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THE

LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

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BY

JAMES K. PAULDING.

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PREFACE.

Shortly after the conclusion of the late war, the author of the following work removed to the city of Washington, where he resided several years. His situation brought him into familiar intercourse with many respectable, and some distinguished persons, who had been associated with Washington; and the idea occurred to him of attempting to compile a Life of the Father of his Country, which might possibly address itself to the popular feeling more directly than any one hitherto attempted. With this object in view, he took every occasion to gather information concerning his private life and domestic habits from such sources as could be relied on as authentic.

Though the work has been long delayed, the design has never been relinquished. But subsequent reflection has induced him to alter his original intention, by attempting to adapt it to the use of schools, and generally to that class of readers who have neither the means of purchasing, nor the leisure to read, a larger and more expensive book. It appeared to him, that the life of Washington furnished an invaluable moral example to the youth of his country and that its introduction to their notice could not but be useful to the rising generation of his countrymen, by holding up to their view, the character and actions of a man whose public and private virtues equally furnish the noblest as well as the safest objects for their guide and imitation.

In compiling this work, the writer has availed himself of all the sources of information within his reach; and though possessed of materials for a much larger one, has compressed them in a manner which, it is hoped, will bring it within the reach of those to whom it is peculiarly addressed. Much of the information concerning the private life and habits of Washington, was derived from the information of his contemporaries then living, but most of them now no more, and from the means afforded by the present most estimable lady who is now in possession of Mount Vernon.

In detailing the events of the Revolution, the writer has principally consulted

the public and private letters of Washington, which have long been before the world, as the most unquestionable authorities; though it must be obvious, that a work intended for the purposes he has avowed, must necessarily be confined to those more consequential events, in which Washington was himself personally engaged, except in so far as is necessary to connect the narrative. He has avoided citing his authority on every occasion, because such a course would, he thought, interfere with the uses for which the work was intended, by presenting continual interruptions: but his readers may be assured, that he has inserted nothing which he does not believe to be true, and for which, if necessary, he cannot produce the authority of history, of Washington himself, or of undoubted traditions.

In a work addressed to the youth, and to the popular feeling of his country, it seemed allowable, if not absolutely necessary to the purposes of the writer, to place the actions of Washington before the reader in a manner the more strongly to affect his reason as well as his imagination, and to accompany them with reflections calculated to impress him deeply with the virtues and services of the Father of his Country. His desire was to enlist their affections—to call forth their love, as well as veneration, for the great and good man whose life and actions he has attempted to delineate; and in so doing he has appealed rather to the feelings of nature than to the judgment of criticism.

LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

CHAPTER I.

Introduction. Birth of Washington. Description of his Birth-place. Of the House in which he was born. Some Particulars of his early Education. His Father. His Mother. His first, second, and last Teacher. Early Military Propensities. Character at School. His Strength and Activity. Anecdote. Becomes Surveyor to the Estate of Lord Fairfax. Anecdote of that Nobleman. Receives a Midshipman's Warrant. His Military Studies.

THERE is no legacy more precious to youth than memorials of great and virtuous men; nor is there any thing which confers more lasting renown on a nation, than the fortunate circumstance of having produced a citizen whose rare virtues and illustrious actions unite the suffrages of mankind in all ages in his favour, and consecrate him as one of the chosen models of the human race. His country and his countrymen equally partake in the benefits of his services and the glory of his actions; nor is there one of his fellow-citizens throughout all posterity, however humble may be his station, that will not in some degree be ennobled by an association with his name. He becomes the great landmark of his country; the pillar on which is recorded her claim to an equality with the illustrious nations of the world; the example to all succeeding generations; and there is no trait which so strongly marks a degenerate race as an indifference to his fame and his virtues.

Such was the man whose life I have undertaken to write; not because it has not already been well-written, or that his renown requires the aid of the historian or biographer. While

these record his virtues and his services, they can do little to perpetuate his fame, which is inseparable from his native land. He who, by the general suffrage of his fellow-citizens, is hailed as the FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY, needs no other monument. His memory will last as long as the country endures, and the name of Washington be co-existent with that of the land he redeemed from bondage.

Not for *his* sake, therefore, but for the youth of my country have I commenced this undertaking. I wished, if possible, to place before our children the character and actions of one, the contemplation of whose virtues and services cannot but inspire them with noble sentiments, and a high regard to their public and private duties. In no age or country has there ever arisen a man who, equally in private as in public life, presented so admirable a model to every class and condition of mankind. The most humble citizen of the United States may copy his private virtues, and the most lofty and magnanimous spirit cannot propose to itself a more noble object of ambition than to aspire to an imitation of his public services. In contemplating such a character, our children will equally acquire a reverence for virtue, and a sacred devotion to the obligations of citizens of a free state.

GEORGE WASHINGTON was born in the parish of Washington,* county of Westmoreland, and state of Virginia, the twenty-second of February, 1732, and was the youngest son of Augustin Washington and Mary Ball, his second wife. He descended from John Washington, a native of England, who emigrated to this country sometime between the years 1650 and 1656, and settled at Pope's Creek, where he married a

* The first Washington describes himself in his will as "John Washington, of the parish of Washington." It is dated Oct. 21, 1675.

daughter of the gentleman from whom the stream derives its name.

Although it is of little consequence who were the distant ancestors of a man who, by common consent, is hailed as the Father of his Country, yet any particulars concerning his family cannot but be a subject of curiosity. In all my general reading I have only chanced to meet with the name of Washington three or four times in the early history and literature of England. In the diary of Elias Ashmole, founder of the Ashmolean Museum, are the following entries:—

"*June* 12*th*, 1645. I entered on my command as comptroller of the ordnance."

"*June* 18*th*. I received my commission from Colonel Washington."

Hume, in his account of the siege of Bristol, has the following passage:—"One party led by Lord Grandison was beaten off and its commander mortally wounded. Another, conducted by Colonel Bellasis, met with a like fate. But Washington, with a less party, finding a place in the curtain weaker than the rest, broke in, and quickly made room for the horse to follow." This was in 1643. Five years afterwards, that deluded monarch, Charles I., suffered the just consequences of his offences against the majesty of the people of England, and from that time the cause of royalty appeared desperate. The more distinguished and obnoxious adherents of the Stuarts exiled themselves in foreign lands, and the date of the supposed arrival of the first Washington in Virginia, accords well with the supposition that he may have been the same person mentioned by Ashmole and Hume. In an old collection of poetry, by Sir John Menzies and others, there is a fine copy of verses to the memory of Mr. Washington, page to the king, who died in Spain. In the year

1640, William Legge, Earl of Dartmouth, married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir William Washington. But the name and family of Washington are now extinct in the land of our forefathers. When General Washington was about making his will, he caused inquiries to be instituted, being desirous to leave some memorial to all his relations. The result was a conviction that none of the family existed in that country.—But the topic is rather curious than important. The subject of this biography could receive little additional dignity through a descent from the most illustrious families in Christendom. He stands alone in the pure atmosphere of his own glory. He derived no title to honours from his ancestry, and left no child but his country to inherit his fame.

The house in which Washington was born stood about half a mile from the junction of Pope's Creek with the Potomac, and was either burned or pulled down long previous to the Revolution. A few scanty relics alone remain to mark the spot which will ever be sacred in the eyes of posterity. A clump of old decayed fig trees, probably coeval with the mansion, yet exists; a number of vines, and shrubs, and flowers still re-produce themselves every year, as if to mark its site, and flourish among the hallowed ruins; and a stone, placed there by Mr. George Washington Custis, bears the simple inscription, "Here, on the 11th of February, (O.S.) 1732, George Washington was born."

The spot is of the deepest interest, not only from its associations, but its natural beauties. It commands a view of the Maryland shore of the Potomac, one of the most majestic of rivers, and of its course for many miles towards Chesapeake Bay. An aged gentleman, still living in the neighbourhood, remembers the house in which Washington was born. It was a low-pitched, single-storied, frame building, with four rooms on the first floor, and an enormous chimney at each end on the outside. This was the style of the better sort of

houses in those days, and they are still occasionally seen in the old settlements of Virginia.

Such is the brief sketch of the birth-place of a man who was destined to carry to a successful issue those great principles of liberty, which, after having resulted in a degree of happiness and prosperity hitherto unparalleled in the history of mankind, are now spreading afar into the remote regions of the earth, and seem fated to work a universal revolution. Let my young reader bear in mind that it was not in a palace, in the midst of the splendours of royalty, that a child was born, with whose first breath the future destinies of millions of the human race were to be inseparably associated, and whose virtues were to redeem his country from a long-continued vassalage. It was in the house of a private man, like that they themselves inhabit, he first saw the light; and it was by the aid alone of such advantages as are within the reach of them all, that he qualified himself, not only to become the future father of his country, but to exhibit to the world one of the purest models of private excellence, that the history of nations presents to the imitation of mankind. The contemplation of such an illustrious example will go far to dissolve those long-cherished delusions, created and fostered by early impressions, and the almost universal tendency of books, which have implanted in their minds a conviction that rank, and birth, and wealth, and power are indispensable requisites to great virtues and glorious actions.

The aged neighbour and cotemporary of Washington, from whom I have derived the preceding description of the house of his nativity, remembers to have heard that at the time of his birth he was very large; and the uniform testimony of those who knew him proves, that in his youth, manhood, and even his declining years, he was distinguished, not only for his vigour, activity, and hardihood, but for an adventurous, resolute, and ardent spirit. His father, Augustin Washington, died

when he was scarcely ten years old, leaving him to the care of his mother, who survived a long time, and lived to see her favourite son hailed by a grateful people as their deliverer.

But young as was Washington at the decease of his father, it is stated, on the authority of the rector of the parish of Mount Vernon, that he lived long enough to implant in his heart the seeds of virtuous principles, which, falling on a rich soil, grew up in time to a glorious maturity. The virtues of truth, justice, and liberality, most especially, were early impressed on his youthful mind, by examples and illustrations, and the principles of religion inculcated with his earliest lessons. From all that is remembered of Augustin Washington, he appears to have been a good man, worthy of such a son.

The mother of Washington, on, whom the care of bringing him up devolved on the death of his father, is described to me, by those who knew her well, as a woman of ordinary stature, once a belle and beauty in that part of Virginia called the Northern Neck. High-spirited, yet of great simplicity of manners, uncommon strength of mind, and decision of character, she exacted great deference from her sons, of whom George was the favourite. The only weakness in her character was an excessive fear of thunder, which originated in the melancholy death of a young female friend, who was struck dead at her side by lightning, when Mrs. Washington was about fifteen years old.

The same inflexible regard to the performance of those ordinary duties of life, on which so much of our own happiness and that of others depends; the same strict punctuality in keeping her word, and discharging all the obligations of justice, by which Washington was distinguished, characterized his mother. There was a plain honesty and truth about her peculiar to that age, and which has been ill-exchanged for empty professions and outward polish. As a native of Vir-

ginia, she was hospitable by birthright, and always received her visitors with a smiling welcome. But they were never asked to stay but once, and she always speeded the parting guest, by affording every facility in her power. She possessed all those domestic habits and qualities that confer value on woman, but had no desire to be distinguished by any other titles than those of a good wife and mother. She was once present, and occupied the seat of honour, at a ball given to Washington at Fredericksburg, while in the full measure of his well-earned glory, and when nine o'clock came, said to him with perfect simplicity, "Come, George, it is time to go home."

Though the early years of Washington are shrouded in the mists of time, I have been enabled, through the kindness of one, whose modest and retiring dignity would scarcely forgive me were I to mention her name, to communicate some interesting particulars of his course of domestic discipline. It will appear from these, that the loss of one parent was amply supplied by the well-directed cares of another, and that he derived his character from the purest fountains of piety and wisdom.

I have now before me a venerable volume, printed in the year 1685, entitled, "Contemplations, Moral and Divine, by Sir Matthew Hale, late Chief-justice of the Court of King's-Bench," in which is written, with her own hand, the name of "Mary Washington." It bears the appearance of frequent use, and particular chapters are designated by marks of reference. It is the volume from which the mother of Washington was accustomed to read daily lessons of piety, morality, and wisdom to her children. The value of such a relic cannot be better set forth than in the language which accompanied its transmission; and I can only devoutly hope that the hallowed sanctuary of Mount Vernon may ever continue to be possessed by such kindred spirits as the writer of that letter.

"I beg it may be carefully preserved and returned, as one of the family heir-looms which better feelings than pride would retain for future generations to look on, even should they not study it. There is something in a reverence for religion favourable to a virtuous character; and that reverence is in some measure kept alive by looking on a family Bible, and solid works of divinity, which have descended from past generations. We associate with them recollections of ancestral virtues, and when family tradition assures us they were the counsellors of past days, there is a feeling of the heart which turns to them in time of trial, and makes it good, I think, to leave them an honourable station, as friends to those that have gone before, and those who shall come after us, to speak in the cause of truth when we shall sleep in the grave."

I shall make some extracts from such portions of this book as appear to have been most used, not only because they contain the finest lessons of piety, morality, and wisdom, but most especially because I think the germ of Washington's character may be traced in the principles and practice they so eloquently inculcate. One of the chapters which appears to have been selected as an ordinary lesson, and marked for that purpose in the table of contents, is denominated "The Great Audit," and seems to me to contain as much true wisdom as was ever embodied in the same compass. I shall extract those parts which most singularly assimilate with the character of Washington, in order that my youthful readers may see whence it was that, in all probability, the Father of his Country derived his principles of action, and, if possible, imitate his virtues.

"As touching my conscience, and the light thou hast given me in it, I have been very jealous of wounding, or grieving, or discouraging, or deadening it. I have therefore chosen rather

to foster that which seemed but indifferent, lest there should be somewhat in it that might be useful; and would rather gratify my conscience with being too scrupulous than displease or disquiet it by being too venturous. I have still chosen, therefore, what might be probably lawful, than to do what might possibly be unlawful; because, though I could not err in the former, I might in the latter. If things were disputable, whether they might be done, I rather chose to forbear, because the lawfulness of my forbearance was unquestionable.

"Touching human prudence and understanding in affairs, and dexterity in the arranging of them: I have ever been careful to mingle justice and honesty with my prudence, and have always esteemed prudence, actuated by injustice and falsity, the arrantest and most devilish practice in the world, because it prostitutes thy gift to the service of hell, and mingles a beam of thy divine excellence with an extract of the devil's furnishing, making a man so much the worse by how much he is wiser than others.

"I always thought that wisdom which, in a tradesman or a politician, was mingled with deceit, falsity, and injustice, deserved the same name, only the latter is so much the worse, because it is of the more public and general concernment. Yet because I have often observed great employments, especially in public affairs, are sometimes under great temptations of mingling too much craft with prudence, and then to miscall it policy, I have, as much as may be, avoided such temptations, and if I have met with them, I have resolutely rejected them.

"I have always observed that honesty and plain-dealing in transactions, as well public as private, is the best and soundest prudence and policy, and commonly, at the long-run, overmatcheth craft and subtlety. And more advantage is derived

from possessing the confidence of mankind, that can ever be made by deceiving them.

"As human prudence is abused if mingled with falsity and deceit, though the end be ever so good, so it is much more debased if directed to a bad end, to the dishonour of thy name, the oppression of thy people, the corrupting thy worship or truth, or to practice any injustice towards any person.

"It hath been my care as not to err in the manner, so neither in the end of the exercising of thy providence. I have ever esteemed thy prudence best employed when it was exercised in the preservation and support of thy truth, in contemning, discovering, and disappointing the designs of evil and treacherous men, in delivering the oppressed, in righting the injured, in preventing of wars and discords, in preserving the public peace and tranquillity of the people where I live, and in all those offices laid upon me by thy providence, under every relation.

"When my end was most unquestionably good, I ever then took most heed that the means were suitable and justifiable. Because the better the end was, the more easily are we cozened into the use of ill means to effect it. We are too apt to dispense with ourselves in the practice of what is amiss, in order to the accomplishment of an end that is good; we are apt, while with great intenseness of mind we gaze upon the end, not to take care what course we take so we attain it; and we are apt to think that God will dispense with, or at least overlook the miscarriages in our attempts, if the end be good.

"Because many times, if not most times thy name and honour do more suffer by attempting a good end by bad means, than by attempting both a bad end, and by bad means. For bad ends are suitable to bad means; they are alike—and it doth not immediately as such concern thy honour. But every thing that is good hath somewhat of thee in it, thy name, and

thy nature, and thy honour is written upon it; and the blemish that is cast upon it, is, in some measure, cast upon thee. The evil, and scandal, and ugliness that is in the means, is cast upon the end, and doth disparage and blemish it, and consequently, is dishonour to thee. To rob for burnt-offerings, or to lie for God, is a greater disservice to thy majesty, than to rob for rapine, or to lie for advantage."

"Touching my eminence of place and power in this world, this is my account. I never sought or desired it, and that for these reasons. First, because I easily saw that it was rather a burden than a privilege. It made my charge and my account the greater, my contentment and my rest the less. I found enough in it to make me decline it in respect to myself, but not any that could invite me to seek or desire it.

"That external glory and splendour that attended it, I esteemed as vain and frivolous in itself, a bait to allure vain and inconsiderate persons to affect and delight—not valuable enough to invite a considerate *judgment* to desire or undertake it. I esteemed them as the gilding that covers a bitter pill, and I looked through this dress and outside and easily saw that it covered a state obnoxious to danger, solicitude, care, trouble, envy, discontent, unquietness, temptation, and vexation.

"I esteemed it a condition which, if there were any distempers abroad, they would be infallibly hunting and pushing at it; and if it found any corruptions within, either of pride, vain-glory, insolence, vindictiveness, or the like, it would be sure to draw them out and set them to work. And if they prevailed, it made my power and greatness not only my burden but my sin; if they prevailed not, yet it required a most watchful, assiduous, and severe labour and industry to suppress them.

"When I undertook any place of power or eminence, first, I looked to my call thereunto to be such as I might discern to

be thy call, not my own ambition. Second, that the place was such as might be answered by suitable abilities in some measure to perform. Third, that my end in it might not be the satisfaction of any pride, ambition, or vanity in myself, but to serve Providence and my generation honestly and faithfully.

"In the holding or exercising these places, I kept my heart humble; I valued not myself one rush the more for it. First, because I easily found that the base affectation of pride, which commonly is the fly that haunts such employments, would render me dishonourable to thy majesty, and discreditable in the employment. Second, because I easily saw that great places were slippery places, the mark of envy. It was, therefore, always my care so to behave in them as I might be in a capacity to leave them; and so to leave them, as that, when I had left them, I might have no scars and blemishes stick upon me. I carried, therefore, the same evenness of temper in holding them as might become me if I were without them. I found enough in great employments to make me sensible of the danger, trouble, and cares of them; enough to make me humble, but not enough to make me proud and haughty.

"I never made use of my power or greatness to serve my own turns, either to heap up riches, or oppress my neighbour, or to revenge injuries, or to uphold injustice. For, though others thought me great, I knew myself to be still the same, and in all things, besides the due execution of my place, my deportment was just the same as if I had been no such man; for I very well and practically knew that place, and honour, and preferment are things extrinsical, and have no ingredience into the man. His value and estimate before, and under, and after his greatness is still the same in itself—as the counter that now stands for a penny, anon for sixpence, and anon for twelve pence is still the same counter, though its place and extrinsical denomination be changed.

"Though I have loved my reputation, and have been care-

ful not to lose or impair it by my own neglect, yet I have looked upon it as a brittle thing that the devil aims to hit in an especial manner; a thing that is much in the power of a false report, a mistake, or misapprehension to wound and hurt, and notwithstanding all my care, I am at the mercy of others, without God's wonderful overruling providence.

"And as my reputation is the esteem that others have of me, so that esteem may be blemished without my default. I have, therefore, always taken this care not to set my heart upon my reputation. I will use all fidelity and honesty, and take care it shall not be lost by any default of mine, and if, notwithstanding all this, my reputation be foiled by evil or man, I will patiently bear it, and content myself with the serenity of my own conscience.

"When thy honour or the good of my country was concerned, I then thought it was a seasonable time to lay out my reputation for the advantage of either, and to act with it, and by it, and upon it, to the highest, in the use of all lawful means. And upon such an occasion, the counsel of Mordecai to Esther was my encouragement,—'*Who knoweth whether God hath not given thee this reputation and esteem for such a time as this?*'"

This admirable book is filled with lessons of virtue and wisdom, clothed in the simple language of sincerity and truth, and adorned in its hoary dignity, like some ancient temple, with rich vines, bearing clusters of flowers, and beautiful even in its decay. It has evidently been much used, and especially in those passages containing enforcements and exemplifications of the higher duties of men. It is the work of a pious and venerable sage, whose whole life illustrated his own precepts, and without doubt contributed much to form the character of the man who scarcely conferred greater benefits on his country by his actions, than posterity will derive from his example.

From this indissoluble connexion between good precepts imbibed in early youth, and good actions performed in manhood and old age, the children of America may learn the value of a virtuous education, and make a proper use of those opportunities which the affection of parents and the munificence of their country afford them. These are among the rich gifts, the "talents," bestowed upon them by the Giver of all good, and according as they use them well or ill will they be able to answer when called upon at the "great audit," when the trumpet shall sound, and the graves give up their dead.

There is little reason to doubt that much of the education of Washington was domestic; that education which, more than all the rest, shapes the course and the character of the future man. This generally falls to the mother, and it is from the source whence children draw their life, that they for the most part derive those qualities and virtues which alone make life valuable to others and to themselves. A firm, tender, careful, and sensible mother is the greatest blessing that ever fell to the lot of a human being. It is from her that the young shoot derives its bent; it is from her it receives its nurture and its cultivation, and it is to her that the children of men should in after life look up as the fountain of benefits which a whole life of grateful duty can scarcely repay. Such a mother had Washington, and such was her reward..

The estate at Pope's Creek, as appears from the will of John Washington, a copy of which is in my possession, having been left to Lawrence Washington, the father of George removed to another, situated on the river Rappahannock, in Stafford county, near Fredericksburg. After his death, however, though I cannot determine precisely at what age, he was sent down into Westmoreland to his half-brother, Augustin, where he attended the school of a Mr. Williams, said to have been an excellent teacher. Previous to his removal from his native place, he had received his first rudi-

ments at a school kept by a man of the name of Hobby, a tenant of his father, who, it is stated, officiated as sexton and grave-digger to the parish of Washington. The same authority says that Hobby lived to see his illustrious pupil riding on the full tide of his glory, and was wont to boast that he "had laid the foundation of his greatness."

At the school of Mr. Williams, he maintained that standing among boys which he was destined to sustain among men. Such was his character for veracity that his word was sufficient to settle a disputed point with the scholars, who were accustomed to receive his award with acclamations; and such his reputation for courage as well as firmness, that though he never on any occasion fought with his fellows, he never received either insult or wrong. He was as much beloved as respected, and when he left school, it is said that the scholars parted from him with tears.

From traditionary information which I rely on, it also appears that at a very early age Washington gave indications of a military spirit, which is, however, so generally a characteristic of boys, that it can scarcely be said to distinguish one from another. He inherited from his father great strength and activity, and was accustomed, not only at school, but long afterwards, to practice the most athletic exercises. Thus it was that he prepared himself to encounter the fatigues and hardships of his future life.

Five years after the death of his father, and, consequently, when under fifteen years of age, he left school for the last time. What were the acquisitions he carried with him cannot now be known. They were certainly confined to the ordinary branches of an English education, at a period when knowledge and the means of acquiring it in this country were not what they are now. A great portion of the youth of the colonies of any peculiar claims to distinction were sent abroad for their education; the good people of that period seeming

to have cherished a conviction that knowledge and learning could never be naturalized in the New World.

While it serves to exalt the character and abilities of this famous man, to learn that though his means of acquiring knowledge were not superior, nay, not equal, to those now within the reach of all for whom I write, yet did he in after-life, by the force of his genius and the exercise of a manly perseverance, supply all his deficiencies; so that when called upon to take charge of the destinies of his country, and bear a load as heavy as was ever laid on the shoulders of man, he was found gloriously adequate to the task, and bore her triumphantly through a struggle which may be likened to the agonies of death resulting in immortality. As with him, so with my youthful readers, most of whose opportunities of acquiring knowledge are greater than those of Washington, and who, though they will never reach his fame, may still rationally aspire to an imitation of his perseverance, his integrity, and his patriotism. Opportunities for great actions occur but seldom, but every day and every hour presents occasion for the performance of our duties.

Fortunately, perhaps, for Washington, he was not born rich. The property of his father was large, but it was to be shared among several children. Thus was he early in life led to look for fortune and consequence to that best of all sources, his own talents and exertions. From the period of his leaving the school in Westmoreland until old enough to engage in the active business of life, he resided either with his mother at the plantation on the Rappahannock, or with his half-brother, Lawrence Washington, at Mount Vernon. His leisure hours, it appears, were spent in athletic exercises, in which he excelled; most especially in running, wrestling, and riding, in all of which, those who recollect him at that time agree in saying, he was greatly distinguished. Such was his skill, grace, and dignity in the latter especially, that during his

whole life, he was considered the finest rider in Virginia, where this was a universal accomplishment.

His sports and recreations were, however, at a maturer age, and when his situation demanded it, or when his future prospects stimulated him to the exercise of those talents which he must have been conscious of possessing, mingled with study and reflection. Yet this habit of exercise continued with him through life, and, combined with the vigour and fortitude of his mind, enabled him to sustain without flinching, all those vicissitudes and hardships which it was his destiny and duty to encounter in the cause of his country. It is by the aid of a strong body, a cultivated mind, and virtuous principles, that we are qualified to perform great actions for the benefit of mankind.

George was the favourite son of his mother, yet he was not a spoiled child, as is usual in such cases. The strength and steadiness of his mind, equally with that of Mrs. Washington, preserved him from the evils of early indulgence. The simplicity of her character was combined with firmness and decision. The following anecdote equally illustrates the principles of mother and son, and is derived from an authentic source.

Mrs. Washington was very fond of fine horses, insomuch that when on one occasion she had become possessed of a pair of handsome grays, she caused them to be turned out to pasture in a meadow in front of the house, from whence they could at all times be seen from the window of her sitting-room. It chanced that she at one time owned a favourite young horse, which had never been broke to the saddle, and no one was permitted to ride. On some occasion, a party of youthful Nimrods, on a visit to the house, proposed, after dinner, to mount the colt and make the circuit of the pasture. No one could do the feat, and many were defeated in attempting to mount, or thrown from his back afterwards. Washington, then bare

youth, succeeded, however, and gave the favourite such a breathing that he at length fell under his rider, who immediately went and told his mother what he had done. Her reply deserves to be recorded. "Young man," said she, "I forgive you, because you have the courage to tell the truth at once; had you skulked away, I should have despised you."

It is easy to imagine that, acting on these principles, the result should be, on the part of Washington, an inflexible regard to the obligations of sincerity and truth. Accordingly, such was the character of this great and virtuous citizen, during the whole course of his noble and exemplary life, in all situations, and under all circumstances. No man, perhaps, ever occupied stations, both in war and peace, more decidedly calculated to draw his frailties before the world, or instigate the bitterest calumnies. Yet he passed through his high career unstained by a single imputation of falsehood, deception, or crime; the sanctity of his character triumphed over the violence of national hostility and party feelings, and he died, as he had lived, with a fame as pure as ever fell to the lot of man.

Such are the few materials I have been able to collect, concerning the first eighteen years of Washington's life. No one probably anticipated his future eminence, for none could foresee that great revolution which has excited the pulse of the world. None prophesied at that time that he would one day become the first, among the first of every age, the champion of the liberties of mankind, the model of virtuous heroism, and, consequently, none were found to preserve or record that portion of the lives of ordinary men, which does not deserve to be remembered. Nor perhaps is this omnission to be regretted when we see so many illustrious persons, who, contemplated in the distance and through the mists of time, assume the port of giants, dwindle into pigmies, by having all their pigmy actions placed before the world. Those heroes always fare best whose memories are traditionary rather than histori-

cal, or whose lives have been written long after them little peculiarities and weaknesses, the thousand insignificant nothings that make up so large a portion of human actions, have passed into oblivion, and nothing is remembered but what is intrinsically great. It has hitherto been found impossible to mar the severe simplicity of Washington's greatness by coupling it with puerilities that have neither the merit of illustrating his character, or increasing our stores of useful knowledge.

That he had established a reputation which placed him very early in life above his contemporaries, can hardly be doubted when my young readers shall learn that at the age of nineteen he was appointed a deputy Adjutant [illegible] of the State of Virginia, and this, too, at a period when the attention of the government had been turned to the [illegible] of our provincial troops, in consequence of the alleged encroachments of the French on the Ohio. Such an appointment to a young man, is presumptive evidence that he had thus early attracted notice on the score of some extraordinary [illegible].

Previous to this, however, [illegible] to his half brother [illegible] a near relative of Lord [illegible] of the Northern Neck of Virginia, [illegible] the lot of a private individual. [illegible] between the Washingtons and [illegible] in consequence of the marriage of [illegible] with the sister of William Fairfax, then a member of the Virginia Council. The latter gentleman introduced Washington to Lord Fairfax, who gave him the appointment of surveyor of his vast estate, in consequence of which he had frequent occasion to explore the uninhabited regions of the back woods, where he became accustomed to a life of exposure, and strengthened his habits and constitution by a series of hardships and exposures. Lord Fairfax lived to hear of Cornwallis laying down his arms to his

former surveyor, when as tradition says, he called for his personal attendant, an old negro, and cried out, "Take me to bed, it is high time for me to die!" It is certain that he never left it till carried to his grave.

The character, habits and inclinations of Washington were, however, decidedly military. At the age of fourteen he applied for and received a warrant of midshipman in the British navy. Happily for himself, for his country, for the world, the interference and entreaties of his mother induced him to relinquish it very unwillingly, and preserved to the cause of liberty its most illustrious champion. Had it been otherwise, he who became the deliverer of his country might have arrived, perhaps, at the dignity of a post-captain. It seems like an interposition of Providence in behalf of the liberties of mankind. His baggage was already on board a man-of-war riding in the Potomac just below Mount Vernon, when the entreaties of his mother induced him to sacrifice his long-cherished wishes to the duties of a son.

But it seems he did not the less cultivate a knowledge of the theory and practice of war. A certain Adjutant Muse, of the county of Westmorland, acquainted with military tactics, who had accompanied Lawrence Washington in the expedition against Carthagena, taught George the manual exercise, in which he soon acquired great dexterity. He also borrowed of this person certain treatises on the art of war, by the aid of which he acquired a knowledge, at least, of its theory, and became an expert fencer under the tuition of Monsieur Van Braam, who was subsequently his interpreter in his intercourse with the French on the Ohio. There can be little doubt that it was a knowledge of these acquirements, and of his decided military propensities, that so early pointed him out to the notice of his government. The foundation of our future fortunes is laid in the days of our youth: the blossoms when blighted in the spring, never produce the rich fruits of summer and autumn.

Had not Washington thus early cultivated his mind and invigorated his body, instead of becoming the sword and shield of freedom, its defender and its mentor, he might have sunk under the weight of his after burthens, and crushed himself with the ruins of his country.

Hitherto I have confined my narrative to the private life and character of Washington. During the period over which we have passed, he was silently preparing himself, by useful studies, active employment, and athletic exercises, for that magnificent career which opened before him vista after vista, by slow and painful labours, until, through a series of disasters and triumphs—of gloomy hopes and bitter disappointments—of long-suffering and keen anxieties—of virtuous sacrifices, unconquerable courage, patience, fortitude, and perseverance, animated by patriotism, and inspired by a genius equal to every emergency, he reached the summit of his imperishable fame. I am now to exhibit him to my youthful readers in new and trying situations, though but a boy, he became charged with the affairs of men, and the interests of states. It will be found that, like the sun, as he rose in the firmament, he diffused additional light and warmth over a wider circumference.

CHAPTER II.

Disputes between France and England founded on the right of Discovery. Encroachments on the Ohio. Situation and Apprehensions of Virginia. Preparations for Defence. Washington appointed Adjutant-General. Volunteers to carry a Letter to the French Commandant on the Ohio. Incidents on the Journey. Extracts from his Journal. Is shot at by an Indian. Is near perishing from the Cold, and narrowly escapes Drowning. Contrast between Washington in the Wilderness and Washington the Father of his Country. Returns to Williamsburg.

It is not necessary to discuss the conflicting claims of France and England to the territory of North America. The one has now no possessions left, and the period is probably not far distant when the New World will be entirely emancipated from the dominion of those who, though they can scarcely govern at home, aspire to control the distant regions of the earth. These claims were equally founded on the right of discovery, a right for the most part much more satisfactory to the discoverer than the discovered. It is enough to say, that between these two rival nations, their claims comprehended nearly the whole of this great continent, from the Gulf of Mexico to Hudson's Bay, and from the Atlantic to the uttermost regions of the unexplored west. One might suppose here was enough for both; but experience teaches us that the possession of much is only a prelude to the desire of more; and, accordingly, the two nations began to dispute and ultimately to fight about a wilderness of which neither knew the boundaries or dimensions.

As my design is rather to write the life of Washington than the history of the era in which he flourished, I shall press nothing into the service but what seems necessary to this purpose. It will be sufficient to state that the pretensions of the French interfered with those of the English, and the

ancient rivalry of the two nations requiring but a single spark to set both in a flame, hostilities were the natural consequence of their conflicting ambition. The French advanced from one step to another, until at length they reached the Ohio, and subsequently established a post at the junction of the Alleghany and Monongahela rivers, on the spot where Pittsburg now stands. The ultimate object of their plans was to confine the English to the country east of the Alleghany mountains, and, of consequence, give the French a decided superiority on this continent.

Virginia was especially interested in these encroachments. Her chartered limits extended quite across from sea to sea, and her frontier lay exposed to the hostilities of the French on the Ohio, aided by the Indians, over whom they always acquired a paramount influence by their religion, their politeness, and their gallantry. These movements on the Ohio of consequence excited great apprehensions in the Ancient Dominion, and preparations were made to meet what might follow by raising and disciplining the provincial militia. The eyes of the state were turned to the valiant spirits of her youthful sons, and the first public station conferred on Washington was that of adjutant-general of Virginia, with the rank of Major, when he was scarcely nineteen years of age. But with the ardent vigour of youth he combined the qualities of mature manhood, and the appointment was not only justified by prudence, but by the whole tenor of his after-life.

Lieutenant Governor Dinwiddie, then the representative of royalty in Virginia, became alarmed, and the state more than partook in his apprehensions. At that period, the whole country west of the Alleghanies was one vast wilderness, roamed by wild beasts, and Indians equally savage and wild. The great valley of the Shenandoah, now rich with the labours of thousands and tens of thousands of independent farmers, was then thinly inhabited by white men, who could

not see the smoke of their neighbours' chimneys; and Winchester was just on the edge of the civilized world towards the west. Often had they suffered from the incursions of bloody and remorseless savages, sparing neither sex nor age, and wreaking their inhuman rage on the breathless bodies after their souls had departed from the scene of suffering. The approach of the French, their probable hostile views, and their known influence over the wild and wayward children of the forest, created the most gloomy anticipations that those scenes, which, as described by the aged settlers to their children, made them shiver and turn pale, would be once more renewed with aggravated horrors.

To avert these dangers, to remonstrate against these encroachments, to obtain information of the feelings cherished by the Indians towards the respective claimants to the empire of the New World, and to conciliate them by every means in his power, Governor Dinwiddie determined to despatch an envoy to St. Pierre, the French commandant on the Ohio. This was no embassy of state, no courtly pageant, where the vanity of man may be gratified by an intercourse with the great. It was a service full of danger and difficulty; it required courage, fortitude, perseverance, and personal vigour, to endure the hardships and perils of the pathless solitudes of nature. Many declined the ungrateful service, and not one of the aids or attendants of the governor was willing to undertake the task. In this crisis, young Washington, before the laws of his country had recognised him as a man, volunteered his services. The governor, a sturdy old Scotchman, accepted the tender, saying, at the same time, "Faith, you're a brave lad, and, if you play your cards well, you shall have no cause to repent your bargain."

Requiring but a single day to make his preparations, he departed into the wide wilderness, accompanied by Van Braam, his old fencing-master, as his interpreter, and two

servants, bearing the governor's letter to the French commandant. It was now the middle of autumn, and the forests began to shed their brown leaves, which covered the earth with her autumnal carpet. A sort of military road conducted the party as far as Will's Creek, beyond which a guide was necessary. They arrived there on the fourteenth of November, and next day, having engaged a guide and four additional attendants, proceeded on their way. Excessive rains, aided by the melting of the snows, had so swelled the streams which crossed their route, that the journey was one of continued labour and difficulty. It was not until the eighth day after their departure from Will's Creek, that they reached the junction of the Alleghany and Monongahela rivers.

Having preceded his attendants and baggage on this occasion, as was always his custom in danger and difficulty, he occupied his time until their arrival in a manner which, as it illustrates the sagacity and foresight of a youth under twenty, is peculiarly worthy the notice of my young readers. I extract the words from the journal of Washington himself, a copy of which is now before me. "As I got down before the canoe, I spent some time in viewing the rivers and land in the fork, which I think extremely well situated for a fort, as it has the absolute command of both rivers. The land at the point is twenty-five feet above the common level of the water, and a considerable bottom of flat well-timbered land all round it, well calculated for building. The rivers are each a quarter of a mile wide, and run here at nearly right angles; Alleghany bearing north-east, and Monongahela south-east. The former of these is very rapid running water; the other deep and still, without any perceptible fall." The French, who chose their military positions in this country with a skill and foresight which has ever since been a subject of admiration, soon after erected a fort on this very spot, where has since grown up the great manufacturing city of Pittsburg.

I should here introduce an entire copy of this interesting journal, the earliest production of Washington on record, did not the design I have in view confine this work within a limited space. For the same reason I shall content myself with detailing a few of the most interesting particulars connected with the expedition. He delivered his letter to the French commandant, and endeavoured to induce the Indian chiefs of the neighbouring tribes to meet him in council, a measure which the commandant used all his efforts to prevent. Finally, he ascertained the views of the French government through M. Joncaire and other officers, who declared, at an entertainment given to Washington, that it was their intention to take possession of the Ohio, which they claimed on the ground of its discovery by the celebrated and unfortunate La Salle.

Having completed the purpose of his mission, so far as was practicable, he prepared to set out on his return. But, by this time, his horses had become too weak to carry the provisions necessary to subsist them in the wilderness. Washington at once determined to proceed on foot to some point where others might be procured. I shall give one more extract from his journal, because it affords a noble example of resolution and hardihood to my youthful readers. The contrast between Washington trudging through the pathless wilderness, with no other garment than his watch-coat, a gun in his hand, and a pack on his shoulders, with Washington at the head of armies, wielding the destiny of a great people, sustaining the inestimable rights of the human race, living the object of the world's admiration, and dying with the sacred name of Father of his Country, is alike striking for its romantic singularity, as for its sublime moral. Virtue, courage, and patriotism, are the three great steps of Jacob's ladder, which lead from earth to heaven.

"I took," he says, "my necessary papers, pulled off my

clothes, and tied myself up in a watch-coat. Then, with gun in hand, and pack on my back, in which were my papers and provisions, I set out with Mr. Gist the 26th (of December.) The next day, after we had passed a place called Murdering Town, we fell in with a party of French Indians who had lain in wait for us. One of them fired at us, not fifteen steps off, but fortunately missed. We took the fellow into custody, and kept him till nine o'clock at night, then let him go, and walked the remaining part of the night without making any stop, that we might get the start so far as to be out of the reach of pursuit the next day, since we were well assured they would follow our track as soon as it was light. The next day we continued travelling until quite dark, and got to the river about two miles above Shanopin. We expected to have found the river frozen, but it was not, except about fifty yards from the shore. The ice, I suppose, had broken up above, for it was driving in vast quantities.

"There was no way of getting over but on a raft, which we set about with but one poor hatchet, and finished just after sun-setting. This was a whole day's work. We next launched it—then went on board and set off—but before we were half over, we were jammed in the ice in such a manner that we expected every moment our raft to sink, and ourselves to perish. I put out my setting-pole to try and stop the raft, that the ice might pass by, when the rapidity of the stream threw it with such force against the pole, that it jerked me out into ten feet water; but I fortunately saved myself by catching hold of one of the raft-logs. Notwithstanding all our efforts, we could not get to either shore, but were obliged, as we were near an island, to quit our raft and make for it.

"The cold was extremely severe, and Mr. Gist had all his fingers and some of his toes frozen. The water was shut up so hard that we found no difficulty in getting off the island

the next morning on the ice, and proceeding to Mr. Frazier's. We met here with twenty warriors who were going to the southward to war; but coming to a place at the head of the Great Kenawha, where they found seven people killed and scalped (all but one woman with light hair), they turned about and ran back, for fear the inhabitants should rise, and take them for the authors of the murders. They report that the bodies were lying about the house, and some of them torn and eaten by the hogs. As we intended to take horses here, and it required some time to find them, I went up three miles to the Yohogany to visit Queen Allequippa, who had expressed great concern that we passed her in going to the fort. I made her a present of a watch-coat and a bottle of rum, which latter was thought much the best present of the two."

In the midst of such wild scenes, Indian haunts, and forest adventures, were the first years devoted by Washington to the service of his country passed. It might have been expected that this apprenticeship to savage warfare, this daily experience of bloody massacres and inhuman barbarity, would have aided in making his deportment rough and his disposition ferocious. But it was not so. In the whole course of his after-life he maintained a mild yet dignified courtesy to all mankind, and throughout his long military career not one act of cruelty was ever justly laid to his charge. His piety and his principles placed him above the reach of contamination, and neither adversity nor prosperity could corrupt his mind or influence his manners. The gold was too pure to become rusted by any vicissitudes.

He arrived at Williamsburg, then the seat of goverment in Virginia, where he waited on the governor, delivered the answer of the French commandant on the Ohio to his letter, and gave an account of his proceedings, which met the entire approbation of that officer. Nor was this all. The House of Burgesses was then in session, and Washington hap-

pening to enter the gallery, the speaker immediately rose and moved that "the thanks of the House be given to Major Washington, who now sits in the gallery, for the gallant manner in which he executed the important trust lately reposed in him by his excellency Governor Dinwiddie." Every member of the House now rose and saluted Washington with a general bow, and the sentiment of the speaker was echoed by more than one member expressing his sense of his merit and services. Washington in vain attempted to make his acknowledgments for this high honour. His voice failed him, and the frame that never before or after trembled in the presence of an enemy, now faltered under the compliments of assembled friends. It was then that the speaker, noticing his unconquerable embarrassment, made him this just and memorable compliment,—"Sit down, Major Washington, your modesty is alone equal to your merit." It will appear in the sequel that this modesty accompained him through his whole life, and while it acted as a stimulus to new exertions, checked every feeling, or, at least, exhibition, of pride at their success. Though, in all probability aware of his superiority over other men, this consciousness never operated to diminish his ardour to increase it by every means in his power; nor did he ever yield to the common foible of youth, which converts premature honours into an excuse for a total remission of all future efforts to deserve them.

CHAPTER III.

Washington accompanies his Brother Lawrence to Bermuda, where he gets the Small-pox. Affection of Lawrence for his Brother George. He rejoices in his rising reputation, predicts his future Eminence, and, when he dies, leaves him the Estate at Mount Vernon. Troubles between France and England. Virginia raises a Regiment. Washington declines the Command, but accepts the Post of Lieutenant Colonel. Proceeds to the Great Meadows and builds Fort Necessity. Succeeds to the Command of the Regiment. Advances towards Fort Duquesne. Retreats to his Fort. Is besieged and captured. Retires from the Service soon after in Disgust, but accepts the Post of Volunteer Aid to General Braddock. Departure for Fort Duquesne.

DURING the interim between his expedition to the Ohio and his appointment as second in command of the regiment raised by Virginia to protect herself against the anticipated hostility of the French and Indians, Washington accompanied his brother Lawrence in a voyage to Bermuda for the benefit of his health. Lawrence had a great affection for George, and often pressed him to reside with him at Mount Vernon. But the young man wisely preferred making his own way in the world by his own exertions, and, as I have before related, accepted the situation of surveyor to the estate of Lord Fairfax.

He, however, yielded to the wishes of his brother, whom he tenderly loved, and accompanied him to Bermuda. He was then wasting away with a consumption, from which he never recovered. While at the island, Washington caught the small-pox, with which he became slightly marked for the remainder of his life. It is traditionary in the family that the brothers never met after George departed on the expedition in which he was finally captured by the French and Indians, as will be related in the sequel. Lawrence, however, often heard of the exploits of his favourite brother, rejoiced in his growing fame, predicted his future eminence, and, when he died, left him the

estate at Mount Vernon, since become the shrine of thousands of pilgrims from among his countrymen and distant nations.

In the mean time, the conflicting claims of France and England were coming to a crisis, and that crisis is always war. The news of the alleged encroachments of the former having reached the British ministers, measures were taken for the formation of a confederacy among the colonies, for the purposes of defence or retaliation. As the dangers were mutual, although some were more exposed than others, each was to contribute its proportion to the general defence in case of need. Virginia being the nearest, naturally expected the first blow, and was of course most prompt in preparing for the storm. A regiment was raised, and Washington was placed second to Colonel Fry, who dying shortly after, the command devolved on the former.

In the perusal of this work, my young readers will bear in mind, I trust, that the means used for attaining their ends are not to be judged of by their magnitude, but their consequences. Great battles and oceans of bloodshed frequently produce nothing but their inevitable results, misery and despair, while often events and instruments apparently the most insignificant lead to consequences which affect the welfare of millions, and change the relations of the world. This remark is especially applicable to the history of the United States from the first moment of the landing of the pilgrims at Jamestown and Plymouth to the present time. Often on the lives of a few wanderers in the interminable wilderness of the west, depended, perhaps, the question whether millions of beings should be now in existence or should never have existed; and often on circumstances, in themselves apparently of no consequence but to those immediately interested, hung the destinies of a vast continent and the future balance of the universe. The events of our history are therefore not to be estimated by their

apparent magnitude at the time they occurred. An obscure battle in the woods, between white men and Indians, often terminated the existence of a nation, and decided the mastery of territories now inhabited by increasing millions; and many are the forgotten acts of virtuous heroism which, in their consequences, out-do the victories of Alexander and Bonaparte. Their conquests are only recorded in history, and the world, which was rudely jostled out of place by their ambition, has returned again to its orbit. But the bow that was bent by the energies of the early settlers of our country has never become relaxed; nothing has gone back, every thing has moved, and is still moving, onward; and the actions I am now about to relate of Washington, though many of them in themselves of no great magnitude when clothed in words, if followed out in their consequences will be found to have carried with them effects that confer a degree of importance far, very far, beyond those of many of the most renowned warriors of ancient or modern times. If there ever was a people who should love and venerate their ancestors, it is the inhabitants of these United States, who have received from their sufferings and heroism the patrimony of a New World, the legacy of freedom and prosperity.

Washington having succeeded to the command, for which, it appears, he was orginally intended, by the death of Colonel Fry, prepared for action with his usual decision and celerity. As the first military character in Virginia, though yet a mere youth, not quite twenty-one years old, he had been strongly spoken of for the command of this little force in the first instance. But where others aspired to honours, he only laboured to deserve them. In a letter to a member of the House of Burgesses, he says, "The command of the whole force is what I neither look for, expect or desire; for I am impartial enough to confess it is a charge too great for my youth and inexperience to be entrusted with. Knowing this, I have too sincere

a love for my country to undertake that which may tend to her prejudice. But if I could entertain hopes that you thought me worthy of the post of Lieutenant-Colonel, and would favour me so far as to mention it at the appointment of officers, I could not but entertain a true sense of the kindness." Thus, on this, as on every other occasion of his life, did Washington exemplify the great truth that those who are most fitted for high stations are always the last to seek them.

