fresh River." But the Plymouth people had enough on their hands at that time.

The territory of Connecticut, and a great deal more, was granted, March 19th, 1631, under the seal of the Earl of Warwick, President of the great Plymouth Company, to Lord Say and Seal, Lord Brook, and others, to the number of eleven. The settlers of the territory were to be the patentees of these associates. Soon after the suggestion made by the Dutch to the English, some Indians, who claimed to be the original proprietors of the soil around the river, and had been driven from their territories by the warlike Pequots, came to Plymouth, and solicited some of the English to go and take possession of the country, promising them great advantages of trade. As the elder colony did not seize upon this proposal, the Indians went and offered the same to Massachusetts. This leads to the first mention of Connecticut which is found in our annals, made by Governor Winthrop, under date of April 4th, 1631. "Wahginnacut, a sagamore upon the River Quonehtacut, came to the Governor at Boston, with John Sagamore and Jack Straw, (an Indian who had lived in England, and had served Sir Walter Raleigh, and was

now turned Indian again,) and divers of their sannops." * They brought a letter addressed to the Governor by Endicott, expressing the desire of the sachem that the English should come and plant in his country, which was very fruitful, and that two men should be sent to examine it, and promising corn, and an annual present of eighty beaver-skins.

Winthrop received the Indians with courtesy, and entertained them at dinner, but did not accept the invitation. He learned afterwards that this sachem was "a very treacherous man, and at war with Pekoath, a far greater sagamore." The truth was, that Wahginnacut wished to overawe the Pequots, who were then in hostilities against the river Indians, by obtaining the friendship of the whites. The Plymouth people doubted only the expediency of making a permanent settlement on the river, but were very much pleased with the proposal of trade; and several individuals, at different times, went thither from the old colony for traffic. Some of the Massachusetts men were willing to unite with those of Plymouth in a common stock for the enterprise. To carry this plan into effect, Edward Winslow, Governor of Plymouth, and Mr. Bradford, came into Massachusetts Bay, July 12th, 1633, and

* Savage's *Winthrop*, Vol. I. p. 52.

remained a week. The motion was to set up a house for trading in hemp and beaver, and thus to forestall the Dutch, who were upon the same undertaking. The Council objected to the plan, that the place was not fit for a plantation, being occupied by three or four thousand warlike Indians; that the river had a violent stream, was barred at the entrance, and was frozen a great part of the year.* A journey was made thither by land, across the wilderness and the meadows, in September, 1633, by John Oldham, Samuel Hall, and two others of Dorchester and Watertown. They judged the distance to

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* Savage's *Winthrop*, Vol. I. p. 105. The acute and discriminating editor, who has polished and set that gem of historic literature, which was left us by the Governor, thinks that there was some disingenuousness in the suggestion of these objections by the Council, and that the design was to deter Plymouth from occupying a spot from which Massachusetts, the next year, warned off the Dutch, and of which she herself took possession in the year following. Secretary Morton, in his *Memorial*, complains with reason that his Plymouth brethren "deserved to have held it, and not by friends to have been thrust out, as, in a sort, they afterwards were." Indeed, there are two other matters, relating to the early history of Connecticut, in her connection with Massachusetts, which a citizen of the latter might wish presented her in a fairer light, the one being her dealing in reference to Springfield, and the other her virtual rupture of the solemn articles of union between the confederated colonies.

be about one hundred and sixty miles, probably following the winding paths of the Indians, at whose towns they lodged, by whom they were kindly treated, and who gave them beaver, hemp, and black lead.* The flattering accounts of the region given by Oldham's party first suggested a removal to the planters around Boston.

The Dutch and the English at once began their disputes for the possession of Connecticut. The former bought a parcel of land, of about twenty acres, of a Pequot sachem, but were opposed in so doing by the English. The Captain of the Massachusetts bark *Blessing*, trading at New Netherlands, informed the Dutch of the intention of the Plymouth people to erect a house on the river, and showed to Governor Van Twiller the commission from the English monarch by which his subjects claimed all New England. The Dutch Governor showed a like commission from the States-General to the West India Company. This mutual warning hastened the occupation of the territory. On the 8th of June, 1633, the Dutch sent Jacob Van Curter, who purchased the land above mentioned, at Hartford, and proceeded to erect a trading-house and fort. He was followed, in October, by William Holmes and a company from Plymouth,

* Winthrop's *Journal*, Vol. I. p. 111.

who carried thither, in a bark, the frame and other materials for a house, with a commission from their Governor, intending to sail up above the position taken by the Dutch. Mutual protests and insults were exchanged. The Dutch threatened to fire; but the English persisted in their purpose, and triumphantly fulfilled it, ascending the river about a mile above their opposers, and taking possession of the spot now known as Windsor. They "quickly clap up" their house, land their provisions, fortify themselves, and send home their bark.*

The Plymouth company took with them the original Indian proprietors to their former territory, and purchased it of them, greatly to the offence of the usurping Pequots. The Dutch Governor immediately sent a reinforcement of seventy men, armed, and with flying colors, to displace the English; but, seeing the strength of their position, the engagement was principally one of words, and after a parley the Dutch retired in peace. The Dutch fort stood on a point of land, which still retains its epithet, where Mill River runs into the Connecticut. Here they maintained a distinct and independent government, in resistance to the colony, un-

* Bradford, in Prince, p. 436, and Morton's *Memorial.*

til 1654. But they were regarded as intruders without claim or title.*

The house erected by Holmes stood at the mouth of Farmington River. This is to be regarded as the first English settlement in Connecticut. There is a tradition, that some Watertown people settled and erected a few huts at what is now Wethersfield, May 3d, 1635.† A number of the Dorchester men went to the bank of the Connecticut in July and August of this year, and made arrangements for a settlement near the Plymouth trading-house. After these arrangements were completed, they returned to Dorchester for their families. It is probable that Captain Mason accompanied these pioneers.

The intentions of Mason's townsmen gave great offence to the emigrants from Plymouth. Their Governor, Bradford, wrote to the alleged intruders, complaining of their conduct as an injury, and insisting that the old colony settlers had a right of possession and of purchase from the Indians. The Dutch at New Netherlands likewise sent home for a commission to rout the

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* In reference to the Dutch claims, see Hazard's *Hist. Coll.* Vol. II. p. 262. Hutchinson's *Hist. of Mass.* Vol. II. p. 416. *Mass. Hist. Coll.* Vol. III. p. 51, and *N. A. Review*, Vol. VIII. p. 85.

† Trumbull, *Hist. of Conn.* Vol. I. p. 49.

new comers.* It was in the midst of all these complaints, added to the perils of the wilderness, that the fathers of Dorchester, who had already been buffeted by so many storms of adversity, prepared to pierce the forests for a new home, on the green meadows of the Connecticut. Without such men as Mason to nerve the feeble and the fainting, and to guide the willing and strong, such undertakings would have rested in mere conception. Another enterprise, commenced at this time, had a tendency to hasten the removal from Dorchester to the now famous land of general desire. On the 8th of October, 1635, John Winthrop, son of the Massachusetts Governor, arrived at Boston, with a commission from Lord Say and Seal, Lord Brook, and the other patentees, to erect a fort at the mouth of the Connecticut, and furnished with ordnance, ammunition, and two thousand pounds sterling. Winthrop was made Governor of the river, and of the parts adjacent, for one year. On the 9th of November, hearing that the Dutch were about taking possession of the mouth of the river, he despatched thither a vessel and twenty men. Only a few days after their arrival, a Dutch vessel, from New Netherlands, appeared and offered re-

* Savage's *Winthrop*, Vol. I. p. 166.

sistance; but the English, having already mounted two cannon, contrived to retain possession.

Every thing now was ready for the removal of the Dorchester people; but the season was so far advanced, that their unavoidable hardships were largely increased. The interval of space to be traversed was more than a hundred miles in a straight line. Crossed as it now is, in all directions, by the well-worn roads of business and pleasure, its rocky fastnesses pierced, its dangerous precipices levelled, its swamps drained, its abundant watercourses spanned by bridges, the imagination can hardly restore the original features, which, though in the beautiful hues of autumn, were grim and dread to the poor exiles from English homes and comforts. As we are now borne over those pleasant regions by the startling velocity of the steam engine, the eye of one who loves the memory of the fathers gazes intently on the swift-vanishing objects, to catch each hoary rock or tree which perchance may have looked upon the weary march, or echoed the holy prayers of those Heaven-led wanderers. Many a mile must have been trodden which was not progress, and the winding paths of the wilderness only lengthened the labors which they eased. The infant was borne up on a single arm of its mother, while her other hand guided the gentle cow, whose back was loaded with babes that had

but just ceased to be nurslings, through tangled thickets and swamps, and across the frequent streams. The sturdy yeomen, with their heavy firelocks and ammunition, carried such household goods as were made dear by former association, or necessary in their wilderness work. As far as their way led through the forests, it was doubtless easier then than it would be now in the same regions. The Indians were wont to burn the underbrush and the shrubs in the fall of the year, so that, in the spots which they chiefly visited, the woods were as clear and pleasant as an English park. Their narrow and winding paths indicated the safer courses, the easiest ascents, the cool springs, the fords, and the places for nightly rest.

The removal of Mason's company from Dorchester was not pleasant to the ministers of that settlement. The elder, Reverend John Maverick, did not join it, but remained with the small remnant of his flock, and died in the following year. The Reverend John Wareham, his colleague, accompanied the party himself, leaving his wife and children till he had made provision for them. He was afterwards joined by his family. The company consisted of about one hundred men, women, and children, chiefly from Dorchester, a few from Watertown and Newtown

being in the number.* They began their journey on the 15th of October, 1635. The milk of their cows afforded them a large part of their nutriment. They travelled on foot, having sent most of their property, implements, and provision, round by water. They were fourteen days on their march before they reached their destination, encountering great hardships on the way, particularly in the passage of the bogs and streams.

They began their settlement on the west side of the Connecticut, not far from the mouth of the Scantic River, and called it Dorchester at first, then Windsor. The boundaries of the original town were of great extent, comprehending a territory of forty-six miles, on both sides of the Connecticut. The face of the country then was much the same as now, save that the rich meadows more nearly resembled bogs. Thick and stately groves of the primeval forest covered the hills. Where the Indian fires had had their full effect, a tall and coarse grass, well suited for thatching, grew rankly upon the rich soil, and afforded a lurking-place for the stealthy savages. The tangled thickets upon the banks of the streams, which

* Harris's *Account of Dorchester*, in the Mass. Hist. Coll. Vol. IX. p. 154. Winthrop says, Vol. I. p. 171, "about sixty men, women, and little children."

were likewise torn by the vernal freshets, and the winter ice, made it difficult to cross them, especially with cattle. Such was the expedition in which the Low Country soldier cast his fortunes.

But all the perils attending the removal of the company were as nothing in comparison of the straits and hardships, to which the much-tried Pilgrims were subjected on their arrival, and through the winter that followed. All the efforts of the fancy to paint the condition of families and individuals, who had been habituated to so different a lot from that which they now encountered, would probably but faintly copy the reality. It was not only that they suffered, but they were likewise compelled to the most wearisome watchings and labors. Their situation was harassing and distressing in the extreme. The weather was unusually stormy and severe, and the winter set in more than a month earlier than in ordinary seasons. By the middle of November, the river was frozen over, and the snow lay very deep. Large numbers of the cattle were left upon the eastern side of the river, and perished there, as it was impossible to transport them, and very difficult to erect the simplest coverings, or to find fodder for them.

Most of the provisions and furniture had been sent around the coast in small vessels, which

were either delayed or destroyed by tempests, and thus failed to arrive. Several of them were wrecked. Two shallops were cast away on Brown's Island, the men and the goods perishing. Early in November, a party of six left the settlement in a vessel to return to Boston. Being wrecked in Manamet Bay, they got ashore; and, after ten days' wandering, they reached Plymouth, exhausted by wintry cold and snow, and pinching famine. All that was needed to complete the horrors of their situation was found in their exposure to the savage animosity and the jealous fears, as well as the yet unchecked cruelty of the Indians, who, as we shall soon see, were reasonably regarded with dread by the English. By the beginning of December, famine stared them in the face. A party of thirteen set out for Boston by land. In crossing a stream, one of them fell through the ice, and was drowned. The rest, after ten days' endurance of incredible hardships, reached their destination, spent by suffering. They were preserved only through the kindness of some of the friendly Indians.

On the 4th of December, a company of seventy men, women, and children, left the settlement to go down to the mouth of the river for their provisions. Not seeing any sign of their vessels, they went on board the *Rebecca*, of sixty tons, and, after being ice-bound for a time, were loosed

by a gentle rain; then they grounded upon the bar, and were forced to unlade and relade, and at last, after a voyage of five days, they arrived at Boston. Those few, who remained at Windsor through the winter, sustained themselves upon "acorns, malt, and grains," by occasional hunting, and the help of friendly Indians. Some few of the cattle that had not crossed the river instinctively preserved their lives by browsing. But the Dorchester people suffered a heavy loss in this valuable species of property. Such was the trial, which the first dreary winter offered to the new comers, surrounded by hostile Indians, among whom they had a few friends, and those suspected, cut off from succor by land and sea, and with no proper food for their children, whatever shifts they might make for themselves.*

How valuable the services of a man like Mason must have been in these emergencies, we may easily conceive. He would naturally be regarded by the sufferers as their strongest earthly staff, their wisest earthly guide. With a minister and a captain, our fathers seem to have scorned all dangers, and to have been equal to every trial. It must have been in these severe straits, that they learned to repose in Mason that confidence, which led them to commit to

* Winthrop makes frequent reference to their sufferings.

him a hazardous enterprise, that sad necessity was soon to compel them to undertake; and in these days of adversity he must have acquired the good report which gave him, through all his days of strength, the highest military office in the colony.

On the 28th of November, 1635, Lieutenant Gardiner arrived at Boston, with a commission and means from the patentees to construct a fort at the mouth of the Connecticut.* This

* Lieutenant Lyon Gardiner (Savage, in Winthrop, Vol. I. p. 174, says, "his name of baptism was David") has also left us a brief narrative relating to the Pequot war, which is printed in the Mass. Hist. Coll. 3d Series, Vol. III. pp. 136 – 164. He introduces the narrative with a few particulars concerning himself, describing himself as "engineer and master of works of fortification in the legers of the Prince of Orange in the Low Countries." He was to have £100 a year, for four years, for "drawing, ordering, and making of a city, towns, or forts of defence." He expected to find three hundred men on the spot, and evidently had no high opinion of the prospect of things at his post. He met there Mr. Fenwick, who afterwards governed the place. Gardiner commanded, for four years, the fort, which, in honor of the principal patentees, was called Saybrook. Soon after his arrival, he took possession of an island, lying in a bay, both of which bear his name. On a blank leaf of a Bible which belonged to him, now in possession of his descendant, John G. Gardiner, of Gardiner's Island, he says he was commander at Saybrook four years, and that there his son David, the first white child born in Connecticut, was born, April 29th, 1635; "and then I went

stanch and skilful man, with whom Mason had many points in common, had likewise received his military education in the Low Countries, and performed good service in the infant colony. He was induced by the persuasion of the famous Hugh Peters, John Davenport, and others of the English at Rotterdam, to come over as architect and engineer, under the younger Winthrop, for the Lords patentees, and he at once joined the company at the mouth of the river. In the account which he has himself left us, he does not disguise his disappointment at finding so few men on the spot, and that so much work was to be done of which so little had been accomplished. He arrived in the very midst of the trouble with the Indians, which we are soon to enter upon. The gallant Lieutenant evidently found himself amid strange scenes, with enemies, in the persons of skulking Indians, such as he had not been wont to contend with in his mathematical fortifications.