At the head of only two companies of the regiment, to the command of which he soon succeeded, Washington, sometime in the spring of 1754, penetrated into the Alleghany mountains, to a place called the Great Meadows. The Blue Ridge was at that time the frontier of Virginia. The great valley between that and the Alleghanies, now one of the richest regions of the United States, was tenanted but by a few straggling settlers from Pennsylvania, whose voices were like one crying in the wilderness, and whose history is one of Indian wars and Indian massacre. Placed beyond the reach of the protection or of the restraint of the laws and institutions of the social state, they for several years maintained a sort of independent existence, governed by the statutes of necessity alone; making war against the wandering tribes of the neighbouring forests, either in self-defence or for purposes of vengeance, unchecked and unaided by the state government. The people thus situated, united only by the common tie of mutual dangers, although they partook of the habits and manners of social life, were as near a state of nature, as to government, as is compatable with civilization.

This position at the Great Meadows brought him in advance towards the French posts, and enabled Washington to protect the frontier of Virginia. While here, receiving information that the French had commenced hostilities by dispersing a party in the employment of the Ohio company, he advanced upon and surrounded a detachment, aided by a dark and rainy

night. At the dawn of day, a fire was commenced upon them which killed their commander, upon which the rest immediately surrendered, with the exception of one man, who escaped.

Reinforced by the arrival of the remainder of the regiment and by two companies of regular troops, Washington, after throwing up a small intrenchment at the Great Meadows, which he called Fort Necessity, and in the erection of which he laboured with the rest, advanced on Fort Duquesne. This was now the strong-hold of the French on the Ohio, and exhibited a testimony of the accuracy of his military judgment having been erected on the very spot indicated by Washington in his journal as a fine military position. Early in his march, however, he was met by a party of friendly Indians, who, in their figurative language, told him the French and their copper-coloured confederates "were as numerous as the pigeons in the woods, and coming like birds on the wing."

By the advice of a council of war, as it was now determined to retreat to the Great Meadows. Accordingly the little army returned to Fort Necessity, where, before they could complete their preparations for defence, they were attacked by De Villier at the head of fifteen hundred men, and forced to surrender, after a gallant defence. The garrison obtained the most honourable terms: they were allowed to march out with the honours of war, retaining their baggage and arms, and to return home without being molested.

Though the expedition proved unsuccessful, yet Washington in this, as in every other disaster of his life, acquired additional reputation. The legislature of Virginia gave a gratuity to the soldiers, and voted its thanks to the officers and their commander. Thus was this high honour conferred for the second time on a youth scarcely arrived at the age of manhood. A similar instance, I believe, does not occur in the history of his country. The gratuity to the privates, and the vote of thanks, were not unmerited, since it appears that the attack,

of the fort was sustained by not more than three hundred of the Virginia regiment, the remainder having retired on learning that the French and Indians were "as thick as pigeons in the woods."

Shortly after this event the military career of Washington was arrested for a time by an ordinance of Governor Dinwiddie, regulating the rank of the provincial officers serving with those of his Majesty's regular troops. These last were to take rank of all those commissioned by the colonial governors, without regard to the date of commission. This was not all; insult and injustice were carried so far as to divest the general and field officers of the provincial troops of all rank when serving with those of a similar grade bearing the royal commission. The conduct of Washington may easily be anticipated. He disdained to acquiesce in this insulting preference, and declaring his willingness to serve his country at all times, when it did not carry with it the sacrifice of his honour, resigned his commission.

Being now, by the death of his brother Lawrence, which took place during his expedition to the Great Meadows, possessed of the estate of Mount Vernon, Washington retired thither to the enjoyment of those rural occupations and rural exercises, which he loved next to the perils of war when encountered in the service of his native country. But scarcely had he settled himself at this magnificent spot, when the roar of cannon was heard echoing along the Potomac, at the opening of the spring of 1755. An English squadron sailed up the river, landed an army at Belhaven, now called Alexandria, under the command of General Braddock, soon afterwards so famous for his obstinacy, imprudence, and consequent disasters.

General Braddock had landed at the Capes of Virginia, and proceeded to Williamsburg, the seat of government, where he consulted with General Dinwiddie. He inquired for Colonel

Washington, with whose character he was well acquainted, and expressed a wish to see him. On being informed of his resignation and the cause, he is said to have exclaimed that "he was a lad of sense and spirit, and had acted as became a soldier and a man of honour." He immediately wrote him a pressing invitation to assume the situation of volunteer aid-de-camp, which involved no question of rank, and which, after consultation with his family, was accepted. Washington once more resumed his military career by joining the British forces at Belhaven.

These were shortly after reinforced by three companies of Virginia riflemen, raised by an act of the legislature, and consisting of as brave, hardy spirits as ever drew a trigger. This accession made the army about two thousand strong, and with these, in the month of June, 1755, Braddock set forth in his march through the wilderness, from whence he and many others of his companions never returned.

CHAPTER IV.

Departure of Washington with Braddock's Army. Falls sick and is left at the Great Meadows. Joins the Army the Day before the Battle. His advice disregarded. The Army surprised and defeated. Braddock shot. Behaviour of Washington during the Fight. Retreat of the Army. Predictions of the Old Indian Chief and the Rev. Mr Davies. Sixteen Companies raised, and the Command given to Washington. Sufferings of the People of the Frontier from Indian Barbarity. Difficulties in defending them. Picture of Washington in his Uniform of Provincial Colonel. His Account of the Massacre of a Family by the Indians. Jealousy and Imbecility of Governor Dinwiddie. Speech of Colonel Barre. Lord Loudon. Franklin's Account of him. General Forbes. Expedition against, and Capture of, Fort Duquesne. War carried to the Northern Frontier. Washington resigns his Commission.

THE troops under Braddock marched in two divisions to the old station at the Little Meadows. On the way, Washington was attacked by a fever, and became so ill that the commanding officer insisted upon his remaining until the rear of the army came up under Colonel Dunbar. He consented, much against his will, but the instant he was able, pushed on and joined Braddock the evening before he fell into that fatal ambuscade where he perished with many other gallant spirits, not in a blaze of glory, but in the obscurity of the dismal forests.

Washington, on rejoining the army, urged upon General Braddock the necessity of increasing and incessant caution. He dwelt much on the silent, unseen motions of the warriors of the woods, who come like birds on the wing, without being preceded by any indications of their approach, or leaving a trace behind them. But the fate of Braddock was decreed; or, rather, his own conduct sealed that destiny which ever follows at the heels of folly and imprudence. He despised the advice of wisdom and experience, and bitterly did he suf-

fer the penalty. The silly pride of a British officer disdained the lessons of a provincial youth who had never fought on the bloody plains of Flanders. There can be no doubt that the superiority affected by the natives of England over those of the American colonies, was one of the silent yet effective causes of the Revolution.

The army halted at Cumberland for some days and then proceeded to its ruin. Contrary to the advice of Washington, who wished to lead with his Virginians, the British grenadiers marched in front about half a mile a-head; the Virginia troops followed; and the rest of the army brought up the rear. The ground was covered with whortleberry bushes reaching to the horses' bellies until they gained the top of a hill, which commanded an extensive prospect far a-head. Here a council was held, during which, the traditionary authority I follow describes Braddock as standing with a fusee in his right hand, the breech on the ground, and rubbing the leaves with his toe as if in great perplexity, without saying a word.

The consultation over, they proceeded onward through the deep woods, the order of march being changed, and the infantry in advance. When within about seven miles of Fort Duquesne, and passing through a narrow defile, a fire from some ambushed enemy arrested their march and laid many a soldier dead on the ground. Nothing was seen but the smoke of the unerring rifle rising above the tops of the woods, and nothing heard but the report of the fatal weapons. There was a dead silence among the savages and their allies, who, masked behind the trees, were equally invisible with the great king of terrors whose work they were performing.

The army of Braddock and the general himself were both taken by surprise, and the consequence was a total neglect or forgetfulness of the proper mode of defence or attack. After a few discharges from the unseen destroyers in the wood,

Washington remained of all the aids alive. In fact, the whole duties of the day devolved on him, and the entire resistance on the troops of Virginia. He exposed himself to thousands of unerring marksmen; his clothes were perforated with bullets, and twice was his horse shot under him. Yet he escaped without a wound, as if to justify the prediction of the old Indian warrior that led the hostile savages, who used long afterwards to declare—"That man was never to be killed by a bullet, for he had seventeen times had a fair shot at him with his rifle, yet could not bring him down."

All accounts agree that the unfortunate Braddock behaved with great gallantry, though with little discretion, in this trying situation. He encouraged his soldiers, and was crying out with his speaking-trumpet, "Hurrah, boys! lose the saddle or win the horse!" when a bullet struck him, and he fell to the ground, exclaiming—"Ha, boys! I'm gone!" During all this time not a cannon had been fired by the British forces. It was at this moment that one who was with him at the time, who is still living, and on whose humble testimony I rely even with more confidence than on the more impossible authority of history, thus describes Washington. "I saw him take hold of a brass field-piece, as if it had been a stick. He looked like a fury; he tore up the sheet lead from the touch-hole; he placed one hand on the muzzle, the other on the breech; he pulled with this, and pushed with that, and wheeled it round as if it had been nothing. It tore the ground like a barshare.* The powder-monkey rushed up with the fire, and then the cannon began to bark, I tell you. They fought and they fought, and the Indians began to *holla*, when the rest of the brass cannon made the bark of the trees fly, and the Indians came down. That place they call Rock Hill, and there they left five hundred men dead on the ground."

* A kind of plough.

The army of Braddock suffered a total defeat. The survivors retreated across the Monongahela, where they rested, and the general breathed his last. His gallant behaviour during the trying situation in which he was placed, and his death, which in some measure paid the penalty of his fool-hardihood, have preserved to his memory some little respect, and for his fate perhaps more sympathy than it merited. He was one of those military men of little character and desperate fortune which mother countries are accustomed to send out for the purpose of foraging in the rich fields of their colonies. He was succeeded in his command by Colonel Dunbar, who ordered all the stores, except such as were indispensably necessary, to be destroyed, and sought safety, with the remainder of his European troops, in the distant repose of the city of Philadelphia, where he placed the army in winter-quarters in the dog days, leaving Virginia to the protection of her gallant rangers.

The conduct of the British troops, on this occasion was, though perhaps natural in the terrible and untried situation in which they were placed, such as to excite the contempt of Washington and his provincials, to whom the escape of the surviving regulars was entirely owing. It was he and they that exclusively made head against the invisible enemy, and finally so checked his proceedings as to secure a quiet retreat to a place of security. But for them, in all probability, scarce a man would have escaped. The British officers behaved with great gallantry, and upwards of sixty of them were either killed or wounded; but the privates exhibited nothing but cowardice, confusion, and disobedience: and it seems quite probable that Washington here learned a secret which was of infinite service in his future career by teaching him that British grenadiers were not invincible.

The provincial troops, on the contrary, according to the testimony of Washington, "behaved like men," to use his own

language. Out of three companies that were in the action but thirty survived. The regulars, on the contrary, "ran away like sheep before hounds," leaving every thing to the mercy of the enemy. "When we endeavoured to rally them," continues Washington, in his letter to the governor of Virginia, "in hopes of retaining the ground we had lost, and what was left on it, it was with as little success as if we had attempted to have sopped the wild beasts of the mountains, or the rivulets with our feet."

The conduct of Washington on this trying occasion confirmed him in the affections and confidence of Virginia, and gave occasion to more than one presage of his future eminence. Among the rest, the Rev. Mr. Davies, in a sermon preached soon after Braddock's defeat, taking occasion to allude to an event which was fraught with such disastrous consequences, uttered the following sentence, which long afterwards was considered prophetic—"I cannot but hope," he said, "that Providence has preserved this youth to be the saviour of his country."

But such predictions rest on the experience of the past, not on an insight into the future. The inspiration which dictated the sentiment of Mr. Davies, was, without doubt, founded on the solid basis of an accurate knowledge of the virtues, acquirements, and character of Washington. These furnished the best auguries of the future, and bore a sure testimony that, should the period ever arrive when their exercise would become necessary to the salvation of his country, she would be saved by Washington.

The Virginia Assembly being in session when the news of Braddock's defeat and death, and Dunbar's ignominious desertion, arrived, at once saw the dangers to which the province was now exposed. Sixteen companies were accordingly raised, the command of which was offered to Washington, accompanied by the rare compliment of permission to

name his field officers. This offer was cheerfully accepted, though it necessarily imposed on him a charge of the most critical nature. The whole frontier of Virginia, extending three hundred and sixty miles, now lay exposed to the incursions of hordes of savages, whose amusement was midnight murders; whose fury spared neither age nor sex; whose enmity was insatiable; whose revenge, inexpressibly terrible. The means possessed by the province were inadequate to the purposes of effectual protection; the British government had deserted them, or at least was ignorant of the desertion of Dunbar; the royal governor was inefficient, jealous, or indifferent, and the safety of Virginia depended on herself alone. Her arms were courage and patriotism—her tutelary genius was Washington.

The savage had already commenced their bloody career, accompanied, and, if not instigated, at least not controlled by their allies: and now was seen what has so often disgraced the Christian name in this New World, the association of those whose religion is mercy and forgiveness, with those who never forgive. A scene ensued which, if I could prevail upon myself to enter into terrible details, would thrill the hearts of my young readers, and make them shiver as with an ague. Civilized warfare, in its worst aspect, is nothing compared with the strife of the wilderness with wild and savage warriors, painted like fiends, and yelling like infuriated madmen. This for ages was the destiny of your forefathers, my young readers, and never should you forget the sacred duty of affectionate gratitude to their memory. They won for you a dear-bought prize, and left you a noble legacy, which you will one day learn to cherish as inestimable.

Now came the time that tried men's souls and bodies too. The pagan redmen and their Christian allies scoured the whole frontier of Virginia, and the wretched inhabitants, scattered at far distances from each other, in scanty numbers that pre-

luded effectual resistance, suffered all the horrors of savage, cruelty, instigated and abetted by the arts of civilized white men. Nothing was spared; no age, no sex, no man, woman, or child, could hope for mercy, living or dead; for the revenge of the red man is not satiated by murder; it outlives the death of its victim, and wreaks its last efforts on the inanimate body. The smoke of burning cottages, and the shrieks of murdered victims, were seen and heard to arise from the depths of forests, and the repose of nature was disturbed by Indian yells and dying groans mingled in one horrible concert. Fifteen hundred savages, divided into separate parties, scoured the frontier, and, penetrating towards the more compact settlements, carried terror and ruin in their train. All who did not flee were murdered and scalped, and in a few months the frontier was a desert and a grave.

In this cruel state of things, the hopes of Virginia rested on Washington and her own means of defence. Dunbar was at Philadelphia: the governor was suspected of being jealous of the reputation of the rising hero, and of that acquired by the provincial troops, whose conduct at the fatal defeat of Braddock was contrasted with that of the boasted and boasting regulars; and the province was left to her own limited resources. Fort Duquesne, the great head-quarters of the empire of the forest, was in the hands of the French; the Indian tribes of the West were, without exception, under their influence, and a frontier of three hundred and sixty miles was to be defended by seven hundred militia. But these were commanded by Washington.

He was but twenty-two years of age when he accepted the arduous task of defending his country from Christian ambition, savage fury, and remorseless revenge. Nothing but the purest motives of patriotism could have prompted him to undertake such a duty with the means at his command. The

force raised for this purpose was utterly inadequate to protect the extensive line now exposed to the incursions of the savages and their instigators. To keep it together would be to leave a great portion of the State unprotected; to divide it into small parties would be to ensure their destruction. Scanty as this force was, it was deficient in supplies of every kind. If he fought the enemy in mass, he would certainly be beaten; if he declined, he would as certainly be blamed. Every savage murder would recoil on his head, and every burning cottage light up a flame of indignation against him. Add to this, that the old royal governor was now ill-disposed towards him, not only on the score of his popularity, but his firm and manly remonstrances whenever he felt himself called upon to point out the existence of errors or neglect, and the means of remedying or avoiding them in future.

It was in the midst of such difficulties, embarrassments, and mortifications, that Washington became schooled to that patience, fortitude, and perseverance, which prepared him to encounter the obstacles that everywhere presented themselves at the commencement and through the whole progress of that great Revolution which he consummated by his talents and his patriotism. The royal governor, with the usual wisdom of such dignitaries as generally fall to the lot of colonies, had determined to act on the defensive. There was no hope of being able to conquer Fort Duquesne, the possession of which enabled the French to command the Ohio and influence the Indians. Washington therefore proceeded to establish, as far as practicable with his limited means, a chain of small forts along the frontier, in which he placed the principal part of his little army. With the remainder he traversed the frontier for the purpose of arresting and punishing the depredations of the savages, and this service he performed with a vigour and celerity that will never be forgotten by Virginia.

In the course of three years of incessant toil, exposure, pri-

vations, and dangers, he was witness to a succession of scenes, the particular relation of which would swell this volume beyond its salutary limits, and at the same time serve to exemplify the barbarities of savage warfare, as well as the unconquerable firmness and vigour of this admirable young man. At an age when too many of our youth are either engaged in frivolous amusements, or murdering their precious time in the indulgence of degrading passions that equally destroy the body and corrupt the mind, Washington was occupied night and day in the highest duties of a patriot, defending the unprotected, shielding the bare bosom of his country, and laying the foundation of a fame as lasting as it is pure and undefiled. It is sufficient for my purpose to say, that all that imagination ever conceived, or experience realized of cruelty, suffering, and despair, was presented in the three years of savage warfare which succeeded the defeat of Braddock.

Traversing the wilderness where here and there a log-house, or a little cluster of log-houses, with a cultivated spot around them, had a few days before, perhaps, presented a smiling picture of the first efforts of man to cope with the wild luxuriance of nature, he would come to a pile of smoking ruins, over which the birds of prey were soaring, and around which the hungry wolves were yelping and howling. Their prey was the mangled, perhaps half-consumed, body of a helpless woman, an innocent girl, or a speechless infant that never drew nourishment but from the breast of its mother. Mangled with the knife or the tomahawk, or perforated with bullet-holes—their bodies scorched black with fire, and half devoured by beasts and birds of prey—their head stripped of its covering of hair by the crooked scalping-knife, they lay festering in the sun, sad monuments of savage revenge, or bloody ferocity.

The history of no people that ever existed affords such a succession of dangers, hardships, and sufferings as were encountered by the ancestors of my young readers. They came

from the enjoyment and habits of civilized life to the untracked wilderness, or, what is still worse, a wilderness tracked only by a race of wild red-men, the most impracticable in their barbarism, the most unforgiving in their hate, of any recorded in the annals of the world. They endured all, suffered all, conquered all, and though they had sowed their seed in dangers and terrors besetting them on every side, it did not fall on rocks and barren places. It grew and flourished, and extended into a rich and glorious harvest, which those who are now reaping should repay by venerating their virtues and imitating their example.

Washington was not accustomed to dwell on this, one of the most painful and arduous periods of his life. But there is one tale of horror which he related on a particular occasion when questioned on the subject by a cherished friend, which will give some idea of scenes that were of almost daily occurrence during these gloomy and disastrous times. It has been preserved, as nearly as possible in his own words, by one whose situation afforded him the best means of information.

"One day," said Washington, "as we were traversing a part of the frontier, we came upon a single log-house, standing in the centre of a little clearing surrounded by woods on all sides. As we approached we heard the report of a gun, the usual signal of coming horrors. Our party crept cautiously through the underwood, until we approached near enough to see what we had already foreboded. A smoke was slowly making its way through the roof of the house, while at the same moment a party of Indians came forth laden with plunder, consisting of cloths, domestic utensils, household furniture, and dripping scalps. We fired, and killed all but one, who tried to get away, but was soon shot down.

"On entering the hut we saw a sight that, though we were familiar with blood and massacre, struck us, at least myself, with feelings more mournful than I had ever experienced be-

fore. On a bed in one corner of the room lay the body of a young woman swimming in blood, with a gash in her forehead which almost separated the head into two parts. On her breast lay two little babes, apparently twins, less than a twelvemonth old, with their heads also cut open. Their innocent blood, which had once flowed in the same veins, now mingled in one current again. I was inured to scenes of bloodshed and misery, but this cut me to the soul, and never in my after-life did I raise my hand against a savage without calling to mind the mother with her little twins, their heads cleft asunder.

"On examining the tracks of the Indians to see what other murders they might have committed, we found a little boy, and a few steps beyond his father, both scalped, and both stone dead. From the prints of the boy, it would seem he had been following the plough with his father, who being probably shot down, he had attempted to escape. But the poor boy was followed, overtaken, and murdered. The ruin was complete. Not one of the family had been spared. Such was the character of our miserable warfare. The wretched people on the frontier never went to rest without bidding each other farewell; for the chances were they might never wake again, or awake only to find their last sleep. On leaving one spot for the purpose of giving protection to another point of exposure, the scene was often such as I shall never forget. The women and children clung round our knees, beseeching us to stay and protect them, and crying out for God's sake not to leave them to be butchered by the savages. A hundred times I declare to Heaven, I would have laid down my life with pleasure, even under the tomahawk and scalping-knife, could I have ensured the safety of those suffering people by the sacrifice."

The difficulties of his situation were aggravated by malicious reports and insinuations, reflecting on his conduct and ca-

pacity in those miserable times. He was assailed by secret enemies, who poisoned the mind of Governor Dinwiddie, and added to his unwillingness to give efficient aid to the conduct of this distressing war. There are extant letters of Washington to that officer, vindicating his proceedings with a manly firmness, joined to a modesty highly becoming, and calling for the names of his secret accusers. In the midst of these insidious attacks he however always had one great consolation in the consciousness, of performing his arduous duties to the extent of his power, and the increasing confidence of his countrymen. Those sufferings which he could not prevent by his valour, he predicted by his sagacity, and every failure of measures which he had endeavoured to prevent only served to prove his superiority over those whose orders he was obliged to obey. Thus he rose with the calamities of the times, and shone only the brighter for the darkness which surrounded him.

To make matters still worse, and increase the miseries of Virginia, the British ministry sent out Lord Loudon, as governor and commander-in-chief. Franklin has given his character, and pronounces it entirely made up of "indecision." "He was like St. George on the signs, always on horseback, but never rode on." It may be supposed, that under such a commander-in-chief matters could only become worse than they were before. Washington presented him with a statement, in which, with his usual directness and brevity, he pointed out the fatal consequences of that system of defensive operations he had been compelled to adopt, detailed the destitute situation of his troops, urged an immediate attack on Fort Duquesne, the possession of which by the British could, he foresaw, alone secure the people of Virginia from the calamities they were now suffering.

But the views of Lord Loudon were directed to another quarter. He aspired to the conquest of Canada. His plan was to invade that province with the great body of his forces,

leaving only twelve hundred men to guard the whole southern frontier. Virginia was thus not only left to protect herself, but to assist the defence of the weaker colonies of the South. But the maxim and the practice of Washington was never to abandon his exertions in a good cause. He turned upon Lieutenant-Governor Dinwiddie and to the assembly of Virginia, once more urging the importance of a proper organization of the militia and the raising of a regular force. But it was his fate in almost every period of his life to feel and to suffer from the consequences of legislative folly or inactivity. His remonstrances were not only disregarded, but the effective force was diminished instead of being increased. Almost any other man would have retired from such a service in disgust; but Washington, happily for his country, was one of those to whom the neglect and inefficiency of others were only stimulatives to new exertions and new sacrifices.

He urged and re-urged the capture of Fort Duquesne, which he had learned was only garrisoned by three hundred men. But that system of defensive warfare, which he from the first strenuously opposed, and which fatal experience had proved to be altogether nugatory, was still continued, and produced only a repetition of calamities. A second time the savages and their allies broke in upon the frontier, approaching still nearer to the older settlements, laying waste the country west of the Blue Ridge, and spreading destruction to life and property wherever they came. Another succession of unheard-of barbarities desolated the land, and the boasted protection of the mother country was exemplified in the triumphs of the tomahawk and scalping-knife, the murder of defenceless women and children. Well might Colonel Barre exclaim, in a burst of spontaneous eloquence which has scarcely ever been equalled, when one of the ministers in a debate in the British Parliament asked, "Are not the Americans our children

planted by our care, nourished by our indulgence, and protected by our arms?" Well might he exclaim:—

"*They* planted by your care! No, sir; your oppressions planted them in America. They fled from your tyranny to an uncultivated and inhospitable land, where they were exposed to all the evils and sufferings which a wilderness alive with blood-thirsty savages could inflict. Yet, inspired by a true English love of liberty, they thought nothing of these, compared with those they had suffered in their own country, and from you who ought to have been their protectors.

"*They* nourished by your indulgence! No, sir; they grew by your neglect. Your indulgence consisted in sending them hungry packs of your own creatures to spy out their liberties, that you might assail them by encroachments; to misrepresent their actions, and to prey upon their substance. Yes, sir; you sent them men whose conduct has often caused the blood of these children of freedom to boil in their veins: men, promoted to the highest seats of justice in that country, who, to my knowledge, had good reason to dread a court of justice at home.

"*They* protected by your arms! No, sir; they have nobly taken up arms in your cause, not their own. They are fighting the battles of your ambition, not their interests; they have exerted a most heroic valour in the midst of their daily labours, for the defence of a country whose frontier was drenched in blood, while its interior contributed all its savings for your emolument."

Soon after the arrival of Lord Loudon, Governor Dinwiddie departed from Virginia, leaving behind him but an indifferent reputation and a wretched province exposed to all the horrors of Indian warfare. The administration of the government devolved, for a short time, on Mr. Blair, who, during his brief authority, cordially co-operated with Washington in all his

measures for the public security. Lord Loudon, after doing nothing, returned to England, and General Abercrombie succeeded him as commander-in-chief of all the British forces in the colonies. The war in the south was committed to the charge of General Forbes, who, influenced by the strong solicitations of Washington, at length determined on an attack upon Fort Duquesne. Before, however, his preparations were completed, the savages and their allies a third time poured in on the few remaining inhabitants of the frontier, and completed the sad history of these disastrous times by new conflagrations and massacres. Having done this, they departed to their wilderness again, unmolested, and laden with plunder and bloody trophies

At length, in the year of 1758, General Forbes put his army in motion for the purpose of dislodging the French from their strong-hold at the confluence of the Alleghany and Monongahela. I have now before me the plan of a line of march proposed by Washington and adopted by the commanding general. It displays a perfect knowledge of the peculiarities of Indian warfare, and of the means by which they are best counteracted. Though distinguished by that rare modesty which was the characteristic of Washington in every circumstance and situation of life, there is in the language and sentiments a manly firmness, indicating not only a conviction of right, but a consciousness of superiority. His long experience in this species of warfare had given him a privilege to advise.

But though the royal general accepted the plan, he did not follow the advice by which it was accompanied. Washington knew the importance, nay, the absolute necessity, of celerity. Arrangements had been made for forming a junction with the warriors of some Indian tribes, which were inclined to desert the French cause, and they were now waiting at Winchester for that purpose. He predicted, knowing the impatient dis-

position of these wild warriors of the woods, that they would become tired and go home; and so it happened. The season was half over before the army arrived at Winchester, previous to which, the savages had left that place, and crossed the Alleghanies.

It was the latter end of June before General Forbes left Winchester, and Washington again had occasion to predict the failure of these dilatory operations. As if studious of delays, the commander, instead of marching by Braddock's road, as it was called, where a passage was already opened through the wilderness, determined to cut a new path from a place called Raystown, against the opinions and remonstrances of Washington. He foresaw the consequences of such a tedious operation, and anticipated the failure of the expedition. In one of his letters, he says, "If General Forbes persists at this late season, he will certainly ruin the attempt."

On another occasion, alluding to these pernicious delays, he says, "If this conduct of our leaders does not originate in superior orders, it must proceed from weakness too gross to name. Nothing but a miracle can bring this campaign to a happy issue." He predicted that the army would be obliged to winter at Laurel Hill, without gathering any laurels, and that Fort Duquesne would not be captured till the next year, if it was ever captured. After cutting this new road through the wilderness, a work of vast labour and consequent delay, they reached Laurel Hill some time in the middle of November, and a council of war was called to decide upon the propriety of going into winter-quarters here, or turning back upon Winchester.

While actually thus employed, some prisoners, who had been accidentally captured, disclosed the almost defenceless state of Fort Duquesne. The design of the British government to attack Canada having become known to the French governor, he had withdrawn all the force from the Ohio for his

defence at home, with the exception of about three hundred men. The Indians, who always join what they consider the strongest side in their co-operation with white men, deserted their French allies, and the British commander was assured that the fort was incapable of defence, and would surrender without firing a gun. Encouraged by the news, he changed his plan. Instead of wintering at Laurel Hill or returning to Winchester, he marched upon Fort Duquesne, which was evacuated by the garrison on his approach. After setting fire to the buildings, they embarked in their boats, sailed down the Ohio, and the French power ceased for ever in that part of the world.

Thenceforward, until the capture of Quebec by General Wolfe, and the final extinction of the French empire in North America, the tide of war flowed in a direction towards the north. The plains of Abraham, the pass of Ticonderoga, the Lakes Champlain and George, and the frontier of New-York became the aceldama, the field of blood in the New World. Virginia ceased to bleed for a time; her harrassed citizens slept quietly in their beds; her gallant rangers reposed from their toils; and the Indian warwhoop was heard no more.

Having nobly performed his duty to his country in her hour of peril, and seen those objects gained which he had sought through years of danger, suffering, and disappointment, Washington now resigned his commission, and sought repose in the shades of Mount Vernon. His arduous exertions and severe exposures in the service of his beloved countrymen had impaired in a considerable degree his naturally fine constitution, while his incessant public duties necessarily prevented a proper attention to his domestic affairs. These considerations determined his conduct, and at the close of the year 1758, he bade adieu to his brothers in arms, who answered him by an affectionate address, and retired to the bosom of tranquillity, there to remain till called forth to the fulfilment of a destiny, as high as ever fell to the lot of man.

He was now only twenty-seven years of years, and yet had twice received the thanks of the representatives of the people of Virginia. His character was firmly established for integrity, firmness, patriotism, and military skill. Everywhere he was looked up to as the first of the sons of Virginia; as her sword and shield; as one who in the hour of danger or difficulty might be relied on as a sage in council, a hero in battle. He had already earned the most precious of all sublunary rewards, the confidence and affections of his countrymen. Such are the fruits of early exertion in a virtuous cause, and such the blessings of a well-spent youth.

CHAPTER V.

Marriage. Domestic Life and Habits of Washington. First Meeting with Mrs. Custis. Picture of that Lady at the Time she captivated Washington. Old Jeremy. His Conversations. Sketch of Mount Vernon. Division of Washington's Time. Hours of rising, retiring to rest, breakfasting, dining, &c. His temperance. Kindness to his relatives residing at Mount Vernon. Discipline of his Servants. Extracts from his old Almanac of 1762. His Custom of retiring to read. Anecdote of old Jeremy. Troubles with England. Is elected to the First Congress.

I AM now to present Washington to the contemplation of my young readers in a character not less worthy of their admiration, and in which they may all imitate him if they please. The ensuing fifteen years of his life were spent in rural occupations, rural exercises, and the performance of his duties as a husband, a master, and a farmer, occasionally interrupted by those of a justice of the peace and a member of the Virginia Assembly. In the latter capacity he was a highly useful legislator, but too much a man of energy and action to be a great orator, although admirably clear in deportment. I have indeed observed that few of the celebrated orators of ancient

or modern times were ever much distinguished for military skill and prowess. Many who can tell how a thing should be done, are utterly incapable of doing it, and it has passed into a proverb, that those who are good at talking are seldom good at any thing else.

Soon after his retirement from the service, he married Mrs. Martha Custis, a lady born in the same year with himself, of considerable personal attractions, and large fortune. Her maiden name was Dandridge, and both by birth and marriage she was connected with some of the most respectable families in Virginia. All her claims to distinction from family connections are now, however, merged in the one great name of Washington, and derive their purest lustre from an association with the Father of his Country.

It has been related to me by one whose authority I cannot doubt, that the first meeting of Colonel Washington with his future wife was entirely accidental, and took place at the house of Mr Chamberlayne, who resided on the Pamunkey, one of the branches of York River. Washington was on his way to Williamsburg, on somewhat pressing business, when he met Mr. Chamberlayne, who, according to the good old Virginia custom, which forbids a traveller to pass the door without doing homage at the fireside of hospitality, insisted on his stopping an hour or two at his mansion. Washington complied unwittingly, for his business was urgent. But it is said that he was in no haste to depart, for he had met the lady of his fate in the person of Mrs. Martha Custis, of the White House, county of New Kent, in Virginia.

I have now before me a copy of an original picture of this lady, taken about the time of which I am treating, when she captivated the affections of Washington. It represents a figure rather below the middle size, with hazel eyes, and hair of the same colour, finely rounded arms, a beautiful chest and taper waist, dressed in a blue silk robe of the fashion of the times,

and altogether furnishing a very sufficient apology to a young gentleman of seven and twenty for delaying his journey, and perhaps forgetting his errand for a time. The sun went down and rose again before Washington departed for Williamsburg, leaving his heart behind him, and, perhaps, carrying another away in exchange. Having completed his business at the seat of government, he soon after visited the White House, and being accustomed, as my informant says, to energetic and persevering action, won the lady and carried her off from a crowd of rivals.

The marriage took place in the winter of 1759, but at what precise date is not to be found in any record, nor is it, I believe, within the recollection of any person living. I have in my possession a manuscript containing the particulars of various conversations with old Jeremy, Washington's black servant, who was with him at Braddock's defeat, and accompanied him on his wedding expedition to the White House. Old Jeremy is still living, while I am now writing, and in full possession of his faculties. His memory is most especially preserved, and, as might be expected, he delights to talk of Massa George. The whole series of conversations was taken down verbatim, in the peculiar phraseology of the old man, and it is quite impossible to read the record of this living chronicle of the early days of Washington, without receiving the full conviction of its perfect truth.

From this period Washington resided constantly at Mount Vernon, one of the most beautiful situations in the world. A wood-crowned bluff of considerable height projects out into the Potomac, here one of the most capacious and noble of rivers, affording an extensive view both above and below. A fine lawn slopes gracefully from the piazza in front of the house to the brow of the hill, where, high above the wave, you stand and view a wide prospect of great variety and interest. The house was at the time of his marriage of indifferent size

and convenience, but was shortly improved into a capacious and imposing mansion. The place is worthy of him with whose memory it is inseparably associated, and long may it appertain to the family and name of Washington.

He here put in practice that system of regularity and of temperance in every species of indulgence and of labour, which he persevered in, as far as was consistent with his circumstances and situation, during the remainder of his life. His moments were numbered, and divided, and devoted to his various objects and pursuits. His hours of rising and going to bed were the same throughout every season of the year. He always shaved, dressed himself, and answered his letters by candle-light in summer and winter; and his time for retiring to rest was nine o'clock, whether he had company or not. He breakfasted at seven o'clock in summer, and eight in winter; dined at two, and drank his tea, of which he was very fond, early in the evening, never taking any supper. His breakfast always consisted of four small corn-cakes, split, buttered, and divided into quarters, with two small-sized cups of tea. At dinner he ate with a good appetite, but was not choice of his food; drank small-beer at his meals, and two glasses of old Madeira after the cloth was removed. He scarcely ever exceeded that quantity. The kernels of two or three black-walnuts completed the repast. He was very kind, affectionate, and attentive to his family, scrupulously observant of every thing relating to the comfort, as well as the deportment and manners, of the younger members.

His habits of military command produced a similar system with regard to his servants, of whom he exacted prompt attention and obedience. These conditions complied with, and they were sure of never being subjected to caprice or passion. Neglect or ill-conduct was promptly noticed, for the eye of the master was everywhere, and nothing connected with the economy of his estate escaped him. He knew the value of

independence, and the mode by which it is obtained and preserved. With him idleness was an object of contempt, and prodigality of aversion. He never murdered an hour in wilful indolence, or wasted a dollar in worthless enjoyment. He was as free from extravagance as from meanness or parsimony, and never in the whole course of his life did he turn his back on a friend, or trifle with a creditor.

In an old Virginia almanack of 1762, belonging to Washington, and now before me, interleaved with blank sheets, are various memoranda relating to rural affairs, all in his own hand-writing, a few of which I shall extract, for the purpose of showing my youthful readers that an attention to his private affairs was not considered beneath the dignity of the man destined to wield the fortunes of his country.

April 5. Sowed timothy-seed in the old apple-orchard below the hill.

" 7. Sowed, or rather sprinkled a little of ditto on the oats.

" 26. Began to plant corn at all my plantations.

May 4. Finished planting corn at all my plantations.

Thus, in the dignified simplicity of usefulness did this great and good man employ himself during the years which elapsed between the period of his retirement after the expulsion of the French from the Ohio, until the commencement of the troubles which preceded the Revolution. His occupation was husbandry—the noblest of all others; his principal amusement was hunting the deer, which at that time abounded in the forests of the Potomac. Here his skill in horsemanship rendered him conspicuous above all his competitors. He also read much, and his hour was early in the morning.

His custom was to retire to a private room, where no one was permitted to interrupt him. Much curiosity prevailed among the servants to know what he was about, and on

Jeremy relates that, in order to gratify it, he one morning entered the room under pretence of bringing a pair of boots. Washington, who was reading, raised his eyes from the book, and getting quietly up—"I tell you," said Jeremy, "I go out of de room faster dan I come in!"

During this long interruption of his military life, Washington was, either constantly or at short intervals, a member of the Virginia Assembly, where he resolutely and firmly opposed the claims of British supremacy that now became daily more importunate and tenacious. The British officers serving under Braddock, Loudon, Forbes, and others, having been frequently entertained in the houses of the planters of Virginia, with all the appurtenances of apparent wealth, had carried home to England reports of the luxuries enjoyed and dispensed by these prosperous colonists. The general opinion in that State has always been, that these disclosures of unsuspected wealth first gave the British ministry an idea of taxing the colonies. There is also a tradition that a certain wealthy Virginian, being on a visit to England, engaged in play with the old Duke of Cumberland, the victor of Culloden, and lost, I think twenty thousand pounds, which he paid promptly by a check on his banker. This fact becoming known, the ministry naturally concluded, that colonies affording such pigeons as this, might reasonably be called upon to pay for what they were pleased to call the protection of the mother country. The source from which this anecdote is derived entitles it to entire credit.

But whatever may have been the immediate causes, the time was now approaching when the repose of Washington, and the liberties of his fellow-citizens, were to be assailed by the pretensions of power. The claim of the mother-country was a right to tax the colonies through the agency of parliament in which they were not represented; the great principle asserted by the colonies was, that taxation and representation were in-

impaired by hard service in the wilderness, and to restore that vigour and activity for which in his youth he had been so highly distinguished. It may not be uninteresting to my young readers to describe him as he is represented in a portrait painted at Mount Vernon in 1772, by the elder Mr. Peale, a portrait of which is now before me. That worthy old gentleman used often in his latter days to relate that, while engaged in this work, he was one day amusing himself with the young men of the family in playing at quoits and other exercises, when Washington joined, and completely outdid them all.

As nothing relating to the Father of his Country can be uninteresting to his children, I will here give another anecdote illustrating his strength, in the words of one of his nearest connexions, who is still living.

"We were sitting," said he, "in the little parlour fronting the river, to the right as you enter the portico.—The general and several others were present—among them two young men remarkable for their strength, when a large back-log rolled from the chimney out on the hearth. The general took the tongs and very deliberately, without apparent effort, put it back in its place. A quarter of an hour afterwards he went out, and the ease with which he handled it became the subject of remark. The log was taken down, and not a man of us could lift, much less put it in its place again. Finally, one with the tongs, another with the shovel, we all set to, and succeeded in replacing it. The general, though remarkably strong in all his limbs, was particularly so in his hands and fingers."

The portrait to which I refer, and which was taken shortly before Washington entered on his last and great career, represents a man in the vigour of his prime, in the uniform of the provincial troops; a cocked hat of the fashion of the time; a blue coat, faced and lined with scarlet; waistcoat and

breeches of the same colour. The coat and waistcoat, in the left-hand pocket of which is seen a paper, endorsed "Order of march," are both edged with silver lace, and buttons of white metal. A gorget, shaped like a crescent, and bearing the arms of England, is suspended from the neck by a blue riband, and an embroidered lilac-coloured crape sash thrown over the left shoulder. The right hand is partly thrust into the waistcoat, and covered with a thick buff buckskin glove, and the left arm is passed behind the back so as to sustain a fusee, the barrel of which projects above the shoulder. This was the very dress he wore on the fatal field of Rock Hill, where Braddock fell.

The face is that of a fresh and somewhat florid man, with light-brown hair. The eye a deep clear blue, full of spirit and vivacity; the nose resembling that of his subsequent likenesses, but much more becoming; and the mouth indicating most emphatically that unconquerable firmness of purpose, that inspired perseverance, that cool yet ardent character, which the history of his whole life exhibits. I should judge from this picture that Washington was naturally of a vivacious temperament, for his eye is full of fire, and its expression rather gay than grave, and I shall, in the course of this work, lay before my young readers some proofs in support of my opinion. The incessant cares and labours he encountered soon after this period, and the weight of those momentous interests which so heavily lay on his mind, and would have weighed almost any other to the earth, were amply sufficient to repress his natural vivacity. Hence, from the date of his accepting the command in the great crusade for the establishment of the rights of his country, he was seldom known to be gay, scarcely ever laughed aloud, and his character was that of gravity, if not something more.

Washington was upwards of six feet in height; robust, but of perfect symmetry in his proportions; eminently cal-

culated to sustain fatigue, yet without that heaviness which usually accompanies great muscular power, and abates active exertion. His movements were graceful; his manner displayed a grave self-possession, and was easy and affable. All those who ever associated with him have remarked that indescribable dignity which, though it created an affectionate confidence, at the same time repressed all freedoms, and forbade the indulgence of the slightest indecorum in his presence. His most remarkable feature was his mouth, which was perfectly unique. The lips firm and compressed. The under jaw seemed to grasp the upper with force, as if the muscles were in full action, even while he sat perfectly still and composed. Yet an air of benignity and repose always pervaded his face, and his smile displayed an extraordinary attraction. No man ever possessed in a higher degree the art, or rather the moral and physical qualifications, to ensure the respect and affection of all who came within the circle of his influence.

Such was Washington when the suffrages of his countrymen called him from his retirement, first to assist by his councils, and next to vindicate their rights in the strife of arms. While attending upon his duties as a member of the first Congress, he was, on the fourteenth of June, 1775, unanimously chosen commander-in-chief of the armies of the United Colonies, and all the forces now raised or to be raised by them. Some little effort was made in favour of General Ward of Massachusetts; but, happily for the cause and the country, local feelings and personal predilections were nobly sacrificed on the altar of patriotism, and the destinies of liberty fell upon one fully adequate to their support.

Washington accepted the dangerous pre-eminence offered him with that modest firmness which never deserted him. I have a letter before me announcing the event to Mrs. Washington, and expressing his doubts whether he is qualified for

the task he had undertaken, with a simplicity that precludes all idea of affectation, if such a weakness were compatible with his character Another, written just before his departure for Boston, to assume a command which promised little but difficulty and disaster, if not disgrace and death, I shall now lay before my young readers It at once displays his domestic feelings, his unaffected diffidence, his uniform and affecting reliance on the goodness of Providence

"*Philadelphia June 23d*, 1775.

"MY DEAREST,

"As I am within a few minutes of leaving this city, I could not think of departing from it without dropping you a line, especially as I do not know whether it will be in my power to write again until I get to the camp at Boston. I go fully trusting in that Providence which has been more bountiful to me than I deserve, and in full confidence of a happy meeting with you in the fall I have not time to add more, as I am surrounded by company to take leave of me I retain an unalterable affection for you, which neither time or distance can change. My best love to Jack, and Nelly, and regards to the rest of the family, concludes me with the utmost sincerity,

"Your entire,

"GEO. WASHINGTON"

By accepting the command of the army of the United Colonies, Washington placed his life and fortune on the issue of the struggle. He not only risked the perils of battle, which every brave man is willing to encounter in a just cause, but the imminent danger of perishing on the scaffold or under the gallows. As a leader in what was called a rebellion by the British government, the ruin of the cause of his country would, almost as a matter of course, have been followed either by a voluntary exile, or an ignominious death. Indeed,

my young readers ought never, while they live in the enjoyment of the blessings of liberty, to forget those who won and transmitted them to posterity, fought, as was the reproachful phrase of their haughty antagonists, "with halters round their necks," and at the risk of perishing, as the unsuccessful champions of liberty have always perished, with the stigma of treason on their names. Under all these circumstances, we have a right to presume, and such a conclusion accords with the whole tenour of his life, that, in accepting a station fraught with so many dangers and discouragements, Washington was actuated, not by the love of power, but solely by an attachment to his country and to the rights of his fellow-citizens.

The triumph in the cause of freedom, achieved by the United States, as they were now soon to be denominated, has already attracted the admiration of nations. But they knew not half the difficulties the good people of the colonies had to encounter. There was a moral influence which, of itself, was almost insurmountable. An influence which to this day festers in the veins of the free citizens of this independent confederation, independent in every thing but mind. It was the influence of that long habit of inferiority which is ever the inglorious birthright of colonies.

The idea of European superiority, and most especially of British valour, British wisdom, and, above all, British power, was an inheritance of our forefathers, and has descended to their children. In their eyes, England was invincible—she grasped the trident of the ocean in one hand, and in the other the sceptre of the land. Equally pre-eminent in arms, in science, and in literature, the idea of opposing her power, or resisting her pretensions, was almost equivalent to that of the war of the pigmies against the giants. It seemed not courage, but temerity; not fortitude, but presumption; not the calm deliberate energy of freemen, determined to assert their rights,

but the frenzy of a slave, gnashing his teeth, and vainly attempting to break his fetters. It was a great effort to overcome these long prepossessions, and it was reserved for the descendants of Englishmen to dissolve the charm of invincibility that had been cherished for ages in behalf of their forefathers.

Besides this soul-subduing feeling of inferiority, which generated a thousand miserable fears, there were other real and substantial grounds for all but despair. The colonies had suddenly, by the violent proceedings of the British ministry in relation to Boston, which had first dared to resist the payment of the duty on tea, been precipitated on a crisis which left them no alternative but submission or resistance. They were obliged to give up the cause, or to enter at once on its assertion by arms. Without adequate means, or unity of action, or concert of system, they had followed the impulse of a generous patriotism, which calculates no deficiencies, and flown to the relief of their brothers of New-England, on whose heads the vengeance of England had first alighted. They were too wise to wait to see their neighbours fall before they came to the rescue, and too magnanimous to desert those who were suffering in the common cause.

Washington was cheered on his way to Boston by the universal voice of confidence in the new commander; by a resolution of Congress pledging itself to stand by him with their lives and fortunes in defence of "American liberty;" by a committee which met and escorted him to Boston: and by an address presented to him by the Massachusetts House of Representatives, couched in the most respectful and affectionate language.

On entering upon the duties of his command, he soon found that, however he might rely on the spirit and patriotism of the people, the army was in a most destitute state, and af-

forded but small grounds for the hope of a successful issue to the struggle at hand, save through a long series of trials and suffering. There was a general defect of organization, and an almost total absence of all the munitions of war. The arms were defective, and the want of powder was a decisive obstacle to their use. The letters of Washington, from this time onward, furnish the best exposition of his situation, and the most authentic materials for a history of the difficulties, delays, and mortifications he encountered, the heroism, patience, and perseverance with which he endured or surmounted them. To them, therefore, I shall principally resort in the narrative which follows. No one can read these letters without receiving a conviction that, during the whole course of the contest for the liberties of the New World, Washington was the master-spirit of the cause, and that but for his urgent solicitations to Congress; his sagacious recommendations of the measures proper to be pursued; his unwearied perseverance in stemming the tide of ill-fortune, and providing against its effects; his inflexible firmness in bearing up against every exigency; his courage, his patriotism, and his genius, all reinforced and sustained by the commanding influence of his character, the struggle for several years might, in all probability, have been lengthened many years more—if it had not been prematurely brought to an end by the utter defeat and subjection of the States, and the postponement, if not final extinction, of all hope of independence. If ever any man merited the greatest of all titles, that of the Deliverer of his Country, it was Washington.

CHAPTER VII.

Causes of the Revolutionary War. Affair of Lexington and Concord. Battle of Bunker's Hill. Washington arrives at Boston and assumes the Command. State of the American Army. Probable Causes of the Inactivity of General Howe. Attempt to dislodge the Americans from Dorchester Heights. Evacuation of Boston by the British. Washington and his Army receive the Thanks of Congress. His firm stand in behalf of the American Prisoners, and Threat of Retaliation. General Howe relaxes the system pursued by Governor Gage.

BEFORE entering on a detail of the actions of Washington in the great war of the Revolution, a brief sketch of the state of affairs at that time will be useful, to enable my youthful readers to comprehend what follows. This dispute between England and her colonies originated in the claim of the former to tax the latter without their consent. They asserted the rights of Englishmen, as the descendants of Englishmen; and as no native of that country could be taxed without the consent of a parliament in which he was supposed to be represented, they insisted the same rule should be extended to them. They demanded either the right of being represented in the parliament of England, or that of taxing themselves through the medium of their own colonial assemblies.

This right they always exercised, and as they had never on any occasion declined contributing the necessary means of defraying their own expenses, and defending themselves against the Indians, and other enemies, there was no just pretext for any innovation on this long-established practice. The government of England having discovered that the colonies were growing rich, began to think them worth protection now that they could afford to pay for protection. Under pretence of the burden of defending them against the French and Indians in those wars which originated in the rivalry of

European ambition, and in which they had no concern whatever, an act of parliament was passed laying a duty on stamps. All legal papers were obliged to bear a stamp, for, which a certain sum was to be paid to certain commissioners, for the use of the British government: and, consequently, every species of business became subject to this imposition which was equally oppressive and embarrassing.

It was not, however, the amount of the tax, nor the vexatious mode by which it was collected, that roused the resistance of the Americans. They saw that this was the commencement of a great system of imposition, founded on the supremacy of a parliament in which they were not represented, and in the choice of whose members they had no voice whatever. They saw that this was the first attempt to feel the pulse of the inhabitants of the colonies, and that submission now would be the signal for new exactions hereafter. Now therefore, was the time to resist, or never. They must strain at the gnat or prepare themselves to swallow the camel.

Others have resisted actual oppressions; it was reserved to the Americans to wrestle for principles alone. They struggled against future rather than present evils; and, with a wisdom, firmness, and foresight to which there is no parallel example in the history of the world, met on the very threshold the enemy, which, if they had once permitted to enter the house, would have finally turned them out of doors. Their manly yet temperate remonstrances at length procured a repeal of the stamp act; but the very abandonment of the practice was accompanied by an assertion of the principle of parliamentary supremacy, on which it had been founded. The Americans continued dissatisfied with a concession which, while it abated the grievance, reserved the right to renew it whenever it was thought proper.

The frequent and expensive wars of England, which had been some time prosecuted upon the new principle of shifting

on posterity the burdens of their fathers, had entailed upon that country the modern blessing of a vast national debt. This carried with it the necessity of additional taxation to meet the interest; and the British ministry began to cherish a design to make the colonies a party in contributing to the payment of debts which they had no agency in contracting. Not one of the wars of England, in which these debts were incurred, had originated in any desire to benefit the United Colonies. They were the consequences of European ambition and national rivalry.

The repeal of the stamp act was followed at no great distance of time by an attempt to collect a tax on tea, which constituted an item in the original budget of which the former was by far the most vexatious, and had never been repealed. Again was that spirit of liberty which our ancestors brought with them to the Western wilderness, and bequeathed to their posterity, roused to action. Remonstrances, petitions, and appeals, the most eloquent, and unanswerable, couched in language the most respectful, were transmitted to the parliament, the people, and the king of England. All these addresses were written with a vigour, a temperate dignity, and a force of reasoning characteristic of an enlightened people determined to maintain their rights; a people whose ancestors had sought the untrodden wilds of a New World that they might escape the despotism of Church and State, and bequeathed to them an abhorrence of tyranny. That to the people of England, written by John Jay, is one of the finest productions of those times which awakened and gave new energies to the genius and virtue of our countrymen. It furnishes the heads of the principles asserted by our ancestors.

"Know then," it says, "that we consider ourselves, and do insist that we are and ought to be, as free as our fellow-sub-

jects of Great Britain, and that no power on earth has a right to take our property from us without our consent.

"That we claim all the benefits secured to the subject by the English Constitution, and particularly that inestimable one of trial by jury. That we hold it essential to English liberty, that no man be condemned unheard, or punished for supposed offences, without having an opportunity of making his defence.

"That we think the Legislature of Great Britain is not authorized by the constitution to establish a religion fraught with sanguinary and impious tenets, or to erect an arbitrary form of government in any quarter of the globe. These rights, we, as well as you, deem sacred. And yet, sacred as they are, they have, with many others, been repeatedly and flagrantly violated.

"Are the proprietors of the soil of Great Britain all lords of their own property? Can it be taken from them without their consent? Will they yield to the arbitrary disposal of of any man or number of men whatever? You know they will not.

"Why, then, are the proprietors of the soil of America less lords of their property than you are of yours? Or why should they submit to the disposal of your parliament, or any other parliament or council in the world, not of their election? Can the intervention of the sea that divides us cause disparity in our rights? Or can any reason be given why English subjects who live three thousand miles from the royal palace should enjoy less liberty than those who are three hundred miles distant from it? Reason looks with indignation on such chimerical distinctions, and freemen can never perceive their propriety."

The people of England responded to the appeal, but had too little influence to obtain justice for their brethren across the Atlantic; the king permitted his ministers to follow out

their own policy; and the parliament referred their complaints to what were aptly called "Committees of Oblivion" where they were never heard of more.

A few voices were heard in the British senate pleading the cause of the Americans. But though among them were those of a Burke and a Pitt, they were as voices crying in the wilderness, unheard except by stocks and stones, and animals without sympathy. Their appeals in behalf of the rights of the descendants of Englishmen fell dead to the ground, though they would seem to have been calculated to awaken the dead from their graves. The elder Pitt, who had in an hour of weakness buried the glory of an illustrious name in the obscurity of an empty title,* vindicated the rights of our forefathers in a manner which entitles him to the lasting gratitude of their posterity.

"For God's sake," said he on one occasion, when addressing the House of Lords—"for God's sake then, my lords, let the way be instantly opened for reconciliation. I say instantly, or it will be too late. The Americans tell you—and remember it is the language of three millions of people—they tell you they will never submit to be taxed without their own consent. They insist on a repeal of your laws. They do not ask it as a favour; they claim it as a right. They demand it. And I tell you the acts *must* be repealed—they *will* be repealed. You cannot enforce them. But the bare repeal will not satisfy this enlightened and spirited people. What! satisfy them by cancelling a bit of paper—a piece of parchment! No, my lords! you must go further; you must declare you have no right to tax them. Then they will confide in you.

"There are, my lords, three millions of whigs in America. Three millions of whigs with arms in their hands, which every one knows how to use, are a formidable body. There are, I trust, twice as many whigs in England; and I hope the whigs

* He had been created Earl of Chatham.

in both countries will unite, and make a common cause in defence of their common rights. They are united by the strongest ties of sentiment and interest; and will, therefore, I hope, fly to support their brethren. In this most alarming and distracted state of your affairs, though borne down by disease, I have crawled to this house, my lords, to give you my best advice, which is, to beseech his majesty that orders may be instantly despatched to General Gage to remove his troops from Boston. Their presence is a source of perpetual irritation and suspicion to those people. How can they trust you with the bayonet at their breasts?

"They have all the reason in the world to believe that you mean to deal them death or slavery. Let us then set about this business in earnest. There is no time to be lost. Every moment is big with danger. Even while I am speaking, the decisive blow may be struck, and millions involved in the consequences. The very first drop of blood that is shed will make a wound perhaps never to be healed—a wound of such uncommon malignity as will never be closed. It will mortify the whole body, and hasten, both in England and America, that dissolution to which all the nations of the earth are destined."

But when were mother-countries ever just to their children? The inflexible policy has ever been to make their industry tributary to their own luxury and ambition; to make them the rich pastures for foraging their own greedy dependants; to insult and harass them with indignities and restraints of every kind, and finally to leave them no alternative but slavery or resistance unto death. The voice of wisdom, justice, and patriotism—the eloquence of inspiration and virtue combined, bursting as it were from the brink of the grave, was unheard. The knife was placed at the throat of America, and the prophecy of the great statesman was fulfilled.

The immediate occasion which produced the first act of re-

sistance on the part of the Americans was an attempt to introduce a cargo of tea into Boston, on which a duty of threepence a pound was laid by act of parliament. Trifling as it was, it involved the whole principle of the right of taxation without representation, and the patriotic inhabitants of Boston, who had before signalized themselves on various occasions by their stern resistance to every encroachment on their rights, proceeded to settle the question in a summary manner. A party disguised as Indians entered the vessel, and threw the whole cargo overboard. Such was the admirable secrecy with which this was meditated, proposed, and performed, that though every effort was made by the royal governor and his instruments to discover the actors, not one betrayed himself, or was betrayed by the others. To this day the names of a large portion of these daring patriots remain either questionable or unknown

When this proceeding became known in England, it called down the vengeance of the ministry and its subservient parliament on the devoted city. An act was passed shutting up the port of Boston, and of course destroying its trade entirely. Reinforcements were sent to Governor Gage, and every thing indicated a settled determination on the part of the British ministry to enforce the system of taxation. These acts roused the indignation, while they awakened the fears, of the Americans. The rest of the colonies considered that Boston was suffering in the common cause, and promptly resolved to make common cause with her. The people of New-England especially took the deepest interest in the fate of their capital, and a generous excitement pervaded the whole country. A general congress of all the colonies was convened, whose first act was a Declaration of Rights, in which they asserted the ancient privileges of Englishmen, professed their loyalty to the king, and their determination "to risk every thing short of

their eternal salvation to defend and transmit those rights entire to their innocent and beloved posterity." The people seconded their representatives, and agreed to an abstinence from all British manufactures, which then constituted nearly all their luxuries and most of their comforts.

In this state of affairs a spark fell among the combustibles and lighted the flames of a seven-years war. Congress had ordered a deposit of stores and ammunition at Concord, a village about thirteen miles from Boston. Governor Gage despatched a force of eight hundred grenadiers and light infantry for the purpose of destroying them. Information having been sent by Doctor Warren, one of the early martyrs in the cause of freedom, the inhabitants of Concord and its vicinity prepared for the reception of the enemy.

Arriving at Lexington, the British met a party of about twenty militia and thirty or forty unarmed spectators. Major Pitcairn, who commanded the former, rode up to them, and cried out, in a furious tone, "Disperse, you rebels—lay down your arms and disperse." This insulting command not being promptly obeyed, he discharged his pistol, and ordered his men to fire. He was immediately obeyed, and the inhabitants fled, while the British continued their fire. This at length provoked resistance; the inhabitants returned the fire, and several were killed on both sides.

The British continued to advance on Concord. The news of the affair at Lexington had spread like fire on a prairie through the neighbourhood, and roused a spirit of resistance. Armed men seemed to spring out of the earth; the farmers left their ploughs sticking in the furrows, and the horses in their gears, and seizing their muskets, rushed to the defence of their country. Intimidated, however, by the number of the enemy, they took a position behind a bridge, and waited for reinforcements, while the British proceeded to destroy the stores and ammunition.

Having done this, they marched upon the bridge to disperse the militia. They again gave the first fire, which was returned with such effect that they were compelled to retreat. They were pursued by the Americans; who, now roused to vengeance, no longer stood on the defensive. As they fled towards Boston, it was like running the gauntlet. The woods, the windows, and the stone fences were alive with irritated freemen, and every shot made its mark on the enemy. The ball rolled, and gathered as it rolled; and before the enemy returned to Boston, two hundred and seventy-three, in killed, wounded and prisoners, had paid the forfeit of shedding the first blood in the cause of oppression.

The inhabitants of Lexington, Concord, and the neighbouring country, proved themselves on this occasion worthy descendants of the pious and gallant pilgrims, who had sacrificed all for liberty in the Old World, and braved, in the same cause, the dangers, hardships, and privations of the New. Of the company of volunteer militia belonging to Lexington, seven were killed and ten wounded. It seems to have been a family of brothers, for among them were nine of the name of Smith, twelve of Harrington, and thirteen, one for each of the states, of Munroe.

The name of every man belonging to the little band which furnished the first martyrs to liberty in this western world, should be recorded and remembered. The anniversary of the battle of Lexington deserves to be kept, and has lately been commemorated in a manner equally honourable to the living and the dead; and long may it be before the children or the men of my country become indifferent to the heroism and sacrifices of their humble ancestors.

On this occasion there occurred instances of devoted and persevering courage which may, and ought to be, placed side by side with any that adorn the history of Greece and Rome. The following will serve as one among many examples. It is

that of Jonas Parker. "He had been heard to say that, be the consequences what they might, and let others do as they pleased, he would never run from the enemy. He was as good as his word—better. Having loaded his musket, he placed his hat, containing his ammunition, on the ground between his feet, in readiness for a second charge. At the second fire he was wounded, and sunk on his knees; and in this condition discharged his gun. While loading it again upon his knees, and striving in the agonies of death to redeem his pledge, he was transfixed by a bayonet, and thus died on the spot where he stood and fell."* While my youthful readers glow with affecting admiration over such examples of courage and patriotism in the lowly village train, let them receive them as lessons of what they themselves will owe to their beneficent country, should it ever again require such sacrifices.

I have dwelt the more particularly on this affair because of the momentous consequences which followed. Trifling as it appears in itself, it was of greater magnitude in its results than many battles and wars in which empires were laid waste, and millions perished by the sword. It was the first link in a chain of circumstances that drew after it the fate of the New, perhaps of the Old World. It was the first sentence of a chapter which records the downfall of oppression, and the commencement of a new era in the history of mankind. The course of human affairs; the great change which is now daily operating on the despotism of power, and the rights of nations; the revolution of opinions, of governments, and of things, all derived a beginning from the fields of Lexington and Concord. There was shed the blood of the first martyrs to liberty, and from thence she dates her new-born existence.

* I quote from the fine address of Mr. Edward Everett in commemoration of this battle.

The famous battle of Bunker Hill followed at no great distance, and formed the second act of the great drama. A second time the kindred blood of the two people who had once been friends and brothers, flowed in the same strife of principle on the one hand, power on the other; there was the gallantry of the assailant met by more than equal firmness of resistance; and there upwards of thirteen hundred of the royal army paid a second forfeit to their contempt of those whom they denominated rebels to their king, because they refused to be bond-slaves to his ministers. The invaders here learned another lesson, which taught them that those who are animated by a love of liberty are never to be despised.

The battle of Bunker Hill, by which name it was first known, and will be longest remembered, is equally memorable for the gallantry displayed on both sides, as for its impressive influence on the events which followed. It taught the enemy caution, and inspired the Americans with confidence. The place is not strong by nature, nor had the militia, who took possession, time to throw up any other defences except a ditch of moderate depth and dimensions and a paltry breastwork. They had neither cannon nor bayonets, and depended on their skill as marksmen, their courage as the champions of a good cause.

They had taken possession of the hill by night, and as soon as the light of the dawn enabled Governor Gage to see that they were there, a cannonade from his ships of war was directed to dislodge them: but they stood their ground, and continued their work. Three thousand men, with a train of artillery, under Howe and Pigot, were then landed near Charlestown, which, in order as it would seem to exasperate the Americans to a more determined resistance, they set fire to, and laid in ashes. They then formed, and advanced towards the hill, while the American and British armies, and the inhabitants of Boston, were watching the result in breath-

less expectation. Here was to be the first trial whether the posterity of Englishmen had degenerated in the New World, and the event was to decide whether they were worthy the liberty they were now about to assert.

On the brow of the hill stood the Americans in their little intrenchment, watching with eyes that never winked, and hearts that never quailed, the approach of that enemy whom they were brought up to believe invincible. Their supply of ammunition being exceedingly scarce, they were directed to reserve their fire till the last moment. The brave "Old Putnam," as he is called with affectionate license by a grateful people, ordered them not to throw away a single shot, nor to touch a trigger till they could see "the whites of their eyes."

The gallant British soldiers, for gallant they were, came steadily on, silent as the grave so many of them were soon to occupy, and were waited for by a foe equally silent. Not a word was spoken within the American line of defence; every man was marking out, with unerring aim, the victim who, instead of imagining he was advancing to his fate, dreamed that he should meet no resistance. But from this dream he was awakened by the messenger of death. Soon as the whites of their eyes became visible a thousand triggers snapped, and a thousand muskets at one single discharge, that made but one report, arrested the career of the whole body, a considerable portion of it for ever. The British halted for a moment, keeping up an irregular fire, and receiving others more deadly and unerring. They fell like armies smitten by the angel of death; but those who escaped stood their ground manfully, maintaining the ancient renown of their country even in a bad cause. But the deadly fire was continued so rapidly, and with such horrible effects, that the commands of the officers were no longer heard or obeyed. They broke in confusion, and precipitated themselves down the hill. Again they were rallied; again they were met by the same deadly

and determined fire, and again they were broken, and retreated down the hill. Fresh troops were sent to their assistance by those who were watching the conflict; and once more, with a perseverance and intrepidity, the result equally perhaps of an arrogant presumption of their own superiority, and a contempt for their enemy—once more they advanced with all the courage of desperation. But by this time the occupants of this immortal little breastwork had expended all their ammunition, with the exception of a few rounds, and they retreated in as good order as could be expected from irregular troops, after firing their last cartridge, and dealing a last blow with the butt-ends of their muskets.

The enemy at length gained the victory, but at a price which perhaps led him to calculate the cost of a contest that had thus commenced. Instead of songs of triumph there was weeping and gnashing of teeth for breathless friends and comrades, or living sufferers, some without limbs, others pierced through the body, others bloodless as shivering ghosts. It was a sorrowful day for England, for she had lost many brave soldiers, many gallant officers, and gained no honour. The wages of so much slaughter were but a ditch and breastwork on the summit of a little hill. For this, thirteen hundred and upwards of the enemy paid the price of their breath or their blood. The loss of the Americans was serious, yet by no means to be compared to that of the British. Among the killed was Dr. Joseph Warren, a distinguished volunteer, whose death was deeply lamented; and who, had Providence spared him to the cause of his country, would, without doubt, have become one of the first among those that survived him. But his death was glorious, and his name will ever be quoted as that of one of the earliest as well as most illustrious martyrs to the liberties of his native land.

These two affairs of Lexington and Bunker Hill appertain exclusively to New England. It was on New England

ground, and by the men of New England these battles were fought, for as yet the more distant colonies had not time to come to the aid of their brothers of the East. They constitute bright pages in the history of those states, most especially of Massachusetts, fortunate in being the first to be attacked, the first to resist, and the first to seal the charter of liberty with her blood. Truth demands this testimony, and the honour should neither be envied nor withheld.

Though the mother country had actually commenced hostilities, and the colonies resisted, still there are many clear indications in the history of those times that, until a considerable period after the American Congress had recommended and authorized strong measures of defence, few, if any, cherished the idea that the British ministers would persevere in enforcing the claims of England to absolute supremacy after they found that the colonies were determined to resist at all hazards.

On the other hand, the British ministry laboured under a similar delusion. They imagined that the colonies had neither the spirit to resist, nor the power to do it effectually. They calculated securely on the long habits of deference which had grown up among them, their attachment to the country of their descent, and their apprehensions of its vengeance. They were taught to believe—for it is the destiny of power to be always deceived—that the mere show of a resolution to enforce it would produce a prompt obedience. They deceived themselves, and suffered the consequences of the deception. They plunged boldly into the stream, and their pride prohibited returning when they discovered the force of the current. Had they foreseen the difficulty of the task, it is highly probable they would have at least temporized, if not abandoned it altogether. But even this would not have answered their purpose. It was the destiny of the New World to become independent of the Old, and nothing could have finally pre-

vented its accomplishment. On the 12th of June, 1775, Governor Gage issued a proclamation declaring the colony of Massachusetts in a state of rebellion; threatening the severest punishment to the insurgents; and proffering pardon on submission to all, with the honourable exception of Samuel Adams and John Hancock.

When Washington arrived at the lines of the American army before Boston, in the beginning of July, 1775, he found the situation of affairs by no means promising, and now commenced that correspondence with the president of Congress, the celebrated John Hancock, from which I shall draw my principal materials. It corroborates the view above taken, when I observe that in all his early letters he calls the British the "ministerial army," thus avoiding a direct collision with the authority of the king.

His first acts were to visit the several posts and reconnoitre those of the enemy. His second, to ascertain the situation of his army, and the means of offensive or defensive operations in his power. The results of the latter inquiry were sufficiently discouraging.

The deficiencies consisted in a want of engineers; a want of arms; of ammunition; of tents; of regular supplies of provisions; of a military chest, that is to say, of money; and, indeed, of almost every necessary constituent of a military force and military action, except "a great number of able-bodied men, zealous in the cause, and of unquestionable courage." He earnestly recommends to Congress a prompt attention to these objects, and laments the distance of that body, which impedes a direct and frequent communication.

"My best abilities," he writes, "are at all times devoted to the service of my country. But I feel the weighty importance and variety of my present duties too sensibly not to wish a more frequent communication with Congress. I fear it may often happen, in the course of our present operations, that I

shall need that assistance and direction from them which time and distance will not allow me to receive."

Thus in a situation where ambitious and aspiring men grasp at discretionary power, and sigh to be free from the restraints of legislative supervision, in order that they may follow the dictates of their own will, or perhaps usurp the liberties of the state, did Washington regret the want of a superintending authority. Throughout the whole of the struggle for liberty he never, on any occasion, attempted to interfere with the civil power, or to transcend the functions delegated to him by Congress. He considered himself only as the servant of the state and sought no other distinction, although continually placed in circumstances that might have justified the exercise of almost unlimited discretion.

But at the same time he neither cringed nor flattered. He never failed to give his own opinions frankly; to point out to Congress what he considered proper or necessary to the comfort of his soldiers or the success of their operations, and to blame, with temperate manliness, its neglect or inertness. His intimations are succeeded by remonstrances, and his remonstrances are repeated with a firm, yet respectful importunity, until the evil is remedied, or all hope of remedy abandoned.

After the battle of Bunker Hill, no action of any consequence took place at Boston. Washington, though exceedingly anxious to storm the British lines, was deterred by a want of the necessary means, and the decision of a council of officers, disapproving such an attempt. Great difficulties took place in the mean time in consequence of the expiration of the term of enlistment of a large portion of the troops; the different organization of those of the different states, which precluded uniformity; together with the want of habits of subordination in both officers and soldiers, who, while strug-

gling for civil liberty, did not sufficiently comprehend the necessity of submitting to the severity of a military code.

These difficulties were increased by local jealousies among the troops of the different colonies, which, while they produced, perhaps, a salutary emulation on the one hand, occasioned on the other feelings directly opposed to a harmonious co-operation. To remedy this, in some degree, Washington proposed to Congress that the whole army should be dressed in hunting-shirts, which, while they furnished a cheap uniform, would do away with those petty dissensions which have often no better foundation than a different coloured coat or feather. The material for this arrangement could not, however, be procured, and the recommendation was, consequently, not carried into effect.

On the other hand, the British, who occupied Boston and its immediate defences, remained comparatively quiet within their intrenchments. It is not possible that General Howe, who commanded under Governor Gage, and afterwards succeeded him, was ignorant of the total want of a supply of ammunition under which the Americans laboured for a considerable time. Indeed, Washington explicitly states, in one of his letters to Congress, this deficiency was known in the enemy's camp, and expresses his surprise at the inactivity of Howe. I am strongly inclined to believe it was in a great measure owing to his expectation of a speedy adjustment of the quarrel between the mother-country and her colonies, and a desire not to increase the difficulty of such an arrangement by additional bloodshed.

The only effort made by General Howe against the Americans who were investing Boston; was to dislodge them from Dorchester Heights, which had been taken possession of by General Thomas. A party of three thousand British under Lord Percy were sent on this errand, but a furious storm arrested their vessels in the passage to the mouth of the river

up which they were to proceed to the point of action; and before they could repair damages, the Americans had so strengthened their works that the attempt to carry them by storm was abandoned.

The possession of these heights rendered the situation of the enemy not a little critical, and produced a determination on the part of General Howe to evacuate Boston without any further attempt at defence. This resolution was carried into effect on the 17th of March, 1776, and Boston at length reposed in the arms, and under the protection, of its natural defenders. This event was hailed with triumph and rejoicing throughout the whole extent of the united colonies, where the cause of Boston was identified with their best principles and most ardent affections. A medal was ordered to be struck by Congress to commemorate the event, and a vote of thanks passed, in which the conduct of Washington and his army is justly characterized as equally "wise and spirited." It was indeed a rational source of exultation, to drive an invading army from its intrenchments with a force comparatively raw, undisciplined, and ill-supplied with every thing. The act was glorious, and the consequences in the highest degree important. It freed a patriotic and devoted city; it gave additional confidence to the friends of liberty, and held forth bright omens of future successes, should the struggle continue.

The conduct of Washington was universally approved by he friends of the good cause. His temperate ardour, exhibited on all occasions in seeking the delivery of the city; the firmness yet kind forbearance with which he had dealt with the feelings of the troops under his command, who had suffered much, and were unused to the hardships and discipline of war; and, in short, his whole deportment had been such as to justify his past reputation, and lay the solid, unshaken basis of that confidence in his vigour, firmness and integrity which supported him in all the future trials of his country.

It was here too that he took a stand from which he never swerved, until the British were taught by his firmness, and perseverance, to abandon a system of treating their prisoners equally cruel and insulting. They either did, or affected to look on the noble struggle for liberty, which has since been consecrated by the admiration and imitation of many nations, as nothing more than a petulent and ungrateful opposition to long-established authority. While a large portion of the people of England sympathized in the wrongs of the colonies, the ministry and the soldiers considered them as rebellious subjects, in arms against their king without cause, and without justice. With this impression they treated their prisoners with an insulting and reckless barbarity, which under no circumstances could be justified among civilized nations. They pretended to consider them as without the pale of honourable warfare, and abused them as they would the worst of criminals. They placed them in irons, and threatened them with the gallows.

Washington wrote to Governor Gage, remonstrating against this barbarity. A haughty and supercilious answer was returned, in which it was intimated that an escape from the halter was all the prisoners could expect; and for this clemency they should be grateful, instead of complaining of their benefactors. To this Washington replied, "If your officers, our prisoners, receive from me treatment different from that I wished to show them, they and you will remember the occasion." Soon after, the command devolved on General Howe, who, either from a conviction that his severity would be retaliated, or from a better motive, for some time afterwards adopted a milder course towards his prisoners.

CHAPTER VIII.

Character of the War. The British evacuate Boston, and Washington proceeds to New-York. State of Affairs there. Declaration of Independence. Arrival of Lord Howe at Sandy Hook. Sends a Flag with Proposals for Conciliation. Lands on Long Island. Battle, and Defeat of the Americans. Fine Retreat of Washington. This ill Success does not impair the Public Confidence in him. Abortive Meeting of a Committee of Congress with Lord Howe, and Rejection of his Offers of Pardon.

THE war which Washington was now conducting was not one of brilliant victories, rousing the unthinking admiration of mankind by the mass of human misery they create, but of difficulties and disasters, calling for the exercise of all the highest qualities of mind and genius to surmount. These alone enabled him to support the labours and vanquish the obstacles that, wherever he went, bristled thick in his way, and, by the blessing of Heaven, to secure a lasting and glorious triumph to the cause of liberty.

The moment he perceived by the motions of General Howe that the British army was preparing to leave Boston Washington commenced breaking up his camp at Cambridge, and was soon on his way to New-York, whither, he believed, the enemy would direct his course ere long, although, on leaving Nantasket Roads, he had sailed eastward. He passed through Providence, Norwich, and New-London, and everywhere directed his attention to the ardous duties devolved upon him as commander-in-chief. He provided for the embarkation of his army at New-London; sent a reinforcement to the American troops in Canada; procured a small supply of cannon from Admiral Hopkins at New-London; and, in short, devoted his time and energies to preparing for the worst that might happen. Everywhere he exerted the influence of his personal character,

and everywhere with the most beneficial consequences. It was this influence, arising from a perfect confidence in his talents, integrity, and patriotism, that more than once proved the bulwark and safeguard of his country.

On his arrival at New-York early in the month of April, 1776, he received a letter from the President of Congress conveying the thanks of that body to himself and his army for their conduct at the siege of Boston. He replied with his usual modest manliness—"I beg you," he says, to assure them, that it will ever be my highest ambition to approve myself a faithful servant of the public; and that to be in any degree instrumental in procuring for my American brethren a restitution of their just rights and privileges will constitute my chief happiness." Speaking of having communicated the thanks of Congress to the army, he adds, "They were indeed at first a band of undisciplined husbandmen, but it is, under God, to their bravery and attention to their duty that I am indebted for that success which has procured me the only reward I wish to receive, the affection and esteem of my countrymen."

Washington found New-York but ill-prepared for defence in the event of General Howe's directing his operations to that quarter. The state troops were deficient in arms, and many of the citizens equally deficient in patriotism. Owing to various causes, the tory influence was strong in that quarter. A considerable number of British troops were always stationed in New-York; the officers had many of them intermarried with the most influential families of the province; and a number of the proprietors of the largest estates were devoted loyalists. Add to this, the Asia, man-of-war, lay opposite the city for some time, having it entirely at her mercy, and the commander threatening destruction in case of any overt act of opposition to the mother-country.

These and other causes damped the efforts of the whigs, and delayed decisive measures of defence. But the body of the

people was sound. The "Sons of Liberty," as they styled themselves, who had represented the popular feeling, had finally the ascendency over their disaffected opponents, and aided by a body of troops from Connecticut, under General Lee, maintained possession of the city in defiance of the threats of the commander of the Asia. That officer declared that if any troops came into the city, he would set it on fire, and Lee replied—"That if he set fire to a single house in consequence of his coming, he would chain a hundred tories together by the neck, and make that house their funeral pile."

The possession of New-York, the key to the Hudson, which forms the great geographical line of separation between New-England and the South, and is, moreover, the most direct route to and from Canada, was deemed an object of the first importance. Accordingly, Washington used his utmost efforts to place it in the best possible state of defence. At his recommendation, Congress authorised the construction of such a number of rafts calculated to act as a sort of fire-ships, armed boats, row-galleys, and floating-batteries as were deemed necessary to the command of the port and river. They likewise voted the employment of thirteen thousand militia, to reinforce the main army under Washington.

Hitherto the Americans had been simply struggling for their rights as subjects of England, but the time had now arrived when the contest was to assume an entirely different character. An event was at hand which was to change the relations between the mother-country and her colonies, and separate their future destinies for ever. The assertion of rights had produced the desire of independence. To the more sagacious of that great and illustrious body of men which composed the first Congress, it gradually became evident that, though the ancient relations of the two countries might perhaps be revived for a time, there never could in future subsist that

cordiality which was indispensible to their mutual interests and happiness. Blood had been shed; bitter invectives and biting insults had been exchanged; injuries never to be forgotten, and outrages not to be forgiven, had been suffered; and the filial piety of the children had been turned into hatred of the tyranny of the mother.

They saw, too, that were England to relinquish her claim to parliamentary supremacy for the present, there would be no security for the future. The colonies would be left as before, equally exposed to a revival and enforcement of the obnoxious claim of taxation without representation. Union could no longer subsist compatibly with the mutual happiness of the two parties, and a separation became the only security against eternal family-strife. The lofty pride of patriotism, which disdains to wear the yoke even of those we have been accustomed to reverence, when it presses too heavily, came in aid of these considerations, and enforced the only just and rational conclusion.

Actuated by these high motives, on the 7th of June, 1776, Richard Henry Lee consecrated his name to the everlasting gratitude of his country, by a motion in the Congress of the United Colonies, that a declaration of independence should be adopted. Three days after the question was taken up, and postponed to the first of July; but in the mean time, Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, John Adams of Massachusetts, Benjamin Franklin, of Pennsylvania, Roger Sherman of Connecticut, and Robert R. Livingston, of New York, were appointed a committee to draft the proposed declaration. The day being come, the subject was taken up, the declaration read, and the most important question that ever did, or ever can arise in this country settled for ever, by the adoption of that famous Declaration of Independence which has become the political

decalogue of all who love and strive for the maintenance or recovery of their rights.

Time has disclosed that this noble paper was written by Thomas Jefferson, of Virginia, who, had he done nothing else for his fame, and conferred no other obligation on his country, would deserve to be remembered in all future time, and venerated by all posterity. It was a noble sight to see this body of illustrious patriots listening to the reading of a declaration of injuries, ending with an eternal abjuration of the authority which inflicted them; to a proposition to divorce one world from another; to one of the most able and eloquent expositions of the rights of nature and nations that ever flowed from the pen of man. It was a sight still more solemn and affecting to see them, with steady hand and unshaken purpose, one after another signing their names to a paper which might have been equally their death-warrant as their patent of immortality, and solemnly pledging themselves to an act by which each one placed in the deepest jeopardy "his life, his fortune, and his sacred honour," for had they failed of success each one would have died the death of a traitor. Nor is it among the least of the attributes of sublimity by which this scene is surrounded, that, of the committee which thus cut asunder for ever the ties which had for ages cemented two countries, of which the past history of the one is but the shadow of the future glories of the other, one was bred a shoemaker, another a printer. It is thus my young readers may learn that no station in life, however high, confers a monopoly of iether talents or virtue; and that, on the other hand, no situation, however humble, can effectually repress the energies of their heaven-inspired possessors. Neither rank, nor birth, nor wealth, can give dignity to weakness or vice; nor can any depression of fortune strip genius and virtue united, of their claim to direct, under Providence, the destinies of mankind.

On the eighth of July following, the declaration was read at the State-house in Philadelphia, and received with acclamations. It was also read to each of the brigades of those troops which now assumed the proud title of the army of the United States, who received it with equal enthusiasm. Henceforward they were to fight under the banner, not of England, but of independence; not of the red cross, but of the stripes and stars. They were now emphatically the soldiers of freedom, and their courage increased with the consciousness of their new dignity. Now it was that every one became sensible that he was contending for the noblest of prizes; and now it was that the souls of all true lovers of liberty were put to the test. Many, who had hitherto gone hand in hand in the assertion of the principle of taxation and representation, shrunk from the idea of an assertion of entire independence on the mother country. They were either too much attached to "home," as England was usually called, or they feared the consequences of the long struggle that seemed now inevitable. They believed that the British ministry might have been wrought upon by the colonies to relinquish their system of taxation, but they despaired of their ever consenting to acknowledge the independence of the States.

The first years of the new-born child of liberty were those of danger and suffering. Her cradle was assailed by the serpent, but she proved the sister of Hercules, and slew him at last. She was nurtured in bloody strife and cruel vicissitudes, but she grew only the wiser and stronger for the buffeting of the waves and the violence of the storm. Like the oak in the whirlwind, she became only the more deeply rooted in the soil of freedom from the energy with which she withstood its ashings.

Four days after the declaration of independence was read to the troops, the fleet of Lord Howe, bringing a force of upwards of twenty-five thousand men, entered the Narrows, be-

tween Long and Staten Islands, and anchored opposite. This was an army of veterans, commanded by officers inured to service, and supplied with every requsite for prompt and decisive action. To oppose them the Americans mustered, rank and file, about seventeen thousand, most of them of little experience, commanded by officers equally inexperienced, and deficient in arms, as well as every other necessary of war. But they were animated by a just sense of their rights, and an inflexible resolution to maintain them.

The first act of Lord Howe was directed towards a reconciliation between the contending parties. He sent a flag of truce ashore with circular letters to some of the old royal governors, enclosing a declaration announcing his authority to grant pardons "to all who would return to their allegiance in proper time." These were transmitted to Congress by Washington, and directed to be published for the information of the people. His lordship at or near the same time sent a letter, directed to George Washington, Esquire, affecting thus to deny his claim to the title of commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States. Washington declined receiving it, saying that it was only in that character he could have intercourse with Lord Howe. Congress very properly approved this dignified proceeding.

Soon after this Colonel Patterson was deputed by Lord Howe to confer with the American general on the subject of the settlement of all differences, but without success. "I find," said Washington, "you are only empowered to grant pardons; we have committed no offence, we need no pardon." Colonel Patterson returned with this answer, and both parties prepared for active determined war.

The twenty-second day of August, in the second month of r independence, the enemy landed on Long Island, with a design to approach New-York in that quarter. Washington had the wisdom to know that the fears of inexperience almost

always overshoot the mark; and that men are most apprehensive of those dangers of which they have least knowledge He knew that the only way to make soldiers out of raw recruits was to accustom them to facing the enemy. The inexperienced soldier goes into action expecting certain death, and a few escapes cause him to imagine himself little less than invulnerable. Waiting for the enemy never increases the courage of an army, and it is better to be sometimes beaten than to be always running away.

Influenced by these considerations perhaps, and certainly by a desire to save New-York, as he had regained Boston, Washington distributed his force to such points as were most accessible to the enemy, and most easily defended A portion was stationed on Long Island, to make a stand in the event of General Howe landing in that quarter. The remainder, with the exception of a part of the militia of New-York, which lay at New-Rochelle, were disposed at different points of York Island, in anticipation that the enemy might approach by the way of Kingsbridge.

In this state of things every appearance indicated that a battle was to be fought ere long, and that its issue would, in all probability, decide the fate of the most important position in the United States. Washington prepared for the crisis with courage and sagacity. Far from sanguine, yet he did not despair of success, though every way inferior to the British. Speaking of his soldiers, he says, "The superiority of the enemy and the expected attack does not seem to have depressed their spirits. These considerations lead me to think that, though the appeal may not terminate so happily as I could wish, yet that the enemy will not succeed in their views without considerable loss. Any advantage they may gain I trust will cost them dear."

Besides performing the duties of a careful and skilful soldier, he used every effort to animate and inspire those under his

command. He appealed to their courage and their patriotism; to their sense of the wrongs of their country; to their recollections of the past, and their hopes of the future. In the general orders addressed to them on the arrival of Lord Howe, he says:—"The time is now near at hand which must determine whether Americans are to be freemen or slaves; whether they are to have any property they can call their own; whether their houses and farms are to be pillaged and destroyed, and themselves consigned to a state of wretchedness from which no human efforts will deliver them. The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, on the courage and conduct of this army. Our cruel and unrelenting enemy leaves us only the choice of a brave resistance or the most abject submission. We have therefore to resolve to conquer or to die. Our own, our country's honour, call upon us for vigorous exertion, and if we now shamefully fail we shall become infamous to the whole world. Let us then rely on the goodness of our cause, and the aid of the Supreme Being, in whose hands is victory to animate and encourage us to noble actions. The eyes of all our country are now upon us, and we shall have their blessings and praises if happily we become the instruments of saving them from the tyranny meditated against them. Let us therefore animate and encourage each other, and show the whole world that a freeman contending for liberty on his own ground is superior to any slavish mercenary on earth."

Again, as the hour approached, he once more endeavoured to infuse into his army a portion of his own energy and enthusiasm, "The enemy's whole force is now arrived, so that an attack must and will soon be made. The general therefore again repeats his earnest request that every officer and soldier will have his arms and ammunition in good order; keep within his quarter and encampments as far as possible; be ready for action at a moment's call; and, when called, remember that liberty, property, life, and honour, are all at stake; that upon

their courage and conduct rest the hopes of their bleeding country; that their wives, children, and parents expect safety from them only, and that we have every reason to believe that Heaven will crown with success so just a cause."

At length, on the 22nd of August, 1776, the greater portion of the British army, under the direction of Sir Henry Clinton, landed on Long Island, and disposed itself in a line extending from the Narrows to the village of Flatlands. The troops under General Sullivan, on the island, were now reinforced by six regiments, under General Putnam, who was directed to take command at Brooklyn, and guard all the approaches by every means in his power. The two armies were now divided by the range of hills called Brooklyn Heights, and within three or four miles of each other. The British superior in numbers, equipment, and discipline, and confident of success; the soldiers of freedom fighting under every disadvantage except that of a good cause.

Under cover of the darkness Sir Henry Clinton advanced with the van of his army to seize on the passes of the heights, and, favoured by the obscurity of the night, fell in with, and completely surprised and captured the American force which was to have guarded the approach. This incident was decisive, in all probability, of the action which followed. Hearing that the pass was entirely without defence, it was immediately taken possession of, and opened to the whole division a passage to the country between the heights and the East River. In the meantime General Grant, with another body of the British, advanced by a different road, skirmishing with the outposts of the Americans. This induced General Putnam to send reinforcements to that quarter; Lord Stirling led two regiments to meet the enemy towards the Narrows; General Sullivan conducted a strong detachment towards Flatbush, while a third occupied a position between that and the village of Bedford.

It was now break of day, and the action commenced with a brisk cannonade on both sides, between the troops under Grant and Stirling. In another direction De Heister and Sullivan were engaged, and to increase the perplexity of the Americans, the British fleet began a tremendous fire on the battery at Red Hook. This was followed, within an hour or two, by the approach of Sir Henry Clinton on the left of the Americans, and by a firing in the direction of Bedford, which, by indicating the advance of the enemy in that quarter, alarmed the Americans with the idea of being entirely surrounded. Thus circumstanced, great confusion began to prevail among them; and after standing their ground as long as could be expected under such circumstances, they broke in all directions, some seeking a retreat in the woods, and others under cover of the works erected on Brooklyn Heights. In this action the Americans lost nearly five hundred in killed and wounded and upwards of one thousand prisoners, among whom were three general officers. It was a severe lesson, and taught them that the price of liberty, as well as every other great blessing, is in proportion to its value.

The situation of the republican army was now such as to call for the most prompt and decisive measures. On one hand they were shut in by a broad, deep, and rapid stream, on the other by a victorious army, waiting only for the dawn of morning to attack them in their weak defences. Washington, who had passed over to Long Island during the battle, called a council of war, in which it was resolved to attempt a retreat, before the wind permitted the British fleet to enter the East River, and thus render it all but impossible.

The evening came, and the night set in with a strong wind, which made it impracticable to cross in the boats provided for that purpose, and the delay of a few hours would bring daylight and destruction. They felt as if standing on the brink of fate, ready to fall at every moment. Their enemies were so

near that they could hear them at work with their pickaxes and shovels just without the lines, and distinguish the word of command given by the officers in the loud tones of a triumphant enemy. At length the wind changed to a gentle breeze from the south-west accompanied by a thick fog, which added deeply to the obscurity of the night. The army, like speechless shadows, entered the boats in death-like silence, one by one and in such perfect order, that the whole, together with the greater part of the heavy cannon, all the field-pieces, provisions, horses, waggons, and ammunition, were in perfect safety before the British discovered that the American lines had been evacuated.

The Americans were not yet landed at New York, when the fog which so providentially favoured their departure clearing away, discovered the British taking possession of the spot they had abandoned but half an hour before. Such was the narrow escape they had; for if the enemy had again attacked them in their present decreased numbers, and under all the disadvantages of the previous defeat, it is extremely probable that a blow might have been given that would have taken years, perhaps ages, to recover.

The result of this affair did not impare the confidence either of the troops or the nation in their general. In this, as on every occasion of his life, his fame depended not on victory or defeat. His countrymen estimated him by the just standard of his indefatigable exertions, his unquestioned integrity, his acknowledged talents, and his long-tried patriotism, not by his successes; and not even ill-fortune could injure his reputation. This was always justly ascribed to a deficiency in the means of success, and not in the leader. Such is the inestimable value of long-cherished character, and such its vast influence over the feelings and opinions of mankind. The success or failure of every man's fortune is decisively swayed by the 'gen-

eral estimation of his fellow-beings, and he stands or falls by that alone. The most despotic tyrant is dependant, more or less, on public opinion.

The conduct of Lord Howe after this victory seems to confirm the opinion I have before stated, that his inactivity was the result of policy. He followed it up, not by pursuing his advantage, but by opening a negociation for peace. General Sullivan, who had been made prisoner at the battle of Long Island, was sent on his parole to Philadelphia with a message desiring a conference on the part of the royalist chief with some of the members of Congress, as he could not treat with it as a body. After some hesitation this proposal was acceded to, and Franklin, Adams, and Rutledge deputed to receive the communication alluded to in the message of General Sullivan. Without entering on the particulars of the conference. it will be sufficient to say that it proved entirely abortive. The republicans refused to be pardoned, and the royalist general having nothing else to offer, expressed his regrets, and ended the discussion.

CHAPTER IX.

Gloomy State of Affairs. Conduct of Washington. Operations on York Island, and in Westchester County. Capture of Fort Washington, and Retreat of the Americans into New-Jersey. Ill treatment of the American Prisoners. Barbarities of the Hessians. Congress not to be blamed for depending at first on the Militia. Caution, firmness, and perseverance of Washington. Retreats to Trenton. Proclamation of Amnesty by Lord Howe. Battle of Trenton. Critical situation of Washington. Brilliant Affair at Princeton, and its Consequences. The Armies retire to Winter-quarters.

The cause of freedom was shrouded in darkness and gloom after the defeat of its supporters on Long Island. The militia were discouraged, and began to be impatient to return to

their homes. Every appearance now indicated either the speedy subjugation of America, or a long, lingering, and disastrous struggle, of doubtful issue. The royal army had taken possession of New-York soon after the battle, and a great fire had laid a large portion of the city in ruins. The army of Washington was decreasing in numbers and spirit every day. The system of colonial government had been entirely broken up, and none other established in its place. The new states were like children suddenly invested with the responsibilities of self-government, without the experience requisite for the purpose; and the internal affairs of the different communities were directed in a great measure by Committees of Safety, the limits of whose powers were scarcely defined, and whose authority the people were under no legal obligation to obey. In almost any other country anarchy would have been the result of this condition of things; but the virtue, intelligence, and patriotism of the people saved the state, and the love of liberty supplied the place of an established government.

Unawed by these difficulties, and supported by Heaven and his own unconquerable zeal in the cause of freedom, Washington met the crisis as he had always met, and continued to meet, disaster and difficulties. He rose with the occasion which demanded his exertions, and was never so great as when he stood surrounded by ruin. Finding it hopeless to attempt the protection of a city, a considerable number of whose most wealthy inhabitants were disaffected to the cause, with an army so entirely inferior in numbers, discipline, and equipments of all kinds, Washington evacuated New-York, and took his station on the strong grounds about Kingsbridge, which he fortified at all points, so far as his limited time and means would permit.

In order to surround him in this position, General Howe, leaving a portion of his army in New-York, proceeded by water to Throg's Neck, where he landed with the principal

part of his forces. Unable to oppose this project, Washington had in the mean time withdrawn his troops from York Island, leaving a strong garrison at the principal defence, called after his name, for the purpose of occupying the attention of the enemy, and impeding his future operations. The royalist general followed the army of the Americans, and a trifling affair took place at White Plains. But the cautious skill of Washington baffled every attempt to bring on a general action, and early in November Lord Howe broke up his posts in this quarter and turned suddenly towards York Island again. Fort Washington was immediately invested at four different points, and being nothing more than an embankment of earth, was surrendered after a sharp but short resistance. The prisoners taken here amounted to three thousand.

Thus the republican army was daily diminishing, while that of the royalists had been increased by a reinforcement of five thousand Hessians and Waldeckers, hired by the British ministry to assist in subduing the posterity of Britons. Washington passed his army over into New-Jersey, leaving the royalists entire masters in New-York. Terror and dismay overspread the whole land. The tories every day grew more bold and insolent; the whigs began to despair of their cause; the neutrals turned partisans against their country, and the British general became arrogant with success.

His conduct towards the prisoners taken on Long Island and at Fort Washington was still more unfeeling and insulting than that of General Gage at Boston. Colonel Rawlings and some other wounded officers captured in Fort Washington were paraded through the streets of New-York on a cart, amid the jeering of the royalists, and set down at a deserted building of a character it would be indecent to name. The allowance to the prisoners was scanty and of inferior quality. They were confined during the winter in churches and sugar-houses, where great numbers perished miserably by cold, un-

wholesome food, and all the indignities which pride, arrogance, and unfeeling avarice could heap on them. No means of cleanliness were allowed them; none were within the reach of their own resources, and they died in the midst of filth, the victims of oppression.