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to an island of my own, which I had bought and purchased of the Indians, called by them Monchonack, by us Isle of Wight." The island lies off the east end of Long Island, and contains about three thousand acres. It was here that the pirate Kidd deposited his treasures. A monument on the island says, that Lyon Gardiner died in 1663. The property was till lately entailed; it is still in the family. The son above referred to died in Hartford, July 10th, 1689.

As the spring opened, the affairs of the new colony brightened. Governor Winslow, of Plymouth, went to Boston, and demanded satisfaction, on behalf of his colony, against the intrusion of the Dorchester company, but was satisfied with a compromise. Three English settlements, beside that at the mouth of the Connecticut, had now been made in the new colony; namely, that at Windsor from Dorchester, that at Hartford from Newtown, and that at Wethersfield from Watertown. The first court met at Hartford, April 26th, 1636, when it was forbidden to sell arms or ammunition to the Indians. At the next court, in September, monthly trainings were ordered, and every man was made a soldier. About one hundred and seventy families, or eight hundred individuals, are supposed to have been comprehended, at this time, in the settlement.* Captain Mason's principal companions at Windsor † were Reverend John Wareham, Mr. Roger Ludlow, Mr. Henry Wolcott, and Mr. Wil-

* Trumbull, Vol. I. p. 59.

† In a manuscript now preserved at Windsor, as a part of the ancient town records, "A Book of Towne Wayes in Windsor," is a plan of the ancient Palisado Plot, which enclosed the dwellings of the early settlers. The book appears to have been written in 1654. In the year previous to that, Mason, having removed to Saybrook, had sold his ground to Mr. Henry Clark. His location, therefore, bears on the plan the name of the latter.

liam Phelps. The labors of the fields might well have engaged all their time and care, and we might have lost the memory of a military man in the peaceful builder of houses, and the maker of roads, and the cultivator of a garden. But the murderous Indians were at work, and cruelties which demanded a brave avenger, if any, had caused the colonists to tremble with fear.

CHAPTER III.

The Origin of the Pequot War. — Relations of the Indian Tribes of Connecticut. — The Pequots, Mohegans, Narragansetts, and Nipmucks. — Views entertained of the English by the Natives. — Murder of Stone and Norton, with their Company. — Murder of Oldham. — John Gallop. — Roger Williams. — Lieutenant Gardiner. — Captain Underhill. — Mason at the Fort. — Endicott's Expedition. — Indian Outrages

The war with the Pequot Indians, which is so nearly identified with the first settlement of Connecticut, had its origin in several atrocities perpetrated by them immediately previous to the removal of the Massachusetts colonists. Captain

Mason was called upon to lead the little army of husbandmen, and he seems to have been fully persuaded both of the justice and of the necessity of the unrelenting completion of his appointed service. His personal history becomes, from this period to the close of his life, as much a part of the Indian as of the English annals. The melancholy fate of one of our native tribes, exterminated by his agency, demands our sympathy. How far the sad tale may be relieved, and the terrible infliction palliated, let a plain narrative of facts declare. The passage of two centuries may well rectify all mistaken views; and let us remember that our histories are written not by red men, but by the whites; not by the vanquished, but by the victors.

At the time of the settlement of Connecticut, its territory was more thickly peopled with the native tribes than any other part of New England. Winthrop, of Massachusetts, estimated, in 1633, that the Indians who lined the river could muster three or four thousand warriors. Their whole number in Connecticut may have reached to twenty thousand. Within the original bounds of Windsor there were ten different tribes or sachemdoms; and even so late as the time of King Philip's war, there were supposed to be in that town nineteen Indians to one of the English. The Pequots and the Mohegans were

regarded by our ancestors as two distinct tribes; but there are reasons for believing that they formed originally one nation. Uncas, the famous sachem of the latter, was, by both his parents, a descendant of the royal line of the Pequots, and had married the daughter of Tatobam, a Pequot sachem. At the time when the English became acquainted with the Connecticut Indians, it would appear that Uncas, who had been a sachem of the Pequots, under their chief, Sassacus, had revolted from him, and was in a state of rebellion. His squaw likewise renounced her kindred, and continued faithful to him.*

The Pequots were likewise the most warlike, as well as the most numerous, tribe in New England. Tradition said they were once an inland tribe, and had obtained by conquest, the territory in which the whites found them. Sassacus, their chief, had under him twenty-six sachems. Their territory lay between the Thames and the Pawcatuck Rivers; their principal seats being at New London, Groton, and the head of Mystic; their hunting-grounds extending to the southern boundary line of Massachusetts, and the Thames, then called Pequot River, making their harbor. The royal fort was on a commanding and beautiful eminence in Groton, now called Fort or

* Trumbull's Papers, MS. Vol. XXII. No. 83

Pequot Hill. The view of land and water which it presents is singularly extensive and fair; for an Indian gaze, it was a noble post. Sassacus had another fort, on a less elevated, but equally beautiful, summit, about six miles further east, near the head of Mystic. It was no wonder that he loved his territory, whether it was his by inheritance or by conquest. He is supposed to have had under him nearly eight hundred warriors.

In the eastern part of Connecticut, the territory reaching from Pawcatuck, now Stonington, to the bay called by their name, was inhabited by the Narragansett Indians. At the settlement of Plymouth colony, they were supposed to number three thousand warriors. They were in perpetual strife with the Pequots, and were the only neighboring tribe which the Pequots had not conquered, though still in a measure tributary to them. Mason tells us that the Narragansetts had a great dread of Sassacus, saying of him, "Sassacus is all one God; no man can kill him." Probably the fairest estimate of the native nobility and courage of the Indians, sometimes magnified by over-wrought description, would be gathered from their common reverence and dread of any one, who displayed any remarkable prowess. Canonicus, the chief sachem of the Narragansetts, being advanced in years, left the principal burdens of his rule to his nephew, Miantonomo.

In the northern and north-eastern parts of Connecticut were the Nipmucks, extending from the great ponds in Oxford, Massachusetts, about twenty miles southward. Uncas had conquered them, and added their territory to his sachemdom. In the neighborhood of the town of Westerly, Rhode Island, were the Nehantic, or Nyantic, Indians, who seem to have vacillated between the Pequots and the Mohegans. The territory of Uncas was at the east and north of Lyme.*

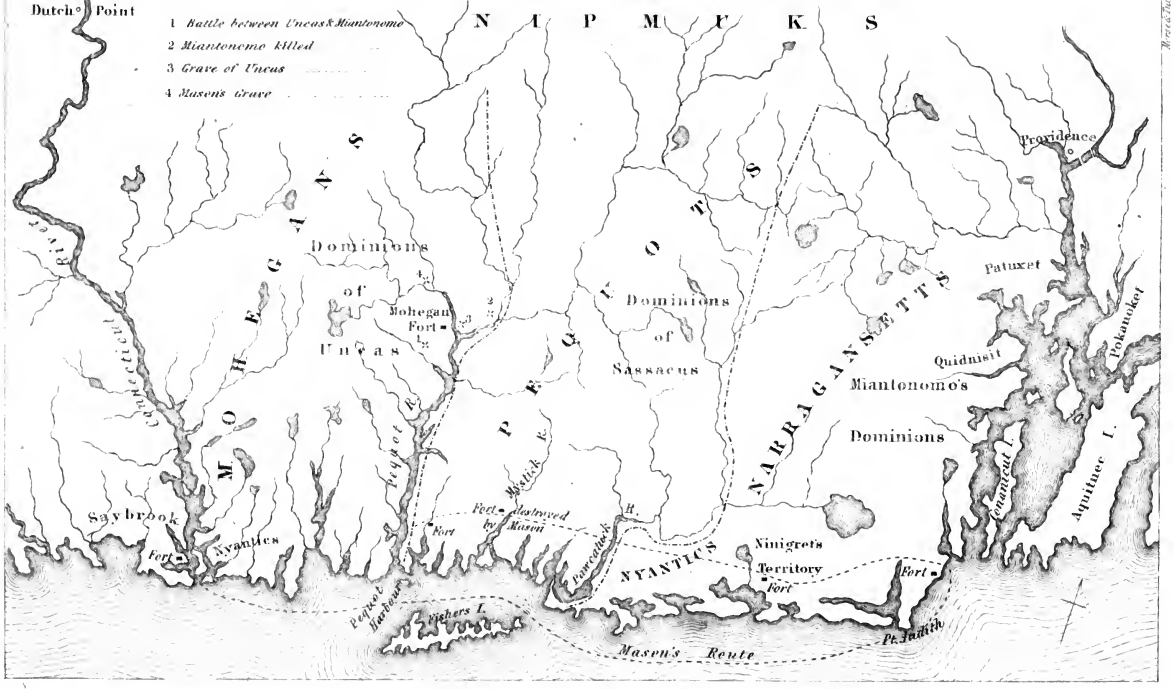
West of Connecticut, towards and beyond New Haven, the Indians were numerous, but scattered, and were the tributaries of the great Mohawk tribes, so that the Pequots and the Mohawks may be regarded as the two great nations who overawed their neighbors, and made their power to be felt by annual visits.

The languages of all the Indian tribes inhabiting New England, at least, were radically the same, differing only as dialects. The various tribes could easily converse together. Roger Williams tells us, that the Indians were very particular in the boundaries of their lands, noting them carefully by rivers and brooks.†

From this brief view of the relations existing between the natives of our soil, at the time of

* The Nyantics were doubtless a part of the great Narragansett tribe, under Ninigret as their sachem.

† Roger Williams's *Key*, &c., p. 89.


Dutch Point
1 Battle between Uncas & Miantonomo
2 Miantonomo Killed
3 Grave of Uncas
4 Masons Grave
N A P M U C K S
Providence
Dominions
of
Uncas
Mohegan
Fort
M O H E G A N S
Connecticut River
Pequot R.
Mattick R.
P E Q U O T S
Dominions
of
Sassacus
N A R R A G A N S E T T S
Patuxet
Quidnisit
Miantonomo's
Dominions
Pokanoket
Conanicut I.
Aquitnet I.
Saybrook
Fort
Nyantics
Fort
Fort destroyed by Mason
Fort
Pawcatuck R.
NYANTICS
Ninigret's
Territory
Fort
Fort
Pe. Judith
Pequot Harbour
Fishers I.
Masons Route

its first occupation by the English, it may well be supposed, that the smaller tribes were friendly to the settlement of the intruders. Mason speaks with great contempt of Indian policy and diplomacy, and of "their feeble manner" of fighting as hardly deserving the name. Nor is it among the least of the palliatory or redeeming circumstances of our Indian warfare, that it did only the more mercifully and swiftly the work, which was brutally and slowly advancing before the whites looked on or aided it. The Indian jealousy of the European settlers of New England showed itself on the first occupation of the country; but various circumstances delayed any open warfare, and confined opposition, spite, and enmity, to individual outrages for more than a dozen years. These circumstances were, first and chiefly, the desire of the Indians for trade with the English, their passionate admiration for our goods, such as hatchets, coats, ornaments, and strong drink. Female vanity was especially gladdened at the possession of English stuffs, as the means for a toilet afforded by the woods and fields were scanty. The devout Johnson, of Woburn, seems to have been shocked by his discovery, which he records in his "Wonder-Working Providence," that "their squaws use that sinful art of painting their faces." Another circumstance, which deferred hostilities, was the

fair and judicious conduct of the planters at Plymouth, who purchased land at what was then, considering its use by its owners, an equivalent, and made solemn treaties with them. The feuds among the Indians themselves for a season secured the English. The Indians at first had no conception that the English designed to plant among them extensive settlements, which would grow into powerful colonies. They expected only few and scattered encroachments on their soil by mere adventurers, and the occasional arrival of ships, sufficient to renew a supply of commodities for their trade, and did not dream of an interference which would result in a claim, on the part of the English, to the ownership and possession of the soil. Sassacus was the first of his race, who, looking into the future, saw there the issue of what was before his eyes. We are now to record the first rupture of a heretofore unbroken peace. It ended in ruin for the natives. Does it comfort us to know, that, in a court of justice, and by our laws, they would be regarded as aggressors?

The occasion of strife, as has so often been the case, was, in this instance, a man wholly unworthy of having even his death avenged by any great sacrifice at the cost of the living. Captain John Stone, of Virginia, who traded between the West Indies and New England, had twice been

in difficulty at Boston for gross immoralities, and had proved himself a troublesome and wicked fellow, and especially so by a Puritan standard. For his last offence he had been tried, imprisoned, and banished from Boston, on pain of death if he ever returned.* This was on the 12th of September, 1633. He left the Bay, and went with his pinnace to Piscataqua, where taking in Captain Norton, he sailed for Virginia.

On his way thither, or it may have been on his return from the West Indies, (St. Christopher's,) he put in at the mouth of the Connecticut, to trade with the Dutch and Indians. He engaged some of the Indians, who were not native Pequots, but in confederacy with them, to pilot two of his men up the river to the Dutch settlement, in a boat. Having frequently traded with the Indians, he had twelve of them on board his vessel. The boat having come to the shore for the night, the two men were murdered by their guides; and the Indians on board the vessel, while most of the crew and Captain Stone were asleep, put them all to death. Captain Norton took to the cook-room, where, for a time, he defended himself, by loading his gun from an open pan of powder, till it accidentally ignited; and, as he was blinded by the flash, he too was

* Winthrop's *Journal*, Vol. I. pp. 104, 111.

killed, making the tenth of the whole company. The Indians then plundered and sank the vessel.* The Pequots and the eastern Nehantics, with Sassacus and Ninigret, their sachems, were supposed to have been privy to these atrocities, because they were afterwards known to have shared in the spoils. News of this affair reached Boston, January 21st, 1634. The magistrates agreed to send an account of it to the Governor of Virginia, and to await his answer, after they had moved him to avenge it.

No further notice was taken of these cruelties, till, in the latter part of October following, a messenger from the Pequot sachem came to Boston with presents, desiring friendship. Mr. Ludlow, then Deputy-Governor, received the present, and returned another, informing the messenger that his chief must send persons of greater consideration, and then the Governor (Dudley) would treat with them. About a fortnight after, November 6th, 1634, two other messengers arrived, bringing a present of wampum. They were taken to Boston, where the magistrates and ministers were assembled on occasion of the famous "Thursday Lecture." The conference

* In the year 1785, some parts of the timbers, plank, and iron of this vessel, were discovered in the river. Field's *Statistical Account of Saybrook.*

grew, the next day, to a treaty. On being questioned as to the murder of Stone and his crew, they said that Stone had wronged them; that he, who had been their sachem at the time of the murder, had since been killed by the Dutch; and that all the Indians, except two, who had been concerned in it, had died of the small-pox. They told either a very artful or a very ingenious story, saying that, when Captain Stone came up the river, he bound two of the Indians, and forced them to guide him up the river, which they did, and that nine of the Indians, at night, put him and two of his men to death, as they slept on shore, and were going to take the pinnace, when it suddenly blew up into the air.

Winthrop says, "This was related with such confidence and gravity, as, having no means to contradict it, we inclined to believe it." * Indeed, the council had no particular reason to distrust the Indians, as Stone's bad character was well known, and as Oldham's party, a short time previous, had received kind treatment. In behalf of their sachem, the Indians seemed very anxious for the friendship of the whites; and they agreed by treaty to deliver up the two men engaged in the late murder, whenever the English should send for them, to give up their land to

* Winthrop's *Journal*, Vol. I. p. 148.

further an English settlement, and to pay a tribute of wampum and skins. The English agreed to send a vessel to trade with them in peace, but not to defend them. Their reasons for coming to these terms afterwards appeared. The Narragansetts were now at war with the Pequots, and the latter were also harassed by the Dutch, who had lately slain the old sachem and some of his men, because the Pequots had killed some other Indians who were trading with them. While the treaty was in progress, a score of the Narragansetts, under two of their chiefs, appeared in the neighborhood on a hunting visit. They came to Roxbury on being sent for, and agreed to allow the Pequots to visit the English in peace, and even to enter into a treaty with them. The English, by allowance of the Pequots, who, though they would scorn to have made the offer themselves, were very willing that it should be made for them, agreed to give the Narragansetts half the Pequot tribute for the sake of amity between the three parties. The treaty was put in writing, signed by the marks of the two ambassadors. But the Pequots were false and artful deceivers, and never kept a single article of the treaty.