In after times these receptacles were exchanged for hospital and prison ships, anchored at the Wallabout in the East River. These were slaughter houses, where a large portion of the captives were carried only to die. Confined between decks, in the filthy caverns of these old "floating hells," as they were aptly called, as close as they could lay, and destitute of the comforts of life or the consolations of sympathy: exposed to insult and ribaldry; themselves, their country, and their cause denounced by every epithet that could add the bitterness of passion to the agonies of despair. they suffered until death, instead of coming as the king of terrors, approached as a smiling deliverer.

Complaints were answered by curses, and groans by sneers, laughter, and sometimes blows. In the hot weather they were roasted, as in an oven, in the holds of the vessels, whose uncaulked decks let in the rain upon their uncovered bodies; in the winter they could only keep themselves warm by twisting their emaciated limbs together. Petty and unfeeling tyrants were placed over them, as if to mock their miseries and answer their complaints by stripes and curses. Deprived thus of air, of pure water, and of wholesome food; destitute of the friends which misery so often procures even among enemies; agonizing under the present, and hopeless of the future, thousands of patriotic spirits, that deserved a better fate, died and were buried, and forgotten by their country, which at this moment cannot tell their names. Some perished of the scurvy; many of putrid fevers engendered in these dens of misery: some died of despair, and other raving mad.

These examples of suffering humanity on one hand, and ar-

rogant, unfeeling cruelty on the other, are recorded not for the purpose of awakening the slumbering passion of revenge, or perpetuating national antipathies. I have a better and a higher motive. I wish to impress on the minds of my youthful readers an idea of the vast value of liberty by showing the price at which it was purchased, in order that they may never, through ignorance, be guilty of the sin of ingratitude. When they shall learn, that in the midst of horrors and sufferings, not one of those firm and virtuous patriots purchased relief from his miseries by abandoning or betraying the holy cause of liberty, they will then know better how to estimate their fathers, and tread in their steps, should it ever be necessary to make similar sacrifices. The name of Arnold stands alone in a dreary and infamous solitude, as the only one that stained the annals of a glorious contest by betraying his country.

If this treatment of his prisoners arose from bad feeling on the part of General Howe, it was cruel as impolitic. So far from quelling the obstinacy of resistance, it added new vigour to its action, and imparted the energies of revenge to the desire of freedom. The spirit which is not crushed by oppression becomes invincible.

But it was not merely the prisoners that were treated in this unmanly and shameful manner. When General Howe passed into New Jersey in pursuit of Washington, the inhabitants remained for the most part quietly at home, under the sanction of protections that were perpetually violated. The Hessians could not read English, and if they had been able, would have paid little attention to them. They had been told by those who sold, as well as by those who bought them, that they were going to fight against savages, who spared neither sex nor age; who were the enemies, not only of all governments, but of the social state, and, in short, of the whole human race. They came under this impression, and for a while

acted accordingly. They, however, at length discovered their mistake. They found they were warring against men and Christians. When taken prisoners, they were treated with a kindness they little deserved: by degrees they became acquainted with the real nature of a quarrel in which the whole human race might feel an equal interest, for our cause was that of mankind; and long before the conclusion of the war, such was their proneness to desertion, that the royalist generals did not dare to employ them as sentinels.

Such, however, was not their conduct at the commencement of the struggle. They rioted in unrestrained licentiousness among the people of New Jersey; property was wantonly destroyed where it could not be consumed or carried away; the hen-roosts were robbed; hogs, sheep, cattle, and poultry carried off; peaceable men murdered or led away prisoners; women insulted, abused, and outraged by every species of wantonness, and a scene of affliction and endurance was exhibited, as disgraceful to one party as it was grievous to the other. But nothing is more true, than that the offences of men are revenged by their own consequences. This course, instead of quelling the spirit of resistance, only served to give it a new and more determined impulse. The thrifty and elastic sapling which was thus attempted to be pulled down to the earth and broken, recoiled with accelerated force, and swung the assailants high in the air. The Jersey Blues were not to be subjugated by insult and aggression. From that period they sought no protection but the arms of freemen. The royalist general had only the satisfaction of making inveterate enemies, where perhaps he might have made grateful friends, or at least conciliated a quiet neutrality. The Jersey farmers flew to arms, associated in independent parties, which finally acted in conjunction with each other, and rallying their combined force, hemmed in the royalist army to such purpose, that they no longer ventured forth except in large force. Even

then they were greatly harassed, and often suffered serious loss. So much for attempting to subdue a spirited people by insults and injuries.

The behaviour of the militia on Long Island, at Fort Washington, and on subsequent occasions, had very much weakened the confidence of Washington, in the possibility of sustaining the contest, without a large accession of regular troops. He had addressed a most serious remonstrance to Congress, urging this subject on its consideration, and strenuously insisting on the necessity of promptly attending to the increasing wants of the army. "I ask pardon," he says, in conclusion, "for taking up so much of their time with my opinions: but I should betray that trust which they and my country have reposed in me, were I to be silent on matters so exceedingly interesting."

The ancestors of those who were now contending for that freedom which they had sought in the wilderness of the New World had ever cherished a decided antipathy to great standing armies. They considered them, and most justly, as chosen instruments in the hands of ambitious leaders for overturning the liberties of mankind. They believed that hireling soldiers had for the most part neither patriotism nor integrity, and that they were just as likely to turn their swords against the bosom of their country as to defend it against the aggressions of others. History and experience had established the truth of this opinion, and the stern republicans of that unequalled body, the first American Congress, did not relish the idea of authorizing a power which might in the end supercede their own, and after assisting to destroy one despotism, end by establishing another. On the great general principle they were right, and no blame ought to attach to them for their unwillingness to give up their dependence on the militia. Until convinced by experience of the necessity of resorting to some other means of defence, they were perfectly justifiable in relying in

a great measure on this. The greatest, and the most dangerous enemy to liberty, is a popular general at the head of a victorious army; and where there is one Washington standing alone in modern history, there are crowds of traitors who only freed their country from foreign chains to fetter it more firmly with their own.

But for the virtuous forbearance and devoted patriotism of Washington who shall say, that at the conclusion of the war, when the prize was actually gained, the apprehensions of the friends of freedom might not have been realized in the camp at Newburgh. Those, therefore, who so freely censure the conduct of as wise and as patriotic an assemblage as perhaps ever met together either in the Old or the New World for hesitating to comply with the requisitions of Washington for a great increase of the regular army, will do well to reverence their scruples, rather than blame their delays. Both were right, and both acted in conformity with their respective situations. The one was charged with asserting the independence of his country by arms; the other with sustaining the principles of civil liberty, by a wise and salutary caution not to endanger the one in securing the other. The people of the United States might have become jealous of their Congress, jealous of their general, impatient of supporting a great standing army, and sought, by returning to their old masters, a refuge from the exactions of the new. Exercising, as it did, a precarious authority, founded entirely on the voluntary submission of the people, Congress was right to refrain from any measures that might have produced disaffection or disunion. There were always enough malcontents, and it would have been dangerous to increase their numbers.

Notwithstanding all that has been said on the subject, an armed nation, animated by the spirit of freedom, is the best defence of a country. Where that high duty is exclusively committed to a standing army, the people gradually accustom

themselves to rely on it solely. They become listless and indifferent; they imperceptibly lose every vestige of public spirit, and degenerate into habits which render them both unwilling and unable to defend their own rights, or vindicate those of their country. Those who remember the battles of Lexington and Bunker Hill, the exploits of Marion in South Carolina, and, above all, the memorable victory of New Orleans, ought not to despise militia. Strict discipline converts reasoning beings into mere machines, and it is better to depend on men, than machinery, for the defence of a nation.

After the defeat on Long Island, and the capture of Fort Washington, the cause of freedom seemed all but desperate. It is impossible to contemplate the situation of affairs at that time, without being convinced that, under Providence, the chief dependence of the States was on Washington alone. Had he despaired—had he faltered—had he remitted his exertions, his caution, his celerity, or his duty, all might, and probably would, have been lost. But he never for a moment sunk under the burden of his country. Relying on the goodness of his cause, the support of the Great Author of all good, the spirit and patriotism of his countrymen, and, without doubt, sustained by a noble consciousness of his own capacity to guide the state over this stormy ocean, he never lost sight of the port for which he was steering. He always saw the light a-head, and steered for it with a steady eye and determined hand.

He bowed his lofty spirit, which ever prompted him to meet, rather than avoid, his enemy, to stern necessity, and retreated as he advanced. New Jersey, which soon after witnessed and shared in his triumphs, now saw him avoiding and baffling, with matchless dexterity and caution, a superior force, with which it would have been madness to contend. To add to his difficulties, disaffection began to rear its head among those who had hitherto remained quiet; and the royal-

ists of the county of Monmouth, encouraged by the aspect of affairs, were preparing to rise in behalf of the invader.

Still Washington preserved his equanimity. Both his head and his heart remained true; and wherever opportunity offered, he faced his enemy to retard, if he could not arrest, his career. While the British poured on with increasing numbers and confidence, his own little destitute army daily decreased. As fast as their short periods of service expired, the levies departed for their homes, leaving their General destitute of almost every means of opposition. The tories of New Jersey became more bold with the certainty of success, and the well-affected to the cause of liberty were repressed by the presence of their enemies.

After vainly attempting to oppose the royal army, now commanded by the active Cornwallis, at Brunswick, Washington retreated to Trenton, where he resolved to remain till the last moment, having first passed his baggage and stores to the other side of the Delaware. He wished to accustom his troops to the sight of the enemy, and hoped that in the arrogance of success, Cornwallis might afford him an opportunity of striking a blow. At this moment, his cavalry consisted of a single corps of Connecticut militia; he was almost destitute of artillery; and his army amounted to but three thousand men. One-third of these consisted of New Jersey militia, and of the others, the term of service of many was about to expire. Add to this, the almost entire want of every thing that constitutes the efficiency of an army, and my young readers will think that the cause of liberty hung by a single hair. But it was not so. It had right and Providence on its side, and it was sustained by Washington. Supported and animated by these, a handful of barefooted soldiers, marching on the frozen ground of an American winter, and tracked by their enemies by their blood on the snow, achieved miracles, and saved their country.

General Howe, encouraged by a hope that the almost desperate aspect of affairs might now enforce his promises of pardon, issued a proclamation, offering the boon to all who, within sixty days, appeared before officers of his appointment, and signified their submission to the royal authority. Despairing of the cause, or perhaps secretly disaffected, many availed themselves of this amnesty; and a general opinion, which daily gained ground, prevailed among all classes, that a longer contest for independence was not only hopeless, but impossible. But the maxim of virtue and wisdom is never to despair. The crisis of the fever is not always death, and the last hour of suffering is often the period of renovation. Light succeeds darkness, just as surely as darkness succeeds light. Washington never despaired. While in the full tide of retreat, General Reed is said to have exclaimed, "My God! General Washington, how long shall we fly?" "Why, sir," replied Washington, "we will retreat, if necessary, over every river of our country, and then over the mountains, where I will make a last stand against the enemies of my country."

The royalist generals had not yet learned the lesson of vigilance and celerity. They did not know that presumptuous delays are the forerunners of disaster, or that the American Fabius was also the American Hannibal, when occasion required. It never occurred to them that the retreating lion will sometimes turn on his pursuers when least expected. Cornwallis remained inactive at Brunswick, leaving Washington a few days of leisure, which he employed with his usual industry in making preparations for the ensuing campaign. He urged congress, he urged the governors of the different states, by every motive of patriotism, to take measures for the safety of the country, and the success of its cause; and, while stimulating others, himself set the example which he enforced by his precepts.

While the British commanders were carousing at New

York and Brunswick, and boasting the anticipated triumphs of their master; while the true lovers of liberty seemed already wrapt in the shroud of dissolution; while the last sun seemed going down on their independence, and the last blow only wanting to the ruin of their cause, some little gleams of comfort appeared. The worthy governor Mifflin of Pennsylvania exerted himself successfully in rousing the good citizens of Philadelphia to the defence of their country. A large portion of them embodied themselves in arms, and fifteen hundred joined Washington at Trenton. Thus reinforced, he, who never remained on the defensive except against his will, moved upon Princeton in a direction towards the enemy then at Brunswick. On his way, however, learning that Cornwallis, having received large reinforcements, was advancing by different routes with a view to gain his rear, and cut him off from the Delaware, he changed his purpose and crossed to the west bank of the river, so opportunely that the enemy came in sight at the moment.

The two armies now remained opposite each other on the different banks of the river. The object of Cornwallis was to cross over, and either force Washington to fight him, or, in the event of his retreating, gain possession of Philadelphia. That of the American general was to prevent the enemy crossing the Delaware. For this purpose he resorted to every means in his power, slender as they were. While thus situated, General Charles Lee, who had been repeatedly urged by Washington to join him as speedily as possible with the troops under his orders, but who had wilfully delayed from time to time, suffered himself to be surprised at his quarters by a detachment of the royal army, was taken prisoner, and for a while relieved the cause of America from the mischiefs of his services. The event, however, seemed still further to depress the hopes of the Americans, already reduced to the verge of despair.

At this moment the British force on the Delaware consisted of four thousand men quartered at Trenton and the neighbouring towns. Other bodies of troops were at Princeton, Brunswick, Elizabethtown and Hackensack. Thus a large portion of New Jersey was in possession of the enemy. The invading army, to use the words of Washington, was increasing like a snowball, by the arrival of new reinforcements and accession of the disaffected, while his own force was inferior in numbers, and, as usual, deficient in all the necessary requisites for efficient action. Even these miserable elements were about dissolving. The ice would soon form in the Delaware, and the British general might avail himself of it to cross the river and take possession of Philadelphia, for there was no force capable of preventing him. Such an event, by further depressing the lingering hopes of the patriots, would increase the obstacles to recruiting his army, already almost insurmountable. It is impossible to read the letters of this great man at this period without shivering at the prospects they disclose; and at the same time receiving a conviction that he was now the last stay of his country. Had he faltered in his purposes, or failed in his exertions, it had been all over with the republic. The dark night had come, and no one could tell when it would be morning.

In such trying moments as these, when the fate of millions of men, and of countless millions of their posterity is at stake; when great principles are on the verge of ruin, and every movement brings nearer the crisis of a nation's fate, then it is that the metal of a man is tried in the furnace, and the discovery made whether it is true gold or not. Where others sink he rises; through the darkness which hides the lamp of hope from all other eyes, he sees the beckoning light, and finds his way where others lose it for ever. Instead of despairing, he is roused to new exertion, and that which makes cowards of other men stimulates him only to more daring

temerity. He perceives that there is a crisis in the affairs of nations when caution is no longer safety, and to march up to the teeth of danger the only road to success. When the case of the patient is desperate, so must be the remedy.

To such minds as that of Washington it must often have occurred that incautious men are very apt, while watching others, to expose themselves; that no force is strong when taken unprepared; and that an enemy certain of success is already half-vanquished, since, in all probability, he will neglect the means to secure it. Prompted by this inspiration, and urged on by the absolute necessity of striking a blow that might awaken the slumbering energies, and revive the almost extinguished hopes of his country, he formed the glorious design of attacking the enemy at the moment he was lulled in the lap of security, waiting for the freezing of the river, to drive the Americans before him like flakes of snow in the wintry tempest.

Great was the design, and nobly was it executed, so far as the elements of nature would permit the exertions of man to be successful. The night was dark as pitch; the north-east wind whistled along the shores of the Delaware, laden with freezing sleet, and the broken ice came crashing down the stream in masses that, as they encountered the rocks above, shivered into fragments, with a noise that might be heard for many miles. Neither man nor beast was out that night, and the enemy sought shelter in the houses of the citizens of Trenton from the howling storm. But Washington was up and doing. In the dead of the night, and amid the conflict of the mighty elements, the boats were launched on the bosom of the icy torrent, and after incredible exertions reached the opposite shore. Without waiting a moment to learn the fate of the other two divisions, which were to co-operate in this daring adventure, he dashed forward towards his destined prey, through a storm of hail and snow, that rattled in the

teeth of his brave companions in arms, and the dawn of day saw him driving in the posts of the enemy at Trenton. The picket-guard had no time to fire, so impetuous and unexpected was the shock of the Americans; they retreated to where Colonel Ralle, who commanded the enemy, had drawn up his men. That officer fell mortally wounded almost at the first fire, and his troops retreated. Washington advanced rapidly upon them, throwing at the same time a detachment in their front, when, seeing themselves surrounded, they laid down their arms, and surrendered at discretion. A thousand prisoners, with their arms, and six field-pieces, were captured on this occasion, at the expense of two Americans who were frozen to death, two killed, and a single officer wounded. This was James Monroe, late president of that confederation which he had shed his blood to cement and preserve. Thus two men fought here together, in the same field, and in the same cause, who were destined in after-life to attain the highest station in the world. From the signal success which attended the division under Washington, there can be no reason to doubt that if the others had been able to cross the Delaware, that morning might have been rendered still more illustrious, by the total discomfiture of the whole British force at the different positions along the Delaware.

But, even as it was, the result of that day's business was of vital consequence to the question of independence. Had Washington failed in the attempt, it would have cost him, and the greater portion of his division, their lives or their freedom. Had this been the case, the stream of liberty, already almost dry, would perhaps have ceased to flow any longer. There was but one Washington—there never has been but one in the world. If the Americans at this, the gloomiest period of their struggle, had lost him, Heaven only knows what might have been the consequences. The Power that watched over them might have supplied the deficiency,

but without the wisdom and virtue of another Washington, I cannot see how the country could have been saved, had he been lost.

But happily, the question was not to be tried. The result was that of entire success, so far as the plan could be carried into effect amid the insuperable obstacles of nature. That day was the dawning of centuries, I hope, of better days to our country. The attempt and the success, of Washington astonished the British; and from that moment they began to discover that they had to deal with one in whose presence they could never sleep on their posts in safety.

History has seldom recorded an action more daringly judicious or more eminently successful than the one just related. It possesses all the characteristics of courage, enterprise, and sagacity; its conception was equally profound and masterly; the arrangements for its prosecution, the time chosen for carrying it into effect, and the manner in which it was borne out to complete success, all serve to demonstrate that the consummate prudence of Washington was combined with a courage and enterprise equally admirable, and that, had he possessed the means of exercising the latter quality, he would have crushed his enemy with even greater celerity than he avoided him. It was a great action in its conception, conduct, and consequences; and nothing is wanting but numbers to give it equal dignity with the most illustrious exploits of ancient or modern times.

With a view to animate the spirits of the people of Philadelphia, Washington made some little parade of marching his prisoners into that city, with the captured flags and cannon, and bristling bayonets. By this exhibition the disaffected were overawed, and the friends of liberty animated to new exertions.

Throughout the whole of the revolutionary war the prisoners

taken from the enemy had been uniformly treated with humanity by the Americans, except in retaliation of their own conduct to ours. Those captured at Princeton consisted principally of Hessians, and if ever provocation could justify inhumanity, the excesses of these men would have furnished an excuse. Both history and tradition unite in recording almost innumerable instances of individual cruelty, insult and robbery on their part, calculated to call forth the bitterest feelings of vengeance in the breasts of those who suffered, and those who sympathized with the sufferers. This was the first opportunity of repaying them, and the humanity of Washington retaliated their injuries by kindness. They were treated with every proper attention, compatible with the means in his power, and the result proved on this, as on every occasion which occurred during the war, that humanity, like honesty, is always the best policy.

The Hessians, as I have before observed, had come over to the New World full of prejudices against the Americans. They considered them little better than savages, and treated them as if they were without the pale of civilized warfare. They were told that if taken they would receive no quarter, and, consequently, they gave none. But the kindness with which they were treated opened both their eyes and their hearts. From this time they began to be disaffected to the barbarous service in which they had been employed: their feelings became enlisted in the cause of liberty; they took every opportunity of deserting, and of all that came over, few ever returned. Those who survived, remained among us; those who came to deprive us of freedom settled down by our side in the full enjoyment of its blessings, and became a portion of our most useful citizens. Such are the peaceful triumphs of mercy and benevolence, and such the means by which the good Washington twice conquered the enemies of his country;—once by his valour, and again by his humanity.

The news of the brilliant success at Trenton aroused the British commander-in-chief at New-York, who was expecting every day to hear of the capture or dispersion of the American forces. He despatched Cornwallis, who was on the point of sailing for England, but unluckily for his future reputation was detained, into New Jersey, with a force which, in his opinion, must carry all before it. Washington had also been reinforced, and recrossing the Delaware, once more took post at Trenton. His situation here again became extremely critical. He had, with the boldness becoming in a man conscious that the great crisis of his country's fate had arrived, determined to make a winter campaign, with a view to wrest the whole of New Jersey from the hands of the enemy. But a force vastly superior to his own was now rapidly approaching, like an impetuous torrent, to sweep him and his little army into the freezing Delaware, and the only alternatives that presented themselves were a choice of difficulties. The state of the river was such as precluded either crossing on the ice or in boats, and if he retreated in any other direction, he would be met by a superior enemy, whom he could not successfully oppose.

In this situation, he again took council from his bold and masterly genius. He resolved once more to baffle the enemy by becoming the assailant. The van of the troops under Cornwallis had now taken possession of Trenton, and the two armies had nothing but the Assumpink, a small stream scarcely thirty yards wide, between them. Tradition has preserved the story that Sir William Erskine urged Cornwallis to an immediate attack.

"Now is the time," said he, "to make sure of Washington."

"Our troops are hungry and tired," replied the other. "He and his tatterdemalions are now in my power. They cannot escape to-night, for the ice of the Delaware will neither bear their weight, nor admit of the passage of boats. To-morrow'

at break of day, I will attack them, and the rising sun shall see the end of rebellion."

"My lord," replied Sir William, "Washington will not be there at daybreak to-morrow."

The rising sun indeed saw another sight. It saw Washington at Princeton, and the British at Trenton heard the echoes of his cannon cracking amid the frosts of the wintry morning. He had, after replenishing his fires to deceive the enemy, departed with his usual quiet celerity, and marched upon Princeton, where three British regiments were posted in fancied security, not dreaming of the approach of a foe. Though surprised, the enemy made a gallant defence, and he who had so long and so often been the shield of his country, now became its sword. His capacious and unerring mind again saw that another moment had come, on which hung the destinies of his beloved country. The cause of freedom now quivered on the brink of a precipice, from which, if it fell, it might never rise again.

The British force was met in full march towards Trenton. On perceiving the advanced guard of the Americans, they faced about, and repassing a small stream, advanced under cover of a wood. A short but sharp action ensued; the militia soon fled, and the small body of regulars, being far overmatched, was broken. At this critical moment, Washington came up with the corps under his command, and renewed the action. Seeing at a single glance that all was now at stake, and all would be lost by defeat, he became inspired with that sublime spirit which always most animates courage and genius in the hour of greatest peril. He snatched a standard, and calling on his soldiers to come to the rescue of their country, dashed into the midst of the enemy. His good soldiers, animated by his words, and still more by his example, backed him bravely. The valiant British cried "God save the king," and the soldiers of freedom shouted "God save George Washington

and he did save him. After a contest as keen as the edge of their swords, the British broke, fled, and were hotly pursued. Some went in one direction, some another. A single regiment took refuge in the college, but retreated through the back-doors on the approach of the artillery, and the classic fane consecrated to learning and science, was equally consecrated to victory.

One hundred and twenty killed, and three hundred prisoners, were the tribute paid by the enemy to the genius, enterprise, and gallantry of Washington. The Americans lost sixty-three, whose names, like those of many other humble champions of freedom, are buried in their graves. The name of General Mercer, who fell early in the action, is alone bequeathed to posterity, and deserves to be remembered, though not alone. He is recorded as one of the most precious of all our martyrs to the shrine of liberty; and his loss, which was deeply mourned at the time, will be long regretted, not on his own account, but that of his country. He who expires in the arms of victory, and in defence of his liberty, lives long enough; for he has lived to leave behind him a name that will never die.

That morning, when Cornwallis opened his eyes to the dawn, the south bank of the Assumpink was as silent as the grave, and nothing but a few waning fires remained to designate the spot that was a few hours before alive with human beings.

"Where can Washington be gone?" asked the royal general. At that moment, the distant roar of cannon was heard in the direction of Princeton.

"There he is," answered Erskine, "rehearsing the tragedy of Colonel Rall."

"By Jove! he deserves to fight in the cause of his king," cried the other.

But he was fighting in a cause far higher than that of kings. He was sustaining the cause of freedom, and the rights of his country.

Thus once more did the heart of all America throb at the news that light had come out of darkness, and hope sprung up with renewed vigour from the regions of despair. Twice had the republicans expected to hear that all was lost, and twice had they heard that victories had been snatched from a superior and hitherto triumphant foe. The genius of liberty again held up her head amid the gloom that surrounded her, and flapped her wings for joy. Her votaries, who had partaken in her despair, shared in her rejoicings, and now, for the first time since the catalogue of disasters, which, one after the other, had depressed the very souls of the stoutest advocates and defenders of freedom, did there awake in the bosoms of all a noble prophetic consciousness, that the land which had determined to be independent was capable of achieving the boon. In ten days, Washington had changed the whole aspect of affairs, and given to his country a respite, if not a deliverance.

Soon after this second victory, the enemy went into winter-quarters at Brunswick and the adjacent villages, leaving Washington master of the ground he had gained by his gallantry, wisdom, and perseverance.

CHAPTER X.

Winter Operations. Eulogium on the First Congress. Plan of the ensuing Campaign. Successful Caution of Washington. Howe changes his Plans. Lands at the head of the Chesapeake, and advances towards Philadelphia. Battle of Brandywine. Lafayette Wounded. Howe enters Philadelphia. Battle of Germantown. Operations along the Delaware. Red Bank. Death of Count Donop. Operations in the North. Savage Warfare. Battle of Bennington. Repulse at Fort Stanwix. Desertion of Burgoyne's Indians. Battle at Bemis Heights. Surrender of General Burgoyne, and delicate Conduct of his Conquerors.

THE cessation of actual hostilities, produced by the British army entering into winter-quarters, brought no relaxation to the labours of Washington. It was his fate to struggle with difficulties that had no intermission, and obstacles without end, during the greater part of seven anxious years of almost perpetual disappointments and mortifications. Always acting, and compelled to act on the defensive without the means of defence, except when compelled by inevitable necessity, he rushed back on his enemy, gave him a single blow to check his arrogance for a moment, and then bowed his spirit to the yoke of fate.

His winters were employed in pointing out and urging on Congress and the different governors of the states the adoption of such measures as experience and disasters had proved indispensable to the final success of the cause; in soothing the feelings of his suffering soldiers, smarting under every deprivation; in providing as far as practicable against the severity of the winter, which smote them with tenfold keenness in their destitute situation, and in preparing for another year of trial and vicissitudes. But the vigour of his mind was equal to that of his body, and both were sustained by a consciousness of right, animated by the purest flame of pa-

triotism. That which made others despair, only braced him to new exertions; and the burden which would have crushed a common spirit, like the ballast of a noble ship, only made him the more difficult to overset. During the whole winter he continued to harass the enemy by skirmishes and surprises.

Nor did he stand alone, the single pillar of the state, though assuredly the keystone of the arch. That illustrious body of patriots, the first Congress in time, in talents, integrity, and patriotism that ever convened in the United States, was not behind-hand in the noble strife. In the midst of defeat and disaster, when the past presented little else than a long black catalogue of woes, and the finger of the future pointed to nothing but an aggravated repetition, that body stood firm as a rock by the side of Washington. It rejected all offers of peace without independence; it debated the great questions, embracing life and death, infamy and fame, freedom and slavery, with a temper, a firmness, and dignity which neither ancient nor modern times have equalled. The boasted Senate of Rome sat unmoved at the approach of the barbarian chief; but the members of the old Congress of the United States exerted themselves to ward off the ruin of their country, rather than submit to it like philosophers.

Limited as were their means, and still more limited their authority, they bore themselves like the true fathers of the state. They seconded the recommendations and remonstrances of Washington, with a tempered experience which taught them not to press too heavy on a people already discouraged by ill-success, and impoverished by the vicissitudes of war; and with a noble patriotism which made them cautious how they interfered with the sacred rights of the citizen, in providing for the wants of the soldiers in defence of their country. They voted the enlistment of more men; they gave every aid in filling up the regiments already authorized to be raised;

they conferred on Washington powers which enabled him for six months to act independently of their orders; and on all occasions, by unanimity, talent, integrity, and firmness, so conducted themselves as to merit the gratitude of all posterity. I would enumerate them one by one, but my young readers cannot look into the records of their country without seeing them shining like stars in the firmament, nor listen to the voice of their countrymen without hearing their names coupled with blessings.

The plan ultimately adopted by the royal general for the ensuing campaign was far more extensive and better arranged than that of the preceding, which had been in a great degree the result of circumstances. The design was, that General Howe, with the main body of his army, should proceed to the southward by sea, and advance with the fleet up the Delaware upon Philadelphia, which, it was supposed, must ultimatly fall into the hands of the enemy. The experience of the royal general had not yet taught him that the possession of our cities was not the subjugation of the country, and their importance was much overrated. Another object was, however, connected with the invasion of Pennsylvania. It necessarily called the attention of Washington to that quarter, and in a great measure prevented him from aiding, either personally or by detachments of his army, in impeding or defeating the other portion of their plan, which was conceived with great judgment and skill. While Washington was thus employed in defending other portions of the Union from the inroads of a superior army, Burgoyne was approaching from Canada, with a powerful force, to act in conjunction with Sir Henry Clinton, who commanded a large body in New York, in obtaining the entire command of the Hudson River, thus separating the north and the south. Thus divided, and incapable of giving each other mutual aid,

it was supposed that each would in succession fall an easy prey. Judicious as this plan might seem, it resulted in a catastrophe as little anticipated as it was decisive. The utmost stretch of human wisdom and foresight often does nothing more than weave the web of its own destruction. The current of the stream cannot be changed by swimming against it, and what Providence hath decreed, man may not gainsay. The plan of proceeding by sea to the Delaware was probably the result of the admirable caution of Washington, who had taken a strong position on the Raritan, which rendered it dangerous for General Howe to move against Philadelphia in that direction, leaving the Americans in his rear.

Washington had gone into winter-quarters at Morristown, in New Jersey, within less than thirty miles of Brunswick, where the troops of Cornwallis were disposed, and little more from the British head-quarters in New York. His harassed and ill-provided soldiers required repose after a campaign of unceasing fatigues, wound up by two victories, gained by men marching and fighting on the frozen ground, with scarcely a shoe to their feet.

The campaign of 1777 opened under gloomy auspices, and promised to the republican cause little else than disasters. The army of Washington was totally inadequate in numbers, discipline, and equipment, to cope with the enemy, with any prospect of success. General Howe, with twenty thousand veteran troops, was preparing to embark for the Delaware, whence he was to move on Philadelphia; while Burgoyne was approaching with about half that number, backed by hordes of savages from the north. The genius of liberty was enclosed between two fires, and once more a fatal crisis seemed approaching.

About the latter end of July, or beginning of September, General Howe, having changed his original destination, landed at the mouth of Elk River, at the head of Chesapeake

Bay, and proceeded without interruption to Brandy-wine River. Here he was met by Washington, who was determined to make an effort to save the capital of Pennsylvania. The consequence of this meeting was a pretty severe defeat of the Americans, who retreated, and were followed by the enemy, who took possession of the city in despite of all Washington's efforts to prevent them.

It was in this battle that the name of an illustrious Frenchman first became associated with the history of our country. Lafayette, who had heard of the noble struggle going on in the New World, panted to take part in the cause of human freedom, and evading the commands of his king, came among us, and fought during nearly the whole period of the war on our side. He shed his first blood on the banks of the Brandywine, which, while it flows, will perpetuate his name. His sacrifices and services were great and great was his reward. He associated his name with that of Washington, and shared and will for ever share with him the gratitude of increasing millions of freemen.

But the enemy did not retain peaceable possession of Philadelphia. Washington hovered near, and wherever he was there was no peace for the invaders of his country He watched them with unceasing vigilance; kept them in perpetual apprehension of attack, and entailed on them the necessity of being on their guard day and night. At length, seeing an opportunity favourable to his purpose, he determined to avail himself of it with his usual ardour, which was at all times equal to his caution. He was now, in consequence of various reinforcements, at the head of twenty thousand men, and determined to act on the offensive.

The British forces had been exposed, in some degree, by the mode in which they were distributed. A portion was in Philadelphia, from whence the line of encampment extended across Germantown, a long, straggling village, consisting, at

that time, principally of stone houses, stretching along either side of the road for nearly two miles. In this situation it appeared to Washington that a portion of the enemy at this village might be surprised and cut off, and he promptly resolved on the undertaking.

His dispositions for this purpose were made with equal caution and celerity. But the nice co-operation of the different parts of the plan, which was indispensably necessary to its success, could not be attained. At seven in the evening of the 4th of October, the Americans removed from their encampment, and just at the dawn of the morning, a division under General Sullivan encountered and drove in the outposts of the British. He was quickly followed by the main body, which immediately entered into action, but it was more than half an hour before the left wing came up. Each of these parties were successful in breaking the enemy; but Lieutenant-Colonel Musgrave, with a small body of British, having taken possession of a strong stone house, annoyed the Americans so much by his fire, that they stopped to dislodge him. The time lost in this attempt, which was unsuccessful at last, was a serious disadvantage. The ground too was difficult, and the obscurity of the morning prevented Washington from seeing distinctly what was going forward. The co-operation of the different parties was broken; the delay in attacking the stone house, and various accidents, against which no foresight can guard, impeded the success of the attack. The enemy rallied, and became the assailants. The brigade under General Greene, after a sharp encounter, was broken; the right wing faltered; the division of Wayne, in falling back on its friends, was mistaken for their enemies, and confusion became general. Washington, perceiving that all hope of success was lost for that time, reluctantly yielded to the disappointment of his sanguine hopes, and retired from the field, which at one moment had promised him a harvest of laurels. He retreated

about twenty miles, and halted at Perkiomen Creek, where, receiving a reinforcement of Virginians, he turned back, and resumed his former position in the vicinity of Philadelphia.

The British fleet, which landed General Howe and his army in the vicinity of Chesapeake Bay, had afterwards entered the capes of Delaware, and sailed up that river for the purpose of aiding the operations of the land forces. Various small encounters took place at Mud Fort and Red Bank, near Philadelphia, and it was in an ineffectual attempt on the latter that Count Donop was mortally wounded, and taken prisoner.—He received the kindest attentions from the Americans, and a message from Washington, expressing his sympathy. These acts of magnanimous forgetfulness of injuries, it is said, overcame the dying soldier, and brought tears into his eyes. He replied to the messenger of Washington—"Tell him," said he, "that I never expect to rise from my bed; but if I should, my first act shall be to thank him in person. He died regretting the service in which he had embarked against a people so humane: and he is one of those whose fate is lamented by his enemies.

But the means within the grasp of Washington, though directed with consummate skill and courage, were at all times insufficient to produce any result, but those of partial and temporary successes. Always inferior in numbers, or in all that constitutes the efficiency of numbers, his triumphs consisted in delaying the operations of the enemy, rather than preparing the way for his own. That, during successive years of defensive war, under every circumstance of discouragement, he saved his army, and his noble cause from utter ruin, is more to his honour than gaining victories and conquering nations with superior means. The enemy at length succeeded in forcing a way for their ships up to Philadelphia, and obtaining the necessary supplies through their co-operation.

In the mean time the war raged furiously in the north and

in the south. The country was bleeding at its heart and its extremities. Burgoyne, with a victorious army, and a band of savages, advanced from Canada towards Lake Champlain, and, pouring into the state of New York, let loose all the horrors of civilized and savage warfare. The detested union of the tomahawk and scalping-knife with the cannon and the bayonet, of Christian white man and pagan red man, was once more exhibited in all its horrors. Indian warriors and Christian soldiers now fought side by side, and it seemed doubtful which claimed the pre-eminence in reckless barbarity. The one seemed to have forgotten what the other never knew, and the tragedy of Miss M'Crae will for ever attest the consequences of this infamous association of civilized arts and savage ferocity. The apology of Christians for the barbarity of their Indian allies is, that it was impossible to restrain them; but it should be recollected, that those who let slip the whirlwind are responsible for its devastations, and that, to put arms in the hands of savages, who never spare, is to become an accomplice in all their atrocities.

Throughout the whole of this struggle, the policy of the British ministry, which most assuredly did not act in accordance with the feelings of the people of England towards the United States, was harsh and unfeeling, as it was weak and impolitic. There were times, and many times, during the more early periods of the war, in which the cause of liberty seemed so desperate, that its advocates might have been subdued by kindness and forbearance. But, fortunate for the fate of freedom, and for the future destiny of our country, whenever our affairs were at the lowest ebb, or whenever the British general offered the olive-branch with one hand, with the other he at the same time perpetrated additional insults and injuries. He had to do with a people who might have been conciliated by kindness, but whom barbarities could never subdue. He preferred the wind to the sun, and the conse-

quence was, that the Americans only girded their cloaks more manfully about them.

The high hills of Vermont and New Hampshire echoed to the groans of the blood-stained valleys of New York, and the Green Mountain Boys, seizing their unerring rifles, rallied in the cause of their country and countrymen. The first check given to the triumphant invader was given by the militia of Vermont, by those who have ever since been distinguished by the honourable title of Green Mountain Boys, though they possessed the arms and the souls of heroic men. On the memorable heights of Bennington, the Hessians were once more to feel the courage and humanity of those who, while defending their own lives, respected the lives of their most obnoxious enemies.

Here Breymen and Baum, two experienced officers who had been despatched to procure supplies of cattle and horses, and to secure or destroy a depot of provisions collected by the Americans, were met by Starke, and bitter was the greeting he gave them. Colonel Baum, failing in his first objects, fortified himself in a favourable position, and waited for his associate Breymen. Before he had time to arrive, the Green Mountain Boys rushed upon his intrenchments with such irresistible impetuosity that nothing could stand before them. The valleys rung with the roaring of cannon answered by a thousand echoes of the mountains, mingled with shouts and dying groans. On the first assault the Canadians took to their heels; Baum received a mortal wound, and not a man of all his companions escaped—all were killed or taken, and six hundred Germans totally annihilated.

Ignorant of the fate of his old comrade, Colonel Breymen came up a few hours afterwards, where he met his victorious enemies instead of conquering friends. He was received, not by the shaking hands of welcoming comrades, but by the winged messengers of death from the weapons of his foes.

His troops, after sustaining a few fires from the unerring rifles of the Green Mountain Boys, broke and sought shelter in the woods, where, by degrees, they were at different times nearly all taken.

This was another crisis in the great cause of liberty. The fortunes of Burgoyne had hitherto rolled on the flood tide of uninterrupted success. But it had become high water with him, and the tide ebbed as rapidly as it had flowed, leaving him and his fortunes high and dry ashore. About the same time that the parties of Baum and Breymen were destroyed, the force co-operating with Burgoyne under Colonel St. Leger, consisting of British and Indians, being met by a fierce resistance, and alarmed by a false report, raised the siege of Fort Stanwix, an important position on the Mohawk. The Indians, discouraged by a tedious series of approaches, which resulted in a total disappointment of anticipated plunder and massacre, deserted their allies and departed to their woods; while General Gates, who commanded the American force in the north, was daily reinforced by brave spirits flocking from the fields and the mountains. Arnold, who afterwards devoted himself to never-dying infamy, was there; and Morgan, whose fame is equally immortal, was also there with those famous riflemen whose every shot was death to an enemy.

The approach of Burgoyne from the north was connected with the expected movement of Sir Henry Clinton, with a force from the south. They were to meet at Albany. But one never arrived there, and the other went against his will, since he was carried as a prisoner, where he anticipated entering as a conqueror.

After many severe encounters and much hard fighting, in which Arnold, and Morgan, and Dearborn, and Brooks, and many others I have not space to name, distinguished themselves and won praises from their countrymen, there was seen a sight worth beholding. At the mouth of the outlet of

Saratoga Lake, and close to the side of the Hudson, there lies a rich meadow, extending a considerable distance up the stream. It is beautiful to the eye, but far more precious to the heart of every true lover of liberty. On the morning of the seventeenth of October, in the year 1777, on that spot was seen the first British army laying down its arms and surrendering to the soldiers of freedom—but not the last. It was one of the brightest mornings that ever opened on this New World, for it heralded the rising of the sun of freedom, which for a long while had sunk below the horizon. It was the dawn of high aspiring hopes and gallant confidence. It taught the republicans to rely on themselves, and others to rely on them. It relieved the country from an army of enemies, and it was the precursor to an army of friends. The alliance with France was the first fruits of the surrender of Burgoyne.

Smarting as the Americans were under the recollection of recent barbarities, and elevated by success, on this occasion they displayed a delicacy of feeling, a refined magnanimity, which under all circumstances, were singularly honourable. They had faced the British in the heat of battle, in the pride of success, but they turned their backs in the hour of humiliation. When the army of Burgoyne laid down its arms in the green meadow on the bank of the Hudson, not an American was to be seen. Who shall say our fathers were not worthy of liberty?

The field of Saratoga will always continue to awaken in the minds of all true Americans the proudest recollections. It is associated with an event which, more than any other that occurred during the revolutionary war, contributed to its happy termination, and carried with it a train of consequences of which the commencement is only known, and the end can only be anticipated. Neither the field of Marathon nor the pass of Thermopylæ possess such claims to the veneration of those who sympathize in the great cause of liberty throughout

the world. It is embalmed in its vast consequences, for the devotion of future times, and every succeeding age will only give it new interest and dignity. No native of this land of freedom should ever pass it without pausing to contemplate the scene, and dwell for a while on the triumph achieved on this spot by the patriotism and valour of his fathers. The noble river and the smiling meadow were its witnesses; and while the one continues its course, and the other remains green, it can never be forgotten.

CHAPTER XI.

Number of Burgoyne's Army. New Hopes of the Friends of Liberty. Conduct of Gates. Intrigue to supplant Washington. Parliament. Lord Chatham. Sufferings of the Army at Valley Forge. Paper-money. Howe's Inactivity. Proceedings of Parliament. Bill of Pacification, and its Reception by Congress. General Howe Resigns. His Character. Sir Henry Clinton. He evacuates Philadelphia. Is followed by Washington. Battle of Monmouth, and conduct of General Lee. He is tried and sentenced to a Year's suspension. His life, Character, and Death. Reflections on the Colonial Feeling.

The army of Burgoyne consisted of about ten thousand men on leaving Canada, but was reduced to nearly one-half that number when it laid down its arms at Saratoga. At the same time that the republicans rid themselves of this formidable foe they acquired a fine train of artillery, seven thousand stand of arms, and a large quantity of military stores. Thus failed a plan which threatened the most fatal consequences to the cause of liberty, and now it was that even the least sanguine spirits looked forward to ultimate success. But the boon, though within their grasp, was not yet gained, and Providence permitted new trials, as if to show the value of the prize by the cost of its purchase.

This great event, it was thought by Congress, would check the advance of Sir Henry Clinton up the Hudson, and relieve General Gates from all apprehensions from that quarter. It was therefore resolved to reinforce Washington by drawing detachments from the northern army. He accordingly deputed the celebrated Hamilton, then a very young man, acting as his aid, to urge General Gates to a speedy compliance with the orders of Congress.

Hamilton states in a letter to Washington, that General Gates discovered much unwillingness to diminish his force, and urged his apprehensions of an attack from Sir Henry Clinton, as a pretext for declining to furnish the reinforcements required. There are, however, strong reasons for believing that his conduct originated in other motives.

It appears that an intrigue had been set on foot to displace Washington from the command, and substitute General Gates in his place. The capture of Burgoyne, by whomsoever achieved, had carried the reputation of General Gates beyond that of any other man in the nation, with the exception of Washington, if, indeed, he was an exception; and a small party was formed in Congress, aided by a few officers, not altogether destitute of claims to distinction, to place him at the head of the armies of the United States.

How far General Gates participated in this project, whether he was an active or passive instrument, is a question which I have no disposition to discuss. Whatever may have been the real merits of this officer, and his agency in bringing about an event so auspicious to the future fortunes of the United States as the capture of Burgoyne, still, as the commanding general, who would have been held responsible for the failure of the attempt, he cannot be separated from the glory acquired by its success. His name is embodied in history; it occupies an honourable station among the heroes of the revolution; it has become a part of the inheritance of na-

tional pride; it belongs to the people of the United States, and I would not, if I could, throw any additional shade over its brightness.

But what is already known, cannot be buried in oblivion. It is certain that he became vain of his reputation; indulged in sly insendoes against the commander-in-chief, and seemed dissatisfied or uneasy under the burden of his glory. His whole deportment exhibited a striking contrast to the calm self-poised, self-supported dignity of Washington, who, whether in prosperity or adversity, success or defeat, sailed along in his high sphere of action, like the eagle, far above the heads of those around him, without effort or noise. You never saw the motion, or heard the flapping of his wings.

Happily for the good cause, and fortunately for the destinies of our country, the intrigue proved abortive. The army under Washington, the good people of the United States, and even the soldiers of General Gates, rejected with honest disdain the idea of a change. There was that in the character of the great Father of his Country which led confidence captive, something that, like the charmed armour of romance, blunted the sharpest weapon of calumny, and warded off the poisoned arrow. He had gained a fame which even misfortune could not injure. General Gates received the command of the force destined to act against Lord Cornwallis in the south, where his success did not justify the anticipations of his friends, or his enemies. He died at New-York, long after the revolution, and those who best knew him wondered at the caprices of fortune.

The news of the capture of Burgoyne was received in England with dismay, in France with exultation. The venerable Chatham once more raised his voice for an immediate cessation of arms, and broke forth into a strain of vehement and inspiring eloquence against the cruelty of associating savages in the warfare of civilized nations. "My lords," said he

"who is the man that, in addition to the disgraces and mischiefs of this war, has dared to authorize and associate with our arms the tomahawk and scalping-knife of the savage? to call into civilized alliance the wild and inhuman inhabitants of the woods? to delegate to the merciless Indian the defence of disputed rights, and to wage the horrors of his barbarous warfare against our brethren?" But the voice of humanity, patriotism, and inspiration fell on the ears of the deaf. The ministers carried their measure by the usual majority, and corruption and vengeance triumphed for a while longer over justice as well as policy.

During the severe winter which followed the events I have related, the army of Washington, quartered at Valley Forge, in the neighbourhood of Philadelphia, suffered almost incredible hardships. Since the battle of Brandywine, they had received neither soap, vinegar, or any other articles allowed by Congress for necessary comfort. A large portion had but a shirt, and some none at all. Many were confined to the hospitals because they had no shoes, and between two or three thousand remained incapable of duty because "they were barefooted and otherwise naked." Their food was often insufficient, and of bad quality; and, in short, they were destitute of all those comforts which conduce to physical strength and mental power.

All this while they were within a few miles of a superior force, and without the excitement of hope; for the prospect of the future seemed but a reflection of the present. Can we wonder, my young countrymen, that these poor, naked, starving soldiers of freedom pined to return to their comfortable homes? or can we blame them, if, when their term of service expired, they were unwilling to enlist again? Is it a subject of surprise or reproach that under these accumulated circumstances of discouragement and suffering, the patriotic spirit of the people almost perished under its burden, or that it became

difficult to rouse and animate the militia, or inspire them with confidence? For my part, so far from censuring our fathers for their want of spirit and activity, I cannot but reverence and admire that noble firmness, which, animated by the love of liberty, resisted the pressure of such a weight of woes, and refused all offers of pardon or conciliation unaccompanied by independence. Let my young readers ponder on these things, and then ask of themselves, who shall cast the first stone at the tombs of their fathers? Let them imitate their virtues, instead of censuring their memory. May Providence grant that the posterity of these much enduring men may emulate their patriotism, and then the freedom they won for us will never be surrendered at the shrine of luxury or on the altar of fear.