About a year after the treaty was made, Lieutenant Gardiner was engaged upon the fort at the mouth of the Connecticut, and on his arrival

he found two messengers, from Massachusetts, John Oldham, and Thomas Stanton, for many years our interpreter, engaged in requiring a fulfilment of the articles.* The Pequots had provided some wampum and skins, but showed no intention of delivering the murderers, and were of course threatened with punishment. Gardiner was very anxious to postpone hostilities till he was in a state of defence, and had made provisions of food. But the Pequots were false to their promise; they would not deliver up the murderers; they kept Gardiner in constant anxiety during the winter of 1635 – 6, and were suspected of being engaged in several iniquities. The magistrates of Massachusetts believed it to be very important to take decisive measures against their growing intolerance. Accordingly, on the 4th of July, 1636, Governor Vane and Deputy-Governor Winthrop wrote to the son of the latter, then at Saybrook, as Governor of Connecticut, empowering him to treat with the Pequots.† He was to make known his commission, in a friendly way, to Sassacus, and request a meeting. If the meeting was refused, he was to send back the present, declaring that all friendly relations were

* Gardiner's *Pequot Wars*, Mass. Hist. Coll. 3d Series, Vol. III. pp. 136 – 160. His narrative was written in 1660.

† *Mass. Hist. Coll. 3d Series*, Vol. III. pp. 130, 131.

at an end. If the meeting was granted, he was to charge upon them their breach of covenant, and the suspicion of their being concerned in some more recent atrocities, and then to threaten vengeance. The present was returned to the chief, who would not comply with the terms of his treaty; but on the solicitation of Gardiner, Governor Winthrop, Mr. Fenwick, and Hugh Peters, who were about leaving the fort for Boston, agreed to seek a postponement of hostilities. There were twenty-four men, women, and children in the fort.

The murder of John Oldham, which occurred immediately after, compelled the colonists of Massachusetts, to which he belonged, to commence their undertaking against the Pequots. He was a representative of the first General Court of the colony, and a man of much enterprise. We have noticed his early visit to Connecticut. This had been followed by him with considerable traffic with the Indians, who gave him Chippacursett Isle, (Prudence Isle?) in Narragansett Bay, on condition that he would come and live with them, which he did not.*

Oldham was murdered by some Indians from Block Island, which was under the Narragan-

* Winthrop's *Journal*, Vol. I. p. 147; and Roger Williams's Letter to Winthrop, *Mass. Hist. Coll.* 3*d Series*, Vol I. p. 165.

setts. The mode in which his death was discovered is one of the most graphic narratives in our annals. Captain John Gallop, before mentioned as an associate of Captain Mason, for whose services events were now preparing, was sailing, in his bark of twenty tons, with one man and two little boys, from Connecticut to Long Island, July 20th, 1636, when, a change of wind compelling him to bear for Block Island, he discovered a pinnace unskilfully managed. He knew it to belong to Mr. Oldham, who was on a trading expedition, having with him two English boys and two Narragansett Indians. The gallant Captain was at once suspicious, and, on his approaching the pinnace, he saw the deck covered with Indians, a canoe with Indians and goods having just left her. Gallop hailed her, without answer, as the wind bore her towards the main land at Narragansett. Gallop had with him two guns, two pistols, and duck-shot. He was afraid to board the pinnace, as the Indians, fourteen in number, were armed with pikes, guns, and swords.

Most men then, and now, would have gone and sought help; but so did not he. He fired on them with such effect, that the Indians all got under the hatches. He then ran upon the pinnace on the wind, and struck her on the quarter, with such effect as almost to overturn her, and

frightened the piratical crew so much, that six of them leaped overboard, and were drowned. Repeating his experiment, he next bored the pinnace with his anchor, and held fast to her, firing without effect. Again he bore down upon her quarter, when four more Indians leaped overboard, leaving but four under the hatches. He then ventured to board her. Two of the Indians came out successively and yielded, whom he bound and put into the cabin; but, soon bethinking himself of the wonderful adroitness of Indians in untying one another, he threw the second prisoner overboard. The other two, being armed, he could not reach, but contented himself with keeping them where they were. He found the body of Oldham still warm, cleft to the brains, with the hands and feet cut off. He removed the goods and the sails, and took the pinnace in tow; but the wind being strong, and the night at hand, he was obliged to part her, when she drifted to the Narragansett shore.*

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* The Narragansetts were seen to have gold pieces, pierced as ornaments, which had belonged to Oldham. Gardiner says he had given him £5, when he left him for Block Island, and afterwards saw the money in the hands of the Dutch. All these particulars are worthy of note, as showing how far our fathers were justified in visiting upon a whole tribe the indignation which may have been due only to a few lawless depredators.

Roger Williams, who so honorably, not to say heroically, served the colony which had banished him, by his persevering friendship in all our Indian troubles, sent information of this tragedy to Governor Vane, by the two Indians who were with Oldham, and by another from Connecticut, July 26th. The third Indian was the prisoner whom Gallop had bound. It appeared, on an examination, that the death of Oldham was contrived by the Narragansetts, except Canonicus and Miantonomo, because he had sought to make peace with the Pequots. The two Indians were likewise suspected, but were sent back because they were messengers. The word was sent that they must be delivered up if demanded. A few days after, Miantonomo, having gone on an expedition against the offenders, returned the two English boys, with the promise of Oldham's effects.

It was still a matter of uncertainty to which of the great tribes the murderers of Oldham belonged. They were supposed to have been of the Narragansetts, and to have fled to the Pequots, who protected them. On the 8th of August, 1636, a deputation was sent to Canonicus, from Boston, to treat about the murder. The sachem was cautious and politic, though he received the messengers with respect, and prom-

ised his aid in discovering the criminals.* On the 25th of the same month, Governor Vane having advised with the magistrates and ministers, it was decided to take summary vengeance for the murder of Mr. Oldham, and thus to strike terror into the Indians, lest a pusillanimous delay should lead them to presume upon impunity for other atrocities. John Endicott, one of the magistrates, was put in command of ninety men, under four Captains, of whom Underhill † was one, and embarked in three pinnaces, taking with them two

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* Winthrop's *Journal*, Vol. I. p. 192. Johnson (*Wonder-Working Providence*, Book II. Chap. 6) describes the state of the sachem, and his reception of the ambassadors, so minutely, that he would seem to have been of the party.

† Captain John Underhill, of whom, as a Low Country soldier, mention has already been made in the text, wrote an account of this war, entitled "*News from America, or a new and experimental Discovery of New England, &c.*," which is reprinted in the *Mass. Hist. Coll. 3d Series*, Vol. VI. pp. 1–28. A copy of the original edition is in the library of Harvard College. He seems to have been a bold man, but very troublesome to the Massachusetts colony, and somewhat jealous of his fame, as he claims a large share in the glory of this war. He says that an Indian arrow would have caused his death, had it not been for his helmet, which, contrary to his own will, his wife had persuaded him to wear. From this incident he draws two morals, first, "that God useth weak means," and secondly, "that no man despise advice and counsel of his wife, though she be a woman."

shallops and two Indian guides. They went as volunteers, victualed but unpaid.

Endicott was instructed to destroy the men of Block Island, sparing and bringing away the women and children, and, after taking possession, to go to the Pequots, to demand the murderers, with a thousand fathom of wampum, and some of their children as hostages, and to use force if his demands were not complied with. Terms so extreme and violent as these could not fail to insure an implacable animosity. The expedition reached the island at the close of the month; and, while the wind and surf prevented the landing, the English were pelted with Indian arrows from the shore. As soon as one soldier landed, the natives all fled, and concealed themselves amid the thickets, and swamps, and brushwood, so that the English, after burning their wigwams, and destroying their plantations and canoes, sailed for the Connecticut River.

Lieutenant Gardiner was sorry to see the expedition, and to learn Endicott's commission, for he felt the Pequots to be troublesome enemies, and knew that the soldiers, after irritating them, would go off and leave him to suffer the consequences. He, however, furnished them with some men, two more shallops, and some bags; for seeing, as he said, they were not like to take any Pequots, he planned for them an enterprise

by which they might seize a quantity of corn. The party then sailed for Pequot Harbor, and after a parley with the Indians, in which Endicott in vain sought to obtain an interview with Sassacus, who, they deceitfully pretended, was absent, he told them his commission. They dallied with him some time; but, on understanding his purpose, they discharged their missiles and fled. Endicott landed on both sides of the Pequot River, which was rather a hazardous enterprise, burnt the wigwams and canoes, and gathered large quantities of corn. Gardiner says his men were left to themselves, and with difficulty got home again.*

Endicott's party then sailed to the Narragansett, and reached Boston on the 14th of September, with no loss of life. Though they had intimidated the Narragansetts, they had done but little more than exasperate the Pequots. They learned, afterwards, that they had killed thirteen

* Gardiner's narrative is written with much spirit. He seems to have had some of Captain Dugald Dalgetty's regard for provisions. He says, "I was glad of the corn." In the latter part of October, he sent five of his men to gather hay from Calves' Island, four miles up the river, when the Indians, skulking in the grass, took and tortured one of them, named Butterfield, who has given his name to the meadow. Hubbard, (*Narrative*, p. 252,) with unwonted ardor, says, "Icarus Icariis nomina dedit aquis."

of the Pequots, and one of Block Island, and had wounded forty. One prisoner was sold as a slave. Their interpreter, Cutshamekin, sachem of Massachusetts, had crept into a swamp, and killed a Pequot, whose scalp he sent to Canonicus. The expedition must be regarded as sanguinary, and bootless likewise. The Governor of Plymouth wrote to Winthrop, then Deputy-Governor, reflecting rather severely, perhaps justly, upon the insufficient but irritating undertaking.*

The threatening aspect of affairs seemed to grow even more dark for the colonists. Sassacus was now making every effort in his power to unite the Narragansetts with him in a league for the extirpation of the English. With earnest and eloquent representations, and seemingly with the forecast of prophecy, he described the encroachments of the English, their occupation and fortification of the finest regions of territory, and dwelt upon the certainty that, when they had overwhelmed the Pequots, they would commence hostilities against the Narragansetts. He said that the allied Indians would not need to have recourse to open war, but might harass and gradually drive out the English, by killing their cattle, firing their houses, and lying in ambush

* Winthrop's *Journal*, Vol. I. p. 199.

everywhere to take them off one by one. The Narragansetts even hesitated, and nothing but their deep-rooted enmity to the Pequots, and the savage heroism which laid up the purpose of revenge, prevented the union. Roger Williams, in the noble spirit of his magnanimity, labored to prevent the league with success.* He induced Miantonomo, with some other sachems, to go to Boston, and there, after a friendly conference, to enter into a treaty of peace and mutual aid with the English, October 22d, 1636.

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* In that long and most touchingly beautiful letter, which Williams wrote to Mason, his "honored, dear, and ancient friend," in 1670, in reference to a dispute between the colonies, (*Mass. Hist. Coll.* Vol. I. pp. 275 – 283,) he says, "When, the next year after my banishment, the Lord drew the bow of the Pequot war against the country, upon letters received from the Governor and Council at Boston, requesting me to use my utmost and speediest endeavors to break and hinder the league labored for by the Pequots against the English, the Lord helped me immediately to put my life into my hand, and, scarce acquainting my wife, to ship myself, all alone, in a poor canoe, and to cut through a stormy wind, with great seas, every minute in hazard of my life, to the sachem's house. Three days and nights my business forced me to lodge and mix with the bloody Pequot ambassadors, whose hands and arms wreaked with the blood of my countrymen, murdered and massacred by them on Connecticut River, and from whom I could not but nightly look for their bloody knives at my own throat also. When God wondrously preserved me, and helped me to break, &c."

This treaty was very well kept, so far as the present emergency was concerned, but afterwards yielded to an equally threatening state of things.

During the brief but most crowded interval of a single year, in which the chief events which I have described occurred, Mason was occupied in the care of his new settlement, and doubtless found employment enough in defending its feeble beginnings from the prowling savages. They committed all sorts of depredations and atrocities in and around the plantations, and he was a pillar of strength. He was soon summoned to the help of Gardiner at the fort. The Lieutenant was, in fact, besieged in his quarters during the winter of 1636 – 7. The Indians lay in ambuscade on the banks of the river, destroying the out-houses, the corn-stacks, and everything within their reach, and so harassing the soldiers as to compel them to keep, for the most part, within the fort. He sent out his men to his cornfield, two miles distant, where he had built a strong house, and gave them strict orders for their safety, which they disregarded. The Indians surprised them in a large party, and took two of them, whom they cut open and hung by halves upon the trees. The Indians also captured old Mr. Mitchell, the brother of the Cambridge minister, and roasted his living body. Towards the end of February, 1637, Gardiner

went out with his men to burn brush; he himself and two others were wounded, and two of the party were killed.*

In the month of March, with twenty men, being as many as could be spared from the settlements, Mason went to the relief of Gardiner. The Indians were beyond measure audacious and impudent, appearing near the fort, in the clothing of their victims, male or female, and boasting that they could kill English like musquitoes. Mason well knew the hazard in

* Two of Gardiner's men ran away without making resistance. As a specimen of his European discipline, he offered afterwards "to let the cowards draw lots which of them should be hanged, for the articles did hang up in the hall for them to read." At the intercession of others, he forbore. Mr. John Higginson, who was in the fort as chaplain, (*Mass. Court Records*, Vol. I. under October 15th, 1638,) opposed the severity. Gardiner, on recovering from his wound, went out and found the two dead bodies of his men. A rib of one of them was pierced through by an arrow, and, as he had been told that "an Indian arrow had no force," he cleansed the rib, and sent it, with the fast-clinging missile, to Governor Vane, by Captain Dike, who had just come round with a message from the Governor, to ask Gardiner what ought to be done about the Pequots. Gardiner complains, that he received but cold thanks for his protecting services to the settlers up the river. He had assumed the office of warden of the port, and had posted some directions on the gate of the fortress, requiring vessels to stop and report their strength for defence. This was as much a measure of prudence as of sovereignty.

which he had left his friends up the river; but he had the satisfaction of observing, that not a single Indian molested the fort while he was there. Gardiner likewise sent to Massachusetts for help, that Mason might return where, as soon appeared, he was even more needed. The Connecticut Court wrote to Massachusetts, February 21st, 1637, complaining of the mismanagement of Endicott's expedition, making known their intended action, and asking further aid. The Massachusetts Council, as much from fear of encroachments on the part of the Dutch as of the Pequots, sent Captain Underhill, on the 10th of April, to Saybrook, and, soon after his arrival. Mason returned to the upper settlements. Underhill had with him twenty men, who were sent at the charge of the Saybrook Company.*

While Mason was at the fort, an outrage was perpetrated at Wethersfield, which called for decisive measures. The Pequots, finding they could do nothing at Saybrook, went, to the number of a hundred, to Wethersfield, and, in confederacy with some of the Indians of that neighborhood, they lay in ambush, and fell upon the English

* Winthrop's *Journal*, Vol. I. p. 217. Underhill, however, was paid by Massachusetts, as appears from the *Court Records*, Vol. I. p. 199. "The Court consented that Captain Underhill should have his maintenance continued for the three months he was at Saybrook."

as they were at work in the fields, April 23d, 1637, killing a woman, a child, and seven men, besides some cattle, and taking two young women as captives. They then came down the river in three canoes, with the linen of their captives suspended on poles for sails. As they passed the fort, Mason knew they must have been on an errand of mischief; and, though they were at some distance, he directed a cannon-shot, which carried away the beak of the canoe in which were the female captives. The savages, being alarmed, drew their canoes over the beach, and disappeared.

The lives of these captives were saved by the intercession of the squaw of Mononotto, a Pequot sachem, a deed which Winthrop afterwards rewarded. They were honorably relieved by the Dutch, at the risk of rupturing their fresh treaty with the Pequots. The Dutch Governor sent a sloop to the Indians, offering a large ransom, which was refused, when the Captain retained six savages, who were on board his vessel trading, and made them hostages for the captives, who were at once yielded up. The natives seem not to have been guilty of that worst treatment of female captives, so generally practised in what is called Christian warfare. The Pequots asked these girls if they knew how to make gunpowder. The Dutch Governor, having obtained their liber-

ty, had given orders that he should have the first sight of them. They were accordingly taken on a visit to him, and then left at Saybrook, where Mason questioned them about the Pequots, and learned that the enemy had sixteen muskets.

CHAPTER IV.

Preparations for War. — Mason appointed Commander of the Army. — Atrocities of the Indians. — Intended Aid to Connecticut from the other Colonies. — Indian Allies. — Mason's Company leaves Hartford. — Arrives at Saybrook. — Incidents. — Council of War. — Mason decides to sail to the Narragansett. — Arrives. — Land Journey. — Attacks and burns the Pequot Fort. — Pursuit. — Triumphant Return.

We come now to the relation of the incidents of that decisive battle, which has made the Pequot war to be famous in history, which led to the extermination of that warlike tribe, and struck such terror of the white men into the breasts of all the neighboring Indians, as to secure the

peace of the colonists for nearly forty years. Of this battle Mason was the hero. His judgment, intrepidity, and valor are apparent through the whole conduct of the expedition which he commanded. By the unavoidable delay attending the preparation of the allied forces from the other colonies, his own band was compelled to rush alone into the fierce strife; and there was at least one crisis in which the prudence of Mason, standing, at the moment, in opposition to all his companions, saved at least the lives of many of his soldiers, even if it did not secure the success of the expedition, and so far rescue from impending ruin the fortunes of the early colonists of Connecticut. It requires all the allowance which we can make for the perilous situation of the colonists, and for the course which even Christians in their day thought they had a right to pursue towards their enemies, to render tolerable the simple details of this decisive battle. The Pequots were seated upon a soil which they called their own; but it was some relief to the more merciful among the whites to know, that the Pequots had gained the soil only by conquest, and were as much intruders upon it as themselves.

An especial court was convened at Hartford on Monday, May 1st, 1637, amid the most ex-

treme dejection of the planters.* There was a great scarcity of provisions; spring had opened, and the time for setting their corn was at hand; but there was but little encouragement to sow the seed, which would be tended at the hazard of their lives, and of which they might not live to enjoy the fruits. The court was entirely occupied with devising prompt methods to the ut-

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* *Records of the Colony of Connecticut*, (at Hartford,) Vol. I. p. 4. In answer to the earnest entreaties of Connecticut, Massachusetts responded. *Court Book*, Vol. I. p. 186. "December 7th, 1636, the court did intreat the Governor and Council to consider about the prosecution of the war against the Pequots, and Block Island, against the next session of this court." A special court was accordingly convened, April 18th, 1637, when, (p. 190,) "for the special occasion of prosecuting the war against the Pequots, it was agreed and ordered, that the war, having been undertaken upon just grounds, should be seriously prosecuted; and for this end there shall be one hundred and sixty men provided, to be chosen, within a week, out of the several towns," &c., "the counsel to treat with Plymouth about aid," &c. In the *Mass. Hist. Coll.* 3*d Series*, Vol. I. p. 159, is a letter of Roger Williams to the magistrates, advising as to the conduct of the war, with a rough sketch of the position of the Indian forts. The following, from the Records of Plymouth colony, shows her intention, June 7th, 1637; "It is concluded and enacted by the court, that the colony of New Plymouth shall send forth aid to assist them of Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut, in their wars against the Pequin Indians, in revenge of the innocent blood of the English, which the said Pequins have barbarously shed, and refused to give satisfaction for."

most limits of its ability for a bold stroke against the Pequots. At least thirty of the English had been put to death within the bounds of the colony, the most of them without having offered to the Indians any sufficient provocation. Some of these victims had suffered the most barbarous tortures which savage ingenuity and rage could inflict. The devout ejaculations with which, in their death-struggles, they called upon their God and their Redeemer, their dying groans and invocations, were caught up by the Pequots, and used by them as jeers and gibes, with which they might taunt the friends of the sufferers from a safe distance. The Indians arrayed themselves in the clothing of their victims, and thus kept open the cruel wounds they had inflicted.

All these barbarities, threatening the remnant left in the three white settlements, were dwelt upon in the gloomy deliberations of the court, and the evidence that the Pequots had not ceased their efforts to draw the neighboring Indians into a league was likewise presented. It was agreed that the boldest measures were alarmingly necessary. The court resolved to raise a body of ninety men,* constituting nearly half the effective force of the colony, to bring the Pequots

* Of this number, Hartford was to furnish forty-two, Windsor thirty, and Wethersfield eighteen.

into an open conflict; and from hard poverty sufficient supplies were voted. Information of this movement was immediately sent to Massachusetts, and that colony agreed to raise two hundred men. On an application from Massachusetts, Plymouth colony agreed to raise fifty men for the same expedition. As we shall find in the course of the narrative, Connecticut had not this aid from either of the other colonies in the most critical part of the undertaking. Forty of the Massachusetts troops, under Captain Patrick, arrived after Mason had achieved his greatest action, and the remainder, being delayed by necessary preparations, came only in season to crown Mason's victory with the extermination of the Pequot name and lineage.

But the force voted by Plymouth, which was to have been commanded by the intrepid Standish, was not ready until the joyful news of triumph rendered it needless. Mason does not mention this intended union of the three colonies in the enterprise. Seventy friendly Indians, under Uncas, sachem of the Mohegans, agreed to accompany the expedition. Captain John Mason was appointed commander, and the Reverend Mr. Stone, who, the year before, had left Cambridge to join in the settlement of Hartford, which place received its name from the place of

his nativity in England, was made chaplain.* The little army left Hartford on Wednesday, May 10th, and dropped down the river on board of "a pink, a pinnace, and a shallop." Mason early imbibed a strong friendship for Uncas, united with confidence in him.

But the first anxiety of the English, at the commencement of the enterprise, was on account of their Indian allies, of whose bravery there was but little evidence, while of their fidelity there was great doubt. They had but lately, if at all, decided to stand wholly aloof from the league, which the Pequots had labored to effect. They were not entirely free from suspicion on their own account, and the possibility of their turning traitors was harrowing to the feelings of the little band of white men, who needed everything to support them in an enterprise, which compelled them to go in search of an enemy, while they left behind them their own wives and little ones, at the mercy of the prowling savages. As the river was very low, the vessels frequently grounded; with which delay and slow progress, the Indian allies, accustomed to the swift motion of their light canoes, expressed much dis-

* Johnson, in his "Wonder-Working Providence," p. 112, repeats, or rather invents, the exhortation which was given to the soldiers on leaving Hartford.

satisfaction. They besought Mason to allow them to go ashore, promising to meet the party at the mouth of the river. Though this request rather increased the suspicions of the whites, and led them to fear that the Indians might at once reveal their movements to the Pequots, yet it was deemed prudent to grant it.

The result was beyond all expectation favorable, as it effected a complete and implacable hostility between the Mohegans and the Pequots. The Indians, on their way to, or after their arrival at, the fort, attacked a party of thirty or forty of the enemy, on May 15th, killed four or five of them, and took one prisoner. Captain Underhill went up to meet Mason's party with the news of this enterprise, which sealed the fidelity of the Mohegans.* The party arrived at Saybrook on Wednesday, May 17th, and lay wind-bound until Friday. Captain Underhill asked the consent of Lieutenant Gardiner to be allowed to join Mason with the nineteen Mas-

* In common with all writers describing the same events, Mason and Gardiner present a strange discrepancy in relating this. Gardiner (p. 149) says, that, after the arrival of the party at the fort, when he was told that the Mohegans were going as allies and as guides, he doubted their sincerity, and sent them, for trial, against six Pequots, whom he had seen the day before, and of whom they captured one and killed four. I have followed Mason in the text.

sachusetts men under his command. The request being granted, Mason sent back twenty of his party, that they might strengthen those who were already left too weak at their homes.

While the party was at the fort, an act of atrocity was performed by allowance of the English, though prompted by the nature and customs of the savages. The prisoner taken by the Mohegans, a Pequot, named Kiswas, was tortured after the Indian manner, before the eyes of the English, and by their permission, given from motives of policy.* He was, to be sure, a dangerous and wily foe, besides being a traitor. He had lived with Gardiner in the fort for some time on friendly terms, and had learned to speak English; but, having run away, he had been seen among the boldest of the enemy in their ambuscades and waylayings, and had divulged to Sassacus all the plans, movements, and numbers of the English. From an exceeding desire to secure the fidelity of the Mohegans, and for the

* This statement is given on the authority of the writer of "A True Relation of the late Battle, fought in New England, between the English and the Pequot Savages, &c.," a small tract, printed in London in 1638, and reprinted in the *Mass. Hist. Coll.* 3*d Series*, Vol. VI. pp. 29 – 43. From the signature to a Latin poem, prefixed to the tract, the writer's name appears to be P. Vincent, of whom, however nothing is known.

sake of confirming the new animosities, which would render their confederacy with the Pequots less and less possible, Mason and Gardiner yielded to the importunity of Uncas, that the prisoner should die by torture. The poor wretch was confined to a stake; and, after the wrenching of his sinews, and the scorching of his body in the flames, portions of his living flesh were passed around the circle and eaten, amid the savage yells of the Mohegans, who danced and exulted at the scene. Underhill put a period to these agonies by shooting a pistol ball through the head of the sufferer.

The two days which the party spent at the fort were occupied chiefly with consultations about the best mode of making their attack. Mason's commission, and a letter of instructions which he received at Saybrook, directed him to make a landing at Pequot River, now the Thames, in the very heart of the enemy's country. Mason, at the time, was not aware of the near proximity of the Indian forts to that river. Had he followed his instructions, it is probable that his whole party would have been cut off; at least, that his enterprise would have terminated in disaster. The other officers were in favor of following the instructions. Mason alone thought otherwise, and displayed remarkable discretion in his opinion and advice. Mason thought the only

prudent course for them was, to march to the Narragansett country bordering on the Pequots, and to land at a place forty-five miles east from the shore of the Connecticut, that being the nearest place where a landing could safely be effected; and thus the party, being on firm land, might attack the enemy from the rear, at an unexpected point. His reasons for this opinion were sound. The eastern bank of the Connecticut, and the shore along the Sound, were lined and guarded, day and night, by the Pequots, who far outnumbered the English and the Mohegans, and who, running along the shore, kept within view of the boats, taunting and threatening the little army. Mason likewise thought, that, by going to the Narragansett country, he could persuade some of the friendly Indians to join him, and that he might possibly meet with some of the force from Massachusetts. He learned from the two women, who had been liberated by the Dutch, that the Pequots had sixteen guns, with ammunition. Mason, as we have said, was alone in his opinion. His officers and men were anxious to bring on the issue immediately; they feared delay; they thought of the danger of an attack on the settlements which they had left; and they did not relish the prospect of a long march through the woods environed by the enemy. In this emergency, Mason requested Mr. Stone, the chaplain,

to commend the matter to the Supreme Being in prayer, and thus to seek devoutly for divine direction. On Friday morning, Mr. Stone, having passed the night previous on board the pinnace, in acts of devotion, came ashore o the fort, and told Mason that he was convinced that the course recommended by him was right. Another council being called, it was agreed unanimously to sail for the Narragansett. The resolution, being taken, was immediately entered upon, and the party set sail on Friday morning, May 19th.

Mason devotes a paragraph of very judicious moralizing to the question whether, and how far, a commander may venture to depart from his instructions. His foreign military education and experience are here manifest. He says, "There was a great commander in Belgia, who did the States great service in taking a city; but, by going beyond his commission, lost his life. His name was Grubbendunk." *

On Saturday evening, the little fleet reached the desired port, having sailed nearly fifty miles. The Sabbath was observed in quietness and devotion on board the vessels. The wind blew so strong that a landing could not be effected until after sunset, Tuesday evening. Mason, with a small party, then went on shore, to the residence of

* Mason's History; *Mass. Hist. Coll. 2d Series*, Vol. VIII. p. 135.

Canonicus, the chief sachem of the Narragansetts, and sent for Miantonomo, who arrived the next morning, with about two hundred of his warriors.* Mason ceremoniously apologized for not having sent information of the intended expedition before appearing in arms in the Narragansett country. He spoke of the suddenness with which the expedition had been decided upon; he enlarged upon the outrages which the Pequots had committed; he boldly declared his resolution to chastise them; and concluded by requesting a free passage through the country of Canonicus. The Narragansett sachems granted his request with much friendly favor, but made a somewhat slighting reflection upon the paucity and weakness of the English. At night, there arrived at the camp an Indian runner, sent from Roger Williams's plantation at Providence, to inform Mason that Captain Patrick had arrived there, with his company, despatched in advance from Massachusetts, and requesting Mason to delay till he could come up. It was not thought best to wait for this reinforcement.

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* Tradition says, that Mason landed at Tower Hill, a few miles above Point Judith. This is altogether probable, as that was the nearest spot at which he could make a good harbor. The island, a few miles further up Narragansett Bay, still bears the name of Canonicus, who had a fort on the western shore of the bay.

On the morning of Wednesday, May 24th, they began their march, a party being left to take charge of the boats, which were to sail back to Pequot Harbor. The number of the English was thus reduced to seventy-seven; about sixty of the Mohegans and River Indians followed in the rear, and about two hundred of the Narragansetts attended them. They marched eighteen or twenty miles, and reached, at night, the Eastern Nehantic, where, on the Pequot frontiers, was the fort of a sachem, tributary to Sassacus.* He treated Mason in a haughty and unfriendly manner, and would not allow him to enter the fort. Mason, knowing that an intercourse was kept up between the Pequots and the Nehantics by some of the squaws, and fearing lest information of his proximity should be sent to the enemy, encompassed the fort by night, and allowed no one to leave it.

On Thursday morning, several of Miantonomo's men joined the party, and offered themselves as allies, with solemn professions of their resolution and bravery. Thus the number of the Indian allies was increased to about five hundred; but, as they were timidly extolling the valor of the Pequots, and seeking to terrify the whites,

* This was doubtless a fort occupied by Ninigret, situated within the limits of the present town of Westerly.

Mason thought the advantage of their presence was doubtful; yet he resolved to turn it to good account by displaying the intrepidity of his men, and thus impressing all the Indians with respect for the English. After a march of twelve miles, they reached Pawcatuck Ford, now Stonington, exhausted with heat, fatigue, and hunger. Allowing themselves a brief rest, they proceeded on three miles, when they came to a large cornfield, which led them to suppose themselves very near the enemy. They relied upon the guidance of Uncas and of Wequash, the latter being a petty sachem of the Pequots, who had lately revolted from them and joined the Narragansetts.

From these faithful guides Mason learned that the Pequots had two strong forts close at hand, distant from each other about four or five miles. The English, quite undaunted, and doubly courageous as the hour of trial approached, resolved to make a simultaneous attack upon both the forts. The eastern fort was kept by the Pequots for the sake of overawing the Narragansetts; the further one was the residence of the dreaded Sassacus. But the English were so wearied by their long and painful march, and by the early and excessive heat, and so exhausted by the want of sufficient food, that they were compelled to rest satisfied with planning an attack upon the nearer fort first. Unknown to themselves at

the time, this had been reinforced by a body of one hundred and fifty warriors from the further fort, on the very night, upon which, after marching very cautiously, they themselves encamped, about one hour after midnight, between two large rocks, now called Porter's Rocks, two miles distant from the site of the nearer fort, known as the Mystic fort.*

We may well conceive that this was a hazardous place for an encampment, and that there was small probability of peaceful rest in the near neighborhood of such an enemy. A mighty interest hung suspended upon the security and the bravery of that little band. They thought of their homes, their murdered and tortured friends, the success of their wilderness work, of planting Christian colonies, and, in full accordance with the faith of the time, which found, in the Jewish annals, precedents for laws and battles, they believed that God designed to drive out the heathen, and to plant themselves.