The sufferings of the army, now, as on all occasions, pierced the bosom of Washington. In addition to this source of anguish, his proud spirit, conscious of meriting the gratitude of his country by every exertion of valour and of virtue, had to bear up against certain slights of Congress, and certain censures elsewhere, that indicated a want of confidence. Of these he however took no notice. He had higher objects than his own feelings to demand his attention; and continued to urge on the attention of Congress the sufferings of his poor soldiers, who on one occasion were without a single ration. With all the energy of true feeling, and with a manly confidence in his own claims to be heard and respected, he exhorted Congress to remedy the defects of the commissary department, where these wants principally originated; and, with the boldness of truth, lays the blame where it ought to rest.

"I declare," said he, in one of his letters—"I declare, that no man, in my opinion, ever had his measures more impeded than I have by every department of the army. Since the month of July we have had no assistance from the quarter-master-general; and to want of assistance from this department the commissary-general charges great part of his de-

ficiency. To this I may add, that notwithstanding it is a standing order, often repeated, that the troops shall always have two days' rations in advance, that they may be ready at any sudden call, yet scarcely any opportunity has ever offered of taking advantage of the enemy that has not been either entirely thwarted, or greatly obstructed, on that account."

Congress had fallen into the common error of inexperience, in complicating rather than simplifying the organization of the commissariat of the army. It was the fashion to establish a board for every thing, and to create a number of separate wheels, each one in some degree independent of the other, and therefore each liable to impede the action of the whole. So far was this pernicious practice carried, that, on one occasion, when the establishment of a whole raft of boards had been proposed by some busy-body in Congress, it is related that the late Judge Peters, of Pennsylvania, then a member, rose, and with gravity moved that the word "board" should be expunged, and that of "shingle" inserted in it place. It is said that the amendment was fatal to the bill, and achieved what no argument could have accomplished. From that time the very mention of boards excited a smile in Congress.

Besides the privations of the army, which have been just specified, they had now to encounter a new enemy, in the depreciation of paper-money, that traitor to its country in time of danger. This depreciation, slow at first, soon acquired an accelerated motion, and, like a wheel running down hill, its speed increased in proportion as it reached the bottom. The officers and soldiers soon began to find that they were paid, if at all, in paper which was losing its value while passing from the hand to the pocket.

Experience has more than once demonstrated the ruinous consequences of a resort to the issue of paper-money on the part of a government. The mischievous facility of multiplying it; the effect that multiplication has on the prices of all the

necessaries of life and the means of conducting military operations; the fluctuations in its value, arising from the increase or diminution of public confidence; and the certainty of its final depreciation, when that depreciation will surely be most pernicious to the interests of the public and to individuals, all seem to demonstrate that it is an expedient which only a stern necessity can justify. That necessity presented itself at the crisis of our revolution. The public liberty, the existence of the nation, was at stake, and the sacrifice of the future was due to the present emergency. But its consequences proved ruinous to many thousands in the end, and the catastrophe of the "continental money," as it was called, remains as an example and a warning to future generations. The extravagance of the parent, which beggars his children, is not more reprehensible than that of a government which entails its burdens on the posterity of its citizens, and thus makes them responsible for its mistakes, its ambition, and its prodigality.

In the account of his expenditures during the revolutionary war, presented by Washington to the auditor-general of the United States, there is exhibited a curious scale of the progress in the depreciation of paper-money, according to the rates from time to time established by Congress, which vainly attempted to regulate this impracticable medium. From the beginning of the year 1777, when it was first issued, it remained at par value, and was equal to silver and gold until the October following, when it began to depreciate, at first slowly, then more rapidly. At the close of the following year two thousand paper dollars were worth three hundred and fourteen in specie; in November, 1780, one thousand paper dollars were worth twenty-five in specie; in May, 1781, twenty thousand paper dollars were worth five hundred in specie; and by the end of that year they were worth nothing. The confidence of the people in the government and in each

other was universally shaken; the idea of having been deceived by their rulers produced resentment and disaffection; the ignorant and confiding became the dupes of the wary and unprincipled; hundreds of thousands of citizens were reduced to beggary; and thus the miseries of want were added to the evils of war.

Yet still, notwithstanding these appalling difficulties, Washington did not for a moment remit his exertions. Being authorized by a resolution of Congress, he directed that all the provisions within twenty miles of his camp should be seized for the use of his army. The expedient procured a temporary supply, but was soon rendered inoperative by the farmers concealing their products, and pleading entire poverty.

There are points beyond which human nature cannot be safely pushed. A single individual may be found willing to give away all to his country, but such sacrifices cannot be expected from whole communities.

In spite of these accumulated obstacles, Washington opened the campaign with his usual activity. General Howe, either ignorant of the deplorable state of the republican army, too cautious in his movements, or perhaps overawed by the superior genius of Washington, and recollecting that while storming his camp at Valley Forge he might be marching into Philadelphia, neglected to take advantage of the present state of affairs. By so doing he lost an opportunity which never afterwards presented itself to him or his successors. The events which immediately followed the opening of the campaign of 1778, not being either striking or decisive, will be passed over, especially as Washington was not personally engaged in them.

The proceedings of the British parliament now became exceedingly interesting. Not long after the rejection of Lord Chatham's motion for a suspension of arms between England

and the United States, and a like fate of others of a similar nature, the British minister, Lord North, himself brought forward a plan of pacification, which was adopted by a great majority. Before, however, the preliminary steps could be taken, the news arrived in England of a treaty of alliance having been concluded between the United States and France. The propositions were in consequence hurried off to America, in the hope of preceding the arrival of the treaty.

Washington received the bill of pacification, and immediately forwarded it to Congress, with a letter expressing his fears of its consequences, if the conditions became known to the people. The propositions of the British government were referred to a committee, which made an able and spirited report on the subject, and exposed, with the keenest analysis, its unsatisfactory, insidious, and insulting provisions. The propositions of parliament, and the report of the committee of Congress, were both published. Soon after this occurred, a French frigate arrived having on board Mr. Deane, bearing the treaty between the United States and the French king. This event was hailed with joy throughout the whole country, as the prelude of a certain successful issue to the cause of independence.

General Howe had now taken his departure for England, whither he carried with him but little glory. He was an experienced officer in European tactics, but wanted energy, enterprise, and activity, and was utterly unable to cope with Washington, who, if he had possessed the means which the former commanded, would have quickly annihilated him.

General Charles Lee, who had more wit than discretion, thus describes Howe in a letter to Dr. Rush:—"He is the most indolent of mortals. He never took further pains to examine the merits or demerits of the cause in which he was engaged, than merely to recollect that Great Britain was said to be the mother country; George the Third, King of Great Britain; that parliament was called the representative of

Great Britain; that the king and parliament formed the supreme power; that supreme power is absolute and uncontrollable; that all resistance must consequently be rebellion; and, above all, that he was a soldier, and bound to obey in all cases whatever.

"These are his notions, and this is his logic. But through these absurdities I could distinguish, when he was not quite himself, rays of friendship and good-nature breaking out. It is true he was seldom left to himself; for never poor mortal, thrust into high station, was surrounded by such fools and scoundrels. I believe he scarcely ever read the letters he signed. You will hardly believe it, but I assure you it is a fact that he never read the curious proclamation issued at the head of Elk, till three days after it was published. You will say I am drawing my friend Howe in caricature: but this is his real character. He is naturally good-humoured and complacent, but illiterate and indolent to the last degree, unless as an executive soldier, in which capacity he is all fire and activity, brave and cool as Julius Cæsar. His understanding is rather good than otherwise, but was totally confounded and stupified by the immensity of the task imposed upon him. He shut his eyes, fought his battles, drank his bottle, advised with his counsellors, received orders from North and Germaine, one more absurd than the other, took Galloway's opinion, shut his eyes, fought again, and is now, I suppose, to be called to account for acting according to his instructions."

He was succeeded in his command by Sir Henry Clinton, also an officer of experience and reputation. But none ever gained lasting laurels at the expense of Washington, and least of all, Sir Henry Clinton. The alliance with France, and its anticipated consequences, rendered an entire change of measures necessary on the part of the enemy, and the new commander prepared to evacuate Philadelphia, with a view to concentrating his force at New York.

This design was executed, and the enemy marched through New Jersey, with Washington hanging on his rear, eager to strike a blow. He had so long been harassed by the necessity of perpetually retreating, that the idea of pursuit animated him to new exertions and new vigour. At length the lion had turned on his pursuers, and almost for the first time since he assumed the command, could Washington indulge the bias of his temper, which ever prompted him to decisive action. His caution was the result of judgment and necessity, and every backward step he took was like bending the bow the wrong way. It went against the grain.

Now, however, the tables were somewhat turned. Though still actually inferior in force, he was equal in numbers, and hoped most ardently that Sir Henry Clinton would afford him an opportunity of attacking him in his march through New Jersey. He proposed the question to a council of officers, where it was strenuously opposed by Steuben, Du Portail, and General Lee. But this did not deter him, and he resolved that the enemy should not escape without a blow, if an opening for striking it occurred. That opportunity soon presented itself and was seized with avidity.

The march of Sir Henry Clinton was directed towards Middletown, from whence he intended to embark his army for New-York, and had now arrived at Monmouth, a small town situated on high ground, not far distant from the bay of Amboy, and presenting a strong position. Another day's march would bring him to the heights of Middletown, where he would be unassailable. This, then, was the last opportunity that might present itself, and Washington determined to avail himself of it in despite of the opinions of the council of officers.

Accordingly he made his dispositions for an attack the moment Sir Henry Clinton moved from the high ground at Monmouth, and General Lee was directed to assault his rear, while

the remainder of the republican army opposed him on his flanks.

The twenty-eighth of June, the day on which this battle was fought, was intensely hot. There was not a breath of air stirring, and the sun shone out without a cloud, making the bayonets and musket-barrels glitter in the eyes of the opposing hosts. The domestic herds had retired into the shade, and every animal except man sought shelter from the burning heat. The panting soldiers could hardly bear up against the burden of their arms, and the horses that drew the artillery were in a foam. The very birds forgot to sing their songs that morning.

At the dawn of day the army of the enemy had taken up its line of march towards the heights of Middletown, and left the strong position at Monmouth. Washington, hearing a firing, presumed that Lee was now engaged, and came rushing on to second him, when, to his utter astonishment, he found that officer in full retreat.

"In the name of God, General Lee, what has caused this ill-timed prudence?" said Washington.

"I know no man blessed with a larger portion of that rascally virtue than your excellency," retorted Lee, sarcastically.

Washington rode on furiously, for now, for once in his life, ill-conduct, aggravated by insolence, had conquered his equanimity. He called to his men, and they answered his call with three gallant cheers. He ordered them to charge the enemy, and they obeyed him without hesitating a moment. The royalists attempted to turn his flank, but were manfully repulsed. They turned in another direction, and met the valiant, steady Greene, who drove them back with his cannon, while on the instant, Wayne, at the head of his legion, gave them such a severe and well-directed fire, that they ceased to act on the offensive, and took post in their stronghold once more. The extreme heat of the day, together with their exertions in the fight, had exhausted the vigour of both parties; some died of

mere fatigue, and others fell victims to their eagerness to allay their burning thirst with cold water. Washington ordered his soldiers to be prepared for renewing the action early in the morning; but when that came, he found that the British had decamped in the silence of the night, and were now so far on their way to Middletown Heights as to destroy all hopes of overtaking them, or preventing their embarkation.

On no occasion during the whole course of the war, did Washington appear greater that at the battle of Monmouth. The extraordinary retreat of Lee, and his subsequent insolence, had roused him to the highest point of energy, and awakened all the heroism of his character. He animated his troops by his voice; he inspired them by his actions, and infused the magnanimity of his own soul into the souls of his gallant troops. He exposed himself to every danger of the day, and seemed determined to make up by his own exertions for the misconduct of the arrogant Lee. One* who always fought by his side, when higher duties did not call him away, has since borne testimony that the spirit which animated, and the genius which directed, the successful operations of this gallant battle, was that of Washington. Greene, Wayne, Morgan, and many others distinguished themselves highly on this occasion, and richly merit to share with him the honour of that day. They were the well-tempered weapons, but his was the soul that directed them. The enemy claimed the victory on this occasion; but a victory succeeded by midnight retreat is hardly worth contesting.

The republican army was indignant at the conduct of Lee, and his disrespect, to give it its mildest name, to their beloved chief, called forth a burst of feeling in behalf of his insulted dignity and virtue. Washington, however, was silent on the subject. He was aware of the mischiefs arising from factions in an

* Lafayette.

army, and probably expected an apology or explanation from the offender. But the subsequent steps taken by Lee precluded all further forbearance. He received a letter from that officer, couched in the most haughty and supercilious terms, and demanding reparation for "the very singular expressions" made use of by Washington on the occasion to which I have referred. To this a reply was sent, assuring him that, if he felt himself aggrieved, he should soon have an opportunity of vindicating his conduct before a court-martial. He was accordingly tried shortly after for disobedience of orders, for misbehaviour before the enemy, and for disrespect to the commander-in-chief. The sentence of the court suspended him from duty for one year, and was unanimously approved by Congress.—This terminated his military career. He retired to his estate in Berkeley county, Virginia, where he lived a few years of folly and eccentricity, and finally, at Philadelphia, closed a life which he might have made useful by his talents, had they been directed by the steadiness, prudence, and wisdom of Washington.

General Charles Lee was a native of Chester county, in England, and descended from an ancient family of that name. He entered the British service, commanded a company of grenadiers at Ticonderoga, in the old French war, where he was shot through the body. He afterwards served in Portugal under General Burgoyne, and subsequently in the Polish army, where he was at the period of the passing of the stamp act.—He then returned to England, and used all his influence in behalf of the colonies. Shortly before the commencement of hostilities, he arrived at New York, and enlisted himself among the most ardent of the Whigs. After visiting all the large cities, and making himself known to the principal political leaders, by his ardour and eloquence in the cause of liberty, he purchased a plantation in Berkeley county, Virgi-

nia, near his old friend Horatio Gates, with whom he had served in days of yore.

One of the worst consequences of the colonial state is, the feeling and habit of inferiority which it never fails to produce on the part of the colonists. Treated, as they always are, by the mother country, with arrogant supercilliousness, or stern unkindness; deprived of all the privileges of equality: accustomed to see every day instances of preference towards the natives of the parent state, and to submit to their assumptions of superiority, they gradually acquire a dependent feeling, and in time acquiesce in a degrading distinction, which overawes their spirit, and depresses their genius.

This was, in a great degree, the state of the public mind at the period when the people of the United Colonies felt themselves called upon to accept the alternative of submission or resistance. They cherished exaggerated ideas of European, and most especially British, superiority; and when it became necessary to take up arms in defence of their rights, to have served in the British army was the great recommendation to rank and honours. Hence, while Green, Wayne, Morgan, and many others on whom nature had bestowed the talents for command, entered the service as inferior officers, such men as Gates and Lee were appointed to the highest stations in the army, without doubt because they were born in England, and had borne a British commission. With the exception of Washington, it was thought next to impossible to find a native of the colonies capable of directing extensive military operations; and the history of our revolution sufficiently exemplifies the existence of this sentiment, in the all but successful intrigue to place General Gates in a situation for which he was greatly disqualified, and where his incapacity would in all probability have ruined our cause.

This feeling of inferiority depressed the energies and discouraged the efforts of the Americans during the whole

struggle for liberty. It damped their ardour, and checked their enterprise; it weakened their confidence in themselves, and at all times operated as a nightmare upon their visions of success. It outlived the era of Independence, and it lives still, though with diminished, and gradually diminishing vigour. It no longer, indeed, plays the political tyrant; but it sways our opinions, insinuates itself into our social habits, influences our tastes, dress, and modes of living, and having resigned as prime minister of American affairs, continues still to govern by a sort of back-stairs influence. I hope my youthful readers, who form the rising hope of their country, will live to see her emancipated from this last and strongest thraldom, and that they themselves will not only assist at its funeral but give it the death-blow. It is time that the people of the United States, who have long boasted of their superiority, should at least begin to feel that they are equal to other nations.

This colonial prejudice operated in favour of Lee. He was offered and accepted the rank of major-general. Lee talked well, and wrote with a keen, sarcastic vigour, which is often mistaken for a capacity to perform great actions. But he never distinguished himself in the cause of freedom. He blamed Washington, he blamed Congress, and he blamed everybody; but he did nothing himself. When called upon by the commander-in-chief to march to his assistance at Trenton, in the darkest hour of peril, he delayed under various pretexts, and at length suffered himself to be surprised and taken prisoner, in a manner that excited the contempt of his enemies, and the laughter of his friends. It was suspected, and on grounds by no means destitute of probability, that he wished to ruin Washington in order to succeed him. His conduct at the battle of Monmouth seemed to corroborate the suspicion, and without doubt operated on the court-martial to suspend

him from service. His example furnishes a salutary warning against premature confidence, as well as a decisive proof that experience in one mode of warfare is only an obstacle to success in a new service and a new world. Without doubt Lafayette, Montgomery, Kosciusko, De Kalb, Steuben, Pulaski, and various others of less distinction, performed important services to our cause, and aided in purchasing for us the blessings of liberty. They merit the lasting gratitude of the people of the United States, as well for what they did, as what they were anxious to do; and they enjoy, in this new world, a reputation which amply repays them for all the services they ever rendered. Still, however, the best trust of a nation is in its own children, its own experience, and its own home-bred energies. Foreign aid may assist in attaining to independence, but it cannot be preserved, except by ourselves. It was, perhaps, fortunate for the United States that European policy and national rivalry were sufficiently strong to overcome the temptation to make them pay dear for the aid they received, and save them from the general fate of all those who call to their assistance an auxiliary more powerful than themselves.

CHAPTER XII

Hopes derived from the new Posture of Affairs. Arrival of the French Fleet. Difficulties about Military Etiquette. Dispute between Count d'Estaing and General Sullivan. Washington still compelled to act on the Defensive. British Army marches up the Hudson. Affair at Egg Harbour. British Fleet dispersed by a storm. D'Estaing sails for the West Indies. The Army erects Huts in the Highlands and goes into winter-quarters. Washington's Spring. He dissuades Congress from attacking Canada.

THE sun of liberty seemed now slowly emerging from the [illegible] cloud in which it had been enveloped, with few intervals, ever since the battle of Long Island. It had occasion-

ally broke out for a little while at Princeton and Trenton only to retire again into deeper obscurity. The surrender of Burgoyne the alliance with France, and the honourable result of the battle of Monmouth combined to give new life to hope, but at the same time relaxed the vigour of perseverance. The storm seemed to have reached the crisis of its violence, and the lighthouse and the haven appeared in distant perspective. The crew of the vessel fell asleep, and the pilot remained awake at the helm.

The battle of Monmouth was quickly followed by news of the arrival of a powerful French fleet, under Count d'Estaing, at Chingoteague Inlet, in Virginia. On board this fleet was a large body of land forces, and the intention of the Count had been to strike the mouth of Delaware Bay, with a view to shutting up the British fleet in that river. A long passage of nearly three months prevented the success of this well-laid plan, and probably saved both the British fleet and British army. Congress communicated the arrival of our allies to Washington, and directed him to co-operate with the French commander.

This co-operation was a delicate affair. Hitherto the French had always been looked upon as enemies by the people of the United States. All their wars had been with that nation, and the recollection was rendered more keen by its connection with Indian atrocities. Besides this, there is always a jealousy, justified by universal example, on the part of weaker nations against their more powerful allies, who have almost invariably only assisted in breaking the chains of others in order to rivet their own. They always sell their favours at a high price. The French government, with a polite delicacy, had conferred on Washington the rank of lieutenant-general in the armies of France, which placed him on an equality with Count d'Estaing, who, besides being commander of the French fleet, was also a lieutenant-general.

The allied forces commenced their operations in New-England, where difficulties soon occurred in relation to military etiquette, and the right of directing the combined army. The rank of D'Estaing, as a lieutenant-general, placed him above every American officer except Washington; and Sullivan, who commanded the forces of the United States in that quarter, being only a major-general, the French admiral insisted on his right to command the combined attack on Newport. Sullivan, who had been cautioned by Washington against any collision in points of mere punctilio, proposed, and the French admiral assented to, an arrangement, by which the Americans were to precede him in landing, and the French troops to follow under the Count in person. The latter, however, soon after declined to act in conformity with this stipulation, and insisted that the landing and the attack should be simultaneous. Other trifling punctilios impeded the first operations of the allies, and a spirit was excited which might have destroyed all the benefits of the French alliance, had not the appearance of a British fleet produced the necessity of a good understanding, or at least, for a time, separated the contending parties. D'Estaing determined on offering battle to the enemy; but, previous to sailing, informed General Sullivan that on returning he would accede to his wishes. Thus a feud, which might have had a most injurious effect on the future operations of the allies, was arrested before it had settled down into a confirmed spirit of opposition.

But the consequences of these disputes remained festering in the bosoms both of the French and American officers, and operated on the hearts of the people of New England, who, more than all the rest, were disinclined towards France. Their early annals were filled with affecting instances of suffering inflicted on their forefathers by the inroads of the French and Indians of Canada and the eastern border, and they had ever been accustomed to look upon them as their hereditary

enemies. The claims of D'Estaing were, therefore, peculiarly grating to their recollections and their pride; and at one time it was feared they might go so far as to withhold supplies from the French fleet. Sullivan, too, indulged himself in some expressions, in a general order, which gave great offence to D'Estaing, who appealed to Congress. That wise and temperate body passed a resolution approving his conduct, and expressing its confidence in his zeal and attachment to the cause; and Washington, ever the instrument of good to his country, soothed his wounded feelings by letters, which operated so effectually, that from that time to the final consummation of the revolution at Yorktown, there was no other struggle between the French and Americans but that of courtesy and gallantry. But still, though the threatening storm was thus averted by a wise forbearance, the lesson is important, as showing that it is best for nations to fight their own battles in their own cause, and to depend for success on their single exertions, aided by the blessing of Heaven. But for the assistance of France, the contest might have lasted, perhaps, a little longer; but my firm conviction is, that the final issue would have been the same. In the words of the great Chatham, "Three millions of freemen, with arms in their hands, can never be conquered."

Washington was now in New Jersey, watching with eagle eye, the movements of the British in New York. His old fate still pursued him. The British ministers, in anticipation of the consequences of the treaty of alliance between France and the United States, had reinforced their armies and navy to an extent that placed him again under the necessity of employing the shield instead of the sword in defence of his country. He was still compelled to ward off the blows of the enemy, rather than inflict them. All that was left him was to act the sleepless watchman to the midnight plunderer.

In the latter end of the month of September, the British

army, in two columns, one on either side of the Hudson, moved up that river, sweeping all before them. The object of Washington was now to secure the passes of the Highlands, and he accordingly held himself in readiness for that purpose. The enemy, however, after completing his foraging, returned to New York. It appeared that the design of this display on the Hudson was to cover an expedition to Egg Harbour, where a large quantity of merchandise and a number of vessels were destroyed. The operations of the French fleet were all this time impeded by its inferiority to that of the British. The latter, however, while off the harbour of Boston, encountered a great storm, which caused its dispersion for a time, and D'Estaing took the opportunity of sailing for the West Indies.

Nothing of consequence occurred within the sphere of Washington's action until the close of the campaign. The enemy detached a large force to operate in the South during the winter, but sufficient remained for the protection of New York against all the efforts of Washington, who soon afterwards went into winter-quarters in the Highlands and the vicinity.

Here the army erected huts, and breasted the wintry winds and storms of the mountains as well as they could. Though destitute of many comforts, and but indifferently clothed, their situation was so far preferable to that of the preceding winter at Valley Forge, that the contrast made them quite happy and reconciled them to many privations. The remains of these huts are still to be seen in the Highlands; and a spring, from which Washington used to drink, is consecrated to his name. It bubbles forth from the roots of a tree in a little grove of oaks, growing just at the brink of a beautiful cascade, which falls into a chrystal basin below, a descent of sixty or seventy feet. Its waters are much cooler than the surrounding springs; and so beautifully clear as to afford no

unapt emblem of the character of him who preferred them to all others.

The last great service of Washington, during this year, was dissuading Congress from carrying into effect a magnificent plan for the ensuing campaign. This was no less than the conquest of Canada, which had always been a favourite object ever since the commencement of the war. This scheme was fraught with consequences which might, and probably would, have gone far to ruin our cause. The bloody plains of Abraham attest the difficulties of such an enterprise; and in all probability the waning resources necessary to the safety of the states, would have been wasted on a hopeless enterprise, which even if it had succeeded, would have had no decisive influence on the result of the great struggle in which we were engaged.

The first intimation that this plan had been decided on, was received by Washington in a letter from Congress, desiring him to write to Franklin, then minister at Paris, to endeavour to induce the court of France to aid in its execution. Instead of complying with this request, he addressed a letter to that body, couched in the most respectful terms, yet detailing, with manly firmness, the difficulties in the way of this wild project, and offering such unanswerable reasons against all probability of success, that it was promptly abandoned. Thus everywhere, at all times, and in all situations, did Washington prove the guardian of his country

CHAPTER XIII.

Consequences of the Alliance with France. Remission of activity on the part of Congress and the People. The British Ministers roused to new exertions. Instructions of Washington to Vigilance and Preparation. Wants and dissatisfaction of the Troops. Mutiny of the Connecticut Line. Overtures for Pacification rejected by Congress. Massacre of Wyoming. Capture of Stony Point. General Wayne. The Tide of War flows toward the South.

One of the ill consequences almost always attending a reliance on the assistance of others, is a remission of our own exertions. Self-dependence, united with a firm belief in the justice of our cause, and the consequent aid of the Being whose great attribute is to side with the right, are the best foundations for success in every honourable pursuit. The moment of the treaty of alliance with France was the crisis of greatest danger to the cause of liberty. I am strongly inclined to think that this event did not greatly accelerate the independence of the United States, since it gave them a ground of hope distinct from a reliance on their own efforts and resources. They now considered their cause beyond the reach of ruin, and from that moment seem to have remitted their exertions to arrest its destruction.

Independently of this pernicious consequence of almost all foreign alliances, the connection with France without doubt aggravated the offences of her former subjects in the eyes of the English ministers, and, above all, in those of the people of England. It was a new effort of disobedience, which entailed on Great Britain a war with France, and finally with Spain and Holland. The necessity of the case, and the feeling of indignation, combined to produce new and more vigorous efforts, and the result of the French alliance was an augmentation of the British force in this country which more than coun-

terbalanced that of France. During the whole of the two succeeding campaigns, Washington was obliged to act on the defensive with diminished means; and there were times when the prospect of a successful termination of the great struggle for liberty, was more gloomy if possible than it ever had been before. That issue still, as it ever did, depended not on the will or the interests of rival despots, but on Washington, the countrymen of Washington, and the great Being who inspired him with virtue, talents, and courage to save his country.

During all this while, though deprived by the apathy of the states and the people, who now dreamed their independence secure, of the means of active service, he continued to be the guardian of their safety. He lost no opportunity to urge his impressive warnings against the dangers of this false security; he conjured them to resist the delusions of a too sanguine hope; he called upon them loud and often to prepare for future and inevitable misfortune, if they continued to rely on others alone; and with the wisdom of inspiration foretold, that, if they fell asleep in the cradle of this false security, they would be awakened to dismay and destruction.

A minute detail of the military operations in which Washington was personally concerned, is not within the compass of my design, and those which took place in the two following years are in themselves inconsiderable. The army was suffered to dwindle away until it amounted to less than three thousand; the depreciation of that miserable substitute for value, paper-money, followed by its total annihilation as a medium for procuring the *comforts* and *necessaries* of life, and the consequent inability of Congress to pay even this small army, produced the most disastrous consequences. Disaffection spread among the troops; the Connecticut Line mutinied; and the farmers, having lost all faith in the ability of Congress to pay for their produce, refused to trust any longer in the promises of that body. It is within the knowledge of the

writer, that the army in the Highlands would have been at times destitute of provisions, had not the then deputy commissary-general pledged his personal credit to the farmers of Westchester and Dutchess counties. By this act of patriotism he served the cause at the expense of his own ruin.

During this period, also, the British ministry made another attempt at conciliating the United States. Commissioners were appointed, and preliminaries discussed; but as nothing was said about an acknowledgement of independence, the negociation entirely failed, as in all previous cases. Disappointed in this, the commissioners resorted to corruption, and attempts were made to bribe certain leading members of Congress.—Here too they failed. That illustrious body could neither be cajoled, threatened, or bought. It was on an occasion which occurred about this time that, in reply to the offer of a large sum of money, the president of Congress, General Reed, uttered a sentiment worthy the best days of Greece or Rome.—"I am poor," said he, "very poor, but your king is not rich enough to buy me." It is by such examples of virtue that nations become illustrious, and the most humble citizens immortal.

Among the military events that occurred during the period of which I am writing, the most affecting and best remembered is the destruction of Wyoming, and the massacre of the inhabitants of that beautiful valley. All accounts agree in painting this secluded region as the abode of peace, innocence, and happiness. If ever there was a community whose harmlessness might have disarmed hostility, and whose rural happiness would have excited sympathy rather than envy, it seems to have been the people of the little settlement of Wyoming. They had never joined in the war, and were as incapable of injuring the enemy, as they were of defending themselves.—But a band of savage Indians, and of white men as savage as they, rushed upon them in the silence of the dawn; their de-

fenders, who had come to their assistance, were overpowered, and massacred in cold blood; the fruitful fields were made desolate, the houses burnt to the ground, and the valley long after remained a desert. Neither age nor sex was spared, and nothing left behind but ruins and bleaching bones. It was a scene that disgraced humanity itself; and though pains have been taken to cast the stigma alone on the savages, nothing can wash away the guilt of having paid and employed them in a service that led to such merciless doings. The tale is consecrated to the remembrance of posterity, in history and long-lived song, and the fate of Wyoming will never be forgotten. Other atrocities occurred in different quarters, and almost everywhere on the exposed frontier the tomahawk and scalping-knife were at work upon the heads and hearts of our suffering countrymen.

Another event more gratifying to the pride and vanity of my youthful readers, which took place in the following year, was the capture of Stony Point, by General Wayne, one of the most gallant exploits of the war. Anthony Wayne was a native of Chester county, in the state of Pennsylvania. He entered the army about the commencement of the revolutionary war, with the rank of colonel, and very soon acquired the reputation of a gallant soldier. He was raised to the rank of brigadier-general, and was engaged in several actions, in which, though occasionally unfortunate, he always conducted himself with singular bravery. There was not an officer in the American army of a higher character for intrepidity; and whenever there was any hard fighting, Wayne was pretty certain to be selected by Washington to bear a part. He distinguished himself by several victories over the British and Indians at the South; and such was the estimation which the state of Georgia placed on his services, that a valuable plantation was granted him by an act of her legislature. His last and greatest exploit was that of totally defeating the Indians

on the Miami, after they had gained two successive victories over Harmer and St. Clair. This decisive action paved the way for the treaty of Greenville, and for ever freed that portion of our frontier from Indian depredations. He died at Presque Isle, on Lake Erie, leaving behind him a reputation second to none of his contemporaries for valour and intrepidity.

To this gallant officer Washington committed the storming of Stony Point. He had in view an attack on the enemy's posts at and about King's Ferry, which he decided to take in detail rather than risk a general system of operations, which the failure of a single link might render ineffectual. Stony Point was one of the most inaccessible of these, and in addition to its natural strength, was defended by six hundred of the enemy, under Colonel Johnson. It was intended to take it by surprise, and for that purpose the hour of midnight was chosen for the attack.

The night came, and at the appointed hour the little band marched in dead silence to execute their dangerous purpose. There was but one way of approaching this strong position, and that was over a narrow causeway, crossing a marsh. They advanced without speaking a single word, with unloaded muskets and fixed bayonets, preceded by the forlorn hope, consisting of two parties of twenty men each, one commanded by Lieutenant Gibbon of Virginia, and other by Lieutenant Knox. They gained the works without being discovered; for the enemy little dreamed of an attempt on their strong position. A few minutes after twelve the attack commenced; the Americans dashed forward under a heavy fire, which nothing daunted the brave soldiers; they fired not a single gun in return, but carried the fort at the point of the bayonet, with the loss of about one hundred killed and wounded. Of these, seventeen were of the party of twenty under Lieutenant Gib-

bon. The loss of the enemy was sixty-three killed, and upwards of five hundred prisoners.

This was a glorious affair for the victors. The smallness of the numbers engaged does not diminish but increase the gallantry of the actors, since courage is often gained from numbers, and cowards frequently become bold from being surrounded by hosts of friends. Every man of this little party behaved nobly. Wayne received a slight wound in the head, which stunned him for a few minutes; but, supported by his aides, on either side, he continued at his post, and entered the fort with the foremost of his companions. Colonel Fleury, Major Posey, Lieutenants Gibbon and Knox, equally distinguished themselves, and their names are preserved among the gallants spirits who in the hour of peril deserved well of the country.

This affair recalled the attention of Sir Henry Clinton from Connecticut, whither he had sent an expedition under Governor Tryon, and he advanced up the Hudson towards the Highlands, where he repossessed himself of Stoney Point. Finding, however, that he could not attack Washington with any chance of success, in the strong position he occupied, Sir Henry fell back upon New York, and devoted his attention to the affairs of the South, whither the tide of war was now flowing.

CHAPTER XIV.

State of the South. Marion. Anecdote. Situation of the Northern Army. Firmness and Patriotism of the Army and People. Effects of the French Alliance. Paper-money. Defects of the Military Establishment. Disposition to Mutiny. Resolution of the Officers to Resign. Prevented by the Influence of Washington. Bank in Philadelphia. Patriotism of American Women. Expostulation of Washington with Congress. Incursion of the Enemy into New Jersey, and noble conduct of the Jersey Blues. Washington. Clinton comes from the South. Invades New Jersey, and retires. Arrival of a French Fleet and Army. Operations in consequence. Close of the Campaign.

The states to the south of the Potomac had early partaken in the sufferings of the war. Virginia had been ravaged by Dunmore; North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia had not escaped. South Carolina, most especially, had partaken of more than her full share. Many of the inhabitants of that state were loyalists, and bore an inveterate hatred, not only to the cause of liberty, but to all its supporters. Internal fires burned within the bosom of the state, while the flames raged on its borders. The British, probably instigated and exasperated by the representations of the tories, repaid the wrongs alleged to have been inflicted on their friends, by retaliating with still greater severity. At one time the enemy even flattered himself that the southern states were conquered. But there was still a spirit stirring within their bosoms, which might be repressed for a while, but could not be subdued. The flame of liberty was kept alive in the pine-barrens, the swamps, and the mountains, by Pickens, and Sumpter, and Huger, and Horry. Above all, there was Marion, who, when all seemed lost, retired to the woods, and with a few followers, worthy of such a leader, kept the war alive, when scarcely a spark was left to kindle it into a flame.

Among the fine spirits of the revolution, there were few whose character and services are more worthy of remembrance and admiration than those of Francis Marion. He was a man of great talents as well as great courage. His patriotism was warm and thrilling, and his love of liberty unconquerable. After the fall of Charleston, Tarlton and his myrmidons insulted and ravaged the lower parts of the state almost with impunity; and the tories became imboldened to new acts of ill-neighbourhood, if not of inhumanity, to their unfortunate countrymen. Their houses were burned, their plantations laid waste, and their wives, mothers, and daughters insulted and abused. There was no force that could make head against external and internal enemies, and the country lay at their mercy.

In this situation the services of Marion were invaluable. Patient of fatigue, and capable of enduring every privation; intrepid and cautious; quick and persevering; a soldier and a philosopher; he never remitted his exertions to sustain what remained of the liberties of his country, nor ever despaired of her cause. Collecting together a little band of hardy and active spirits, he retired into the inaccessible swamps where he watched his opportunity, darted out on his enemies, struck his blow, and before it was known whence he came, was safe in his woods again. Within his sphere, he might be said to have carried on a war of his own, for the State authorities were distant, inaccessible, and almost destitute of power. His mode of subsisting himself and his soldiers is affectingly illustrated by the following striking anecdote derived from an old fellow-soldier of Marion, many years ago.

While occupying one of the fastnesses, in the midst of a swamp, a British officer with a flag, proposing an exchange of prisoners, was one day brought blindfold to his camp. The exploits of Marion had made his name now greatly known, and

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the officer felt no little curiosity to look at this invisible warrior, who was so often felt but never seen. On removing the bandage from his eyes, he was presented to a man rather below the middle size, very thin in his person, of a dark complexion and withered look. He was dressed in a home-spun coat that bore evidence of flood and field, and the rest of his garments were much the worse for wear.

"I came," said the officer, "with a message for General Marion."

"I am he," said Marion; and these are my soldiers."

The officer looked around and saw a parcel of rough, half-clothed fellows, some roasting sweet potatoes, others resting on their dark muskets, and others asleep with logs for their pillows.

The business being settled, the officer was about to depart, when he was rather ceremoniously invited by Marion to stay and dine. Not seeing any symptoms of dinner, he was inclined to take the invitation in jest; but on being again pressed, curiosity as well as hunger prompted him to accept. The general then ordered his servant to set the table and serve up dinner; upon which the man placed a clean piece of pine bark on the ground, and raking the ashes, uncovered a quantity of sweet potatoes. These constituted Marion's breakfasts, dinners, and suppers, for many a time that he watched the flame of liberty in the swamps of South Carolina.

Some jests occurred at this patriarchal feast, but in conclusion the conversation took a serious turn. The British officer learned, in reply to various questions, that Marion and his soldiers were serving without pay; living without quarters; sometimes half-clothed, at others half-starved; and expressed his pity for their situation. The reply of Marion ought never to be forgotten by my youthful readers.

"Pity not me," said the soldier of freedom, smiling; "I am happier than you, for I am fighting to free, while you are

striving, to enslave your countrymen. When I am hungry, I comfort myself with the hope that I am doing something for my fellow-creatures; when I am cold and wet, I warm myself with the consciousness that I am suffering for my country, and when the cause in which I am engaged, and for which I have pledged my life, seems shrouded in gloom and despair, I still recollect that there is yet virtue in man, and justice in his Maker. The children of my country in after generations may never hear of my name, or know that I laboured in their cause; but on my soul, sir, the thought that I am now contending for their freedom and happiness, is what I would not exchange for the feelings of any man that lives, or ever lived, who was the oppressor of his fellow-creatures."

The soldier of Britain made no reply. He returned to his commander with a serious, nay sorrowful countenance; and on being questioned as to the cause, made this remarkable answer.—

"Sir, I have seen an American general, his officers and soldiers serving without pay, without shelter, without clothing, without any other food than roots and water—and they are enduring all these for liberty! What chance have we of subduing a country with such men for her defenders?" It is said he soon after threw up his commission and retired from the service, either in consequence of a change in his feelings, or of hopelessness in the success of the cause in which he had engaged.

Such was the deplorable state of affairs in the South when—failing in all his attempts to avail himself of his superior force, by the consummate skill and caution of Washington, whose talent for war was every year perfecting under the difficulties he was doomed perpetually to encounter—Sir Henry Clinton, leaving a sufficient force to protect New York, carried the war into that quarter with more vigour than ever.

He besieged and took the capital of South Carolina, which surrendered the 12th of May, 5780, and with it the whole southern army under General Lincoln. Washington had previously strenuously advised against shutting up or risking armies for the defence of cities, and the event, as in every other case in which he gave his decided opinon on military affairs, justified his sagacity.

By this disaster the whole southern section of the United States was left exposed to the incursions of the enemy. They could derive no assistance from the American army in the North, which was now weakened in numbers, and above all, by want and misery. General Schuyler, the old Roman soldier, of whose value Congress had again become sensible, in restoring him to his command, thus writes to Washington about this period:—"At one time the soldiers ate every kind of horse-feed but hay. As an army, they bore it with the most heroic patience; but sufferings like these, accompanied by the want of clothes, blankets, will produce frequent desertion in all armies; and so it happened with us, though it did not create a single mutiny." Such were the miseries our fathers bore for a succession of years, rather than forfeit the great prize of liberty; and let those who dare question their patriotism, because they sometimes complained, put themselves in their places, and say what they would have done. Nothing, indeed, can be more ungrateful and unjust than to impeach the firmness and virtue of a people who, for almost eight years, were by turns the prey of an irritated, arrogant enemy, who disdained to concede to them the courtesies of civilized warfare under pretence of their being rebels, and who endured all these sufferings rather than submit to *anticipated* despotism. Much less ought the descendants of those firm and unconquerable patriots to detract from the merits of the poor soldiers who gained victories in the dead of winter barefooted, and endured defeats, sharpened and aggravated by hunger, cold, and

despair of better days. Instead of wondering that they did no more, we ought to consider their doing what they did little less than a miracle performed by patience, courage, and patriotism.

Another sad and gloomy period succeeded the towering hopes wakened by the alliance with France. As yet it had done nothing but draw down on the head of America a greater weight of vengeance and power. The French fleets brought with them, or were followed by, superior fleets of the enemy, which checked their operations on our coasts; and when they departed for one place, took advantage of their absence to scourge those whom they came to protect. Public credit, too, was now at the lowest ebb, and paper-money approaching rapidly to that catastrophe which sooner or later, in every age and nation, is sure to come in the hour of deepest calamity. It is the traitor who plunders his country in peace, and betrays it in war; the parasite that clings to the vigorous oak in the days of its strength for support, and assists in choking it when it begins to wither and decay.

Congress could now procure no supplies for the army in exchange for promises, whose fulfilment depended on a distant hope, every day apparently getting farther off; and the poor soldiers, who sought to mitigate their wants by the sacrifice of the earnings of their blood, were paid, if paid at all, in rags, which even Time himself could not keep pace with in depreciation. It became impossible to graduate the pay of the army to the rapid depression of the medium of payment, and the swiftness of the decent every moment indicated that the bubble was now about to burst. The selfish, cowardly policy of shifting the burdens of the present to the broad shoulders of the future, was now exemplified in a state of affairs that threatened irretrievable ruin to a cause which had already cost the people years of misery and suffering to sustain. Public confidence was destroyed and independence

tottered on her throne. The pay of a field officer would not furnish provender for his horse, and that of a common soldier could find nothing in the shape of a want within the compass of his means.

Owing to a lack of uniformity the military establishment, arising in a great degree from the different quotas of the states being placed under the supervision of those who sent them, and not of Congress directly, and the means or will of some of the states being greater than others, it frequently happened that the troops of one state would be, at least partially, supplied with necessaries or comforts, of which the other were wholly destitute. Thus, to the miseries of want, was added the aggravation of seeing others in comparative plenty; for though the soldiers sometimes shared with each other, it was not to be expected that they would strip themselves to clothe a stranger, or divide their last morsel with any but a dear friend or near relation.

In this state of affairs, a strong disposition to mutiny began to manifest itself among the common soldiers which was not checked by an exertion of the influence of the officers. They too were suffering like their fellow-soldiers; those who had private fortunes were compelled to expend them, and those who depended on their pay were left destitute by the worthlessness of paper-money. The officers of more than one line unanimously announced their determination to resign, and without doubt, if they had carried this resolution into effect, it would have been followed by a voluntary disbandment of the whole, or a greater portion, of the army. But whenever the genius of freedom despaired, she had recourse to the wisdom and influence of Washington. What neither Congress, nor any other man or men could do, he did. The love, and confidence, and veneration of his soldiers was the sceptre of his dominion over their minds. He reigned by the force of his character and the purity of his virtues. He

called to him the officers who were about to take this fatal step; he reasoned with them on the duties of patriotism, and the sacrifices which every man owed to his country in her hour of peril; he referred to the past, as furnishing rational grounds of hope for the future; and by the force of his eloquence, aided by the weight of his character, at length wrought on these gallant spirits to devote themselves again to the noble cause in which they had suffered so much and so long. Thus, once more did Washington, by the authority, not of his station, but of his virtues, ward off another imminent danger that hovered like a black cloud over the hopes of the future.

The immediate wants of the army were at length relieved by the expedient of a bank in Philadelphia, whose object was the supply of provisions and clothing, by means of a capital of three hundred thousand pounds. During the whole course of a long war, full of disasters and suffering, the females of the United States had exhibited a patriotism worthy of their fathers, husbands, sons, and country. The details of the insults they endured from the insolence of triumphant foes, the dangers they encountered in their unprotected homes from their barbarity; the privations they suffered from the plunder of their desolated fields and gardens, while their protectors were far away, fighting the battles of their country; all these, if collected in one mass, would form a picture scarcely paralleled in the annals of war. Christian and pagan, red man and white man, Briton and Hessian, loyalist and Waldecker, seemed to vie with each other in an utter contempt of the courtesy due to a virtuous female, every-where, and under all circumstances. The wrongs of women escape through the wide meshes of history, but they are preserved in the hearts of their children; and the recollection of the insults of our mothers is rendered still more affecting, as

well as endearing, by that noble firmness which enabled them to bear them all without turning traitresses to the sacred cause of their country.

The traditions of our revolution abound in the most affecting instances of female courage and patriotism, such as posterity will do well to imitate, should the time ever again arrive for such sacrifices. Often did they suffer their houses to be burned over their heads, their persons to be insulted, and their lives to hang by a single hair on the ferocious mercy of a drunken soldier, rather than betray the haunts of their defenders, or give the least item of information that might be serviceable to the enemy. Often did their industry contribute to the comforts of the army, and often did they sacrifice those little fineries that women love, at the shrine of patriotism. Thus, at the time of which I am writing, the ladies of Philadelphia came forward and gave large donations of money, and the products of their industry, for the relief of the suffering army. Such instances should be frequently held up to the imitation of our daughters, who, too many of them, seem to have not only thrown away that noble simplicity which was the characteristic of their mothers, but also that affecting patriotism by which they were so highly distinguished.

In this gloomy crisis again we hear the paternal voice of the good Washington urging on the tardy footsteps of tired patriotism. He thus expostulates with Congress, whose difficulties were not inferior to his own. It had to deal with a people struggling for freedom, and jealous of authority even when it originated in themselves. While opposing the encroachments of parliament, they equally dreaded those of Congress. That body exercised no supremacy but what was voluntarily conceded by the states. It could recommend, but not enforce. Its influence was that of character, and its authority was founded on necessity. It is therefore unjust, as well as ungrateful, to blame it for not exercising promptly a

power which it did not possess. On the expected arrival of the French fleet to commence the campaign of 1780, Washington thus addressed Congress, referring to his entire ignorance of the force which would be at his disposal when called upon to co-operate —

"The season is come when we have every reason to expect the arrival of the French fleet, and yet, for want of being informed on a point of such primary consequence, it is impossible for me to form a system of co-operation

"I have no basis to act upon, and of course, were this generous succour of our ally now to arrive, I should find myself in the most awkward, embarrassing and painful situation. The general and the admiral, as soon as they approach our coast, will require of me a plan of the measures to be pursued, and there ought of right to be one prepared, but circumstanced as I am, I cannot imagine, or even conjecture From these considerations, I yesterday suggested to the committee the indispensable necessity of their writing again to the states, urging them to give immediate and precise information of the measures they have taken, and the result The interest of the states, the honour and reputation of our councils, the justice and gratitude due to our allies, all require that I should, without delay, be enabled to ascertain and inform them what we can or cannot undertake This is a point which ought now to be determined, on the success of which all our future operations may depend, but on which, for want of knowing our prospects, I can make no decision For fear of involving the fleet and the army of our allies in circumstances which would expose them, if not seconded by us, to material inconvenience and hazard, I shall be compelled to suspend it, and the delay may be fatal to our hopes"

The enemy, who on all occasions miscalculated the patriotism of the American people, presuming on the discontents of the army, and the state of the public mind in New Jersey,

which was represented in exaggerated terms, in the beginning of June made an attempt in that quarter. A force of five thousand men under General Knyphausen, landed at Elizabethtown-point, and marched into the interior as far as Springfield. But the Jersey Blues were true to themselves, and their cause, and their country. The militia flew to arms, and gave the enemy such a reception that he halted at Connecticut farms, after having in revenge set fire to that settlement. Other excesses, unworthy of a magnanimous nation, were committed during this excursion. The wife of a clergyman was wantonly shot through a window, while sitting surrounded by her children. It was thus that, in the lowest ebb of their fortunes, the people of the United States were roused to new exertions, by a conduct as impolitic as it was irreconcilable with the usages of civilized warfare, or the dictates of humanity. Yet the Americans on no occasion ever retaliated.