* The selection of such a spot for the temporary repose of his men, exhibits Mason's good judgment and his practised military eye. The spot, which even now retains all its primitive features, is near the head of Mystic, just where the swampy ground gives place to firm land. Here two large and bare granite rocks, with sides almost perpendicular, forming, with some smaller rocks, two thirds of a circle, enclose a safe hiding-place, accessible only through narrow entrances.

Mason had devised his movements with such caution, that the enemy had not the slightest suspicion of his presence. His advanced sentinels heard the riotous rejoicings and the yells of boastful triumph, which the Pequots continued until long after midnight, fancying themselves secure in their fort, and supposing, as they had seen the vessels sail by their shore, that the English had given up their intended purpose from fear. By the light of a bright moon, two hours before daybreak, on Friday morning, May 26th, the valiant band arose from a short repose, and, commending their cause in prayer to the favor of Heaven, they were ready for the strife.

After a march of two miles, they reached a large cornfield at the foot of a hill, on which, as their trembling allies informed them, was the dreaded fort. These boastful allies, overcome with fear and dismay, had long since taken their places in the rear. Mason had asked Uncas what he thought the Indians would do when they came up with the enemy. Uncas replied, that they would all run away except himself; and so it proved, as only a small remnant was now left of the great body. Mason, thinking this a good opportunity to assure the Narragansetts and Mohegans of the bravery of the whites, which they were much inclined to doubt, told them that they need not fight, but urged them to remain

at a safe distance, and behold the valor of his men. The poor creatures panted and quaked like the chased deer of their own woods, such was the terror of the Pequot name.*

The hill on which the fort stood, now within the limits of the town of Groton, Connecticut, on the west side of the Mystic, is commanding in its position, but its sides are not steep. The fort itself, by which Sassacus, the dread tyrant of the fields and rivers of Connecticut, maintained upon those fair regions his royal control, was, in the eye of Mason, but a poor defence. An area of from one to two acres was enclosed by the trunks and half trunks of trees, set in the ground to the depth of three feet, with earth piled against them, and rising to the height of twelve feet. These palisades stood close enough to prevent an entrance, while there was sufficient space between them to allow the marksmen to cast arrows. They were bound with withes near their tops, to make them more

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* The panic produced among the natives by the mention of Sassacus's name, is doubtless exaggerated by our writers. The effect is described by Wolcott, as so great,

> "That suddenly they run, and seek to hide,
> Swifter than leaves in the autumnal tide.
> The Narragansetts quit the service clear,
> But the Mohegans followed in the rear."

Governor Wolcott's Poem, in the *Mass. Hist. Coll.* Vol. IV. p. 281.

firm. The area within was thickly covered with wigwams, to the number of seventy, at least, which were made of thick matting covering basket-frames. Two long streets, on each side of which the wigwams were planted, and another circling them all within the palisades, were entered by two sally-ports, or openings left between the timbers, and temporarily closed with logs and bushes.*

Captain Underhill came up with Mason as they approached the fort; and, learning from Wequash, that there were two openings between the palisades, they divided their forces. Mason had come within one rod of the opening on the north-east side, when the barking of a dog was followed instantaneously by the alarm-cry of an Indian, "Owanux! Owanux!" Englishmen! Englishmen! The Pequots were sleeping after their revels, but the alarm soon rang from many who were amazed at the unexpected presence of their enemies. Mason, aided by his Lieutenant, Seeley, removed the bushes which blocked up

* In the copy of Underhill's little book, preserved in the library of Harvard College, is an engraved plan, called "The figure of the Indians' Fort or Palizado in New England, and the manner of the destroying it by Captayne Underhill, and Captayne Mason." Underhill puts his own name first, and marks on the map, *Hear enters Captayne Underhill.*

one entrance, and, with sixteen men, stood within the palisades. Underhill, with a brave youth named Hedge, did the same at the other opening. No Indians were visible until their defences were thus forced, when they rushed forth with frantic rage, and ran through their streets, followed by the swords and muskets of the English. Being so hard pushed, they betook themselves to their wigwams.

Mason's intention was to make a thorough destruction of the Indians, and to save the plunder, as even that was an object to the colonists. He was the first to enter one of the wigwams, where he found the poor and doomed tenants hiding beneath their mats. In his enthusiasm, it seems, that he ran faster than consisted with the portliness of his form, while intent upon chasing the Indians through their streets. He says, "The Captain, facing about, marched a slow pace up the lane he came down, perceiving himself very much out of breath." It was evident that it would be a long and hard task to search for the Indians under their mats; and, finding two of his men posted at one entrance, to prevent the escape of any fugitives, he told them that would never destroy the Indians, and added, "We must burn them." On forming this resolution, he returned to the wigwam, which he had just entered, and, seizing a firebrand,

applied it to some of the frail huts on the windward side; and Underhill immediately followed his example. While taking fire from the wigwam, Mason, though he does not mention the incident himself, was in great peril of his life. An Indian, with his arrow drawn to the head, and pointed towards Mason, was about to speed the dangerous missile, when Sergeant Davis cut the bowstring.

The flames spread instantaneously, and raged with fury among the combustible materials. When the wigwams were thoroughly kindled, as Mason says, "the Indians ran as men most dreadfully amazed;" and well they might. He gave command to the English to encircle the fort as closely as the flames would admit, while the Mohegans and other allies, who seem in a measure to have rallied their courage, formed an outer circle, to insure thorough destruction, and to prevent the escape of any fugitives. The ruin, as the imagination paints it, must have been awful and agonizing in the extreme. What a fearful and harrowing reality must that night-scene have been to the poor sufferers! The light of the moon was just giving place to the gray of morning. The crackling fire, with its flames and smoke, and its consuming heat, turned the defences of the Pequots into a cage for their own destruction. Their palisades became to them, in

dreadful fidelity to their own usage, stakes of torture. Fierce yells, shouts, and groans mingled with the exultations and triumphs of the English. One of the soldiers, Arthur Smith, being severely wounded, was discovered just in season to be rescued by his comrades.

Some of the poor Indians, with piteous laments, gave themselves madly to the flames, which devoured their rude homes, preferring fire to the mercy of the English. Some rushed to the windward, and cast their arrows, which were answered by small shot. About forty dusky forms were seen climbing the palisades in a last effort for life, and they were marks for fatal bullets. The destruction was complete. A triumph, such as it was, was the reward of the English, when the dawn of morning showed them how entire was the dreadful victory which they had gained, in an action of less than two hours, over their wild brethren of the woods. Mason exults, with an unholy glow of vengeance, which he mistook for devout gratitude to a covenant God, recognizing that God, as did Israel, only as their God, and not as the God of all that dwell on the earth. Who, as he peruses the narrative, can refuse a tear to the desolation of the homes, the indiscriminate massacre of families, and of a tribe, though the homes and the bodies were those of heathen? There is a faint

relief in knowing that the Pequot warriors had removed many of their old men, women, and children from their fort a short time previously; yet many of these, whom savage warfare was wont to spare, were among the victims. The Pequots afterwards acknowledged that between six and seven hundred perished in the fort; seven escaped, and seven were captured. The English lost two; twenty more were wounded; all of them suffered much from the want of comforts, and of their surgeon, who, being timid, had remained on board the vessel.*

But, notwithstanding his victory, Mason felt that his little band was still in a most critical situation. They were in the country of an enemy now exasperated into implacable rage, and far outnumbering the English. They were destitute of ammunition and of food, and were anxious about meeting with their vessels at the mouth of the Pequot River. The remnant of their Indian allies yielded again to the fear of the vengeance, which the Pequots in the further fort might yet inflict. But forty of the English were capable of active service, as twenty of the party were employed in carrying the wounded.

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* This surgeon, whose name was Pell, was attached to Saybrook Fort, and had been sent on the expedition by Gardiner.

As they marched towards the rendezvous appointed for their vessels, they saw at a distance a band of more than three hundred of the Pequots coming from the further fort towards that which lay in ruins. At the sight of the desolation, they tore their hair, and stamped in rage, and then rushed in blind fury upon Mason's little band.

Though well nigh completely exhausted, the intrepidity of Mason rallied his men; and, after he had hired with bribes the help of some of the Mohegans and Narragansetts to carry the wounded, he made a bold resistance. Indeed, this may be considered the most alarming crisis in his expedition. He was in a strange country, and did not know his way out of it. His panic-stricken allies implored him to defend them, when he most needed help from them. Underhill says that he endeavored to induce some of them to exchange arrows with the Pequots, which they attempted after such a manner, "that they might fight seven years, and not kill seven men." Fifty of the Narragansetts took to flight, and, being set upon by the Pequots, Underhill went to their rescue. Mason soon espied his vessels sailing into the harbor, which was very near to them; and, taking new courage from the cheerful sight, he hastened to meet them, keeping the Indians at bay during his progress, and firing

into the swamps and thickets before him, as they continued a flight of arrows from their ambuscades behind the trees and rocks. The enemy gave over their annoyance when Mason had come within two miles of the harbor. Here he burned a few wigwams, and then went with his party to the vessels, in whose arrival was recognized a special providence.

Here they found Captain Patrick, with his company, from Massachusetts, who had embarked on board the vessels at the Narragansett, and come round in them. There was some dissension between the three captains about their movements and the use of the vessels. Underhill, with his company, the wounded and the prisoners, embarked to go to Saybrook by water, while Mason, with twenty men, accompanied by Patrick, with forty, set out for the same destination by land, a distance of twenty miles, intending to scour the country between the Pequot and the Connecticut Rivers. About midway, they came upon a party of the Nehantics, who fled to a swamp, and were for a time pursued, till they broke company and took to coverts. This was about three o'clock on the afternoon of Saturday, May 27th. As the Sabbath approached, Mason concluded to give over any further effort, and led his men to the Connecticut shore, opposite the fort at Saybrook, "being nobly entertained by

Lieutenant Gardiner, with many great guns." They passed the night on the bank, and entered the fort next day, receiving high commendations and courtesies. Here Mason made disposition of his Narragansett allies, and immediately took his men up the river to their homes, where they were entertained with great triumph and rejoicing. With all our respect for the prowess and intrepidity of Mason, we must regret the self-gratulation, the bigotry, and the harshness, with which he exults at his success, but spares not one word of commiseration for the poor Indians, whose hopeless fate and bereft destitution cannot but move our pity, as we do not fear their revenge.

CHAPTER V.

Mason's Second Expedition against the Pequots. — Aid from Massachusetts. — Captain Underhill. — Sassacus. — Flight of the Pequots. — Captain Stoughton joins Mason. — Pursuit of the Pequots. — The Swamp Fight. — Death of Sassacus. — Surrender of the Pequot Remnaut. — Treaty at Hartford. — Division of the conquered. — Their Treatment by the English. — Reflections on the War. — Relations of the English and the Indians.

The first expedition of Mason, which was signalized by the destruction of Mystic Fort, was soon followed by another, which completely overthrew the Pequot power, and was designed to obliterate the Pequot name. The enemy being routed and scattered, the little remnant of stragglers repaired to the other fort; and, in their blind rage, they upbraided Sassacus as the chief cause of their ruin, as it was by his obstinacy and hostility, that the whites had risen against him Some of his men threatened his life upon the spot; but this was spared by the intercession of his counsellors. In swift and grave deliberation among themselves, they debated whether they should vent their rage against the Narragansetts,

or against the English, or, nursing their animosity, should fly, for the present, from their territory.

They decided upon the last course; and, after burning their wigwams, and destroying their corn, they set off for the Dutch plantations on the Hudson. As they crossed the Connecticut under the guidance of Sassacus, they murdered three Englishmen, who were descending the river in a shallop to Saybrook. The English fought bravely, and wounded several of the Indians. A runner, sent by Mr. Williams, carried the news of this additional provocation to Massachusetts. The 15th of June had been observed there as a thanksgiving for the victory over the Pequots. Underhill, who had been on service three months, returned with his company to Boston, and met Stoughton on his way. The valiant Captain reached Boston in season to involve himself in the thickest of the Antinomian controversy, and to begin that erratic course on which the government, in spite of his services, visited its censures, though repentance subsequently restored him to favor, and reformation gained him new honors. There was, doubtless, a jealousy between him and Mason, as how could there fail to be?

In the latter part of June, which was about a fortnight after Mason's return, and a month after the fight at Mystic, Captain Israel Stoughton,

with one hundred and twenty men, accompanied by Wilson, of Boston, as chaplain, arrived by water in Pequot River. The commander and the chaplain were elected by lot, with prayer, in open court.* It was probably intended that Stoughton should be the General of the united forces. Mason calls Stoughton Commander-in-chief, and himself the Chief-commander, a distinction of dignities, in which it is difficult to decide with whom was the eminence of honor. On June 26th, Connecticut sent Mason down the river, with forty men, to join with Stoughton. After consultation together, the two chief commanders determined to pursue the scattered remnant of the Pequots towards the Dutch plantations, whither, it was understood, they had fled. The troops sailed along by the shore, up Long Island Sound. This pursuit of the Pequots opened to the English a knowledge of the

* Winthrop's *Journal*, Vol. I. p. 223. In Mass. Court Records, Vol. I. p. 192, the court being at Newtown, May 17th, 1637, we read, "Mr. John Wilson and Mr. John Eliot being put to lot, which should go forth with the soldiers against the Pecoits, Mr. Wilson was chosen. Mr. John Winthrop, Jr., Mr. Simon Bradstreet, and Captain Israel Stoughton, being put to lot, which should go forth in the expedition against the Pecoits, and Captain Stoughton was chosen." This court likewise denounced a severe penalty against any, who should sell or repair arms or ammunitions to or for the Indians.

sites of New Haven and Fairfield, the former of which was occupied, in the fall of the same year, by Eaton and Davenport's company. The troops reached successively the places where the fugitives, encumbered with their families, and lacking provisions, had stopped to dig for clams, and to pick berries.

Uncas, with a few of the Mohegans, scoured the shores to hunt out any of the Pequots, and intercepted a Pequot sachem, whom they beheaded, at what is now called Guilford Harbor. His head was set up in the crotch of an old oak-tree, where it remained for many years, giving the name of Sachem's Head to the promontory. Beyond the mouth of the Quinipiack River, the site of New Haven, Mason and Stoughton, July 13th, 1637, came in view of a large body of the Pequots, and pursued them, till, from the top of a hill, they discovered a cluster of wigwams, separated from the foot of the hill by a swamp, now in the town of Fairfield. They were led to this retreat of Sassacus by a Pequot straggler, whom they had seized, and whose life they spared on condition that he would turn traitor; a condition which he faithfully performed. The two chiefs, Sassacus and Mononotto, suspecting his design, continued their flight towards the Mohawk country. About eighty of the warriors of the Pequots, with nearly

two hundred old men, women, and children, embracing a few Indians of the place, who were tributary to the Pequots, were hid in this swamp, which was rendered nearly impassable by quagmires and tangled bushes, and was of an area of nearly a mile. It was almost divided by a dry and clear passage at one side.

Here was a consultation, among the English, as to the course which they should pursue, in view of this, one of the most cunning and perplexing stratagems of Indian warfare. Some of the men rushed, with unwise rashness, into the swamp, intending to make for the wigwams; but they sank into the mud, and, being set upon by the Indians, who had resolved to sell their lives dearly, they were with difficulty rescued, severely wounded, by their companions. The swamp being now encircled by the English, some of them advised to cut down the thickets, as they had many Indian hatchets; others suggested the enclosing it with palisades, and a repetition of the tragedy at the fort; others were for forcing the swamp; but Mason proposed, that they should draw closely around it, and stop up every aperture with bushes, by which means, as it was about three o'clock in the afternoon, the Pequots might be secured till morning, when a further consultation should be held. Mason says that neither opinion prevailed; and, as might have

been expected from the distance at which the English kept, several of the enemy broke through. He, however, directed a party to cut through the passage in the swamp, "which did much shorten our leaguer. It was resolutely performed by Sergeant Davis."

The English were unwilling to make a common destruction of men, women, and children, and to involve the Indians of the place in the fate which they designed for the Pequots. Thomas Stanton, who was skilled in the Indian tongue, and whose services as interpreter were for several years of great value to the colonists, offered to go into the swamp, to make some terms with all whose hands had not been stained with English blood. About one hundred and eighty old men, women, and children, availed themselves of the offer, and surrendered to the English, though at the cost of being the witnesses of the doom hanging over their kindred. Those who remained in the swamp were closely beleaguered through the night, the English standing on the watch, distant from each other less than a rod. Taking advantage of a fog, just before daybreak, the Pequots, with great whooping and yelling, made a bold effort to break through Captain Patrick's quarters; but, that point being strengthened by Mason, they were repulsed. They had immediate recourse to another point,

where they were likewise met; but, on a third attempt at the former point, they were successful. About seventy of them broke through, and escaped with yells of revengeful triumph. Those who were killed in the effort, together with the few who had been killed by the constant firing into the swamp, amounted to only twenty, and the English had in their hands one hundred and eighty prisoners.

The Pequots being thus scattered, a price was set upon the fugitives. They became a common prey to all, over whom they had tyrannized. Their scalps were almost daily brought to Hartford and Windsor. Thirteen sachems still survived, and among these the two most dreaded, Sassacus and Mononotto. The Mohawks surprised and killed all but the last, whom they wounded. They sent their scalps to Connecticut in the fall. Parts of the scalps of Sassacus, of his brother, and of five other sachems, were carried to Boston, August 5th, by the chaplain, Mr. Wilson, who had been called home to help in settling the Antinomian strife. The Massachusetts Council, on the next day, sent for Stoughton to return. He reached Boston, with his company, on the 26th, having lost but one man, who died of natural disease. The Massachusetts Court suggested to the elders the appointment of a day of "thanksgiving for the return of the

soldiers, and that they be feasted by their towns." *

The Pequot remnant, being weary of the unrelenting pursuit which tracked them in all their lurking-places, offered, through some of their chiefs, to surrender as vassals of the English, to be disposed of at their pleasure. Mason favored the measure, and the offer was accepted. The Indians stated, that nearly two hundred men of the tribe yet survived. They met the English, with Uncas and Miantonomo, at Hartford, September 21st, 1638.† Mason says they were divided as follows; eighty to Uncas, sachem of the Mohegans, eighty to Miantonomo, sachem of the Narragansetts, and twenty to Ninigret, (or Ninnicraft,) "when he should satisfy for a mare of Edward Pomroye's, killed by his men." ‡ This animal is of frequent mention in the early records of Connecticut.

The magistrates of Connecticut, in behalf of the colonies, entered into a solemn treaty with the Indians present at this council. It was

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* Court Records, Vol. I. p. 199. An interesting letter, from Stoughton, while on service, to the Governor, is given in Savage's *Winthrop*, Vol. I. p. 398.

† Trumbull's *Connecticut*, Vol. I. p. 86, from Records of Connecticut.

‡ History, *Mass. Hist. Coll. 2d Series*, Vol. VIII. p. 148.

agreed, that there should be perpetual peace between the Mohegans and Narragansetts and the Pequots, who had been respectively allotted to them; that all past injuries should be buried in oblivion; that all future causes of alienation should be submitted for arbitration to the English, who should have power to enforce their decisions; and that no Indians, that had murdered any of the English, should be concealed, but be at once destroyed or delivered up by the allies. It was likewise covenanted that the Pequots should no longer inhabit their country, nor use the name of their tribe, but should be called Mohegans or Narragansetts, according to the tribe of their adoption; nor should the other tribes reside in any part of the Pequot country, without the consent of the English. The Pequots agreed to pay an annual tribute to Connecticut of a fathom of wampum for every sannop, half a fathom for every youth, and a hand of wampum for every male pappoose.

The Connecticut Court, twenty years after the war, in March, 1658, made an attempt to obliterate the Pequot name from their jurisdiction, and resolved to call the fair harbor-settlement of the tribe *New London*, that they "might thereby leave to posterity the memory of that renowned city of London, from whence we had

our transportation." * The name of the river was likewise changed, and called the Thames.

The 12th of October, 1637, was observed in the churches of Massachusetts, as a day of thanksgiving, as had been also the previous 15th of June, for the victory over the Pequots; and the captains and soldiers, who had been in the expedition, were escorted to a feast by the magistrates and ministers.† The charges of the expedition were defrayed at the public expense. Of the prisoners, Winthrop,‡ under date of July 6th, 1637, tells us, that some were distributed in the country, and that forty-eight women and children came to Boston. Of these a part ran away, but, being returned by the other Indians, were branded on their shoulders. Fifteen of the boys, and two women, were sold to go as slaves to Bermuda, a cruel measure; one man was given to Mr. Cutting to take to England. Mason says of the captives whom they designed to keep as servants, that "they could not endure

* Records of Connecticut.

† Mass. Court Records, Vol. I. p. 211. November 25th 1637, Stoughton was freed from his rate for one year for his services, and Wilson received £20. In court, May 22d, 1639, (p. 245,) Captain Mason had granted to him £10, "for his good service against the Pequots, and otherwise." John Higginson, as chaplain at the fort, applied, October 15th, 1638, for a grant of land.

‡ Journal, Vol. I. p. 232.

that yoke, few of them continuing any considerable time with their masters." * The wife and children of Mononotto were also among the prisoners, and they were kindly dealt by, being taken under the especial charge of Winthrop, on account of her humanity, and of her having saved the lives of the two girls captured by the Pequots at Wethersfield.

Thus disastrously to the poor sufferers, the stock of a once famous tribe, was the enterprise of Mason conducted to what the English regarded as a providential triumph. The expedition has, indeed, no parallel in history. In the feeble beginning of a wilderness colony, less than fourscore foreigners "marched on, in an uncouth and unknown path," more than forty miles, through the hostile country of perfidious Indians, attended by allies, who were powerless from timidity, when they ceased to be suspected of treachery. The march was a dark secret to its keen-eyed victims. A poor and trembling company of wives and little ones was left, all but undefended, in a rude and strange home, and it was unharmed. Mason says, that his "commons were very short, there being a general scarcity throughout the colony of all sorts of provisions." He adds, that the company had,

* History, p. 148.

through the whole march, but one pint of strong liquors, "the bottle of liquor being in my hand; and when it was empty, the very smelling to the bottle would presently recover such as fainted away." * The Captain likewise mentions "two or three special providences," which, by our judgment, less or more pious as it may be, were in no way remarkable. "Lieutenant Bull had an arrow shot into a hard piece of cheese, having no other defence; which may verify the old saying, A little armor would save a man, if a

* It certainly was not the intention of the court of Connecticut that their soldiers should be so scantily supplied. The Colony Records, (Vol. I. p. 4,) after giving the appointment of the number of men to be furnished by each of the three towns, enumerate the various articles of food to be provided on leaving their homes, or to be taken up at the mouth of the river. The "one pint of strong liquors" seems but meagrely to fulfil the following order from the record; "It is ordered that there shall be one good hogshead of beer, for the captain and minister, and sick men; [and] if there be only three or four gallons of strong water, two gallons of sack." It was ordered, at the same time, "that Hartford shall send fourteen armor in this design, Windsor, six." The *armor* seems to have been a stuffed or padded garment, sometimes called a corslet, a good protection against Indian arrows. November 14th, 1637, the court voted that the men should be paid, for the expedition against the Pequots, one shilling and threepence per day, reckoning six days to a week, for a month, and Mason forty shillings per week. (Records, Vol. I. p. 5.) February 9th, 1638, a levy of £520 was imposed to pay the expense of the war. (p. 6.)

man knew where to place it." He withholds such providences regarding himself, "since there is none to witness them."

The subject invites, but our limits preclude, an application of the searching tests of righteousness and charity to the measures of our fathers, in extirpating that once famous tribe, which has perished from its fair fields. All the judgments of the present day lean to the side of mercy; humanity is made a higher standard than heroism. Necessity, indeed, compelled our fathers to subject themselves to the hostility of the red men. Had the first settlers here remained in small numbers, in the places, which they first occupied around the seaboard, it is not probable they would have been disturbed. But these localities were rugged, barren, and bleak, unfit for tillage, save with great labor. The colonists were soon compelled to make inland and isolated settlements in valleys and upon streams. They availed themselves of savage instinct in seeking out the richest intervals and meadows, and thus awaked the suspicion and hate of the natives.

The Indians did many acts of devoted kindness to the whites in their early feebleness and straits, keeping them from starvation by their corn, piloting their course by land and water, offering their athletic frames in the stead of boats and bridges, and teaching them all the secrets of

woodcraft. In many instances, the strong liquors, purchased by the Indians from the whites, inflamed the passions, which were exercised in atrocities. We know not the provocations which the natives may have received from avaricious traders. The reverence and love with which they regarded Roger Williams, and his well nigh unbounded influence over them, make us regret that more of the English did not imitate him. The Indians were, in fact, timid in English warfare; there is more of romance than of fact in the tales of their prowess. In open fight, they were far from formidable. The whites, standing single, could avoid their arrows, and would break them as they fell. Captain Underhill, attempting to justify all the dreadful accompaniments of the strife, when silence would have been better, says, "We had sufficient light from the word of God for our proceedings."

The favorite plea of defence for the English, at the present day, is, that the Almighty could not design these fair regions to be held forever by a scattered population of roaming savages. The fewness of their numbers is thus made to palliate the measures which exterminated them. With far more reason might this plea be reversed, so that the dwellers in villages could come into our crowded cities, and put their inhabitants to the sword, averring that the Almighty could not de-

sign that so many human beings should live together. In reviewing the treatment which the Indians received from our fathers, there is much which presents the whites in an honorable and merciful relation to the poor red men; and this should satisfy us, that quarrels and massacres were as much deplored by the one party as they were fatal to the other. The English thought it necessary to take summary measures at first, lest impunity for a single murder should excite the Indians to a desperate and concentrated work of blood. After the decisive battle, the policy of our fathers led them, though under constant risks, to be generous and merciful to the natives.*

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* The Pequot war suggested the famous confederation between the four New England colonies, the first motion for which was made in Boston, August 31st, 1637, when some magistrates and ministers of Connecticut were there. *Winthrop*, Vol. I. p. 237.

CHAPTER VI.

Influence of Mason on the Fortunes of Connecticut. — His gradual Advancement. — His Services. — Represents Windsor. — Made a public military Officer. — Colonel Fenwick and Mason at Saybrook. — Mason one of a Committee to record remarkable Providences. — Court grants him Land. — Elected a Magistrate. — Put in Command at Saybrook. — A Commissioner of the United Colonies. — Troubles with the Indians. — Treaty with the Indians. — Trouble with the Dutch. — Mason sent on various Missions. — Put in Command of an intended Expedition.

For a long period following upon the important events already described, and in which Mason performed so eminent a part, he continued to be one of the leading spirits of the colony; his counsel and his strong arm were continually needed, and were kept in service till the very year of his death, at a ripe age. He held every post of honor in the gift of the colony, save that of Governor. Indeed, he must have discharged, as Deputy-Governor by election, the duties of chief magistrate, during the interval of nearly two years, in which Governor Winthrop was in

England about the charter. That Mason, on his first arrival in this country, was not at once raised to the dignities of a civil trust, may, perhaps, indicate that he was of humble origin, not favored with wealth or other adventitious distinctions. It may have been, however, that his military character stood, in some degree, in the way of his civil advancement.

It never was, and it is not now, in conformity with the spirit and the preferences of New England to choose the magistrates from among soldiers. That Mason won all distinctions, and grew in honor with his years, is a proof of the value and the appreciation of his services at a time when good men alone were raised to office, and continued there for successive elections, amid some jealousies, the great trial of those times as of ours. For nearly forty years, he was actively engaged in all the concerns of the colony. This period embraced the most serious and trying emergencies of what was once called the Western Colony, such as the long-continued exposure to the savages; the position of Connecticut as umpire, arbiter, and avenger, in all the quarrels between the Pequot remnant, the Mohegans, and the Narragansetts; the hostile proceedings of the Dutch at New Netherlands; the relations of Connecticut to the other colonies, especially to Massachusetts and New Haven; and, finally, the ob-

taining of a charter from Charles the Second. A brief detail of Mason's concern in all these interests, will fill out this sketch of his life.

Mason may be considered as having been the Indian agent of the colony of Connecticut to the close of his life. He was frequently sent to intimidate and to arbitrate, to quell rising feuds, to collect tribute, and to endeavor to keep peace between the Mohegans and the Narragansetts, who, after the Pequot war, maintained incessant hostilities up to the time of Philip's war. On the 2d of June, 1637, the court sent thirty men, and, in three weeks afterwards, ten more, to plant in the Pequot country, and maintain the right gained by conquest.* The Captain probably advised and aided the carrying into execution these measures. He appeared as a representative, or committee-man, from Windsor, in the General Court, November 14th, 1637. On the 8th of March following, the court appointed him "a public military officer." † Though in these simple words of appointment, we do not find the title of Major, yet this rank and office were implied, as he is henceforth called Major Mason in the records, and sometimes, with dignified familiarity, "the Major." The duty was assigned to

* Colony Records, Vol. I. p. 5.
† Records, Vol. I. p. 7.

him of going to the different plantations, and training the soldiers ten days in each year. All males above the age of sixteen were to come under his discipline. He was to receive forty pounds a year for his salary. Reverend Thomas Hooker, the famous divine, presented the leader of the Connecticut forces with a military staff, accompanying it with an address, which we may well believe to have been appropriate and intelligible.

The colony was now suffering from a great scarcity of provisions, caused by its long-continued state of defence, and by the recent war. Private trading in corn had been forbidden, as it enhanced the price. Mason, with two others, had been sent, in the winter, up the river, as far as Pocomtuck, (now Deerfield,) to trade with the Indians for that staple article, and was so successful, that fifty canoes, laden with it, followed him on his return. He was again sent on a similar errand by the same court, which gave him his military appointment.* It furnishes a singular picture of the rigid discipline of the times, that even this trained European soldier, and Major of the new colony, who ought to have regarded the virtue of punctuality, was fined like a schoolboy, with five others, on the 5th of April,

* Records, Vol. I. p. 8.

1638, in the sum of one shilling, for not being present in his place, as representative from Windsor, at the opening of the court, "which is seven of the clock." * The court, however, did not lose its confidence in him, for he was sent immediately to conciliate the Indians at Woranock, (now Westfield.) Doubtless he took a part in that convention of all the free planters of the original colony of Connecticut, held at Hartford, January 14th, 1639, which adopted its constitution.

The original patentees of Connecticut had been deterred, thus far, from coming over to take possession of their territories, on account of the unsettled state of things, and the difficulties with the Indians. They were mostly, too, distinguished members of the republican party, whose intended removal was prevented by Charles the First. They, therefore, remained at home, until a change took place in public affairs, which they regarded as favorable, and then they had no motive to come hither. One of them, Colonel George Fenwick, came over in the summer of 1639, and named the tract at the mouth of the Connecticut Saybrook, in honor of his principal associates. He kept possession of the fort and town, which latter was laid out with

* Records, Vol. I. p. 8.

great taste as a residence for gentlemen, until his associates gave up their design of removal, when he sold it to the colony. From his first arrival, Mason was much in his company, aiding him in the independent government of the settlement, and afterwards succeeding to his authority.