During this period, Washington occupied the hills between Springfield and Chatham, where he remained a witness of what he could not prevent. His force consisted of less than four thousand rank and file, as usual, ill provided with the means of rendering even that efficient. He saw the fields of his country laid waste, its homes in smoking ruins, and the females a prey to lawless violence, and, while his great spirit panted to chase the spoiler from the land, was without the means of either arresting or revenging the wrongs of his beloved countrymen. Yet he never despaired, or remitted his exertions. The even tenor of his well-poised mind remained undisturbed. He watched with incessant vigilance for an opportunity of checking and punishing the invader; he toiled himself; himself set the example of fortitude and patience, while, at the same time, what fate had denied him to do by his sword, he endeavoured to do with his pen. He called upon those who directed the civil affairs of the states to exert their influence and their energies to enable him to defend the

liberties of his country, and never ceased urging them, with a dignified and decorous firmness, to the adoption of measures for the safety of the good cause. In many instances, they were animated to the passage of laws for this purpose, but the delays, perhaps difficulties, of carrying them into execution, were such as, in very many cases, prevented Washington from availing himself of their benefits until the opportunity had passed away never to return. There can be no doubt whatever, that if his means had in any degree corresponded with those of the enemy, he would have finished the war in a single campaign. But this was at no time the case, and least of all now. General Kynphausen, finding it impossible to bring him to action, or to take advantage of his rashness in the admirable position he had chosen, returned once more to Elizabethtown, there to wait the arrival of Sir Henry Clinton, who, having, as he vainly supposed, conquered the South, was about to return to gather fresh laurels in the North.

That event took place about the middle of June, and added to the already-overwhelming force of the enemy, who resumed his operations in New Jersey with new vigour. But meeting with a brave resistance at the bridge of Rahway, and discouraged, perhaps, by the spirit and vigour displayed on that occasion by the regular troops under General Greene, the British commander turned back once more to Elizabethtown, from whence he passed over to Staten Island.

In the month of July following, the French fleet, under the Chevalier Ternay, having on board six thousand troops, under Count Rochambeau, appeared off Rhode Island. The anxiety of Washington had been extreme that the states should be prepared to co-operate with their allies with an efficient force. He wished his country to be placed on a respectable footing by the side of France, and not to owe her safety or indepen-

dence to foreigners alone. But this man of many trials, this noble-spirited citizen, this unconquerable patriot, whose struggle for the liberties of his country was one long series of disappointment and mortification, was doomed once more to sustain the bitter feelings of wounded pride—the noble pride of conscious worth and eminent services.

The plan which he had urged for recruiting his army, had indeed been partly adopted. But such were the inevitable delays attending the action of a government which might recommend, but not enforce, its measures, and such the discouragements which stood in the way of enlistment, that Washington could form no reasonable estimate of the force with which he might be able to co-operate with the French, and consequently propose no feasible plan of operations. This was the more mortifying to his feelings, as the French army had been placed by the court of France entirely under his direction. By this arrangement all difficulties with regard to punctilio were obviated; the French were always to give the post of honour to the Americans, to whom they were considered in the light of auxiliaries, and thenceforward there existed between them a harmony, equally honourable to both parties.

The arrival of the French fleet and army rendered it now imperative on Washington to present to their commanders a definitive plan for the campaign. He accordingly communicated to them an arrangement for besieging New York, in the forlorn hope that the means of fulfilling his part would in time be furnished him by Congress and the states.

"Pressed on all sides," he says, in a letter to the former, "by a choice of difficulties, in a moment which requires decision, I have adopted that line of conduct which comported with the dignity and faith of Congress, the reputation of these states, and the honour of our arms. I have sent on definitive proposals of co-operation to the French general and admiral.

Neither the period, the season, nor a regard to decency would permit delay. The die is cast, and it remains with the states, either to fulfil their engagements, preserve their credit, and support their independence, or to involve us in disgrace and defeat. Notwithstanding the failures pointed out by the committee, I shall proceed on the supposition that they will ultimately consult their own interest and honour, and not suffer us to fail for want of means which it is evidently in their power to afford. What has been done, and is doing, by some of the states, confirms the opinion I have entertained of sufficient resources in the country. Of the disposition of the people to submit to any arrangement for calling them forth, I see no reasonable ground of doubt. If we fail for want of proper exertions in any of the governments, I trust the responsibility will fall where it ought, and that I shall stand justified to Congress, my country, and the world."

Those who reflect on the character of Washington, so totally divested of the slightest disposition to declaim or exaggerate —with what a noble, patriotic caution he avoided transcending the powers committed to him by Congress, and every appearance of dictating to that body, will see in this extract the struggle of his mind. He had committed himself, in the hour of stern necessity, by an engagement to the French commanders, which it rested in Congress to enable him to comply with. "The die is cast," as he says with a brief solemnity; and he calls on Congress and the states to enable him to fulfil his word, and save his own honour as well as that of his country. This was probably the most painful period of his life; and nothing but his ardent devotion to his country, joined perhaps to an innate and heaven-inspired consciousness that her destinies, under Providence, in a great measure hung on his perseverance, and that if now he deserted her, confusion would follow, probably impelled him still to retain an arduous station, in which he met with such bitter mortifications. The idea of

being obliged to forfeit that word which to him was sacred, and which he had thus pledged to the gallant soldiers of France, must have carried with it a pang, which neither misfortune nor personal suffering could equal. There is something singularly affecting, to my mind, in contemplating the situation of Washington, not only at the present time, but during the preceding years of the revolutionary struggle.

The picture presented to my imagination is that of a lofty and expanded mind, struggling with difficulties, not for an hour or a day but through a long series of years, each one increasing the weight of his cares, and investing him with still more insuperable difficulties. He was indeed a man of many cares, perplexities, disappointments, and sufferings; and nothing could have supported him in these endless trials of his patience, his fortitude and his intellect, his body and his mind, but that consciousness of duty which is founded on the Rock of Ages, animated and inspired by a patriotism which nothing could shake or undermine. With him the animating principle was neither the love of glory nor the ambition of power. His station for a long series of years offered him no hope of the one, no present possession, and scarcely any anticipation of the other. Many is the time, no doubt, that, instead of glory, he looked forward to exile, or an ignominous death; and instead of the wreath of victory, anticipated a crown of thorns. The conquerors of kingdoms and the desolators of the world fade into utter insignificance when brought face to face with the man of our pride, our affections, and our reverence; and far greater, as well as far more an object of admiration and love does he appear, to my mind, in the midst of disaster and defeat, than did Cæsar when making his triumphal entry into the capital of the world, laden with the spoils and followed by the captives of a hundred nations of barbarians.

The plan proposed by Washington for the seige of New York contemplated that the French troops should leave New-

port, and the Americans rendezvous at Morrisania, opposite York Island, where they were to form a junction. It was indispensable to the success of the arrangement that the French should possess a naval superiority over the British. But this was effectually prevented by the arrival of six ships of the line, sent by Admiral Graves to reinforce the squadron at New York.

This turned the scales completely; and instead of the allies besieging the British in New York, the English admiral forthwith sailed to Rhode Island to attack the French. At the same time Sir Henry Clinton proceeded with eight thousand men, as was supposed, with a design of co-operating, and Washington prepared for an attack on New York in his absence. This brought Sir Henery speedily back to this old quarters, which movement of course arrested the design of the American commander.

Thus all prospects of a junction of the allied forces of America and France were suspended for a time, until the expected arrival of a fleet from the West Indies, under Count de Guichen. The policy of the French government in its co-operation with the Americans had a two-fold object, each of which interfered with the other, and often came near rendering both abortive. One was to assist America, the other to protect the French West India Islands. Hence in the history of those times, the conduct of the French admirals, in appearing at one moment here, and the next sailing for the West Indies, which might otherwise seem strange to my youthful readers, is explained by the necessity of following the movements of the fleet of the enemy.

Instead of the arrival of the Count de Guichen on the coast of the United States, the news came that he had sailed for France. By this unexpected movement, which created great disappointment both among French and Americans, the British land and naval forces were each left in the ascendency, and

the allies forced to act on the defensive. Washington, however, still cherished a determination to attempt New York the first opportunity; when the arrival of Admiral Rodney, with eleven ships of the line, rendered all further prosecution of the design utterly hopeless, until a change took place in the relative force of the contending parties.

The high-wrought expectations to which the French alliance had given birth, thus ended, for the present, in disappointment. Hope deferred is said to be more harassing than hope utterly lost; and the absence of any favourable results from the co-operation of the French forces, had a worse effect on our cause than the failure of our own unaided exertions. While we depended on ourselves alone, we looked forward to defeat, and armed ourselves with patience and fortitude for a long period of suffering. But the moment of the French alliance was hailed as the beginning of a new and more prosperous era, which would speedily be followed by victory and independence. Both Congress and the states had remitted their exertions: the Americans had ceased to depend on themselves, and instead of reaping their own scanty harvest, left the field to be sown by others

No man more deeply felt the bitterness of the disappointment of the apparently just expectation of the people of the United States than Washington. The campaign of 1780 had passed, without bringing with it a single advantage. It had been in a great measure inactive, as well as inglorious: and the army of freedom retired once more to its huts in the Highlands, as full of wants, and more hopeless of their being supplied than ever. These circumstances prepared the way for events which again, and with still more rigour, threatened for ever to annihilate all the hopes even of the most sanguine friends of the great cause of mankind.

CHAPTER XV.

Treason of Arnold Capture and Death of Andre.

THE close of the year seventeen hundred and eighty was distinguished by the discovery and defeat of a conspiracy that, had it succeeded, might have long deferred, if not put a final period to, the hope of independence Arnold who had distinguished himself on various occasions as a brave, active and skilful officer, was now about to become infamously immortal by betraying the country which he had so gallantly defended. Had he pursued the bright track in which he commenced his career, through all the vicissitudes of the struggle, he might have left behind him a name second to Washington alone in the military annals of the revolution But he preferred to stand first in the records of infamy, to live alone in ignominious solitude, as the only traitor that deforms the pages of our history. He was a great soldier, but not an honest man. He possessed the talents to serve his country, but was without that virtue which is the only true basis of illustrious actions. He could resist the enemies of his country, but not his own. He wanted the firmness to be prudent, and the integrity to overcome those temptations which imprudence throws in every man's way. He incurred debts, and sold himself and his country, not to pay them, but to procure the means of new extravagance. He finally fell into the bottomless pit of infamy, and no one pitied a man who was false to his country, with the example of Washington before him His fate ought never to be forgotten, because it furnishes incontestible evidence, that without integrity and prudence no man can ever become truly great He may rise to a certain height, but like the youth in classic fable, the moment he approaches the sunbeams of

temptation, the wax of his wings will melt, and he will fall never to rise again.

He who is despised or hated by his school-fellows, will seldom live to be respected or beloved by men. The bud that is cankered by the worm produces no full-blown rose; and the worthless child becomes the villain man. It appears, from subsequent investigations, that Arnold was an evil-disposed boy, and equally hated and feared by his associates. He was a tyrant and a traitor at the same time. He deceived them into confidence, and then punished them for their credulity. He led them into transgression, and became their accuser. My young readers may be almost sure, that he who in his youth pursues such a course as this, will end in guilt and crime. He may never be in a situation, like Arnold, to betray his country, but in whatever condition he may be placed, he will be equally mischievous and worthless. To check the earliest bend of the young plant is the only way to make it an upright and stately tree.

The vain prodigality of Arnold produced the want of money, and placed him in the way of temptation; for the clamours of the creditor are the whoopings of the owl, foreboding mischief and ruin. His wants led him to have recourse, while in Philadelphia, to the most irregular and unbecoming means of supplying them. This brought him into collision with the authorites of Pennsylvania, and under the censures of Congress. He demanded a trial, and was sentenced to be reprimanded by Washington. He possessed not the pride of integrity, but had his full share of that baser substitute which shrinks, not from the commission, but the exposure of crime. That pride was deeply wounded, and the mild lesson he received from his virtuous commander, instead of operating in favour of his reform, only determined him to deeper and darker transgressions.

It appears that either before, or shortly afterwards, he in-

vited a correspondence with the British in New York, and only waited to become worth buying to propose the purchase to Sir Henry Clinton. That opportunity offered itself when, at his solicitation, he was placed in command of the post of West Point, which was not only the key to the Highlands, but at that time the head-quarters of the American army, and the very stronghold of liberty. It was now that Arnold meditated the final consummation of his treason. In conjunction with Major John Andre, adjutant-general of the British army, he matured a plan which, had it been successfully executed, would in all probability have eventuated in the capture of the entire army, and all the military stores deposited at West Point. Sir Henry Clinton was to proceed by water to the Highlands with all his force, where he would find the American troops dispersed in situations which would render defence impossible and their capture certain. The absence of Washington in Connecticut furnished the favourable moment.

To give the last finish to this fatal scheme, the Vulture sloop of war was sent up the river, as near the Highlands as was prudent, bearing Andre to an interview with Arnold, who had come down to Haverstraw for this purpose. Accordingly they met, and settled the final preliminaries of this momentous project. But Providence, that seems ever to have watched over the liberties of the United States, interposed a series of obstacles, apparently trifling in themselves, but decisive in their consequences. Andre was to have been put on board the Vulture by daylight in the morning, but that vessel had been obliged to remove so far down the river, by a fire from the shore, from a small cannon, that the men appointed to row the boat, which belonged to a man of the name of Smith, refused to perform the task. They either feared detection, suspected something wrong, or were, as they pleaded, too much fatigued for such a service.

It then became necessary to provide for the return of Andre by land. The district of country between the Highlands and Kingsbridge, or Spiking Duyvel, was at that period neither in possession of the British or Americans. It was called "between the lines," and, like the borders of England and Scotland in former times, was subject to the inroads of both parties. That celebrated scholar and divine, the Reverend Timothy Dwight, President of Yale College, in his excellent travels through New England and New York, has given the following striking and affecting picture of the condition of this unfortunate people.

"In the autumn of 1777 I resided for some time in this county.* The lines of the British were then in the neighbourhood of Kingsbridge, and those of the Americans at Byram River. These unhappy people were therefore exposed to the depredations of both. Often were they actually plundered, and always were they liable to this calamity. They feared everybody they saw, and trusted nobody. They yielded with a kind of apathy, and very quietly, what was asked, and what they supposed it was impossible to retain. If you treated them kindly, they received it coldly, not as kindness, but as compensation for injuries done them by others. When you spoke to them, they answered without good or ill-nature, and without any reluctance or hesitation; but they subjoined neither questions nor remarks of their own; proving, to your full conviction, that they felt no interest in your conversation or yourself. Both their countenances and their motions had lost every trace of animation and of feeling. Their features were smoothed, not into serenity, but apathy; and instead of being settled in the attitude of quiet thinking, thoroughly indicated that all thought, beyond what was merely instinctive, had abandoned their minds.

"Their houses, in the mean time, were in a great measure

* Westchester.

of desolation. Their furniture was extensively plundered and broken to pieces. The walls, floors, and windows were injured by violence and decay, and were not repaired, because they had not the means of repairing them, or because they were every day exposed to a repetition of the same injuries. Their cattle were gone. Their enclosures were burnt, where they were capable of becoming fuel, and in every case thrown down where they were not. Their fields were covered with a rank growth of weeds and wild grass. Amid all this appearance of desolation, nothing struck my eye more forcibly than the sight of the great road,—the passage from New York to Boston. Where I had heretofore seen a succession of horses and carriages, and life and bustle lent a sprightliness to all the surrounding objects, not a single, solitary traveller was visible from week to week, or from month to month. The world was motionless, silent, and sad, except when one of those unhappy people ventured upon a rare and lonely excursion to the house of a neighbour no less unhappy. A scouting party, traversing the country in quest of enemies, alarmed the inhabitants with expectations of new injuries and sufferings. The very tracks of the carriages were overgrown or obliterated. The grass was of full length for the scythe, and strongly realized, to my mind, the proper import of that picturesque declaration of the song of Deborah: 'In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through by-paths. The inhabitants of the villages ceased—they ceased in Israel.'"

Such was the state of this devoted country. Yet still, as it was possible that Andre might encounter some of the Americans on his route to New York, it was determined, after much opposition on his part, that he should lay aside his uniform, and put on a disguise.

Thus voluntarily relinquishing his character of a soldier, he

was passed over to the east side of the river, and furnished by Smith with a horse. Smith also accompanied him as far as he thought necessary or prudent, and then, bidding him farewell, returned to his home. Andre pursued his way without meeting any interruption, or encountering a single obstacle, and was congratulating himself, as he afterwards declared, on being now in safety, when, in the act of crossing a little bridge, near the village of Tarrytown, he was stopped by a young man, dressed as a countryman, who darted out of the woods, and seized his bridle.

He was completely taken by surprise, and acted as men usually do in such situations. He asked the young man, whose name was John Paulding, where he came from? He replied, "From below," a phrase signifying that he came from the British posts in that direction. "And so do I," cried Andre, expecting to be immediately released But this confession betrayed him, and on the appearance of two other young men, who were called out by the first, he discovered his imprudence. It was then that he produced his pass from Arnold, which would have probably assured his release, but for the previous declaration, that he came "from below." He was taken into an adjoining wood, and searched, without making the least resistance; and nothing being found to excite suspicion, the young men began to waver under his threats of the vengeance of Arnold, should they detain him any longer.

Before they let him go, however, it was proposed to search his boots, which had hitherto escaped their attention; and now, for the first time, Andre turned pale. He discovered an unwillingness that excited suspicion, and they were obliged to resort to threats, before they could induce him to submit. On pulling off his right boot, a paper was discovered, which at once indicated his business. It was a plan of West Point, the disposition of the army, and of

every particular necessary to the success of Sir Henry Clinton. This, and other papers concealed in the boot, all in the handwriting of Arnold, disclosed the nature of Andre's mission, and at the same time the importance of the prize.

It was then that these three youths, scarcely at the age of manhood, and steeped to the very lips in poverty, resisted those temptations which had placed their names among the imperishable records of the times. They were the sons of reputable families in the county of Westchester, but they were poor, and their poverty had been rendered more pressing by the evils and excesses of war. Their parents lived "between the lines," and were equally subjected to the injuries of both parties. Andre offered them any reward they should demand, and pledged himself to remain as a hostage wherever they pleased, until the reward was received. "If you would give me ten thousand guineas, you should go nowhere but to headquarters,"* replied Paulding, and the sentiment was echoed by his companions.

As they proceeded to the quarters of Colonel Jameson, who, was the nearest officer, Andre remained at first silent and sad, until they stopped for refreshment at a small country inn.—Here he entered into some conversation with the young men and seemed more cheerful. During the rest of their journey, he scarcely uttered a word.

The capture of Andre disconcerted for ever the nefarious schemes of Arnold. Jameson, who seems to have been a weak and credulous man, permitted Andre to write him a letter announcing his capture, in the expectation, probably, that he would take measures for his release But the only use he made of his information was to flee with all speed, leaving his wife to the mercy of those he attempted to betray, and his name to their execrations. He succeeded in reaching the Vulture, whence he proceeded to New York. Here he

* Testimony at the trial of Andre.

met the rewards of that treason which the virtue of three poor youths had defeated; he received from the British general the rank he had forfeited in his own army; distinguished himself by his impertinence, his gasconade, and his cruelties; retired to England after the conclusion of the war, where he lived a life of mortification, poverty, and worthlessness, and died a death worthy of his never-ending infamy. His name remains, and I trust ever will remain, the blackest blot upon upon the annals of his country; and as he had no predecessor, so may he never have a successor to his vast inheritance of shame.

Andre, who had hitherto persisted in calling himself John Anderson, perceiving now the impossibility of further deception, wrote a letter to Washington, announcing his name and rank, and hinting that the treatment of certain prisoners taken at Charleston, might materially depend on that which he received. This avowal has been often, indeed, uniformly cited, as a proof of candour and magnanimity; but in reality there appears but little of either in avowing what can no longer be concealed. His subsequent conduct was manly and becoming; he was tried, condemned, and executed as a spy, amid the regrets of his enemies, who, softened by his youth, and penetrated by the circumstances of his inglorious death, lamented his fate, and heartily wished for some other victim.

By his countrymen he was considered a martyr to his loyalty, and by the Americans the hero of a romantic tale of unmerited misfortune. They forgot that he had been deep in a dastardly plot of treason against a people long struggling in vain for liberty, and now gasping in the toils of subjection; they voluntarily refused to remember that the success of his scheme would, in all probability, have almost ruined the cause, and to say the least, have added to the catalogue of their miseries other long years of suffering; and they only desired to remember the high-coloured picture of a young man of brilliant destinies,

perishing ignominiously in the outset of his career, under a gallows surrounded by enemies, who at that moment became his friends, and forgave him all he intended to do against them.

But the real heroes of this striking tale, are the honest and lowly youths who saved their country from such imminent perils, by the simple exercise of an incorruptible integrity, animated by an ardent patriotism. The factitious brilliancy thrown around Andre by his rank, his accomplishments, his manly firmness in dying, and the somewhat ostentatious display of rhetoric in his letters to Washington, fades into insignificance when compared with the noble spectacle of honest poverty resisting temptations, to which one of the most distinguished warriors of his country had just yielded. The moral lesson afforded by these almost boys, when they had no army to witness their honesty, and no world looking on to admire their self-denial, is one that cannot too deeply be impressed on the minds of my young readers, and it is for this reason I have dwelt on it with less brevity than the nature of the work otherwise requires. All who read these details may imitate the example, for there is no situation in life that precludes a man from doing his duty to his country. This is a call made on all mankind, from the highest to the lowest, and none can refuse to answer promptly, without violating one of the highest obligations of nature.

Washington honoured these young men with testimonies of his approbation; Congress bestowed on them a silver medal, an annuity, and a unanimous vote of thanks; the state of New York gave them each a farm, and the names of John Paulding, Isaac Van Wart, and David Williams, have ever since been quoted by their countrymen as synonymous with incorruptible integrity and honest patriotism. The example they afford cannot but be useful to the youth of my country, by showing that no station in life precludes them

from the exercise of the highest virtues, or from receiving from their country both gratitude and honours, when they deserve them.

CHAPTER XVI.

Opening of the Year 1781. Mutinies. Conduct of Washington, and his Motives. Commences a Journal. Extracts. Reprimand to his Overseer. Disputes between New-York and Vermont. Washington interposes his good offices effectually. Ruinous State of the Finances. Colonel Laurens sent to France. Letter of Washington. French and Dutch Loan. Promise of effectual co-operation on the part of France. Preparations for besieging New York. Washington departs for the South. Incursion of Arnold into Connecticut. Yorktown. Cornwallis invested. ... rank, ... joy of the People at the ... Newfoundland, ... nced ...

The year 1781 commenced with events more ominous of that total destruction of all the hopes of our country, than any the had preceded them. The patience and fortitude of the soldiers of the Revolution had been too sorely tried, and could endure no more. The army was now in winter-quarters in New Jersey, and among the Highlands of the Hudson, suffering many hardships and privations; stinted of food deficient in clothing, and without pay. The soldiers considered themselves, in some measure, abandoned by their country, which they, perhaps justly, accused of ingratitude; and a portion of them resolved no longer to fight for that freedom which promised nothing but poverty, debts, and a jail.

On the night of the first of January, a period usually devoted to festivity, the Pennsylvania line, amounting to thirteen hundred men, turned out under arms in their quarters, near Morristown, in New-Jersey, announcing their determination to march where Congress was sitting, and demand a redress of grievances. They declared they would throw down their arms

and return home, unless this was promptly granted; and neither the influence of their commander, General Wayne, nor of other distinguished officers, could deter them from their purpose. Their demands were, an immediate discharge to all who had served three years, an immediate payment of all arrearages, and pay in hard money to all who should choose to return to their duty. The whole body took up its line of march towards Princeton. The influence of their officers, the representations of Congress, and of the executive authorities of Pennsylvania, all proved ineffectual. They had received promises more than enough, and they now demanded their immediate performance.

However reprehensible may have been the conduct of these men, their subsequent course sufficiently proved that it did not originate in any unworthy motive. It was the consequence of personal hardships and suffering, not of disaffection or cowardice. When the fiery-spirited Wayne, their commander, threatened them with a cocked pistol, they exclaimed, with one voice, "General, we love you, we respect you, but if you fire you are a dead man. We are not going to desert to the enemy. Were he in sight at this moment, you would see us fight under your orders in defence of our country. We love liberty, but we cannot starve." Their after conduct proved the truth of these professions. When Sir Henry Clinton, hearing of these proceedings, despatched emissaries to tempt them to his side, by a promise of great rewards, they spurned the proposal, seized the tempters, and delivered them up to their general. Such behaviour as this, in some measure atoned for their desertion, and mingles admiration with censure.

Washington was at New Windsor, on the Hudson, immediately above the Highlands, when the news of the mutiny reached him, which was before the civil authorities of Pennsylvania had yielded in a great measure to the demands of the

mutineers. He was placed in a situation of great embarrassment. He equally felt the justice of the demands of the poor soldiers, and the danger of compliance. To deny them might be followed by perseverance in the course they had taken; to yield to threats, made with arms in their hands, would, beyond doubt, encourage others having equal cause of complaint to pursue a similar course.

Under these circumstances, he declined to interpose that personal authority and influence which had hitherto been so uniformly successful in quelling the discontents of his army. He despaired of success, and did not choose to risk a failure, which might give a decisive shock to his dominion over the minds of his soldiers, and be the forerunner of a habit of disobedience fatal to his authority, which he felt was mainly based on their affection and confidence. It is probable, too, that having failed from year to year in his exertions to impress upon Congress and the states the importance of a new and better organization of the army, as well as more attention to their wants, he might rationally conclude it was best to leave to the civil authorities the settlement of difficulties justly referable to their own conduct. They required a serious lesson in the shape of an example, since precept had failed in producing a reformation. No immediate danger could result from the withdrawal of the Pennsylvania line in the dead of winter, and now was, perhaps, the best time to impress upon Congress and the state authorities the absolute necessity of providing for the future pay and wants of the army.

He justly concluded, that if a compliance with their wishes was accorded to the mutinous soldiers, it had better be done by the civil power than the commander-in-chief, who, by yielding to the demands of soldiers with arms in their hands, would give an example fatal to the future discipline of the army and his own authority. Accordingly, he

contented himself with recommending to General Wayne a watchful vigilance over the movements of other portions of the army in his immediate vicinity, and advising him to draw the refractory line to the western side of the Delaware, for the purpose of rendering it more difficult for the enemy to tamper with them in their present state of excitement.

The executive council of Pennsylvania having yielded to the demands of the mutinous soldiers, the consequences of this successful violence soon became apparent in the conduct of the other divisions of the American army. A considerable portion of the Jersey brigade took up arms, turned out, and made demands similar to those so successfully asserted by their neighbours of Pennsylvania; and there was reason to fear that a general disaffection would ere long manifest itself by similar effects in other divisions.

Washington, who deliberated with great caution, acted with celerity when he had decided. He had foreseen the consequences of complying with demands which, though just, were ill-timed, and made in a manner destructive to all military discipline. Perceiving also that in all probability every additional example of successful mutiny would be a signal for others, he determined at once to take prompt and decisive measures towards the Jersey brigade. He directed the American General Howe to march against the new mutineers; to make no terms with them under any circumstances; and whether they surrendered their arms, or resisted by force, to seize and hang a few of their ringleaders in the presence of their confederates. No resistance was made to General Howe; the mutineers laid down their arms; two of the most active were shot, and the remainder returned to their duty to a country which nothing but a series of hardship and privations, difficult for the most patriotic to beat, had prompted them, in a moment of impatient suffering, to desert.

Presuming that these ominous lessons might carry with

them an influence which all his own unanswerable representations had failed to exercise, Washington seized this crisis to renew them. He wrote a circular letter, referring to the events just related, and urging on the states the fulfilment of their engagements to the suffering soldiery. While he reprehended their conduct, he pointed out the justice of their complaints. They were frequently in want of provisions, and one of the usual modes of procuring supplies, only to be justified by the law of necessity, was sending out parties to seize them wherever they were to be found. Such expedients, besides being necessarily uncertain, carry with them the grossest violation of the right of property, accompanied by insult and all the aggravations of lawless violence. Nothing can operate more powerfully to render a people disaffected to the noblest principles than a resort to such desperate measures; and that the inhabitants of the United States so generally remained faithful to a cause which entailed upon them the wrongs, not only of enemies, but of friends, is a proof of patriotism which should be remembered with gratitude by their posterity.

Believing, as I do, that the life and actions of Washington exhibit one series of the finest moral lessons to be found in those of any other hero, ancient or modern, and that his military fame, high as it is, must yield the palm to his wisdom and his virtues, I am the more solicitous to dwell on those situations which, though they perhaps may not excite the admiration of such as delight only in brilliant victories and boundless conquests, are far more worthy the imitation of mankind. It is my peculiar object to make my young readers fully sensible of his patriotism, his fortitude, his patience, his forbearance, his firmness, his perseverance, his integrity, and his disinterestedness. I wish to show them that there has been at least one man in the world who could not only resist the long-continued torrent of difficulties, disappointments, and mortifi-

cations which are accustomed to overpower others; but, what is far more rare and admirable, triumph without effort over the allurements of that fatal ambition, which, like the dragon in the Revelation, has drawn a third, yea, ninety-nine in a hundred, of the stars from heaven, and cast them to the earth.

In estimating the greatness of his character, we are not to consider the vastness of his actions, but the difficulties of their performance, and the great qualities necessary to vanquish them. In this respect he stands superior to all who have yet followed him: and as the consequences of his actions have been, and are likely to be, more lasting and beneficial than those of any patriot of any age or country, so were they the result of a rare combinations of virtue and intellect, that places him on a level with the mighty train of events to which he so materially assisted in giving birth. For these reasons, I dwell most particularly on those difficulties which called forth his virtues, and furnished their best illustration.

While thus surrounded by half-starved, half-clothed, mutinous soldiers, Washington, during the winter of 1781, commenced a military journal, the contents of which are peculiarly interesting. It begins with enumerating the wants of his army. While dwelling on this melancholy record, my youthful readers, should they reflect a single moment, cannot but pause, with mingled sympathy and admiration, on the man who, in the midst of such difficulties, never despaired. For myself, it is only since I first entered on this attempt to delineate the character of the Father of his Country, that I have become fully sensible of his claim to that most noble and affecting of all titles a nation or a monarch can bestow. Had he served the latter, he might perhaps have become a noble; but the goddess of liberty, through the universal voice of her votaries, bestowed on him a title greater than that of Monarch of the World. He thus gives the summary of his means, or rather his deficiencies:—

Instead of having magazines filled with provisions, he had only a scanty pittance, scattered at far distances, and often out of his reach.

Instead of arsenals well supplied, he had scarcely any, and these the workmen were fast abandoning for want of pay.

Instead of necessary field-equipage, the quarter-master-general was just at the time applying to the states to provide it.

Instead of a regular system of transportation, and funds to defray the expense, he had neither one nor the other. The whole was done by a resort to coercion; forcing the people to contribute the means, and thus souring their tempers and alienating their affections.

Instead of regiments, completed according to the recommendations of Congress, and his own urgent remonstrances, scarcely a single state had more than one-eighth of its quota in the field.

"In a word" he adds, "instead of having every thing in readiness to take the field we have nothing; and instead of having the prospect of a glorious offensive campaign before us, we have a bewildered apprehension of a defensive one, unless we should receive a powerful aid of ships, troops, and money from our generous allies, and these at present are too contingent to depend upon."

In this situation, labouring under the weight of difficulties, not one of which can be traced to any neglect of his own, and which year after year he had laboured to prevent, Washington remained true to himself and his country. He neither remitted his zeal nor his exertions, but continued right onward in the path pointed out by his high destinies and duty. His determination strengthened with his difficulties, and that which discouraged others only animated him to persevere. He had faith in himself, faith in the justice of his cause, faith in the

protection of Heaven, and he went forward on his dark career, hoping every day to emerge into a clearer sky and a brighter sunshine.

During the campaign of 1781, the war raged principally in the neighbourhood of New York, and in the South. It brought with it little success, and awakened no new hopes. Washington remained in the North, hoping to be able to take advantage of the diminution of British force in the former place, in consequence of the large detachments sent against the latter. All he could, he did, by giving his best advice to Congress, and to the officers in command at the South, and using every effort to employ Sir Henry Clinton in the North in such a way as to prevent his still further reinforcing Cornwallis in the Carolinas. He even diminished his own little force in the Highlands, by sending important relief to that quarter, now groaning under the weight of a powerful and vigorous invader.

His manly disinterestedness appeared, not only in thus divesting himself of the means of acquiring glory, perhaps of the power of avoiding defeat and disgrace, but in a private act which deserves equally to be remembered. While the British fleet was lying in the Potomac, in the vicinity of Mount Vernon, a message was sent to the overseer, demanding a supply of fresh provisions. The usual penalty of a refusal was setting fire to the house and barns of the owner. To prevent this destruction of property, the overseer, on receipt of the message, gathered a supply of provisions, and went himself on board with a flag, accompanying the present with a request that the property of the general might be spared.

Washington was exceedingly indignant at this proceeding, as will appear by the following extract of a letter to his overseer.

"It would," he writes, "have been a less painful circumstance to me to have heard that, in consequence of your non-

compliance with the request of the British, they had burned my house, and laid my plantation in ruins. You ought to have considered yourself as my representative, and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy, and making a voluntary offer of refreshment to them with a view to prevent a conflagration."

To the diminution of his forces, and the increasing disaffection of those that remained under his command, was now added a quarrel between the states of Vermont and New York, originating in a dispute about their respective boundaries. Congress had interfered by an act of mediation, which did not satisfy either party and of consequence produced only additional irritation. Washington at once saw the consequences of a division of the state and with that paternal solicitude which, more than any thing else, entitles him to the appellation of Father of his Country, wrote to the Governor of Vermont, desiring to know the real grounds of the controversy, and the designs of the people of that state. The governor frankly replied, that "they were determined not to be placed under the government of New York; that they would oppose this by force of arms, and join with the British in Canada rather than submit to that government." Such a resolution as this menaced the dissolution of the confederacy, and consequent ruin of the cause in which so much blood had been shed, and so many hardships endured. In this state of things, Washington addressed another letter to the Governor of Vermont, characterized by such a temperate wisdom, such a weight of argument, such nice impartiality, and such profound good sense, that it wrought upon the Legislature of Vermont to pause, and finally to accept the propositions of Congress. The danger which menaced the ruin of our home and our country was thus arrested; and again were they indebted, in a great degree, for their preservation to the guardian spirit of wisdom, virtue, and moderation which had so often watched

over them in the hour of peril and darkness. It was not alone in the day of battle that his decisive influence was seen and felt. It was active, vigilant, and untiring, everywhere and at all times; and whether the storm approached from within or from without, whether by night or by day, it ever found him active and at the helm, ready and able to protect the ship equally from the mountain wave, the secret rock, or boiling whirlpool.

The campaign of 1780, which had ended without advantage, commenced with little prospect of better times in 1781. The genius of Washington was naturally ardent, if not impetuous, and though through the whole course of the war he had been compelled to act on the defensive, the history of his life and actions proves, that when opportunity offered, or circumstances justified it, he always preferred decisive measures to cautious delays. It was necessity alone that prevented his giving, rather than avoiding battle. He never turned his back on an enemy, except when it was madness to face him. He felt that the destinies of his country were confided to his care, and that for the gratification of his own personal feelings, or the chance of gaining a brilliant renown, he had no right to gamble with such a mighty stake. Hence we find him continually risking his own fame by cautious delays and timely retreats, but never the safety of his country by intemperate rashness. The course of other heroes is only marked by tombs and desolation. They left nothing behind them but ruins, while the fruit of his labours is an emancipated world.

One great object of his solicitude had always been to dislodge the British from the city of New York; and, as has been before related, this was the basis of the plan first presented to the French admiral, on his arrival in this country. That object was prevented by an accession of force to the British fleet, which deprived the French of the superiority ne-

cessary to its success. But it was not relinquished by Washington, who was fully aware of the great advantages which the British derived from the possession of a central port, accessible at all seasons of the year, and situated at the mouth of a great river, the command of which, could it be completely attained, would separate the confederation of the states into two parts, and prevent their co-operation with each other.

Thus, whenever Sir Henry Clinton diminished his force in New York by detachments to the South or East, Washington was on the watch to take advantage of the occasion; justly considering that the fall of that city would, in all probability, be decisive of the war. A plan for this purpose had been drafted at Hartford, by himself, Count Rochambeau, and other officers of distinction, and it was, while absent on this occasion, that Arnold took the opportunity of arranging his treasonable plot with Major Andre.

The finances of the United States were now in a desperat condition. Paper-money was worth absolutely nothing, and they had no other. Credit was so far exhausted, that the farmers had no longer any faith in the promises of Congress. The event of the great struggle for liberty seemed every day more and more doubtful, and should it prove disastrous, those promises would be of no value. In this state of things Colonel Laurens, an ardent patriot, a gallant soldier, and an accomplished gentleman, was deputed by Congress to represent their difficulties to the court of France.

He carried with him a letter from Washington, stating in clear and distinct terms the situation of affairs, and the prospects of the future. It set forth that the United States had been compelled to a series of exertions beyond their strength, and of contributions which had exhausted their natural resources; that any revenue they were capable of raising would be entirely insufficient to enable them to continue that war;

that forced contributions had, from necessity, been frequently resorted to, and, if continued longer, would entirely alienate the affections of the people, and produce a revolution in the public feeling fatal to the success of the allies; that besides this serious objection, the temporary supplies thus procured were totally inadequate to the wants of the army; that the patience of the troops was entirely exhausted, and mutinies of a serious and alarming nature had occurred in consequence; that a loan of money by France was absolutely necessary to revive public credit, and give vigour to future operations; and that, next to this, a naval superiority in the American seas was equally indispensable to the success of any enterprise that might be undertaken.

He also urged the capacity of the United States to repay any loan that might be granted, they having both resources and inclination. These representations, aided by the favourable influence of the ability and address of Colonel Laurens and the weight of Franklin, then minister to the court of Versailles, proved successful. The French government loaned six milions of livres, and guarantied the payment of ten millions from the States of Holland. In addition to this, the promise of a powerful naval support was pledged.

Accordingly, in the following spring an armament of twenty-five sail of the line, having on board a considerable body of land forces, sailed from the port of Brest, destined to assist in putting the last hand to a struggle that had now endured for seven long, suffering, and wearisome years. Preparatory to the arrival of this reinforcement despatches were received by Count Rochambeau, and an interview was had shortly after at Wethersfield, between the count and Washington, accompained by some of their principal officers. Here a definitive plan was agreed upon for the ensuing campaign, the principal point of which was an attack on New York, immediately on the arrival of Count de Grasse.

Washington, in order that he might be enabled to co-operate with the French force on this occasion in a manner that might not disgrace the cause and the country, now once again urged the eastern states, and others deficient in their respective quotas of troops, to fill up their ranks, and hold them in readiness when occasion required. The French and American forces were now in motion. The former marched from Rhode Island, and Washington left his quarters in the Highlands, from whence he removed towards Kingsbridge. General Lincoln fell down at the same time with a body of troops in boats, and took possession of the site of old Fort Independence. In consequence of these combined movements the enemy left his outposts, and concentrated his whole force on York Island. Nothing was now wanting to the commencement, and in all probability final accomplishment, of a great object which Washington had long cherished, but the presence of a superior French fleet. The enemy would then have been cooped up in the city, and a scene which was not long afterwards acted at Yorktown, in Virginia, might have been exhibited in New York, in the state of that name.

Every preparation within the power of Washington was made to render the success of this decisive measure certain. But it was ever his destiny to attempt great objects with little means. In spite of all his representations to the executive authorities of the states, when the expected time of action came his army was augmented only a few hundred men beyond the number that had left their winter-quarters in the Highlands. He appeared before the officers and soldiers of the allies, with whom he had, in some degree, covenanted an efficient support, as one who had forfeited his engagements, and promised what he either could not or would not perform. He blushed for his country, and his great spirit, which neither misfortune, nor disappointment, nor danger, nor difficulty could daunt, bowed down at the suspicion of a want of faith.

But it was only for a moment. Such was his character for honour and truth, that none ever thought of blaming him for these deficiencies; and such his noble consciousness of always doing the best for his country, that even disappointment could not long cast him down.

But while the rulers of the states were thus deficient in the performance of their duties, a higher Power was watching over the great interests of freedom, and converting the usual causes of defeat into the means of achieving a glorious victory. Fortunately, the omission of the states to send their recruits in time, had delayed the commencement of the siege of New York until the last of July. At this period Cornwallis, in consequence of having been hard pushed by Greene, had taken a position near the Capes of Virginia. A brief summary of the causes that led to the retreat of Cornwallis from the Carolinas, is not only proper to enable my young readers to comprehend the present situation of affairs, but in justice to the singular merits of the distinguished officer by whose consummate skill and gallantry that decisive event was brought about.

After the fortunate failure of the intrigue to displace Washington and appoint General Gates to the command-in-chief, that officer was sent to defend South Carolina, then pressed by the enemy, and in a state of imminent danger. His conduct in the South did not sustain the reputation he had gained in North, and he soon verified the prediction of his fellow-soldier, General Charles Lee, who foretold that his northern laurels would wither in the southern sun. He imprudently risked battle, was signally defeated at Camden by Cornwallis, and driven out of South Carolina. In this disastrous battle perished the Baron De Kalb, a brave Prussian soldier, who had voluntarily sought our shores for the purpose of giving the aid of his courage and experience to the cause of freedom.

At the head of the continental troops, who alone stood the brunt of the battle, the militia having fled ignominiously at the

first fire, he maintained a gallant resistance for nearly an hour, during which the bayonet was several times resorted to on both sides. He fell at length, fighting in front of his troops, covered with eleven wounds, and was received into the arms of Colonel De Buisson, who was bayoneted while demanding quarter for his general. The brave old soldier expired shortly after: the last act of his life was dictating a letter bearing honourable testimony to the bravery of his troops, and his latest breath was spent in expressing his attachment to the cause in the support of which he laid down his life. His services and his death entailed a debt of gratitude on South Carolina which she has lately repaid by the honourable testimony of a monument to his memory.

A few months after the affair of Camden, Congress passed a resolution directing Washington to institute a court of inquiry into the conduct of the man, who, not long before, a considerable number of its members had thought worthy of superseding him. They likewise authorized him to appoint another officer to succeed General Gates in the southern command, without designating any one. This gave Washington an opportunity of exercising his own judgment, which he did in a manner that, while it displayed his sagacity, merited the gratitude of the country. To a delegate from South Carolina he wrote, "I think I am giving you a general; but what can a general do without men, without arms, without clothing, without stores, without provisions?"

The officer selected was General Nathaniel Greene, born at Warwick, in the state of Rhode Island, of a respectable family of Friends, whose doctrine of non-resistance he abjured at the call of his country. In his youth he is said to have been of a grave, steady, reflecting character, fond of study, and especially devoted to the military science. He had attained a high station as a merchant, when the battle of Lexington roused the spirit of every American that had any spirit, and,

immediately after, we find Greene at the head of three regiments at Cambridge, with the rank of brigadier-general. He soon attracted the particular notice of Washington, who saw into the souls of men, and in 1776 was raised to the rank of major-general. He distinguished himself at Trenton, Princeton, Germantown, Monmouth, Rhode Island, and everywhere that opportunity offered, and gradually rose to the highest rank in the estimation of Washington, as well as of his country.

Congress having delegated the task to the commander-in-chief, he appointed General Greene to the army of the South, a station that promised little else than defeat and disgrace. But it was given in the confidence of friendship, and accepted with the ardour of patriotism. The country was overrun, if not subjugated, by the enemy. The disaffected were in arms against their country, and those who loved, almost despaired of her safety. A foreign enemy was lording it over all the low country, an internal one betraying it on every side. Marion, Sumpter, Moultrie, Pickens, Hol Shelby, Cleveland, and other gallant soldiers, occasionally, ino. d, checked the career of Rawdon, Tarlton, and Ferguson, while the Rutledges, the Pinckneys, and other noble patriots, still stood firm at the helm, though the vessel was reeling. But, whatever might be their talents and their will, they could not make head against a superior and veteran army, furnished with every thing necessary to effective warfare, flushed with success, and commanded by an active general, who had been taught by Washington, at Trenton and Princeton, not to sleep on his post.

Such is briefly a sketch of the situation of affairs when General Greene undertook what seemed the almost hopeless task of recovering the country from the hands of the enemy. But there is nothing impossible to valour, activity, and prudence. Aided by Morgan and Howard, and those brave spirits

just named, he commenced the task, which he accomplished in a manner to merit the lasting gratitude of his country, and the second place in its heart. His defeats were turned into victories by the bravery with which he fought, and the skill and activity by which he retrieved his fortunes. Cornwallis gained a bloody field, and nothing else. His first step after winning a battle was to retreat, for his enemy seemed to rise stronger from every blow. Brave, persevering, skilful, and indefatigable, General Greene appeared to live without sleep or repose; and during the space of months that the fate of the South hung on every passing moment, he never once changed his garments.

At length the moment arrived. Having been obliged to cross the river Congaree, he was followed by Lieutenant-Colonel Stewart, who took post at Eutaw Springs, among the the High Hills of Santee. Here he was attacked by Greene, and received a severe check, decisive of the war in that quarter of the Union. Previous to this well-contested action, Lord Cornwallis had abandoned the Carolinas for Virginia, and after various fortunes entrenched himself at York Town, agreeably to the directions of Sir Henry Clinton. Thus, with a handful of soldiers, new-raised, half-clothed, half-armed, and often half-starved, but at the same time brave, determined, and persevering, did this distinguished officer, nobly aided by the patriots of the South, in the space of nine months chase from their conquests a veteran army, superior in numbers, every way abundantly supplied, and commanded by officers of great activity and experience. Often was he obliged to ask bread of his own soldiers, when they were themselves on the verge of starving. Like his great example and leader, he never despaired. When, in the lowest state of his affairs, he was advised to retire into Virginia, his reply was "I will recover South Carolina or die."

General Greene was rather above the middle size, of a fine

person, dignified demeanour, keen quick eye, a quicker apprehension, a mind capable of grasping the most comprehensive schemes, and arranging the most discordant materials. He possessed unconquerable firmness and determination; his disposition was equally frank and sincere; his principles those of the highest integrity; his manners kind and unaffected, and his whole deportment that of a polished gentleman. He died in the state of Georgia, of a stroke of the sun, in the forty-seventh year of his age, leaving behind him a name and fame, lasting as the high hills of Santee, and pure as the Eutaw Springs.

About the period that Cornwallis took post at Yorktown, Sir Henry Clinton received a reinforcement of three thousand Germans in New York. This increased his strength to such an extent as to make it an almost hopeless attempt on the part of Washington to commence the siege, to which he had so long anxiously looked forward. Intelligence being also received from Count de Grasse that his destination was Chesapeake Bay, these circumstances contributed to produce a total change in the whole plan of the campaign. Washington directed his attention to the South, and the attack on New-York was abandoned.

But still the appearance of such a design was carefully kept up for the purpose of deceiving Sir Henry Clinton, and preventing his sending succours to Cornwallis, who it appears had strongly urged him, and received his promise of large reinforcements. The design of Washington was rendered completely successful by a perseverance on his part in all the usual preparations for a siege, and most especially by the fortunate interception of a letter written by him at the time when it was really his intention to attack New York, detailing minutely the plan of the intended operations against the city. Nothing could be more fortunate than the destination of this letter. It fortified Sir Henry so strongly in the impression that a siege

and the facility of receiving reinforcements from Sir Henry Clinton.

The arrival of Count de Grasse with twenty-five ships of the line destroyed one ground of hope, and the delays of Sir Henry were equally fatal to the other. He saw himself besieged by a superior army, animated by the hope, nay, the certainty of success, and inspired by a noble emulation; every day increased his difficulties, and diminished his hopes of succour; new batteries were raised on all sides against him, while his own defences fell, one after another the Americans and French vied in acts of gallantry; and at the expiration of a few days his situation became desperate. On the nineteenth of October, 1781, a second British army deposited its arms at the feet of American soldiers, and the plain of York became for ever illustrious as the spot where the struggle for liberty was finally closed, and the award of Providence given in favour of its defenders.

The actors in the closing scene of that great revolution, whose consequences are beyond all calculation as to the future, deserve to be remembered with honour. It is needless to mention Washington. He was the soul that animated the war, the genius which directed it, the presiding spirit of valour, prudence, and decision. Among the bright, though lesser stars, was Lafayette, the steady friend, the gallant soldier, the virtuous patriot; Hamilton, whose genius equally fitted him for whatever he undertook, whether in war or in peace; Laurens, the Chevalier Bayard of the South; Viomenil, Lincoln, Knox, Du Portail, Steuben, Rochefontaine, and many others who deserved well of our country, and bore a brave hand in her deliverance. Nor must the name of Nelson be forgotten on this occasion. At the head of the militia of Virginia his gallantry was not a whit behind that of the regulars, and his patriotic disinterestedness deserves to be remembered among the honourable examples of the war.

He possessed the finest house in York, which was occupied by the enemy. Perceiving that, from a delicate consideration for his interests, the American artillerists avoided directing their pieces to that particular spot, he proclaimed a reward of a guinea for every shot that should be lodged in his house. In a few minutes it became too hot for the occupants, and was abandoned, though not before it had been well riddled with balls.

The force surrendered by Cornwallis amounted to more than seven thousand men, with a train of upwards of one hundred and sixty pieces of cannon. The site where the British laid down their arms is still pointed out by the people of York; and the scene itself was grand and affecting. The captured army marched to the spot in silence, and was received in silence by crowds of spectators, French and Americans, who lined the path through which they passed. The latter preserved a high and magnanimous decorum; not a smile was seen, or a word heard, indicative of triumph or exultation; and all seemed struck with the contrast so often presented in the vicissitudes of human life. The terror of the wives and children of our country, the active and indefatigable Cornwallis, the boasted conqueror of the South, was now about to deliver his army and his sword into the hands of those he had always considered in the light of rebels to their sovereign. All eyes were turned in one direction, in expectation of his coming; but he came not. He shrunk from this trial of manhood, and deputed General O'Hara as his substitute in this humiliating trial. The scene had scarcely closed when Sir Henry Clinton appeared at the mouth of the Chesapeake with a reinforcement equal in number to those who had just laid down their arms. But he came, like the sunshine after the storm, not to repair, but to witness the devastation. The news arrived that all was over with Cornwallis and

his army, and the British commander returned again to New York.

The capture of Cornwallis awakened a thrill of rapture from one end of the United States to the other. It was everywhere hailed as the finishing stroke of the war, the end of a long series of hardships and sufferings. There was scarcely a city, town, or sequestered village throughout the whole wide circuit of the Confederation that had not felt the scourge of war; few were the fields that escaped ravaging, or the houses that had not been plundered, and few the citizens but had suffered in their persons or property. The whirlwind had not confined itself to one narrow track of devastation; it had crossed and recrossed its track in every direction, and wheresoever it passed, left its mark of ruin behind.

No wonder then that the prospect of being for ever relieved from this scourge of nations, and of winning the great prize for which all these sufferings had been patiently endured, awakened the pulse of the whole people, and caused their eyes to sparkle and their cheeks to glow. At the dead of the night, a watchman in the streets of Philadelphia was heard to cry out, "Past twelve o'clock, and a pleasant morning—Cornwallis is taken." All but the dead resting in their last sleep, awoke at this glorious annunciation. The city became alive at midnight; the candles were lighted, and figures might be seen flitting past the windows, or pushing them up, to hear the sound repeated, lest it should have been nothing but a dream. The citizens ran through the streets to inquire into the truth; they shook hands, they embraced each other, and they wept for joy. None slept again that night, and the dawn of the morning, which brought new confirmation of the happy tidings, shone on one of the most exulting cities that ever basked in the sunshine of joy.

The news ran like fire on the prairies along every road, and through every by-place of the land. It seemed to fly on the

wings of the wind, or to be borne by some invisible messenger, No one could tell from whence it came, but it came invested with a charm that rendered confirmation unnecessary. Everybody believed it, for all, even in the darkest days of the Revolution, had cherished a hope, which carried with it almost the force of inspiration, that Washington would, beyond all doubt, one day give liberty to his country. That hour was now come, and the souls of the people expanded with unutterable joy. For years they had stared misery in the face, and suffered in its iron grasp. They had reaped many harvests of bitterness, and they now expected to reap those of peace and plenty. They had passed through the dark valley of the shadow of death, and were now about to emerge into the regions of light. There was but one single united voice throughout the whole land, and that shouted the name of Washington the Deliverer of his Country.

CHAPTER XVII.

Events following the Capture of Cornwallis. The Combined Armies separate. Washington at Newburgh. Proceedings of the Army. His Address to the Officers, and its Effects. Reflections on the conduct of Washington on that occasion.

The capture of Cornwallis and his army may be considered the concluding scene of that great drama which had agitated a considerable portion of the Christian world, and of which it yet feels, and long will feel, the consequences. The revolutionary struggle of the States had finally involved France, Spain, and Holland in hostilities with England, and its termination brought with it peace in the Old as well as the New World. The plan of operations against Yorktown was conceived with profound wisdom, and conducted with a skill and

vigour which, combined with good fortune, produced the signal success it deserved.

The day which succeeded an event so great in itself and its consequences, was signalized by the pardon and release of all officers and soldiers under arrest, and divine service was ordered by Washington to be performed in the different brigades and divisions. The whole army offered up its thanks with once voice to the God of battles, who had enabled them a second time to capture its enemies. The scene was solemn and affecting in the highest degree; the soldier laid down those arms with which he had conquered man, at the foot of the throne of that good Being who created him, and bent his knee in humble gratitude.

This duty being performed, the combined armies separated to go into winter quarters, after exchanging a final farewell. A portion of the French forces departed, under Count de Grasse, for the West Indies, and the remainder, under Count Rochambeau, remained in Virginia until the spring, when it left the country, followed by the blessings of those whom it had assisted to become free. Whoever may question the motives of the French government for co-operating with the Americans in their revolutionary struggle, it cannot be denied that our country owes France a debt of gratitude. Whatever were the benefits ultimately derived from her good offices, or whether they resulted from policy or friendship, the debt is substantially the same. Mankind have no right to vitiate the motives for a friendly act as an excuse for becoming ungrateful.

Washington, after separating from the French army, pursued his way to the North, and resumed his old position on the Hudson, for the purpose of being ready to act, if necessary, against Sir Henry Clinton on the opening of the campaign. Though hoping the war was now brought to a close, he did not in the least remit his exertions to be prepared for

its renewal. He saw the necessity of being ready for another campaign. "I shall endeavour," he writes to General Greene, who so nobly distinguished himself in the war of the South—"I shall endeavour to stimulate Congress to the best improvement of our success, by taking the most vigorous and effectual measures to be ready for an early and decisive campaign the next year. My greatest fear is, that, viewing this stroke in a point of light which may too much magnify its importance, they may think our work too nearly closed, and fall into a state of languor and relaxation. To prevent this error I shall employ every means in my power; and if unhappily we fall into this fatal mistake, no part of the blame shall be mine."

Thus wisely did he ever seek to guard against the delusions of hope, as he had hitherto resisted the impulses of despair. But Congress either did not partake in his apprehensions, or neglected to provide against their consequences. The country would have been in a state probably worse than it was before, had the British government resolved on continuing the war, and made its preparations accordingly. But from the receipt of the news of the capture of Cornwallis, the ministry ceased to carry a majority of the House of Commons in favour of such a measure. Various motions were made for putting an end to the war, and finally a majority of that body passed a resolution, declaring "That the House would consider as enemies to his majesty and to the country all those who should advise or attempt the further prosecution of offensive war on the continent of America." The command of the British forces in this country was given to Sir Guy Carleton, with instructions to prepare the way for an accommodation by every proper means in his power.

That officer accordingly opened a correspondence with Congress, earnestly proposing the appointment of commissioners

on their part to negociate a reconciliation. By the terms of the treaty of alliance between the United States and France, neither party could conclude a separate peace without the consent of the other, and the negociations were transferred to Paris. Here, on the 30th of November, 1782, the provisional articles of a treaty were agreed on by John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, and Henry Laurens, on the part of the United States, and Messrs. Fitzherbert and Oswald on behalf of Great Britain. The definitive treaty of peace was, however, not finally ratified until the 30th of September, 1783. It recognised the independence of the United States, and for ever abrogated the claims of Great Britain to the sovereignty.

Thus, after a series of sacrifices as great as was perhaps ever made by any nation for the attainment of freedom, and an accumulation of sufferings, hardships, disappointments, and aggravated difficulties, which could only have been borne by a brave, steady, and virtuous people, the United States won for themselves a station among the independent nations of the earth. The price was high, but the blessing was well worth the purchase. It was liberty, without which man is little better in spirit and intellect than the brute that perishes. It is to liberty the people of the United States are indebted for all they are, all they will ever be. If, judging as we have a right to do, of the future by the past, the United States are, as I trust they are, destined to become, at no distant period, a rare and memorable example of successful enterprise, intellectual vigour, patriotic spirit, social virtue, and unequalled prosperity, if they ever justify by their future happiness and glory the predictions of philosophers and the hopes of the world, it will be owing entirely to their continuing to cherish in their heart of hearts, that liberty which was purchased for them by the blood of their fathers, aided by the virtue and heroism of Washington.

It might have been supposed, now that the great battle had

been fought and won, the country would have quietly reposed from its long struggles in the arms of peace, and that Washington might now be permitted to return to Mount Vernon, to enjoy the long-coveted blessings of retirement, under the shade of his laurels. But though the wind no longer whistled, the waves had not yet subsided.

As the excitement of war died away, and the soldiers of the revolution ceased to fear for the safety and independence of their country, they began to think of themselves. Previously discontented by what they considered the neglect of Congress to provide for their wants, and pay them their dues, they now became violently agitated by indignation and despair, when it was known they were about to be disbanded in all probability without their just demands being complied with. They had already petitioned Congress, and deputed a committee of officers to represent their claims to that body. Both their apprehensions and indignation had been aggravated by neglect and delay. Hitherto nothing had been done to quiet their fears, or administer to their necessities.

In this critical state of affairs, when nothing but pouring oil on the troubled waters could have allayed their fury, an anonymous paper was circulated among the troops at that time assembled at Newburgh and its vicinity, inviting a meeting of the general and field-officers for the purpose of consulting on the measures most effectual for procuring that redress of grievances, which they had hitherto solicited in vain. This paper was accompanied by an address to the officers of the army, most eminently and adroitly calculated to produce mischief.

It pleaded the motives and services of the writer; the claims of the soldiers of the revolution; the cold neglect of Congress; and urged the probability of a final refusal to comply with their just requisitions. It painted the situation of the officers and soldiers, if they suffered themselves to be dis-

banded and sent home to enjoy the remnant of a miserable life in rags, poverty, and contempt; it called upon them to "*carry their appeal from the justice to the fears of the government;*" and it distinctly pointed out the course proper to be pursued by the army in case of a "war" with Congress. It recommended that, "*courting the auspices, and inviting the direction of their illustrious leader, they should retire to some unsettled wilderness, smile in their turn, and mock when their fear cometh.*" The whole of this address was couched in strong and glowing terms. It had one bad recommendation; it suited the feelings of the army and the purposes of the writer, and may thus far lay claim to the admiration it has received, as a piece of eloquent declamation.

When the minds of men are balancing on the very extremes of passionate impatience, a feather will turn the scale; and thus an address which would have brought men moderately excited to their senses, by the violence of its suggestions, inflamed the irritated soldiers almost to madness. Such was the extreme excitement at this, one of the most dangerous moments in the existence of our country, that a fiery address which in ordinary times would have been perfectly innoxious, now operated like a spark which, destined only to live for a moment, produces a conflagration, the effects of which are seen for ages afterwards.

At no period in the life of Washington was he placed in a situation to test more severely his sterling integrity and patriotism. The advice of the writer of the address to the army had too plainly indicated what was expected from him in case their demands were not satisfied. It was evident it was anticipated that he would finally lend himself to the views of the writer, and if called upon by the troops, become their leader in overthrowing that newly-erected edifice of liberty, of which he was the great architect. Whatever may have been the sincerity of the writer of this address in recommend-

ing a retirement "*to some unsettled wilderness*," it must be evident to all, that had the army rebelled against the constituted authorities of the country, it would not have retired to the wilderness unless driven there. A civil war would have been the consequence, and despotism is ever the result of civil war. Had Washington been like the vast herd of heroes that deform the pages of history, he might, perhaps, by taking advantage of the discontents of the army, have become the subjugator instead of the deliverer of his country. He might have sunk into a king, and exhibited one more example of the folly of perverted ambition. But he was a hero of a new species, destined to become the head of a great school, not to follow the lead of others.

The most dangerous feature in the present aspect of things, was that the demands of the army were just. They had a right to what they asked, and the universal sentiment of the people was in their favour. It was impossible to coerce such men with such claims, and arms in their hands to assert them. This was no time to use force, had force been at his command; and if it had, Washington would have scarcely resorted to it, for in his heart he pitied, if he did not justify his own faithful soldiers. They waited patiently till they had achieved the great prize of the revolution, and now they only demanded what every one acknowledged was their due. It would have been cruel to punish such men.

The indirect allusion to marching under his auspices had no temptation for his glorious ambition, nor would it if the prospect of a boundless empire had been open before him. He was no hero except in a virtuous cause, and even had he known no other impulse of action than that of base selfishness, he must have felt that he had already acquired a diadem and an empire richer than that of all the Cæsars.

With a temperate wisdom, which works almost all the wonders of this world, he took his measures to counteract the

effects of this inflammatory address, not by forbidding the meeting it recommended, but by issuing a general order for the same purpose. The meeting thus proposed by him, was to take place a few days before that designated in the anonymous address, and the intermediate time was employed in soothing the feelings of the impatient troops, as well as smoothing the way to more moderate measures. Washington communed with each individual officer privately, and never was the sublime influence of his personal character more finely exemplified than in the result of these interviews. Some of the officers were observed to come out of his room with the traces of tears on their cheeks, and others seemed bowed down by the weight of irresistible conviction.

His own self-poised and manly spirit also yielded to the affecting crisis which had now arrived. He was about to use that influence which eight years of common service and common suffering had given him over his old companions in arms, to persuade them to go home and starve. There were among them grey-headed soldiers, on whom life was almost closing, and who were long past the time for beginning the world anew. Others had become prematurely old by wounds, and hardships, and exposures; their heads had waxed white before their time. All had been his faithful followers throughout the whole or a greater part of the long, lingering war that gave freedom to their country; and as he looked in their care-worn, weather-beaten faces, he recognised many a one to whom he was indebted for good service in the hour of danger. As he cast his eyes around on the war-worn band he had called together, his eyes became dim, and he said, "I am growing old in my country's service, and losing my sight; but I never doubted its justice or its gratitude."

He then proceeded to address them in the language of a father instructing his children, with the wisdom of age and the kindness of paternal love; he appealed to their reason, their

feelings, and their patriotism; he allayed their irritation by encouraging hopes; dwelt on the cheerful assistance and manly obedience he had always received, and now expected to receive, from them; exposed with a just severity the mischievous incitements of the anonymous writer of the address, who was most likely an emissary of the enemy: and finally pledged that word which was never forfeited, to exert himself promptly, vigorously, and on all occasions to procure them speedy justice.

In conclusion, he exclaims—"Let me conjure you, in the name of our common country, as you value your sacred honour, as you respect the rights of mankind, and as you regard the military and national character of America, to express your utmost horror and detestation of the man who wishes, under any specious pretences, to overturn the liberties of our country, or who wickedly attempts to open the floodgates of civil discord, and deluge our rising empire with blood.

"By thus determining and thus acting, you will pursue the plain and direct road to the attainment of your wishes; you will defeat the insidious designs of our enemies, who are compelled to resort from open force to secret artifice. You will give one more distinguished proof of unexampled patriotism and practical virtue rising superior to the most complicated sufferings; and you will, by the dignity of your conduct, afford another occasion for posterity to say, when speaking of the glorious example you have exhibited to mankind, 'Had this day been wanting, the world had never seen the last stage of perfection which human nature is capable of attaining.'"

The words of truth from the lips of Washington were irresistible. No one answered him, and he retired, leaving the meeting to its deliberations. A resolution was proposed and adopted, stating, "That they reciprocated his affectionate expressions with the greatest sincerity of which the heart is capable." The meeting finally concluded with expressing its

determination in the following memorable words,—"That no circumstances of distress or danger should prompt them to actions that might tend to sully the reputation and glory they had acquired at the price of their blood, and of eight years faithful service—That they continued to have an unshaken confidence in the justice of Congress and their country—That they viewed with abhorrence and rejected with disdain the infamous proposition contained in a late anonymous address to the officers of the army."

In no act of his life did Washington confer a greater benefit on his country, or exhibit a higher proof of virtuous self-denial, than in that I have just recorded. Had he been tainted with that ambition which is the besetting sin of men of great minds, he had here an opportunity of indulging it under the sanction of the most plausible motives. He might have placed himself at the head of a disaffected army, and under pretence of asserting the rights of his soldiers, overturned the newborn liberties of his country. In this attempt he would have doubtless been aided by foreign powers; his influence over the army and people would have strengthened his means, and there was nothing to oppose him but a Congress without authority, and a nation whose resources were exhausted. In the event of the disbandonment of the army he could look forward only to retirement and repose. There was no office then existing in the country that held out the slightest temptation to his acceptance; he could not expect to be the head of a government that was without a head; nor aspire to any other reward than the gratitude of the people. But such considerations as these never weighed with him, or swerved his mind one hair's breadth from the line of duty to his country. He at once sacrificed false glory to true; and the scarcity of such examples of disinterested patriotism in the history of mankind, sufficiently shows the difficulty of practising this heroic self-denial.

The author of the letters to the army at Newburgh has since avowed himself, and it is but justice to his character to say, that there can be no plausible ground for a suspicion that he was actuated by the motives or the influence ascribed to him in the address of Washington. Without doubt he was stimulated by a sense of his own wrongs, and those of his fellow-sufferers; and, however he may be justly chargeable with recommending a course of conduct which, had it been pursued, would in all probability have withered the fruits of eight long years of labour, anxiety, and suffering, his character and his services must acquit him in the eyes of posterity either of collusion with the enemy or hostility to his country. Still no blame can attach to Washington for adopting and avowing these suspicions. At that time the author was unknown, and the imputation was therefore not personal. The course so strenuously recommended by him was one which in its consequences might, and in all probability would have involved the country, then just springing into a renovated existence, in the most woful calamities, or at all events have given a death-blow to the civil authority of the newborn nation. It was therefore the duty of Washington to take the most decisive measures to arrest the influence of the anonymous writer, whose labours were fraught with such deplorable consequences; and if, in so doing, he imputed to him views of which he was innocent, the blame should rest with him who laid himself open to, not with him who made, the imputation. The purity of a man's motives can only be known to his own heart; others have no criterion but his acts by which to judge him.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Evacuation of New York, Washington enters the City. His reception. Takes leave of his brother Officers, and proceeds Homeward. Contrast of his situation now and at the time he passed through New Jersey retreating before the Enemy. Delivers his Accounts to the Auditor-General. Remarks on them. Affecting Ceremony of resigning his Commission. Address of Washington, and Reply of the President of Congress. Reflections on the occasion.

On the twenty-fifth day of November, 1782, the British evacuated New-York, of which they had kept possession ever since the year 1776, and a detachment of American forces marched into the city. Washington soon after made his entry, attended by a great number of civil officers and citizens, where he was received with enthusiastic and grateful demonstrations of welcome. The war being ended and the revolution accomplished, he was now about to depart for that home from which he had so long been estranged. From the period of his taking the command of the American army, it is believed he had never visited Mount Vernon; and without doubt, the toils, hardships, and anxieties he had endured through the whole course of that long absence had doubly endeared it to his recollection.

One ceremony remained to be performed before he finally sought the retirement he loved. It was to take leave of his old companions in arms, perhaps for ever. On the fourth of December, at twelve o'clock, they assembled, by his request, at the hotel in which he lodged, where in a few minutes they were met by their venerated chief. Few words passed, for their hearts were too full to speak. Washington filled a glass of wine, turned to his old fellow-soldiers, and in a voice almost choked with his emotions, addressed them in these noble and affecting words:—"With a heart

full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you. I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honourable." Having pledged himself to them all, he added —"I cannot come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged if each of you would come and take me by the hand." The first that came was General Knox, who received the pressure of his hand in silence, and in silence, returned it. He exchanged an embrace with his old friend and commander, and was followed, one by one, by each of the officers present, who returned the pressure of the hand and the cordial embrace without uttering a single word. I have heard some of the old remnants of the good days of honest patriotism, who partook of this affecting ceremony, attempt to describe it; but though more than thirty years had then passed away, they never spoke of it without melting into tears. They said it was like a good patriarch taking leave of his children, and going on a long journey from whence he might return no more.

When the last pressure of the hand, and the last embrace was given and received, Washington left the room, followed by a solemn procession of his officers. In dead silence he proceeded to Whitehall, where a barge was in waiting to take him across the river—entered it, and waving his hat, took a final leave. The farewell was received, and returned as it was given, in solemn silence: the general was rowed away; and the procession returned to the place whence it departed, as if coming from the funeral of a beloved parent.

From New York Washington proceeded onward to Annapolis, in Maryland, where Congress was then assembled, for the purpose of resigning his command. His progress was everywhere hailed by testimonials of the gratitude and veneration of the people, more affecting and sincere than ever accompanied a conqueror returning from the subjugation of na-

tions. He was received and greeted, not as the destroyer, but the preserver; and there was mingled in these outpourings of national feeling, whatever could give honour and dignity to such demonstrations. He was about to become a private citizen, his favour or his influence could no longer be of consequence to any individual; and the sentiment with which he was everywhere cheered, was not that of the hope of future benefits, but gratitude for past services. No selfish feeling mingled in the universal chorus; and it was now that he received, not only the fruition of past toils, but the foretaste of the immortality to come. His virtues, his services, and his sufferings in the cause of mankind, were here rewarded by the noblest of all diadems, the crown of a nation's gratitude.

How different his journey now, accompanied as he was by the applauses of a grateful people, and the consciousness of deserving them, from the painful situation when, only a few years before, he passed over this same ground, with the almost hopeless fortunes of a nation on his shoulders, a superior enemy tracking his path, and difficulties and disasters surrounding him on every side. Yet, even in that extremity, he was sustained by those imperishable pillars that always support the edifice of piety and virtue—the consciousness of a just cause, an honest heart, and the blessing of Heaven. Under such auspices, no man ought ever to despair.

When Washington accepted the appointment of commander-in-chief of the American Armies, it was with a condition that his emoluments should be strictly limited to his actual expenses. He consequently served during the whole war without pay, and now, in passing through Philadelphia, rendered in his accounts, exhibiting a sum which may serve as a lasting example to his successors. I have now before me a facsimile of this interesting document. It is all in the handwriting of Washington, and is so clear and explicit in every item, as to furnish conclusive evidence of its correctness, had any been

wanting. Every dollar he expended is specifically accounted for, and every dollar received credited. The whole amount of his expenditure during the war is under fourteen thousand five hundred pounds, and of this nearly two thousand is for procuring secret intelligence. His household expenses amounted to less than three thousand five hundred pounds.

These facts may appear trifling, but they are well worth the notice of my young readers. They may learn from them that the basis of all public, is private virtue, and that true greatness consists in a strict regard to the same obligations which govern all good men. He who is reckless of his own resources, will be yet more so of those of the state; he who wastes his fortune will always be assailed by the temptations of debt, than which none are more fatal to the integrity of man. Youth is too apt to admire that false generosity which, disregarding the obligations of justice, instead of paying its own debts, pampers its vanity by giving away what is not its own, and thus acquiring the reputation of liberality at the cost of others. The expenditures of Washington on no occasion went beyond the bounds of rational propriety, nor did he ever violate the stern principles of justice, under the influence of a weak and selfish vanity. The fate of Arnold furnishes an example and a warning, to show that extravagance ever leads to temptation, and that debts wantonly incurred, and which we are unable to pay, are ever the forerunners of desperate expedients, unprincpled actions, or moral insensibility. The great pillars of freedom are economy and simplicity.

On arriving at Annapolis, Washington signified to Congress the intention of resigning his commission, and desired to know its pleasure as to the manner in which it should be done. That illustrious body, being desirous of an opportunity of bearing ample testimony to its high sense of his merits and services, determined that the act should be performed in a public audience, and appointed a day for that purpose.

A desire to witness a ceremony fraught with so many interesting recollections, and in itself so simply grand, brought together a crowd of spectators from the city and its neighbourhood. Washington was introduced and conducted to a chair by the Secretary of Congress, the members of which sat coveted. The president, after the delay of a few moments, apprised him, "That the United States, in Congress assembled, were prepared to receive his communication." He rose, and with that calm, dignified simplicity which clothed all his actions in a native grace, spoke as follows:—

"MR. PRESIDENT,

"The great events on which my resignation depended having at length taken place, I have now the honour of offering my sincere congratulations to Congress, and presenting myself before them to surrender into their hands the trust committed, to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring from the service of my country.

"Happy in the confirmation of our independence and sovereignty, pleased with the opportunity afforded the United States of becoming a respectable nation, I resign with satisfaction an appointment I accepted with diffidence,—a diffidence of my ability to accomplish so arduous a task; which, however, was superseded by a confidence in the rectitude of our cause, the support of the supreme power of the Union, and the patronage of Heaven.

"The successful termination of the war has verified the most sanguine expectations; and my gratitude for the interposition of Providence, and the assistance I have received from my countrymen, increases with every review of the momentous contest. While I repeat my obligations to the army in general, I should do injustice to my own feelings not to acknowledge, in this place, the peculiar services and distinguished merits of the gentlemen who have been attached to

my person during the war. It was impossible the choice of officers to compose my family should have been more fortunate. Permit me, sir, to recommend in particular those who have continued in the service to the present moment, as worthy of the favourable notice and patronage of Congress.

"I consider it an indispensible duty to close this last act of my official life by commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence of them to his holy keeping.

"Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action, and bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission, and take leave of all the employments of public life."

He then advanced to the chair of the president, delivered his commission into his hands, and, while standing, received the following address from that high functionary:—

"SIR,

"The United States, in Congress assembled, receive with emotions too affecting for utterance the solemn resignation of the authority under which you have led their troops, with success, through a perilous and doubtful war. Called upon by your country to defend its invaded rights, you accepted the sacred charge before it had formed alliances, and while it was without funds or a government to support you. You have conducted the great military contest with wisdom and fortitude, invariably regarding the rights of the civil power through all disasters and changes. You have, by the love and confidence of your fellow-citizens, enabled them to display their martial genius, and transmit their fame to posterity. You have persevered until these United States, aided by a magnanimous king and nation, have been enabled, under a just Providence,

to close the war in freedom, safety, and independence; on which happy event we sincerely join you in congratulations.

"Having defended the standard of liberty in this new world; having taught a lesson, useful to those who inflict and to those who feel oppression, you retire from the great theatre of action with the blessings of your fellow-citizens. But the glory of your virtues will not terminate with your military command; it will continue to animate remotest ages.

"We feel with you our obligations to the army in general, and will particularly charge ourselves with the interests of those confidential officers who have attended your person to this affecting moment. We join you in commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, beseeching him to dispose the hearts and minds of our citizens to improve the opportunity afforded them of becoming a happy and respectable nation. And for you we address to him our earnest prayers that a life so beloved may be fostered with all his care; that your days may be as happy as they have been illustrious, and that he will finally give that reward which this world cannot bestow."

Thus closed the millitary career of Washington, in a manner worthy of him, of his country, and of its constituted authorities. It seems impossible to contemplate the scene I have just sketched without feeling the heart to swell with the noblest, most affecting emotions. The event itself, so simple yet so grand; the example of a great and virtuous man, who, having fulfilled the duties for which he was raised to power, voluntarily comes forward to surrender it into the hands of the representative of the people; the character and dignity of that august assembly to whom the trust was surrendered, and of the man who thus easily divested himself of authority; the piety, fervour, and simplicity of the address and the reply; and the recollection of the events which preceded and followed the consumation of the independence of a

great nation—all combine to form a picture to which few of this world present a parallel. Here, as in all other acts of his life, Washington exhibited an example which will be much oftener admired than imitated. Here, as in all other circumstances, he stands almost alone in the world—great without seeming to be great, because he performed great actions with such ease and simplicity, with such a total absence of all apparent effort, that, until we examine them critically, they appear like those of ordinary men.

Having performed this act of moderation and patriotism; having served his country through good and evil fortune, through perils and unnumbered storms, and brought her safely into the haven of repose and security, Washington now retired to Mount Vernon, there to enjoy in quiet the sweets of domestic intercourse, and the pleasures of rural life, followed by the blessings of grateful millions.

CHAPTER XIX.

Washington at Mount Vernon.

The poor man carries his happiness with him wheresoever he goes, for it is the inmate of his bosom. Its source is in the consciousness of virtue and the approval of Heaven. This is the only sure basis of independence, for it places us above the world and all its accidents, which are otherwise beyond our control. I have generally observed that men of eminent purity of life, and distinguished for the exercise of the higher virtues, were happy and blessed in the possession of what they most desired. They were perhaps neither rich nor great; but if they were not so, it was because they coveted neither. But they possessed what they valued far above these—a serenity and quietness of mind, a calm contented acquiescence in the

bounties of Heaven, whether bestowed or withheld. If they were not great, they were honoured by the esteem of others; and if subjected to misfortunes and reproaches, it was apparent to all that they enjoyed what is above all things most precious —a composed, cheerful, and resigned spirit, a divine contentment, such as placed them far above the influence of all this world can give or take away, and clearly proved that virtue is not without its reward even in the extremity of its hardest trials.

If ever man possessed these means of happiness, it would seem to have been Washington. During his whole course of life his actions corresponded with his faith and his principles; the one was the natural result of the other. We see him on all occasions modestly and unaffectedly distrusting his own powers, promising nothing but honest exertions and integrity of purpose, and uniformly relying for the attainment of just ends on the aid of a just Providence. Everywhere, and at all times, exhibits this high-souled dependence, and while he carried with him into retirement the recollection of having employed his past life in the performance of useful and glorious actions, he looked forward to the future with a happy confidence founded on the Rock of Ages.

Having piloted his country through a long and angry tempest, his ambition, or rather his delight, was to set her such an example as would aid in securing the blessings placed within her reach by the attainment of independence. These, he perceived, could only be secured by the union of industry, economy, intelligence, and virtue. No man knew better than himself that agriculture is not only the foundation of national wealth, but also of national happiness. It furnishes the materials for every other species of human industry, as well as the almost universal means of subsistence; it is the most wholesome and dignified of all the employments of man; and it affords less incitement to bad habits, by the absence of those

temptations and opportunities which beset him in crowded communites, where vice, like disease, may be said to be contagious, and is not only diffused, but aggravated, by communication. In short, having won the wreath of glory, his ambition was now to become a useful citizen, by setting an example of private virtue.

During the period which elapsed between his retirement from the command of the army and his elevation to a still higher station, he did not sink into indolent or luxurious repose, nor think that, having done so much, he was not called upon to do more. From an example to all future patriots, he became a model to all the cultivators of the land. Dividing his time into separate portions, and devoting each one to its particular objects, he had leisure for every thing. His public duties, as will presently be seen, were by no means abandoned or neglected during his retirement; but they did not interfere with the most critical attention to his own private affairs, his agricultural pursuits, his domestic offices, his devotions, and his social enjoyments.

He was at this time fifty-one years of age, with a vigorous frame and a constitution unbroken by the vicissitudes of a hard service of eight arduous years, notwithstanding in some of his letters he alludes to his being occasionally afflicted with rheumatic pains, the consequence of his former exposures in the field. Though his pleasure was in the performance of his duties, his employment was agriculture. He wished to set an example of successful farming to all those within the sphere of his influence, and his long absence from the care of his estate left ample room for improvements. Accordingly, he opened a correspondence with the most distinguished agriculturists of England and the United States, and availed himself on all occasions of their experience, whenever he thought it applicable to the condition or the means of his countrymen and neighbours.

His adoption of new systems and theories was judiciously cautious. He knew that experimental farmers seldom or never prosper; and that the man who adopts every thing new will be pretty sure to entail on himself poverty in his old age. The example of his correspondent, Arthur Young, furnished its warning. He who could teach others how to manage a farm, reduced himself to bankruptcy by following out his own theories. The wisdom of Washington had taught him that in agriculture, as well as every other pursuit, that system which will in one country ensure prosperity, will in another as surely produce disappointment and poverty. The very air we breathe, as well as every other universal benefit, may be made the means of death as well as life. Washington, therefore, wisely concluded that in agriculture, as in all other pursuits, success depended solely on the adaptation of means to ends, and not in expending more in the attainment of an object than it was worth.

Betimes in the morning he was abroad in the fields, directing his labourers, and seeing that they had complied with his instructions. His eye was everywhere, and as those who performed their duties never failed of being rewarded by his approbation, so those who neglected them were sure of a reprimand. He considered indulgence to his dependants, when carried to the extent of permitting idleness or offence, as equally unjust to himself and injurious to them. He was a kind master to the good, a strict disciplinarian to the bad, and he was both feared and loved by all within the sphere of his domestic influence. He exacted obedience, and repaid it by benefits. His domestic government was patriarchal; the people of his establishment were his children, equally the subjects of his authority and the objects of his affection.

But Washington did not confine himself to the improvement of his own estates, or the introduction of a better system of agriculture in his native state. He took journeys in different

directions to ascertain the practicability of great internal improvements, which might at one and the same time increase the means of happiness, and, by associating the interests of the different sections of the country, operate as new bonds of union. His influence and his arguments prevailed in the legislature of Virginia, and two companies were established for the purpose of extending the navigation of the Potomac and James Rivers. By the act of the legislature, one hundred and fifty shares of stock, amounting to forty thousand dollars, were offered to his acceptance. These he declined with a noble disinterestedness, and at his request they were appropriated to the purposes of education. Thus usefully and honourably employed in cultivating the earth, and forwarding objects beneficial to mankind, his short interval of repose passed away in all the comforts of a good man's lot. Health, competence and well-won honour, active employment, and the recollections of a glorious life, all combined to make him as happy as is compatible with the dispensations of this world.

These general outlines could be agreeably illustrated by various anecdotes in my possession, derived from the most unquestionable sources, did not the design of this work necessarily confine me within certain limits. I am therefore obliged to restrict myself to a mere sketch of the private life of Washington, although it furnishes, perhaps, an example equally, and indeed more universally important than even his public actions. The world has had enough of heroes and conquerors, who appear to have considered the performance of brilliant exploits, or the possession of superior talents, as conferring the privilege of a total disregard to private duties; and the lustre of great actions, a sufficient gloss for follies and crimes that ought in reality to be more deeply abhorred, because the example is more likely to be followed, and the consequences more widely disseminated. Washington on his farm at Mount

Vernon, performing his duties as a virtuous and useful citizen, is equally an object worthy of contemplation with Washington leading his country to independence, and showing her how to enjoy it afterwards. The former example is indeed more extensively useful, because it comes home to the business and bosoms of ordinary men, and is within the reach of their imitation.

But he was not long destined to enjoy his dignified repose. Such men belong to their country. They are sacrifices offered up to the welfare of nations, martyrs at the shrine of public happiness, and must find their enjoyments in administering to those of others. Scarcely had the sun of independence dawned on the United States, when it was obscured by the clouds of evil omen, and increasing darkness. The cement of a common danger had kept them together while struggling for liberty, almost without a government. But that no longer existing, the bonds that remained were too weak to produce either unity of action or submission to authority. A people who had just burst asunder the shackles of a foreign government, were unwilling to impose upon themselves new fetters. Like children let loose from school, and freed from the supervision of a rigid master, they wished to play truant a while, and enjoy a little of the sweets of unrestrained liberty. They mistook no-government, for self-government, and confounded the authority of their own choice, with the domination imposed on them without their consent.

It soon became evident that the provisions of the act of confederation, under which the states had, by the special favour of Providence in giving them such a leader as Washington, attained their independence, were insufficient to sustain the shock of peace. The states, which had acted in a great measure independent of each other during the war, were extremely unwilling to circumscribe their privileges, the more dear for being but newly acquired; and a large portion of the

people shared in the sentiment. It had become obvious that they could not long hold together by the rope of sand of a confederation, which left each one at liberty to reject or disregard the requisitions of Congress. The enemies of liberty had predicted the speedy dissolution of the Union, and the prophecy seemed about to be fulfilled.

People began to talk of the necessity of returning once more to the protection of England, or establishing a king of their own. Washington, in one of his letters, exclaims,—"What astonishing changes a few years are capable of producing! I am told that even respectable characters speak of a monarchical form of government without horror! From thinking proceeds speaking: thence to acting is often but a single step. But how inexcusable and tremendous! What a triumph for the advocates of despotism to find that we are incapable of governing ourselves, and that systems founded on the basis of equal liberty are merely ideal and fallacious! Would to God that wise measures may be taken in time to arrest the consequences we have so much reason to apprehend. Retired as I am from the world, I frankly acknowledge I cannot feel myself an unconcerned spectator. Yet, having happily assisted in bringing the ship into port, and having been fairly discharged, it is not my business to embark again on a sea of troubles."

Yet he could not find it in his heart to desert his country in this new and perilous voyage. He employed the influence of his character, the force of his reasonings, and the authority of his example, in producing a general impression of the absolute necessity of a modification of the government, to preserve its existence. He addressed letters to the governors of the states, and to the principal men of influence everywhere, urging them to come forward and lend their support to this indispensable measure. But it was a long time before even the authority and arguments of Washington could overcome

the salutary fear with which every true lover of liberty contemplates an extension of authority.

The effect was, however, at length produced. Virginia, the native state of Washington, and worthy of his nativity, here, as in many other instances, took the lead, and she was the first to introduce a resolution for electing deputies to a General Convention for modifying the Articles of Confederation. An insurrection in Massachusetts which occurred about this time, and which for a while baffled the authorities of the state, afforded additional proof of the utter weakness of the government, and seemed to demonstrate the necessity of a new organization.

The name of Washington appeared at the head of the Virginia delegates, and he was urged on all sides and with the most pressing arguments, to accept the appointment. Greatly as he loved Mount Vernon and the enjoyments of rural life, he loved his country more. What he had laboured so earnestly to bring about in the beginning, he could not and would not desert until it was brought to an end, and, after long consideration, he once more consented to return to public life. With what unwillingness he made the sacrifice is seen in various of his letters, wherein he expresses, with the unaffected plainness of truth, his hesitation. Once more, in the month of September, 1787, did Washington leave his retirement, where, for a few short years of his arduous existence, he had tasted the blessings of a quiet and happy home. His country called, and he obeyed her summons, to aid by his wisdom in the preservation of that freedom which he had won by his valour.

CHAPTER XX.

Convention. Evils to be remedied by it. The New Constitution. Washington solicited to accept the Presidency. Consents with great Reluctance. Is chosen unanimously. Leaves Mount Vernon. His Reception on his Journey Situation of Public affairs. Disputes with England. Spain. War with Moors and Indians. National Debt. Administration of Washington. Final Retirement to Mount Vernon.

THE weakness of the confederation was the cause, to give it strength was the object, of calling the convention. It was convened, not for the purpose of making a new constitution, but amending the old. The most striking and dangerous defects to be remedied, are thus eloquently set forth in a letter of Washington:

"With joy I once beheld my country feeling the liveliest sense of her rights, and maintaining them with a spirit apportioned to their worth. With joy I have seen all the wise men of Europe looking on her with admiration, and all the good with hope, that her fair example would regenerate the old world and restore the blessings of equal government to long oppressed humanity. But alas! in the place of maintaining this glorious attitude, America is herself rushing into disorder and dissolution. We have power sufficient for self-defence and glory, but those powers are not exerted. For fear Congress should abuse it, the people will not trust their power to chastise them. Ambitious men stir up insurrections; Congress possesses no power to coerce them. Public creditors call for their money; Congress has no power to collect it. In short we cannot long subsist as a nation, without lodging somewhere a power that may command the full energies of the nation for defence against all its wants. The people will soon

be tired of such a government. They will sigh for a change and many of them already begin to talk of monarchy without horror."

These crying evils certainly called loudly for a remedy. But there were many and formidable obstacles to its adoption. The states were justly jealous of their independence, and the people justly afraid of delegating too much power to the general government. They had felt oppression, and trembled at the the idea of authority. The power had reverted to them on the dissolution of the parent government, and they disrelished the idea of parting with it so soon, by delegating it to others.

The convention, however, met at Philadelphia, and unanimously chose Washington its president. This situation in some measure precluded him from speaking, if he had been so inclined; but his influence was not the less in producing the results which followed. It is highly probable that but for the exertions he made in private, and the vast authority of his character and services, the objects of the convention might not have been attained. As it was, the constitution encountered great opposition within doors, and when promulgated, after a session of six months, it was met by the people in various quarters with a determined spirit of hostility. It was accepted slowly and unwillingly by many of the states, which accompanied their adhesion by a variety of proposed amendments, almost all operating to circumscribe the authority of the federal government. The great talents of Madison, Hamilton, and Jay, exerted in that celebrated work called the Federalist, and the influence of many of the leading men of the different states, aided by the name of Washington, alone, perhaps, secured to the country the great charter of its liberties.

Under the new constitution a chief magistrate became necessary to administer the government. The eyes of the whole

people of the United States were at once directed to Washington, and their united voices called upon him who had led their armies in war, to direct their affairs in peace. His old companions came forth and besought him to leave his retirement once more to serve his country. The leading men of all parties wrote letters to the same purport, and on all hands he was assailed by the warmest, most earnest applications.

His replies are extant, and those who have ever seen them cannot for a moment question the deep reluctance with which he undertook this new and trying service. Both in its external and internal relations, the country was at this time in a most critical state, and the man who accepted the hard task of administering its government, might rationally anticipate little of the sweets and all the bitterness of power. He who already possessed the hearts of the people; he who had already gained the most lofty eminence; the noblest of all rewards, the hallowed title of his country's father, and gratitude of a nation, would risk every thing and gain nothing by embarking again on the troubled ocean of political strife, in a vessel whose qualities for the voyage had never been tried. But Washington thought he might be of service to his country, and once more sacrificed his rural happiness and cherished tastes at the shrine where he had often offered up his life and all its enjoyments.

He was unanimously elected president of the United States on the fourth of March, 1789, but owing to some formal or accidental delays, this event was not notified to him officially until the fourteenth of April following. Referring to this delay, he thus expresses himself in a letter to General Knox, who possessed and deserved his friendship to the last moment of his life.

"As to myself, the delay may be compared to a reprieve; for in confidence I tell you (with the world it would obtain

little credit) that my movements towards the chair of government will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit going to the place of execution; so unwilling am I, in the evening of a life consumed in public cares, to quit my peaceful abode for an ocean of difficulties, without the competency of political skill, abilities, and inclination which is necessary to manage the helm. I am sensible that I am embarking with the voice of the people, and a good name of my own, on this voyage, and what returns will be made for them, Heaven alone can foretel. Integrity and firmness are all that I can promise. These, be the voyage long or short, shall never forsake me, though I may be deserted by all men; for of the consolations to be derived from these, the world cannot deprive me."

Such was the foundation of his modest confidence;—firmness and integrity, the true pillars of honest greatness. And these never deserted him. He kept his promise to himself in all times, circumstances, and temptations; and though, on a few rare occasions during the course of a stormy season, in which the hopes, fears, and antipathies of his fellow-citizens were strongly excited, his conduct may have been assailed, his motives were never questioned. None ever doubted his firmness, and the general conviction of his integrity was founded on a rock, that could neither be undermined nor overthrown.

His progress from Mount Vernon to New York, where Congress was then sitting, was a succession of the most affecting scenes which the sentiment of a grateful people ever presented to the contemplation of the world. His appearance awakened in the bosoms of all an enthusiasm, so much the more glorious because little characteristic of our countrymen. Men, women, and children poured forth and lined the roads in throngs to see him pass, and hail his coming; the windows shone with glistening eyes, watching his passing footsteps; the women wept

for joy; the children shouted, "God save Washington!" and the iron hearts of the stout husbandman yearned with inexpressible affection towards him who had caused them to repose in safety under their own vine and their own fig-trees. His old companions in arms came forth to renovate their honest pride, as well as undying affection, by a sight of their general, and a shake of his hand. The pulse of the nation beat high with exultation, for now, when they saw their ancient pilot once more at the helm, they hoped for a prosperous voyage and a quiet haven in the bosom of prosperity.

His reception at Trenton was peculiarly touching. It was planned by those females and their daughters whose patriotism and sufferings in the cause of liberty, were equal to those of their fathers, husbands, sons, and brothers. It was here, when the hopes of the people lay prostrate on the earth, and the eagle of freedom seemed to flap his wings, as if preparing to forsake the world, that Washington performed those prompt and daring acts which, while they revived the drooping spirits of his country, freed, for a time, the matrons of Trenton from the insults and wrongs of an arrogant soldiery. The female heart is no sanctuary for ingratitude; and when Washington arrived at the bridge over the Assumpink, which here flows close to the borders of the city, he met the sweetest reward that, perhaps, ever crowned his virtues.

Over the bridge was thrown an arch of evergreens and flowers, bearing this affecting inscription in large letters:

"DECEMBER 26, 1776.
"The hero who defended the mothers will protect the daughters."

At the other extremity of the bridge were assembled many hundreds of young girls of various ages, arrayed in white, the emblem of truth and innocence, their brows circled with

garlands, and baskets of flowers in their hands. Beyond these were disposed the grown-up daughters of the land, clothed and equipped like the others, and behind them the matrons, all of whom remembered the never-to-be-forgotten twenty-sixth of December, 1776. As the good Washington left the bridge, they joined in a chorus, touchingly expressive of his services and their gratitude, strewing, at the same time, flowers as he passed along. That mouth whose muscles of gigantic strength indicated the firmness of his character and the force of his mind, was now observed to quiver with emotion; that eye which looked storms and tempests, enemies and friends, undauntingly in the face, and never quailed in the sight of man, now glistened with tears; and that hand which had not trembled when often life, fame, and the liberty of his country hung on the point of a single moment, now refused its office. His hat dropped from his hand as he drew it across his brow.

His reception everywhere was worthy of his services, and of a grateful people. At New York, the vessels were adorned with flags, and the river alive with boats, gaily decked out in like manner, with bands of music on board; the place of his landing was thronged with crowds of citizens, gathered together to welcome his arrival. The roar of cannon and the shouts of the multitude announced his landing, and he was conducted to his lodging by thousands of grateful hearts, who remembered what he had done for them in the days of their trial. It had been arranged that a military escort should attend him; but when the officer in command announced his commission, Washington replied, "I require no guard but the affections of the people," and declined their attendance.

At this moment, so calculated to inflate the human heart with vanity, Washington, though grateful for these spontaneous proofs of affectionate veneration, was not elated. In describing the scene in one of his familiar letters, he says:—

"The display of boats on this occasion with vocal and instrumental music on board, the decorations of the ships, the roar of cannon, and the loud acclamations of the people, as I passed along the wharves, gave me as much pain as pleasure, contemplating the probable reversal of this scene, after all my endeavours to do good." Happily, his anticipations were never realized. Although his policy in relation to the French Revolution, which was as wise as it was happy in its consequences, did not give universal satisfaction, still he remained master of the affections and confidence of the people. The laurels he had won in defence of the liberties of his country, continued to flourish on his brow while living, and will grow green on his grave to the end of time.