The remnant of the Pequots, having been divided among the Mohegans and Narragansetts, had agreed to give up their name and ancient dwelling-places. But a large number of them broke their covenant, and returned to a new settlement in their country. Mason was sent out by the court, with forty men, to rout them, and to destroy their wigwams and canoes, and to take their corn, if they resisted. Uncas, with a hundred Mohegans, accompanied him. The order was fulfilled in September, 1639. The Indians made a show of resistance. Mason made some prisoners, whom he gave up to Uncas, "because our prison had been very much pestered with such creatures." The Major returned with thirty canoes, belonging to the enemy, filled with their effects.*

The devotion and the religious gratitude felt by the fathers of Connecticut in view of their

* Mason's *History*, in the *Mass. Hist. Coll. 2d Series*, Vol. VIII. p. 148.

protection from famine and war, two of the three ancient visitations, the other of which was pestilence, incited them not only to begin and end all their public and private observances with prayer, but to seek that a record of their divine aid, amid perils, should go down to their posterity. Chiefly, of all the colonists, the fathers of Connecticut loved to find, in the early Israelitish history, parallels to their own condition. Especially did they love to repeat the eightieth Psalm of David, as prophecy, and as twice recorded history, saying of their divine leader, "Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt, thou hast cast out the heathen and planted it.' The richly multiplying clusters of the grape gave them their pleasant emblem, and the words, "Sustinet qui transtulit," became the motto of their arms. Prompted by such devotion and gratitude, the court of Connecticut, on the 10th of October, 1639, appointed Major Mason, Deputy-Governor Ludlow, and four others, to be a committee, individually in their several settlements, and jointly for the colony, to furnish to the court a record "of those passages of God's providence, which have been remarkable, &c."* This order of court was renewed, October 2d, 1656, when Major Mason, the Reverend Messrs. Stone,

* Colony Records, Vol. I. p. 32.

Goodwin, and Wareham, and others, were appointed for the purpose.* To the fulfilment of this order on the part of Mason, we owe his own narrative of the Pequot war. It is probable, that many other manuscripts were prepared, which have perished.

The court granted to Mason, January 5th, 1641, five hundred acres of land about the Pequot country, and the liberty to dispose of five hundred acres more to the soldiers, who were with him in his expedition.† He did not take advantage of the order at the time, and his name frequently occurs in connection with grants and deeds of land on the records. In 1649 and 1650, the court finally gave to the Major Chippacursett Island, in Mystic Bay,‡ and one hundred and ten acres of land at Mystic; and ordered that the five hundred acres granted to his best men should be laid out in the Pequot or Nyantic country, in the neighborhood of the present towns of Groton, New London, and Lyme.

Mason was first elected, by the freemen at large, one of the six magistrates of the colony, April 16th, 1642.§ He continued to be elected to this office, till he was chosen Deputy-Gov-

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* Colony Records, Vol. II. p. 72. † Ib. Vol. I. p. 86.

‡ This island contains five or six hundred acres.

§ Records, Vol. I. p. 88.

ernor. He shared with Colonel Fenwick the management of Saybrook. It was now evident that the original patentees of Connecticut had no intention of occupying it, and the difficulties between the rival claimants to portions of its territory had commenced. Fenwick, of course, advanced a title for his associates to the conquered country of the Pequots. Massachusetts, too, put in a claim for her share in the conquest.*

The court of Connecticut appointed a committee in April, 1644, to confer with Colonel Fenwick for the purchase of the right and title of the patentees of Connecticut. Mason was one of this committee. Articles of agreement for the purchase were signed, December 5th, 1644. The court ratified the agreement, February 4th, 1645, and the records contain frequent and very particular repetitions of the terms of the contract by which Connecticut acquired the possession of Saybrook Fort, and all the territory covered by the original patent. The court immediately made a levy, and took other measures for the completion and improvement of the fortifications at the mouth of the river. At the request of the inhabitants of Saybrook, and for their protection, Mason, who had already passed much time there

* Massachusetts Court Records, Vol. I. pp. 212, 213, and Hazard's *Hist. Coll.* Vol. I. p. 427.

was sent to the fort as a place of residence. On the 20th of June, 1647, the court put him in command of the soldiers and inhabitants there, and remunerated him for his personal sacrifices in leaving his habitation up the river at Windsor.* His office was certainly no sinecure. That narrow point of land, which stretches out from the Connecticut into the fair waters of Long Island Sound, was a position of great importance. The bar across the river's bed made the navigation critical, and gave the fort a commanding influence. It was the chief protection of the colonists against the Dutch at New York, and the Indians from Long Island. A meeting-house was built at Saybrook, in 1646, and Mr. James Fitch, who afterwards, by a second marriage, became the husband of Major Mason's eldest daughter, was ordained pastor. In the winter of 1647, the fort, which was of wood, was accidentally destroyed by fire, together with goods stored in it. This was a heavy loss of more than one thousand pounds to the colony, which had lately expended so much upon its repair and improvement. Major Mason, with his family, narrowly escaped.

The fort was rebuilt by order of the court, May 17th, 1649.† A large, grassy mound, itself

* Colony Records, Vol. I. p. 168. † Ib. Vol. I. p. 194.

a fit place of defence, still shows its position; and near it is seen the time-stained monument of Lady Anne Butler, the wife of Colonel Fenwick, who died here in 1648. A dwelling-house connected with the fort, and erected by the colony, was the residence of the Major; and there, for more than ten years, he did good service as commander, going to Hartford, as magistrate, at the regular sessions of the court; holding a periodical court, likewise, as a justice, in connection with Winthrop, at Pequot; and making several visits, in behalf of the colony, to the meetings of the commissioners, and to the troublesome and seditious Indian settlements. A casual notice on the records shows that he was troubled with witches at Saybrook, a kind of enemy which he doubtless dreaded more than the Indians. But he overcame the foe without execution, at least.*

On the 19th of May, 1643, the colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Haven, united, by their commissioners, in a confederation of amity and mutual aid. The measure had been in agitation for several years, but conflicting interests delayed it. For more than forty

* Records, Vol. II. p. 115. June 15th, 1659, "Mr. Wyllys is requested to go down to Saybrook, to assist the Major in examining the suspicions about witchery, and to act therein as may be requisite."

years, until the abrogation of the charters by James the Second, this union was continued, and was of essential service to the colonists in their protracted difficulties with the Indians and the Dutch. Major Mason was one of the two commissioners sent to represent Connecticut in the years 1647, 1654, 1655, 1656, 1657, and 1661.* The first meeting of the commissioners, in 1643, was signalized by an exercise of their authority in arbitrating between the hostile Indians, which it is sad to record, and which has given a romantic interest to the region around the present city of Norwich, in Connecticut. After the Pequot war, Uncas and Miantonomo, the respective sachems of the rival tribes of the Mohegans and the Narragansetts, were in continual feud. Their quarrels were aggravated, if they were not caused, by the relation in which the English stood to them, and by the desperate and troublesome remnant of the Pequots, who had been divided among their conquerors.

The whites evidently leaned to the side of Uncas, and it may be that Miantonomo will yet find a champion in history or biography. Uncas complained that the Narragansett sachem was

* In the records of the commissioners will be found two papers offered by Major Mason in behalf of Connecticut, vindicating the claims of that colony, by right and by conquest, to the Pequot country. *Hazard*, Vol. II. pp. 415–420.

continually plotting against his life, first by secret stratagems, and then by open warfare, begun without preparation or warning. Mason seems to have labored strenuously, but in vain, to reconcile the two chiefs. He was a warm and constant friend of the Mohegan sachem. At last, in a battle provoked by Miantonomo, and begun, as our records assert, by his own ignoble return to an heroic proposition from Uncas, the latter was the victor, and made a prisoner of his rival. Miantonomo was confined at Hartford, and by his own urgent request was left to the disposal of the commissioners, who decided that, as Uncas would be at the mercy of his treacherous rival so long as he lived, he should die. Order was accordingly given that Uncas should execute him on the spot where he was taken, and that two of the whites should attend and see that no torture or cruelty was practised. Arrived at the spot, a blow from the hatchet of one of Uncas's men mercifully and swiftly levelled the unexpecting victim to the earth. Uncas, with savage joy, cut a piece of flesh from his shoulder, and ate it, exclaiming, "It is the sweetest meat I ever ate; it makes my heart strong." *

* Hazard's *Hist. Coll.* Vol. II. p. 9. Miantonomo is buried on the spot where he fell, in a retired field in the eastern part of Norwich. For many years a heap of stones, thrown up by passing Indians, marked his grave. A simple granite

The commissioners, at their successive meetings, were constantly occupied with the feuds of the Indians among themselves, their threatened hostility to the English, and their failure to comply with the terms of the treaty made at Hartford. Occasional atrocities likewise required the whites to assert, resolutely and fearlessly, their purpose to enforce the rules of Christian justice among the red men. By the terms of the treaty, a yearly tribute was to be paid by the Mohegans, Nyantics, and Narragansetts, in behalf of the Pequots divided among them; and before hostilities could be commenced by any tribe, the English were to be notified, and the latter were likewise to defend the cause of an injured party. The Narragansetts, aided by the Nyantics, pursued Uncas with implacable animosity, and threw out bold threats against the English, withholding the tribute, and keeping the colonies in constant agitation. Major Mason was frequently employed by the commissioners in efforts to obtain the In-

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block, inscribed "Miantonomo, 1643," was placed there, July 4th, 1841. At a short distance, on a beautiful plain, near the falls of the Yantic, is the royal burial-ground of the Mohegans; and there sleeps Uncas, honored with an obelisk, the foundation of which was laid by President Jackson, and which was completed July 4th, 1842. We believe that both these monuments to the rival chieftains owe their erection, in a great measure, to the honorable interest of William C. Gilman, Esq., of Norwich.

dian tribute. The natives stood in awe of his bold presence and prowess. He went among them freely, and without a thought of fear, accompanied generally either by Thomas Stanton or Benedict Arnold, the most skilful interpreters.

The commissioners, at an extraordinary meeting in 1645, decided to send an army against the Narragansetts, not only for the protection of Uncas, according to their obligation, but to make war upon his enemies. Major Mason was at first appointed to command the united forces of the colonies; but, in compliment to Massachusetts, which, it seems, was not slow to assert preëminence and require deference, Major Edward Gibbons was finally intrusted with the chief authority.* Alarmed by the preparations of the commissioners, the Narragansetts and Nyantics sent a delegation of sachems to Boston, and in August, 1645, entered into an agreement to keep the peace, and to pay a tribute of two thousand fathoms of wampum to reimburse the English for the expense which they had incurred. This treaty was but partially kept. Small instalments of the tribute exacted by frequent messages, and most reluctantly paid, were wrung from the

* The instructions of the commissioners, addressed to their "loving friend, Captain Mason," are given in *Hazard*, Vol. II. p. 31.

Indians, who excused their non-compliance by alleging that they were frightened into the treaty.

The English soon discovered that the restless enemy was endeavoring, and with partial success, to unite the Pocomtuck or Deerfield Indians in a league against the whites. The dangerous device, which was prosecuted with large presents of wampum, was discovered and defeated; but the settlements were kept in continual dread. In spite of the efforts made, and the penalties threatened by the courts against furnishing the natives with arms or ammunition, the Indians were known to have the forbidden implements in their possession, some being obtained through the friendly savages, but chiefly from the Dutch.

The Dutch, on their part, were now at war with the Indians on their own account, and were, therefore, all the more disposed to relax, in a measure, their hostility to the English, and to enter upon negotiations, which, however, failed to produce amity between these European dwellers on a foreign soil. In such a state of things, a man like Major Mason was sure to find full and fit exercise for his skill, his judgment, and his courage. Engaged in strengthening the works at Saybrook, which could scarcely be sufficient against a powerful enemy, he was constantly called to different scenes of active duty; to the court at Hartford, to Pequot as a judicial

magistrate, to the various places of meeting for the commissioners, and to the rendezvous of the Indian tribes. On the 18th of May, 1648, the court sent him to the Indians on the main land and on Long Island, to require the long-deferred payment of the tribute; and either the almost desperate hope of obtaining a little by his means, or an appreciation of the hazard of the undertaking, led the court to decide that "it is judged equal, and allowed, that he shall have one half for his pains." Winthrop was appointed to fill his place as magistrate.* Another attempt was made in 1651, and through the agency of Uncas, to obtain the tribute due from the Pequot remnant under his charge. Through the lenity of the whites, an amicable prospective arrangement was made, past dues were forgiven, and this little residue of the tribe became henceforward friendly to the English.

In the year 1651, the colonists at New Haven determined upon a long-meditated purpose of effecting a settlement on their lands in Delaware, and, feeling the importance of a leader who should unite all the requisite qualifications for such an undertaking, they invited Major Mason to take the management of the enterprise, with desirable terms. He cherished an intention of

* Records of Connecticut Colony, Vol. I. p. 176.

complying with the request, and application was accordingly made to the court at Hartford. The public action on the matter exhibits in the best possible light the estimation and regard in which the honored Major was held. The court was strenuous in discountenancing his removal, complimenting his character and his services, but allowing that, if he was earnestly inclined to the measure, he might go for three months, but must then return.*

In June of the next year, Saybrook Fort was put into the best state of defence of which it would admit, on account of the continued provocations received from the Dutch, who, in 1653, were thought, on evidence, to be bribing and inciting the Indians to massacre the English. The colonies were in a state of intense excitement, and their commissioners, with the exception of those from Massachusetts, were satisfied of the infamous plot, and were bent on summary measures. The General Court of Massachusetts opposed a war with the Dutch, even to the extent of breaking covenant, and violating the articles of confederation. The aspect of affairs was gloomy in the extreme. Governor Hopkins,

* Records of Connecticut, Vol. II. p. 21, October 9th, 1651 Trumbull (Vol. I. p. 208) is not strictly accurate in saying that the court "would by no means consent."

being in England, was urged to lay the matter before Parliament; letters were written, and interest made in the mother country. The defeat of the Dutch fleet prevented the arrival of an expected reinforcement at New Netherlands.

In answer to applications from Connecticut and New Haven, Cromwell sent over, in June, 1654, Major Sedgwick and Captain Leverett, with a small fleet and land forces for the reduction of the Dutch. These officers desired an extraordinary meeting of the commissioners to aid them. Major Mason and Mr. Cullick were sent from Hartford, June 13th, 1654, and preliminaries of war were decided, but made useless by the peace between England and Holland, which ensued immediately upon the defeat of the Dutch fleet.

The confederation of the colonies was, in fact, ruptured by the opposition of Massachusetts to the decision of the commissioners, both in refrence to the Dutch and the allied Indians, on the main land, and on Long Island, against whom Ninigret, sachem of the Nyantics, was pursuing his hostilities. But Massachusetts yielded. Ninigret continued his outrages against the Long Island Indians, and was believed to intend the same against the friendly Mohegans, for which purpose he was leaguing the Mohawks, the Pocomtucks, and the Wampanoags, afterwards known as King Philip's Indians. Major Mason was

sent by Connecticut with aid to the Indians on Long Island; and New Haven ordered Lieutenant Seely to join him with a reinforcement at Saybrook. The policy of the English (and it was Christian policy) was to keep peace between the Indians; and the Montaukets on Long Island were instructed to stand on the defensive.

The commissioners, of whom Mason was one, met at Hartford, in September, 1654, and decided upon hostile measures, which, however, through the reluctance of Massachusetts, were rendered almost ineffectual. This conduct cast upon Connecticut and New Haven the principal risk and charge of the unsettled and threatening state of the Indians, and for years the counsels of those colonies were devoted to this absorbing interest; Mason being ever ready to answer the frequent call for his especial services. In April, 1657, he was again sent to Long Island to quiet the Indians, who, in spite of all the pains and expense incurred by the English, had done great damage to Southampton. Uncas, likewise, was troublesome, and required both censure and aid. Such was Mason's principal occupation as "a public military officer." *

* Records of Connecticut Colony, Vol. II. p. 88. "The Major is allowed £5 for his going to Long Island, besides his expenses in that service."

CHAPTER VII.

Mason removes to Saybrook. — Elected Deputy-Governor. — Appointed to that Office, by Charles the Second, under the New Charter. — Elected by the People. — The Indian Grants of Land. — Mohegan Case. — Mason at Norwich. — State of the Settlement. — Mason's History of the Pequot War. — His Death. — His Character. — Governor Wolcott's Notice of him. — His Dwelling-House. — His Grave. — His Family and Descendants.

THE eventful life of John Mason embraces one more removal, and one other public honor, in addition to those which he had already received. The town of Saybrook had been settled principally by inhabitants of Hartford and Windsor, who removed after the ordination of Mr. Fitch, there having previously been no church body gathered at the fort or settlement. In the protracted contests between the Mohegans and the Narragansetts, the sachem Uncas had been besieged in one of his forts on the western bank of the Pequot or Thames River, and, when reduced almost to starvation, found means of communicating a knowledge of his condition to

the English at Saybrook. Ensign Thomas Leffingwell, with great daring, ventured to paddle a canoe, laden with beef, corn, and peas, to the besieged sachem, a distance of at least five and twenty miles, by night. The bold enterprise was successful; the siege was raised, and Uncas, as a token of gratitude, granted the tract originally called Mohegan, now Norwich, being about nine square miles, to Leffingwell, Mason, Fitch, and thirty-two other proprietors, who made a present to Uncas and his sons of seventy pounds. Joined by a few others, these proprietors immediately made arrangements to remove, and applied to the court at Hartford for permission, which was granted.*

Mason had been elected Deputy-Governor of the colony, May 17th, 1660. In March following, he made over to the colony all the lands, which, having been reserved by Uncas as planting grounds, Mason had been authorized to purchase.† Governor Winthrop, of Connecticut, being now engaged in England, negotiating for a charter, Mason, who was continued in his office, by election, for the two following years, acted as

* The petition of the Saybrook people for liberty to remove to Mohegan was answered by the court, May 20th, 1659. *Records*, Vol. II. p. 114.

† Records of Connecticut, Vol. II. p. 135. March 14th, 1660.

Governor. There were difficulties in the way of obtaining the charter, and its final acquisition was protracted. Whalley and Goffe, two of Charles the First's judges, had been sheltered in the western colonies from their pursuers, and but slight demonstrations of loyalty had been made there, on the restoration of Charles the Second. Winthrop, however, showed great address, a ring, given to his grandfather by the late King, being not among the least of his pretensions. The interest made by Lord Say and Seal and the Earl of Manchester, succeeded in obtaining an ample charter of liberties.

By this instrument, signed April 20th, 1662, Major John Mason was appointed by the King Deputy-Governor of the colony, until the ensuing election. The charter did not arrive until after the election in May; but, when it came, it was received in Connecticut with rejoicings. Not so, however, in New Haven, for the latter colony was by the charter merged in the former, and only after protracted dissensions was the wound between brethren healed; for New Haven seemed to part with her glory and her liberties. In the Court of Elections, at Hartford, October 9th, 1662, Major Mason was chosen Deputy-Governor; and he held that office, after the union of the two colonies, until advancing years, with their infirmities, compelled him to seek for rest.

Connecticut colony was for years involved in a lawsuit with some of the descendants of Major Mason, on account of lands, the Masons professing to act as guardians of the Mohegans. The deeds of whole tracts, and of their several constituent parts, are repeated over and over again in the early records; and it is not surprising that confusion should have led to litigation. I cannot here enter into the merits of the case. On the 6th of June, 1659, Uncas and his two sons, Oneco and Attawanhood, granted to the town of Norwich a tract of nine square miles, embracing the present towns of Norwich, Franklin, Bozrah, and Lisbon, and parts of Griswold and Preston. Major Mason witnessed the subscription of the deed.* In 1668, Uncas and Attawanhood granted to Mason a tract of land situate on the Shetucket River, containing five hundred and fifty acres. One of the first measures taken by the company, on their removal from Saybrook to Norwich, was to appoint that the burial-place of the Mohegan sachems, on the banks of the Yantic, should be forever reserved to its ancient use. There the degenerate chiefs of the race, who have borne the name of their great sagamore, have ever

* A copy of the deed, with the Indian signatures, is upon the Norwich Town Records, Vol. I.

since been interred. It is a remarkable fact, that Miantonomo, Uncas, and Major Mason, should all have found a last resting-place beneath the soil, which, when covered by forests, was the scene of their mutual conflicts. Mason alone, of the three, slumbers in an unmarked grave.

The life of Major Mason at Norwich was one of honor and activity. A dense forest surrounded the small settlement, and fringed the banks of the beautiful streams. The houses of the early inhabitants could not, as was usual in the first settlements, be built in close proximity, on account of the roughness of the region, but were erected at a distance from each other; "the green" being a common centre. An amphitheatre of bold hills surrounded the spot, and upon one of the loftiest of these, on a foundation of rock, stood the first rude meeting-house, where the Reverend James Fitch, who, in 1664, became the son-in-law of Major Mason, ministered. The spot, which bears to this day the name of "Meeting-House Rocks," is almost precipitous, and a latter generation regarded it as inaccessible, for the church now stands at its foot. But in ancient times, when the "freedom to worship God," which was won by exile, was perilled by the fear of an attack, in the hour of prayer, by pagan red men, such a position for

a place of worship was all-important. The towering rock afforded a commanding view all around, and the sentries could give an early alarm to the armed worshippers. Imagination can recall the Sabbath company, who mounted the elevated hill, and entered the humble walls of that forest sanctuary, to keep holy time. It was then that the first settlers of Norwich experienced the most benefit from the friendship of the Mohegans. The Indians were ready to remove from place to place, and to environ the farm-houses and temples with their wigwams, and were thus able to detect the first signs of a hostile inroad, and to aid a defence. These movable allies more than once saved the lives of their protectors, and were the constant guardians of their substance, though, like some other watchmen, they at times needed to be watched.

Major Mason was intrusted with much public business, and the duties of his office were burdensome. He was Chief Judge of the County Court from its first organization, in 1664, until 1670. In many collisions and conflicting interests he was a good arbiter. That he should have lived a long life in those times, with such companions and cares, and under the rigid discipline of Puritan Connecticut, and yet have escaped all reproach, is somewhat remarkable. But his character seems to have been always above sus-

picion, and his conduct to have been unquestioned.* May 20th, 1668, he petitioned the court to grant a farm, of about three hundred acres, to one of his sons; which was granted at a place called Uncupsitt.† He was present in his place at Hartford, for the last time, in May, 1671. At the session in October of that year, he was not present, but sent in, through an attorney, a petition in reference to some private business. He was not elected in May, 1672. Infirmity had come upon him, and his time of public usefulness, after having been well filled, was past.

Major Mason's account of the Pequot war, written from his own notes while he resided at Norwich, and, as appears from an humble dedicatory address to the General Court of Connecticut, in answer to their frequent and urgent solicitation, is a good performance, measured

* The only hint of anything which would appear to conflict with this statement, that I have been able to discover, is contained in the following entry on the records of the court, May 14th, (1663, Vol. II. p. 183.) "The court doth declare, that notwithstanding the uncomfortable debates that have been respecting the Major, (Deputy-Governor,) that the Major stands clear, and is in a fit posture to carry on the affairs of the court, which this court doth desire and request him forthwith to attend, according as his place requires." He was plaintiff in an action for slander and defamation, in 1671, and gained his suit.

† Records, Vol. II. p. 260.

by the standard of taste and sentiment prevailing in his time. Like Cæsar, he writes in the third person; the pronoun of majesty occasionally appears, and that of egotism but once. In 1677, Increase Mather published Mason's History, without the prefaces, from a manuscript communicated to him by Mr. John Allyn, then secretary of the colony of Connecticut. Mather attributed the authorship of the manuscript to Mr. Allyn; but the Reverend Thomas Prince, who reëdited the work in Boston, in 1736, says that the narrative was written by Major Mason, and was put into his hands by his grandson, Captain John Mason, of New London. Prince promised to give some further account of the Major in his chronology, a promise which, whether broken or kept, has left for us no evidence.* The Major, in his preface to "the judicious reader," complains of incorrect and partial accounts of the Pequot war. Lieutenant Gardiner also refers to accounts in "our New England twelve-penny chronicle," which praise the undeserving, to the neglect of the well-deserving.

Mason died at Norwich, previous to June 4th, 1672, in the 73d year of his age, ripe in honors, and leaving a well-deserved fame to be cherished

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* Prince's edition of Mason's History is republished in *Mass. Hist. Coll. 2d Series*, Vol. VIII.

by those whom he had benefited. Certainly not the least poetical lines, in Governor Wolcott's poetical account of his predecessor Winthrop's agency in obtaining the Connecticut charter, are given to Mason. After the poet has described the preparations for the Pequot war, he adds,

> "The army now drawn up; To be their head
> Our valiant Mason was commissioned;
> (Whose name is never mentioned by me,
> Without a special note of dignity.)" *

This hero is sufficiently extolled in that somewhat ambitious performance. The dwelling-house of John Mason, in Norwich, stood a little south of the old court-house, on the old road leading to New London, near the bridge, which now crosses the beautiful River Yantic, at the most romantic and delightful spot in its course.† Upon fields and meadows encircled by the primeval forest, the renowned military leader and honored magistrate pursued his peaceful labors, as far as the constant demands made upon him by the public exigencies would admit. Stern integrity, and a hearty devotion to all the interests of others, a deliberate judgment, and a prompt and persevering spirit of execution, were the prominent traits of Mason's public character. In all his

* Mass. Hist. Coll. Vol. IV. p. 277.

† The house was bought by the town, in 1692, for a parsonage. *Records.*

private relations, he appears to have fully met the rigid exactions of the Puritan standard of his times. Such were the men, whom New England commemorates with gratitude as the worthiest among her founders. Their virtues were those of Christians in heart and life, their infirmities those of suffering exiles, at times bewildered and misled.

The site of Mason's house was marked by its ruins within the memory of some of the present inhabitants of Norwich. About a mile above the spot, on the bank of the Yantic, is the retired place, where the first settlers of Norwich were buried. This place seems, at an early period, to have been found inconvenient for the purpose, and but few interments were made there. Some gray stones, with names and dates, still remain, but nothing designates the grave of the first military officer and the Deputy-Governor of the colony of Connecticut. There is, however, no doubt, that his dust there mingles with that of the companions of his last years.

NOTE.

Genealogy of the Mason Family.

Having been at some pains to search out and trace the line of family descent from John Mason, I subjoin here such particulars as may interest a considerable number of persons.

I have reason for believing that Major Mason lost his first wife at Windsor, and that he was there married a second time in 1640. His last will, and the inventory of his estate, were exhibited in court, June 4th, 1672. "The names and ages of the children of Major Mason" are thus stated in the Norwich Records.*

Priscilla, born in October, 1641; Samuel, in July, 1644; John, in August, 1646; Rachel, in October, 1648; Anne, in June, 1650; Daniel, in April, 1652; and Elizabeth, in August, 1654. His eldest child, Priscilla, became, in October, 1664, the second wife of Reverend James Fitch, the first minister of Norwich. Of this union eight children were the issue, and from them have descended a long succession of individuals, who have borne the name of Fitch, with high honors

* First Book, Births and Deaths, p. 22.

in church and state; and with quiet esteem and usefulness in private life.

Samuel Mason, the eldest son of the Major, resided in Stonington, and, first as Lieutenant, then as Captain, and afterwards as Major, was honored with the military dignities of his father.* By the record of administration on his estate, it appears that he left no son.†

John, the second son of the Major, was in the line of promotion to civil dignities, and was likewise a Captain, when he received a wound in the famous swamp fight, in King Philip's war, December 19th, 1675.‡ He died, as is supposed, in consequence of this wound, in September, 1676, leaving a widow, Abigail, and two children, John and Ann. The inventory of his estate was exhibited in court, June 5th, 1677, and his brother-in-law, Reverend James Fitch, and Lieutenant Samuel Mason, his brother, were appointed guardians of his children. His son John, who was also a Captain, resided at Stonington, § and married his cousin, one of the daughters of Major

* Trumbull Manuscripts, Vol. XXII. An agreement signed by Captain Samuel Mason, November 9th, 1699.

† Probate Records at New London. Under date, March 7th, 1706, the court distributed "the estate of Major Samuel Mason, late of Stonington, to Elizabeth his wife, and his four daughters, Ann, Sarah, Elizabeth, and Harriet." The amount was £929 4s. 10d.

‡ List of slain and wounded, in the Trumbull MSS. Vol. XXII. Number 79.

§ In the Records of Towns and Lands, at Hartford, Vol. II. p. 162, is a deed, signed, June 13th, 1707, by Captain John Mason, of Stonington, conveying nine hundred acres of land, adjoining Norwich, to Reverend Peter Thatcher, of Milton

Samuel Mason.* Of this union, a son named Samuel, who was thus doubly a representative and heir of his honored ancestor, became the prosecutor of the colony of Connecticut, in the famous Mohegan Law Case. He resided for years in London, and obtained money from the English treasury to carry on his suit, which he pressed, as alleged guardian of the Mohegans, to obtain large tracts of land. Once he was successful; but after a most protracted and weary litigation, the decision was in favor of the colony.†

Daniel, the third and youngest son of Major John Mason, resided in Lebanon. He was appointed schoolmaster at Norwich for nine months, in March, 1679, and died in Stonington, in 1736, aged 85. In the Indian troubles in 1676, which kept his whole neighborhood in terror, he removed his wife, for her expected confinement, to her friends in Roxbury.‡ In that town was born, and baptized, by the Indian apostle Eliot, the pastor of the first church, "month 2d, day 9th, 1676, Daniel, son of Daniel Mason, of Norwich,"§ who, on reaching manhood, resided at Lebanon, and on the 19th of April, 1704, married Miss Dorothy Hobart, daughter of Reverend Jeremiah Hobart of Haddam.||

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* "Mohegan Law Case," a volume in the State Library at Hartford, p. 67.

† Trumbull Manuscripts, in which are numerous letters relating to this case from Richard Partridge, the agent of the colony in London.

‡ Manuscript Letter of Reverend James Fitch, of Norwich, on Indian affairs.

§ Roxbury First Church Records, *Baptisms*.

|| Second Book of Records of West Haddam. I am indebted to the Reverend Dr. Field, of Haddam, for his most

Of this marriage there was one child, a son. On the death of Daniel Mason, his widow married Hezekiah Brainerd, October 1st, 1707, and had the sacred honor of numbering among her children the devoted David Brainerd, one of the true saints of the New England wildernesses. Her son by her first husband, Daniel Mason, the grandson of Major Mason, was born, March 4th, 1705, and received from her father the Christian name of Jeremiah. He married May 24th, 1727, Mary, a daughter of Thomas, son of William Clark, who was one of the first settlers of Haddam,* and removed to that section of the original town of Norwich, which is now called Franklin. In that town was born, February 1st, 1730, his son, Jeremiah Mason, who married Elizabeth Fitch, daughter of James Fitch, of Lebanon, grandson of the first minister of Norwich and of the eldest child of Major John Mason. Thus, in the fourth generation, led through a descent, on both sides, of the honorable and reverend fathers and the pious mothers of the colony, were united the grandchildren of children's children. And by that union Massachusetts has had restored to her, in the person of that eminent jurist, the Honorable Jeremiah Mason, of Boston, distinguished among and above many who are great, the representative of the Low Country soldier, and of the friend of Fairfax, whom she once gave, from her councils and her fortifications, to plant and save a new colony.

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kind and valuable aid, in consulting records and monuments in that town for my information.

* Manuscript Letter of Dr. Field

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