On the 30th day of April, 1789, he took the oath, and entered on the office of President of the United States, one of the highest, as well as the most thankless that could be undertaken by man. The head of this free government is no idle, empty pageant, set up to challenge the admiration, and coerce the absolute submission of the people; his duties are arduous, and his responsibilities great; he is the first servant, not the master of the state, and is amenable for his conduct, like the humblest citizen. As the executor of the laws, he is bound to see them obeyed; as the first of our citizens, he is equally bound to set an example of obedience. The oath "to preserve, protect, and defend the constitution of the United States," was administered in the balcony of the old Federal Hall in New York, by the chancellor of the state, and the Bible on which it was sworn is preserved as a sacred relic.

At the time Washington assumed the high functions of President of the United States, there was ample room for the exertion of all his firmness, integrity, and talents. A new constitution to be administered, without the aid of experience or precedent, by an authority to which the people were strangers; serious and alarming difficulties to be adjusted with

England; the Indian nations all along our frontier, brandishing their tomahawks, and whetting their scalping-knives; war with Mediterranean pirates; the Spaniards denying our right to navigate the Mississippi, and the people of Kentucky threatening a separation from the Union, unless that right was successfully asserted by the government. Other difficulties stared the new president full in the face. Some of the states still declined to accept the new constitution, and become members of the confederation; others nearly equally divided on the subject; and a debt of eighty millions of dollars; to meet all which there was an army of less than a thousand men, and an empty treasury.

Here was enough, and more than enough, to call forth all the energies, if not to produce despair in the breast of an ordinary man. But Washington was not such a man. Conscious of the purity of his purposes, he relied on the protection of that Power which is all purity. His first care was to provide for the civil and judicial administration of the government, by the appointment of men in whose virtue and capacity a long experience had given him confidence. Having done this, he took the reins with a firm, steady hand, and commenced the ascent of the rugged steep before him.

The next object that called his attention was the situation of the inland frontier, now exposed to the inroads of the savages, who had not been included in the general pacification, although a proposition to that effect had been made by the British commissioners. Although our government has always treated the Indians as independent tribes, it has never placed them on the footing of civilized nations, or admitted any mediation on the part of foreign powers. The United States do not recognise them as parties in civilized warfare; they neither avail themselves of their alliance, nor acknowledge them as the auxiliaries of other nations.

A system was devised for the conduct of those singular re-

lations which alone can subsist between people so different in all respects, moral and political. The wisdom of that system has been exemplified in having uniformly been acted upon to this time; and though it may perhaps be questioned as to its abstract principles, it would be perhaps difficult, if not impossible, to devise a better. Our ancestors came to this country under the sanction of a principle at that time universally acknowledged among civilized nations, and when once here, the first law of nature, self-defence, furnishes their only justification. While weak, they were obliged to defend themselves, and when they became strong, they were probably too apt to remember their former sufferings.

The policy of Washington, with regard to these unfortunate people, was successful in quieting, if not conciliating, many of the Indian tribes; but others remained refractory, and continued their atrocities. After defeating two American armies, with great slaughter, they were at length brought to terms by the gallant Wayne, who gave them so severe a beating in a great general action, that they sued for peace. This was concluded at Greenville; and the cession of a vast territory, not only relieved the frontier from savage inroads, but paved the way for the progress of civilization into a new world of wilderness.

He was equally successful at a subsequent period in his negociations with Spain. His high character for veracity and honour gave him singular advantages in his foreign intercourse. He proceeded in a straightforward, open manner; stated what was wanted, and what could be given in return; relied on justice, and enforced its claims with the arguments of truth. He disdained to purchase advantages by corruption, or to deceive by insincerity. As in private, so in public life, he proceeded inflexibly upon the noble maxim, whose truth is every day verified, that "Honesty is the best policy."

The conviction of a man's integrity gives him far greater advantages in his intercourse with the world, than he can ever gain by hypocrisy and falsehood. The right of navigating the Mississippi was finally conceded by Spain.

The settlement of the controversies growing out of the treaty with England proved even more difficult than those with Spain. The wounds inflicted on both nations by a war of so many years were healed, but the scars remained, to remind the one of what it had suffered, the other of what it had lost. Time and mutual good offices were necessary to allay that spirit which had been excited on one hand by injuries, on the other by successful resistance; and time indeed had passed away, but it had left behind it neither forgiveness nor oblivion. It was accompanied on the one hand by new provocations, and on the other by additional remonstrances and renewed indignation. Negociations continued for a long time, without any result but mortification and impatience on the part of the people of the United States; and it was not until the French Revolution threatened the existence of all the established governments of Europe, and England among the rest, that a treaty was concluded, which brought with it an adjustment of the principal points that had so long embroiled the two nations, and fostered a spirit of increasing hostility. The most vexing question of all, however, that of the right of entering our ships and impressing seamen, was left unsettled, and it became obvious that it would never be adjusted except on the principle of the right of the strongest. About the same time peace was concluded between the United States and the Emperor of Morocco; and thus, for a while, our commerce remained unmolested on that famous sea where, some years afterwards, our gallant navy laid the foundation of its present and future glories.

It is not my design to enter minutely into the principles or conduct of the two great parties which, from the period of the

adoption of the constitution down to the present time, have been struggling for ascendancy in the government of the United States. My limits will not permit it if I wished; but, if they did, I should decline the task. My youthful readers will know and feel their excitement soon enough, perhaps too soon; and I wish not to become instrumental in implanting in their tender minds the seeds of social and political antipathies. I am attempting to write the life of a great and virtuous man; to exhibit a noble moral example for the imitation of the children of my country. My business is with the actions of Washington, not with the imputations of his enemies, or the struggles of ambitious politicians. Posterity has placed him far above such puny trifles and triflers, and I will not assist, however humbly, in reviving imputations which have long since sunk into oblivion or insignificance under the weight of his mighty name.

The French Revolution, which set the Old World in a blaze, but for the wisdom and firmness of Washington would have involved the United States in the labyrinth of European policy. He it was that prevented their becoming parties in that series of tremendous wars which desolated some of the fairest portions of the earth; caused the rivers to run red with blood; overturned and erected thrones; converted kings into the playthings of fortune; and ended in the creation of a mighty phantom which, after being the scourge and terror of the world, vanished from our sight on a desolate rock of the ocean.

The people of the United States had continued to cherish a strong feeling of gratitude for the good offices of France during their struggle for independence; and in addition to this, their sympathies were deeply engaged in behalf of a contest so similar in many respects to their own. The institution of the French republic was hailed with an enthusiasm equal to that they felt on the establishment of their own liberties; and, but for the firm and steady hand of Washington, they would have

taken the bridle between their teeth and run headlong into the vortex of European revolution.

Washington issued his famous proclamation of neutrality, from which M. Genet, the minister of the French republic, threatened to appeal to the people, a measure understood to mean nothing less than revolution. From that moment the people began to rally around their beloved chief, like children who will not allow their father to be insulted, although they themselves may think him wrong. They sanctioned the proclamation, and time has ratified their decision. It is believed there is not a rational American who does not now feel that the course of Washington was founded in consummate wisdom, deep feeling, and eternal justice.

Having been twice unanimously elected to the highest office in the gift of men; having served his country faithfully eight years in war, and eight in peace; having settled the government on a permanent basis, established a series of precedents for the imitation of his successors, and seeing the United States now resting happily in the lap of repose and prosperity; having fulfilled all and more than they had a right to ask of him, and consummated all his public duties, Washington now signified his intention of declining a re-election. During the arduous services of the preceding term, he had been obliged to retire for a while to the repose of Mount Vernon for the re-establishment of his health, and he now resolved to relieve himself finally from all the duties and cares of public life. He had earned this privilege by a whole life of arduous patriotism and without doubt wished to close his public career by one more act of moderation, as a guide to those who might come after him. He believed eight years to be a sufficient term of service in the office of president for any one single man, and determined to establish the precedent by setting the example himself.

Feeling on this occasion like a father about to take a final

leave of his dear children, and give them his parting blessing, Washington, at the moment of announcing his intention of retiring from the world, addressed to the people of the United States his last memorable words. These were conveyed in a letter to his "Friends and fellow-citizens," fraught with lessons of virtue and patriotism, adorned by the most touching simplicity, the most mature wisdom, the most affectionate and endearing earnestness of paternal solicitude. He was now about to withdraw his long and salutary guardianship from this young and vigorous country, his only offspring, and he left her the noblest legacy in his power, the priceless riches of his precepts and example.

"In looking forward," he says, "to the moment which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honours it has conferred upon me, or still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me, and for the opportunities thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment by services useful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal.

"Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave as a strong incitement to unceasing vows, that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free constitution which is the work of your hands may be sacredly maintained; that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue: that in fine, the happiness of these states, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete by so careful a preservation, and so prudent a use of this blessing, as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and the adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

"Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger natural to such solicitude, urge me, on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observation, and which appear to me all important to your felicity as a people. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see them in the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsel.

"Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendations of mine is necessary to fortify the attachment.

"The unity of government, which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is the main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquillity at home and your peace abroad; of your prosperity, of that liberty which you so highly prize. But as it is easy to foresee that from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth, (as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be constantly and actively, though often covertly and insidiously directed,) it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immoveable attachment to it, accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it may in any event be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon every attempt to

to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties that now link together the various parts."

He then proceeds to caution his fellow-citizens against those geographical distinctions of *North*, *South*, *East*, and *West*, which, by fostering ideas of separate interests and character, are calculated to weaken the bonds of our union, and to create prejudices, if not antipathies, dangerous to its existence. He shows, by a simple reference to the great paramount interests of each of the different sections, that they are inseparably intertwined in one common bond; that they are mutually dependant on each other; and that they cannot be rent asunder without deeply wounding our prosperity at home, our character and influence abroad, laying the foundation for perpetual broils among ourselves, and creating a necessity for great standing armies, themselves the most fatal enemies to the liberties of mankind.

He earnestly recommends implicit obedience to the laws of the land, as one of the great duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of liberty. "The basis of our political system," he says, "is the right of the people to make and alter their constitutions of government; but the constitution which at any time exists, till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and right of the people to establish government, pre-supposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government."

He denounces "all combinations and associations under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities," as destructive to this fundamental principle and of fatal tendency. He cautions his countrymen against the extreme excitements of party spirit; the factious opposition and pernicious excesses to

which they inevitably tend, until by degrees they gradually incline the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of public liberty.

He warns those who are to administer the government after him, "to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, refraining, in the exercise of the powers of one department, to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the form of government, real despotism."

He inculcates, with the most earnest eloquence, a regard to religion and morality.

"Of all the dispositions and habits," he says, "which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labour to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it be simply added, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be attained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to a refined education, or minds of peculiar cast, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in the exclusion of religious principles."

He recommends the general diffusion of knowledge among all classes of the people. "Promote, then," he says, "as an

object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened."

He recommends the practice of justice and good faith, and the cultivation of the relations of peace with all mankind, as not only enforced by the obligations of religion and morality, but by all the maxims of sound policy. For the purpose of a successful pursuit of this great object, he cautions his fellow-citizens against the indulgence of undue partiality or prejudice in favour or against any nation whatever, as leading to weak sacrifices on one hand, senseless hostility on the other.

Most emphatically does he warn them against the wiles of foreign influence, the fatal enemy of all the ancient republics. He enjoins a watchful jealousy of all equally impartial, otherwise it may only lead to the suspicion of visionary dangers on one hand, and wilful blindness on the other.

Then, after recommending a total abstinence from all *political* alliances with the nations of Europe; a due regard to the national faith towards public creditors; suitable establishments for the defence of the country, that we may not be tempted to rely on foreign aid, which will never be afforded, in all probability, without the price of great sacrifices on the part of the nation depending on the hollow friendship of jealous rivals, he concludes this admirable address, which ought to be one of the early lessons of every youth of our country, in the following affecting words:—

"Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects, not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall always carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indul-

gence, and that after forty-five years of a life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

"Relying on its kindness in this as in all other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a man who views it as the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectations that retreat in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking in the midst of my fellow-citizens the benign influence of good laws under a free government, the ever favourite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labours, and dangers."

On the 4th of March, 1797, he bade a last farewell to public life. Those who have read in history the struggles of ambitious men for power, and seen them in every age and country involving whole nations in the horrors of civil strife, only for the worthless privilege of choosing a master, will do well to mark the conduct of Washington on this occasion. He waited only in Philadelphia to congratulate his successor, and pay respect to the choice of the people in the person of Mr. Adams. He entered the senate chamber as a private citizen, and, while every eye glistened at thus seeing him perhaps for the last time, grasped the hand of the new president, wished that his administration might prove as happy for himself as for his country, and bowing to the assemblage, retired unattended as he came.

As he was hailed with blessings on entering, so was he greeted with blessings when he quitted for ever the presidential chair. He came from his retirement at Mount Vernon accompanied by joyful acclamations of welcome, and he was followed thither by the love and veneration of millions of grateful people. Blessed, and thrice blessed, is he who closes

a life of honest fame in such a dignified and happy repose; fortunate the nation that can boast of such an example, and still more fortunate the children who can call him Father of their Country.

CHAPTER XXI.

The last Years of Washington.

During the period which elapsed between his retirement from the presidency, and the lamented death of Washington, his days were happily and usefully occupied in rural pursuits and domestic enjoyments. Influenced by those great motives of patriotism which governed all his public acts, he indeed accepted the command of the army of the United States, in a season when it was believed the authority of his name would operate beneficially to his country. But he was never again called into action, and the few remaining years of his life were passed away in peaceful occupations, and in the bosom of repose. Mount Vernon was, of course, thronged with visitors; it was the shrine where his countrymen came to pay their devotions, and where distinguished foreigners thronged from all parts of Europe, to behold and to converse with the man who, after delivering a nation from foreign oppression, had left it in possession of the freedom he had won; the man who twice abdicated a power for which thousands and tens of thousands of vulgar heroes had sacrificed themselves and their country.

He exhibited the same wise economy of time, that same attention to his domestic affairs and rural occupations, the same cheerfulness in hours of relaxation, and the same attention to the happiness of those around him. He always rose at, or before dawn, lighted his candle, and entered his study, where he remained a considerable time, as was supposed, at his devo-

tions. But no one ever knew, for none ever intruded on his sacred privacy. When his occupation was finished, he rung for his boots, and walked or rode out to pursue his morning exercise and avocations. Visitors did not interfere in the least with his course of life; they were made welcome, by permission to do as they pleased, and being convinced by all they saw that they interfered not in the least with the economy of the household, or the pleasures of others.

Like all truly great men, the manners of Washington, though eminently dignified, were adorned by the most unaffected simplicity. He relished the innocent gaiety of youth, the sprightly gambols of children, and enjoyed a decorous jest or humorous anecdote with a peculiar relish. If, while perusing a book or newspaper in the domestic circle, he met with any thing amusing or remarkable, he would read it aloud for their entertainment and never failed to participate in every innocent or spo'e frolic that was going on around him. His dignity was not that of pride or moroseness, but of intellect and virtue; and among those he loved, he laughed and joked like others. He was accustomed sometimes to tell the following story:—

On one occasion, during a visit he paid to Mount Vernon, while president, he had invited the company of two distinguished lawyers, each of whom afterwards attained to the highest judicial situations in this country. They came on horseback, and, for convenience, or some other purpose, had bestowed their ward-robe in the same pair of saddle-bags, each one occupying his side. On their arrival, wet to the skin by a shower of rain, they were shown into a chamber to change their garments. One unlocked his side of the bag, and the first thing he drew forth was a black bottle of whiskey.—He insisted that this was his companion's repository; but on unlocking the other, there was found a huge twist of tobacco, a few pieces of corn-bread, and the complete equipment of a

waggoner's pack-saddle. They had exchanged saddle-bags with some traveller by the way, and finally made their appearance in borrowed clothes, which fitted them most ludicrously. The general was highly diverted, and amused himself with anticipating the dismay of the waggoner, when he discovered this oversight of the men of law. It was during this visit that Washington prevailed on one his guests to enter into public life, and thus secured to his country the services of one of the most distinguished magistrates of this or any other age.

Another anecdote, of a more touching character, is derived from a source which, if I were permitted to mention, would not only vouch for its truth, but give it additional value and interest. When Washington retired from public life, his name and fame excited in the hearts of the people at large, and most especially the more youthful portion, a degree of reverence which, by checking their vivacity or awing them into silence, often gave him great pain. Being once on a visit to Colonel Blackburn, ancestor to the exemplary matron who now possesses Mount Vernon, a large company of young people were assembled to welcome his arrival, or on some other festive occasion. The general was unusually cheerful and animated, but he observed that whenever he made his appearance, the dance lost its vivacity, the little gossipings in corners ceased, and a solemn silence prevailed, as at the presence of one they either feared or reverenced too much to permit them to enjoy themselves. He strove to remove this restraint by mixing familiarly among them, and chatting with unaffected hilarity. But it was all in vain; there was a spell on the little circle, and he retired among the elders in an adjoining room, appearing to be much pained at the restraint his presence inspired. When, however, the young people had again become animated, he arose cautiously from his seat, walked on tip-toe to the door, which was ajar, and

stood contemplating the scene for nearly a quarter of an hour, with a look of genuine and benevolent pleasure, that went to the hearts of the parents who were observing.

As illustrating his character and affording an example of his great self-command, the following anecdote is appropriate to my purpose. It is derived from Judge Breckenridge* himself, who used often to tell the story. The judge was an inimitable humourist, and, on a particular occasion, fell in with Washington at a public house, where a large company had gathered together for the purpose of discussing the subject of improving the navigation of the Potomac. They supped at the same table, and Mr. Breckenridge essayed all his powers of humour to divert the general; but in vain. He seemed aware of his purpose, and listened with a smile. However, it so happened that the chambers of Washington and Breckenridge adjoined, and were only separated from each other by a thin partition of pine boards. The general had retired first, and when the judge entered his own room, he was delighted to hear Washington, who was already in bed, laughing to himself with infinite glee, no doubt at the recollection of his stories.

The constitution of Washington was naturally strong, and though a life of labour, anxieties, and hardships had occasionally impaired his health, still his equanimity, his temperance, and his constant exercise on horseback promised a green and vigorous old age. But it would appear that this great and good man, great in what he performed, but still greater in what he resisted, having finished the work for which he seems to have been expressly designed, was to be suddenly called away, lest, in the weakness of old age, he might possibly do something that would diminish the force of his own invaluable example, and thus deprive posterity of its most perfect model.

* Author of Modern Chivalry.

He enjoyed his last retirement but two or three years, when he was called away to heaven.

I shall describe the last parting with one of his favourite nephews, as received from his own mouth.

"During this, my last visit to the general, we walked together about the grounds, and talked of various improvements he had in contemplation. The lawn was to be extended down to the river in the direction of the old vault, which was to be removed on account of the inroads made by the roots of the trees, with which it is crowned, which caused it to leak. 'I intend to place it there,' said he, pointing to the spot where the new vault now stands. 'First of all, I shall make this change; for, after all, I may require it before the rest.'

"When I parted from him, he stood on the steps of the front door, where he took leave of myself and another, and wished us a pleasant journey, as I was going to Westmoreland on business. It was a bright frosty morning, he had taken his usual ride, and the clear healthy flush on his cheek, and his sprightly manner, brought the remark from both of us that we had never seen the general look so well. I have sometimes thought him decidedly the handsomest man I ever saw; and when in a lively mood, so full of pleasantry, so agreeable to all with whom he associated, that I could hardly realize that he was the same Washington whose dignity awed all who approached him.

"A few days afterwards, being on my way home in company with others, while we were conversing about Washington, I saw a servant rapidly riding towards us. On his near approach, I recognized him as belonging to Mount Vernon. He rode up—his countenance told the story—he handed me a letter. Washington was dead!"

The old gentleman, for he is now very aged, was overcome by the recollection of that moment. Every circumstance con-

nected with the departure of him whose life was one series of virtuous usefulness, and whose death was mourned by the tears of a whole nation, must be interesting to my young readers. They may learn from the example of Washington, that he whose conscience is void of reproach will always die without fear. The following account of his last illness is copied from a memorandum in the handwriting of Tobias Lear, his private secretary and confidential friend, who attended him from first to last:—

"On Thursday, Dec. 12, the general rode out to his farms at about ten o'clock, and did not return home till past three. Soon after he went out the weather became very bad; rain, hail, and snow falling alternately, with a cold wind. When he came in, I carried some letters to him to frank, intending to send them to the post-office. He franked the letters, but said the weather was too bad to send a servant to the office that evening. I observed to him that I was afraid he had got wet; he said, no; his great-coat had kept him dry: but his neck appeared to be wet—the snow was hanging on his hair.

"He came to dinner without changing his dress. In the evening he appeared as well as usual. A heavy fall of snow took place on Friday, which prevented the general from riding out as usual. He had taken cold (undoubtedly from being so much exposed the day before), and complained of having a sore throat; he had a hoarseness, which increased in the evening, but he made light of it, as he would never take any thing to carry off a cold,—always observing, 'Let it go as it came.' In the evening, the papers having come from the post-office, he sat in the room with Mrs. Washington and myself, reading them till about nine o'clock; and when he met with any thing which he thought diverting or interesting, he would read it aloud. He desired me to read to him the debates of the Virginia Assembly on the election of a senator and governor,

which I did. On his retiring to bed he appeared to be in perfect health, except the cold, which he considered as trifling —he had been remarkably cheerful all the evening.

"About two or three o'clock on Saturday morning he awoke Mrs. Washington, and informed her that he felt very unwell, and had an ague. She observed that he could scarcely speak, and breathed with difficulty, and she wished to get up and call a servant; but the general would not permit her, lest she should take cold. As soon as the day appeared, the woman Caroline went into the room to make a fire, and the general desired that Mr. Rawlins, one of the overseers, who was used to bleeding the people, might be sent for to bleed him before the doctor could arrive. I was sent for—went to the general's chamber, where Mrs. Washington was up, and related to me his being taken ill between two and three o'clock, as before stated. I found him breathing with difficulty, and hardly able to utter a word intelligibly. I went out instantly, and wrote a line to Dr. Plask, and sent it with all speed. Immediately I returned to the general's chamber, where I found him in the same situation I had left him. A mixture of molasses, vinegar, and butter was prepared, but he could not swallow a drop; whenever he attempted he was distressed, convulsed, and almost suffocated.

"Mr. Rawlins came in soon after sunrise and prepared to bleed him; when the arm was ready, the general, observing Rawlins appeared agitated, said, with difficulty, 'Don't be afraid;' and after the incision was made, he observed the orifice was not large enough: however, the blood ran pretty freely. Mrs. Washington, not knowing whether bleeding was proper in the general's situation, begged that much might not be taken from him, and desired me to stop it. When I was about to untie the string, the general put up his

hand to prevent it, and, as soon as he could speak, said, 'More.'

"Mrs. Washington still uneasy lest too much blood should be drawn, it was stopped after about half a pint had been taken. Finding that no relief was obtained from bleeding, and that nothing could be swallowed, I proposed bathing the throat externally with sal volatile, which was done; a piece of flannel was then put round his neck. His feet were also soaked in warm water, but this gave no relief. By Mrs. Washington's request, I despatched a messenger for Dr. Brown at Port Tobacco. About nine o'clock Dr. Craik arrived, and put a blister of cantharides on the throat of the general, and took more blood, and had some vinegar and hot water set in a teapot, for him to draw in the steam from the spout.

"He also had sage-tea and vinegar mixed and used as a gargle, but when he held back his head to let it run down, it almost produced suffocation. When the mixture came out of his mouth some phlem followed it, and he would attempt to cough, which the doctor encouraged, but without effect. About eleven o'clock, Dr. Craik bled the generalagain; no effect was produced, and he continued in the same state, unable to swallow any thing. Dr. Dick came in about three o'clock, and Dr. Brown arrived soon after; when, after consultation, the general was bled again: the blood ran slowly, appeared very thick, and did not produce any symptoms of fainting. At four o'clock the general could swallow a little. Calomel and tartar emetic were administered without effect. About half-past four o'clock he requested me to ask Mrs. Washington to come to his bedside, when he desired her to go down to his room, and take from his desk two wills which she would find there, and bring them to him, which she did. Upon looking at one, which he observed was useless, he desired her to burn it, which she did; and then took the other and put it away. After this was done, I returned to his bedside and took his

hand. He said to me, 'I find I am going—my breath cannot continue long—I believed from the first attack it would be fatal. Do you arrange and record all my military letters and papers; arrange my accounts and settle my books, as you know more about them than any one else; and let Mr. Rawlins finish recording my other letters, which he has begun.' He asked when Mr. Lewis and Washington would return? I told him that I believed about the twentieth of the month. He made no reply.

"The physicians arrived between five and six o'clock, and when they came to his bedside, Dr. Craik asked him if he would sit up in the bed: he held out his hand to me and was raised up, when he said to the physician—'I feel myself going; you had better not take any more trouble about me, but let me go off quietly; I cannot last long.' They found what had been done was without effect; he laid down again, and they retired, excepting Dr. Craik. He then said to him—'Doctor, I die hard, but I am not afraid to go; I believed from the first attack I should not survive it: my breath cannot last long.' The doctor pressed his hand, but could not utter a word; he retired from the bedside and sat by the fire, absorbed in grief. About eight o'clock, the physicians again came into the room, and applied blisters to his legs, but went out without a ray of hope. From this time he appeared to breathe with less difficulty than he had done, but was very restless, continually changing his position, to endeavour to get ease. I aided him all in my power, and was gratified in believing he felt it, for he would look upon me with eyes speaking gratitude, but unable to utter a word without great distress. About ten o'clock he made several attempts to speak to me before he could effect it; at length he said, 'I am just going. Have me decently buried; and do not let my body be put into the vault in less than two days after I am dead.' I bowed assent. He looked at me again and said, 'Do you

understand me?' I replied, 'Yes, sir, ' 'Tis well,' said he. About ten minutes before he expired, his breathing became much easier: he lay quietly: he withdrew his hand from mine and felt his own pulse. I spoke to Dr. Craik, who sat by the fire; he came to the bedside. The general's hand fell from his wrist; I took it in mine, and placed it on my breast. Dr. Craik placed his hands over his eyes; and he expired without a struggle or a sigh."

Thus perished the mortal part of Washington, leaving behind it a fame which no man that ever lived may not envy. The death of monarchs is signalized by courtiers in suits of sable, but not of mourning; while that of the Father of his Country was wept by millions, who felt as if they had lost a dear father. As the sad news, which no previous fears had prepared them to expect, spread like a black cloud over the whole land it was received with such feelings as children mourn their beloved parents. "Washington is dead!" was repeated from mouth to mouth, from heart to heart, from city to city, until it was heard from one extremity of the country to the other; and if ever a man's memory and virtues gained for him the noblest of all sublunary rewards, the tears and blessings of his country, it was those of Washington.

Though his body was buried in the rustic vault of Mount Vernon, his obsequies were celebrated everywhere by processions, anthems, prayers, funeral orations, and tears of silent sorrow. Public honours were decreed to his memory, but his memory requires neither marble tombs nor proud mausoleums to render it immortal. His country is his monument, and its history his epitaph. So long as public and private worth shall be cherished; so long as true glory is honoured, talents admired, or integrity appreciated in the world, so long shall the name of Washington be quoted as the great example of virtuous heroism and disinterested patriotism.

High as is his name, it will continue to rise higher and higher. Time, which obliterates and defaces the recollection of false heroism, will only add new lustre to the true glory of Washington; the more distant the light, the farther off it will be seen, and the brighter it will shine. When the remote posterity of the present age shall discover, as they probably will, that the lapse of centuries has produced no second Washington, and that he still continues to stand alone "in the solitude of his glory," they will then better know how to honour his virtues and venerate his name.

CHAPTER XXII.

Character of Washington.

The lives of great and good men who have become illustrious for services to their country and the world, are principally valuable in showing by the exercise of what great qualities they were enabled thus to become the benefactors of mankind. In this manner their example is carried down to posterity, and in addition to the benefits derived immediately from their actions, they become useful to all succeeding ages, by exciting the desire of imitation, through the medium of admiration and love.

It is not too much to say, that no character on record furnishes a safer or more noble object for the imitation of every class of mankind, from the ruler of nations to the humblest citizen, than that of Washington. Equally admirable both in a public and private station, as a military chief, a civil ruler, and a useful citizen, nothing but good can arise from the contemplation of his example, in every circumstance and situation of his life. Those who follow in his footsteps can never go astray.

Though the simple relation which has been given furnishes

the best exemplification of his great qualities, and would seem to render an analysis of his character unnecessary, yet addressing myself, as I do, to the youth of my country, it may not be useless to them if I attempt to point out, one by one, those virtues and talents which to me seem to have contributed most to his own glory, and to the salvation of his country. All are exemplified in his life and actions, but they cannot be too often or too distinctly presented to the notice of my youthful readers. Every thing truly good and beautiful becomes the more so by study and contemplation.

It is impossible to read the speeches and letters of Washington, and follow his whole course of life, without receiving the conviction of his steady, rational, and exalted piety. Everywhere he places his chief reliance, in the difficult, almost hopeless circumstances in which he was so often involved, on the justice of that great Being who holds the fate of men and of nations in the hollow of his hand. His hopes for his country are always founded on the righteousness of its cause, and the blessing of Heaven. His was the belief of reason and revelation; and that belief was illustrated and exemplified in all his actions. No parade accompanied its exercise, no declamation its exhibition; for it was his opinion that a man who is always boasting of his religion, is like one who continually proclaims his honesty—he would trust neither one nor the other. He was not accustomed to argue points of faith, but on one occasion, in reply to a gentleman who expressed doubts on the subject, thus gave his sentiments:—

"It is impossible to account for the creation of the universe without the agency of a Supreme Being.

"It is impossible to govern the universe without the aid of a Supreme Being.

"It is impossible to reason without arriving at a Supreme Being. Religion is as necessary to reason, as reason is to religion. The one cannot exist without the other. A rambling

being would lose his reason in attempting to account for the great phenomena of nature, had he not a Supreme Being to refer to; and well has it been said, that if there had been no God, mankind would have been obliged to imagine one."

On this basis of piety was erected the superstructure of his virtues. He perceived the harmonious affinity subsisting between the duties we owe to Heaven and those we are called upon to sustain on earth, and made his faith the foundation of his moral obligations. He cherished the homely but invaluable maxim, that "honesty is the best policy," and held the temporal as well as eternal happiness of mankind, could never be separated from the performance of their duties to Heaven and their fellow-creatures. He believed it to be an inflexible law, that sooner or later, a departure from the strict obligations of truth and justice would bring with it the loss of the confidence of mankind, and thus deprive us of our best support for prosperity in this world, as well as our best hope of happiness in that to come. In short, he believed and practised on the high principle, that the invariable consequence of the performance of a duty was an increase of happiness. What others call good fortune, he ascribed to a great and universal law, establishing an indissoluble connection between actions and their consequences, and making every man responsible to himself for his good or ill success in this word. Under that superintending Providence which shapes the ends of men, his sentiments and actions show that he believed, that, as a general rule, every rational being was the architect of his own happiness. Ninety-nine times in a hundred, the stone that falls on our heads is thrown up by ourselves.

If we trace the noble course of Washington, we shall find these truths exemplified at every step of his rising greatness. When, at the age of fourteen, he sacrificed his most cherished hopes, and resigned his warrant as a midshipman in the British navy, to filial piety, he laid the foundation of all his future

greatness. This act of duty prepared the way for that career which ended in freeing a nation, and earning the noblest of all titles, that of Father of his country.

So, in like manner, we see this great principle exemplified in the consequences growing directly out of his early habits of life. His manly steadiness of character, his attention to study for the purpose of supplying the deficiencies of his early education, his fraternal kindness to his brother Laurence, his industry in pursuing his profession of surveyor, and the reputation he early established for inflexible truth and integrity, were rewarded by the respect and confidence they inspired in all who knew or ever heard of him. On these qualities, connected with and sustained by the basis of a great and well-constituted intellect, was erected the edifice of his future fame. On these it arose, on these it reposed, and will repose through all succeeding time.

It is impossible for my young countrymen to read the history of his life and actions, without perceiving, as clear as the light of day, that it was not less his private than his public virtues that stood him in stead, when invested with the great prerogative of defending his country. Power without authority is in a degree personal. It originates in the noblest of all sources, superior virtue and superior intelligence. In a free country especially, no man who is despised can govern.

It was this authority, derived exclusively from his personal character, that enabled Washington to consummate the revolution. This was the power which kept together the loose fragments of the conferation, when all the landmarks of old times were swept away, and no man knew his rights or his duties. He governed equally by his pen and his sword; everywhere, in times of dismay and suffering, we find him the inspiring soul, the indefatigable soldier, the defender and the Mentor of the young Telemachus committed to his guidance. His untiring industry enabled him to attend to every

thing; his sagacity to provide against all emergencies by his urgent representations to Congress and the states; and the opinion universally entertained of him, gave to his advice all the authority of wisdom and virtue. In all probability our cause had been lost, but for this sublime confidence in his integrity and patriotism. It was his virtues, after all, that saved his country. But for the unshaken confidence inspired by these, the hero of Saratoga might have superceded him in his command, and the surrender of Burgoyne produced the ruin of our cause.

What but this personal authority, founded, not in his power, but in his reputation, enabled him to retain the obedience, confidence, and affections of half-starved, half-naked, shoeless and shirtless soldiers, when retreating day after day, month after month, before a superior enemy; or when encamped in miserable huts, in the dead of winter, exposed to all the temptations of idleness, the past afforded no pleasing recollections, the present nothing but misery, the future nothing but despair?

What but this supremacy of virtue enabled him to keep alive the dying energies of an exhausted, almost hopeless people, in the dark periods of the war when every man's house, and every man's fields were at the mercy of an arrogant enemy, who considered the struggles of liberty an offence against Heaven, and treated its asserters as if they were infidels? And what was it that so often stimulated Congress and the States to the adoption of measures which, however dilatory and inefficient, enabled him still to keep the flame of liberty alive in the mountains of the Hudson, when it seemed everywhere else extinguished, or flickering its last light, on the earth?

Whoever examines the subject with a critical eye, will find, indeed, that his was the great influence which pervaded every-

where, and at all times. In the conduct of the revolutionary war; in the almost anarchy which succeeded the establishment of independence; in producing the call of a convention; in bringing about the adoption of the constitution; in administering its principles, and establishing those precedents so necessary to give it stability of action; and, finally, in the noble example of moderation he exhibited in voluntarily retiring from power, this moral influence, arising from the authority of his personal chacter for inflexible virtue, was the great cement of the Union. Well and truly was it said by a distinguished member of the House of Representatives, in announcing the death of Washington, that, "More than any other individual, and as much as to one individual was possible has he contributed to found this our wide-spreading empire and to give to the Western World independence and freedom" —"that he was first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

The courage of Washington was both morally and physically perfect. It was that of sentiment and nerve; it was not merely the absence of all fear, but the impulse of a stronge, unchangeable, and vigorous feeling, prompting him to exposure and exertion in the cause of his country. It was like all his other virtues, steady and true to noble purposes. It consisted, not in occasional outbreakings in the moment of keen excitement, but of an infinite series of wrestling with dangers, having scarcely a ray of hope to sustain their endurance, and unaccompanied by the stimulus of glory or success. As a soldier, he encountered perpetual dangers with a coolness and self-possession never on any occasion shaken or even disturbed; and, as a citizen in arms against a proud, unyielding parent, inflexible in her claims and unforgiving in her vengeance, he may be justly said to have faced for years, without shrinking, another danger, a thousand times more appalling than the cannon and

the bayonet. It is sufficient to say that, though through nearly the whole of the revolutionary struggle, he was compelled to the hard necessity of retreating before a superior enemy, neither friends or foes, rivals or detractors, ever breathed a whisper against the courage of Washington.

Industry is a homely virtue it is true, but it ought not on that account to be despised by my young readers. The power to do good, or to perform great actions, is nothing without the will; and those who are idle or indolent never possess that will. Without industry, either of body or mind, no one can ever become great, or even useful to himself or to others. The soil may be rich, but without cultivation it will produce little else than worthless weeds, luxurious poisons, or flowers that fade before they flourish. Cultivation must be accompanied by labour. We often see men become rich or great by some lucky speculation or fortunate accident, but it is only the wealth and greatness of a day. That which is not the means of acquiring, can never be of preserving a great good; and he who supposes that labour and attention are not necessary to the attainment as well as retaining of prosperity, will one day surely learn, by woful experience, that the condition on which we receive all our real enjoyments, and the capacity for their relish, is that of earning them by our own exertions. Could virtue be inherited like wealth, it would be comparatively worthless. The efforts necessary to its attainment give it value.

The industry of Washington was one of his great characteristics, and may be said to have accompanied him from his cradle to his grave. This was one great foundation of the success which accompanied him through life. In a good cause he never despaired or remitted his labours. By dividing his time into different portions, each devoted to one particular class of occupations or duties and never suffering any ordinary temptation or circumstance to interfere, he had a

time for all things, and time enough for every thing. His recreations never interfered with his labours, nor his labours with his recreations. When his work was done, then, and not till then, did he come forth among his guests, or his family, in the serene majesty of his virtues, cheerful and kind, indulgent and conciliatory. His attentions were paid with a graceful humility; his voice was attuned to kindness; and those accustomed to be the object of his smiles, say that there was something in them peculiarly touching. They were full of benignity and chastened cheerfulness. They were more apt to draw tears of gratitude, than to awaken gaiety. One of his kinsmen, now no more, who was, when a child, much at Mount Vernon, has told me that when the general patted him on the head, and gave him one of his affectionate smiles, he always felt the tears swelling under his eyelids.

The temperance of Washington was, like all his other virtues, under the dominion of temperance. It consisted, not in a total abstinence from the authorized indulgences of this life, but in their salutary enjoyment. He did not turn with sour disgust, or affected disdain, from the table which the Giver of all good had beneficently spread before him, but partook of the banquet moderately and thankfully. On no occasion is there the least authority for supposing he ever transcended the bounds of moderation in the enjoyments of life, or the indulgence of those passions universally implanted in the nature of man. He consequently escaped all the delusions of excess, which consist in false, misty, and exaggerated views or designs, stimulated into action by artificial excitement, and misleading the judgment, while they aggravate the passions and madden the imagination. Thus his intellect was always clear, and the admirable physical powers bestowed upon him by nature were never debased to bad purposes, or weakened by licentious indulgence.

A steady, unwavering perseverance in the pursuit of great and good ends was another striking characteristic of Washington. He neither decided rashly, or weakly abandoned his decisions when made. Once on the track of right, he followed it without wavering in the path, or relaxing in the pursuit, though the object might seem gradually to recede from his view, and on the point of disappearing for ever. The checks and disasters he encountered in his arduous, almost hopeless military career, never for a moment cooled his ardour or palsied his vigour; and the repeated failures of his advice and remonstrances to the civil authorities of his country, only increased the vigour and eloquence with which he renewed his expostulations. Disappointment only added to the force of his exertions in a good cause; and the neglect of their duty by others but made him more vigorous in the performance of his own. In the whole course of the revolution there is not a single instance in which his courage flagged, or his perseverance abated.

But the greatest of all the virtues of Washington, and that which he most gloriously illustrated through his whole life, was his pure, exalted patriotism. This is the noblest feature of his character, and in this he stands, to say the least, on a level with any name in ancient or modern history. A true and faithful servant of his country, he devoted to her his days, nights, and years, and never flinched or swerved from those great duties which, under all circumstances, and in every situation, all men owe to their country, yet so few are willing to pay. For his country and its holy cause he endured all, and shrunk at nothing but duplicity, falsehood, and dishonour. For her he would have sacrificed everything, but the obligations of religion and morality. No temptation of ease, of luxury, or advantage, could draw him aside from the path of toil, anxiety, and suffering, he trod for so many years, animated and sustained alone by the love of his country and of

liberty. He never mentions that country without some accompanying epithet of affectionate devotion; and not only in words, but in deeds, demonstrated that this was the great ruling principle of his life. His was the pure ambition of an exalted mind; he sought not his own advantage, but the glory and happiness of his fellow-citizens, and scorned to be great at the price of the degradation of all around him. There is not a single trace in the whole course of his life, from which can be derived the remotest ground for a suspicion that he was influenced by any personal motive to accept or to exercise the functions of any one of the high offices he administered.

He held them no longer than he thought necessary or useful to his country. By accepting the office of commander-in-chief of the American armies, at the commencement of the war of the Revolution, he risked every thing dear to man—his person, his fortune, and his fame. As the great leader in the crusade of liberty, its defeat would have brought down certain ruin on his head. In the gloomiest period of the struggle, if he had retired from his station, and left his country without a pilot in the midst of the breakers, he might perhaps have been justified in the sight of the world and of posterity, by the utter neglect of that country to follow his advice, or aid him with the means necessary to her defence. Yet adversity only quickened his patriotism to greater exertions of patience, perseverance, and valour, and the sluggish insensibility of others seemed only to inspire him with more unconquerable energy.

It is in this glorious light of a patriot that I wish most especially to hold him up to the admiration and emulation of my youthful readers. The duty which men owe to their country is alike common to every citizen. It is the condition of our birthright; it is born with us, and should only expire with our latest breath. The children

of America should be taught to look upon it as their benign mother, from whose bosom they drew their nourishment, and under whose protection they enjoy all the comforts of existence. It is her air they breathe, it is her soil they cultivate, it is her waters they drink, her food that sustains, and her laws that protect them in the enjoyment of their happiness. Nothing but her tyranny and oppression can ever justify them in deserting her in the hour of peril; and he who will not raise his arm in her defence, is unworthy of her protection and benefits. Those who require examples to spur them on to the performance of these high duties, have only to turn their eyes to Washington; and surely if this nation should ever forfeit its reputation, or tamely surrender its liberties, its disgrace will be doubly deep, that it sinned in the face of the purest and most exalted example with which a people was ever blessed.

Most especially it is the first duty of every youth of this country to love, and cherish, and protect it in every situation which requires their services. In her bosom they repose in peace and safety, under a system of laws that metes out justice and protection to all. From her bosom they draw the means of existence, more liberal and more equally bestowed than in any other land under heaven; and never should they offer up their thanks to the great Giver of all good without breathing a prayer of gratitude for their lot having been cast in a country so happy and free. Never was there a region on the face of the earth more richly entitled to the love of its citizens, or more worthy of being defended by its children.

Nor was Washington alone distinguished by those qualities which command the respect and confidence of mankind without winning their love. He was kind and benevolent as well as just. He gave away freely to those who deserved his bounty; yet, though his humanity was such that he would relieve the starving beggar without inquiring into his deserts,

still, he neither encouraged idleness by his bounties, nor guilt by his patronage. He considered it a robbery of the deserving to pamper those who were the authors of their own miseries. That which he gained by his own economy, and attention to his affairs, he gave freely away, but not without discrimination, or at the expense of others. The obligations of justice, which are the basis of all the virtues, preceded the indulgence of charity. He paid his debts first, and considered all the rest his own, to dispose of as he pleased. No creditor ever called a second time for his dues, nor was an honest debtor ever oppressed.

In a letter to his overseer, written in 1775, he gives the following directions:—

"Let the hospitality of the house, with respect to the poor, be kept up. Let no one go away hungry. If any of this kind of people should be in want of corn, supply their necessities, provided it does not encourage them in idleness; and I have no objection to your giving my money in charity, to the amount of forty or fifty pounds a year, when you think it well bestowed. What I mean by having no objection is, that it is my desire it should be done. You are to consider, that neither myself nor wife are now in the way to do these good offices. In all other respects, I recommend it to you, and have no doubt of your observing the greatest economy and frugality; as I suppose you know that I do not get a farthing for my services here, more than my expenses. It becomes necessary, therefore, for me to be saving at home."

His overseer had also orders to fill a large crib with corn every season, for the use of his poor neighbours: and when, on one occasion, much distress prevailed in the country round, on account of the failure of the harvest, he purchased several hundred bushels of corn at a high price, to be given away to those who were most in want, and most deserving of relief.

He also founded a charity-school in Alexandria: and if it were necessary, or within the limits of my design, I could give various other instances of his uniform and well-directed benevolence. It was a quiet and unfailing stream, which never brawled its way in the noonday sun, but flowed silently and unseen, and only betrayed its course by the green fertility of its margin.

His disinterestedness is strikingly displayed in the stipulation which formed the condition of his consenting to accept the command of the armies of freedom. It was that he should receive no more than the precise amount of the expenditures incurred in the discharge of his public duties; and my young readers may have seen what these were in the course of eight years. His declining to accept one hundred and fifty shares in the public works authorized by his native state, is another proof of this great and noble quality, consonant with his whole life and actions.

In his domestic and social relations, the sentiment he uniformly excited was reverence, mingled with affection. None of his family ever ventured to treat him with disrespect, and none ever feared to approach him with confidence. He had no child; but the grandchildren of Mrs. Washington by her first husband, together with his own nephews and nieces who survive, can bear testimony to his parental cares, as well as his undeviating kindness towards his relatives and dependants. And here I will take what seems to me a proper opportunity of refuting a false insinuation, which appears in one of the last places that it might reasonably be expected to occur. In the edition of Plutarch's Lives, translated by John and William Langhorne, and revised by the Rev. Francis Wrangham, M.A. F.R.S, there is the following note appended to the biography of Cato the Censor, whose kindness is said to have extended to his cattle and sheep. "*Yet Washington*,

the Tertius Cato of these latter times, is said to have sold his old charger!"

On first seeing this insinuation of a calumny founded on hearsay, I applied to Colonel Lear, who resided at Mount Vernon, and acted as the private secretary of Washington at the time of his death, and many years previously, to learn whether there was any foundation for the report. His denial was positive and unequivocal. The horse of Washington, sold, not by him, but one of his heirs, after his death, was that which he was accustomed to ride about his plantation after his retirement from public life. The aged war-horse was placed under the special care of the old black servant who had served the same campaigns with him; was never rode after the conclusion of the war, and died long before his illustrious master.

In analyzing the character of Washington, there is nothing that strikes me as more admirable than its beautiful symmetry. In this respect it is consummate. His different qualities were so nicely balanced, so rarely associated, of such harmonious affinities, that no one seemed to interfere with another, or predominate over the whole. The natural ardour of his disposition was steadily restrained by a power of self-command which it dared not disobey. His caution never degenerated into timidity, nor his courage into imprudence or temerity. His memory was accompanied by a sound, unerring judgment, which turned its acquisitions to the best advantage; his industry and economy of time neither rendered him dull or unsocial; his dignity never was vitiated by pride or harshness, and his unconquerable firmness was free from obstinacy or self-willed arrogance. He was gigantic, but at the same time he was well-proportioned and beautiful. It was this symmetry of parts that diminished the apparent magnitude of the whole: as in those fine specimens of Grecian architecture, where the size of the temple seems lessened by its

perfection. There are plenty of men who become distinguished by the predominance of one single faculty, or the exercise of a solitary virtue; but few, very few, present to our contemplation such a combination of virtues, unalloyed by a single vice; such a succession of virtues, both public and private, in which even his enemies can find nothing to blame.

Assuredly he stands almost alone in the world. He occupies a region where there are, unhappily for mankind, but few inhabitants. The Grecian biographer could easily find parallels for Alexander and Cæsar, but were he living now, he would, meet with great difficulty in selecting one for Washington.—There seems to be an elevation of moral excellence, which though possible to attain to, few ever approach. As in ascending the lofty peaks of the Andes, we at length arrive at a line where vegetation ceases, and the principle of life seems extinct; so in the gradations of human character, there is an elevation which is never attained by mortal man. A few have approached it, and none nearer than Washington.

He is eminently conspicuous as one of the great benefactors of the human race, for he not only gave liberty to millions, but his name now stands, and will for ever stand, a noble example to high and low. He is a great work of the almighty Artist, which none can study without receiving purer ideas and more lofty conceptions of the grace and beauty of the human character. He is one that all may copy at different distances, and whom none can contemplate without receiving lasting and salutary impressions of the sterling value, the inexpressible beauty of piety, integrity, courage, and patriotism, associated with a clear, vigorous, and well-poised intellect.

Pure, and widely disseminated as is the fame of this great and good man, it is yet in its infancy. It is every day taking deeper root in the hearts of his countrymen, and the estimation of strangers, and spreading its branches wider and wider, to the air and the skies. He is already become the saint of li-

berty, which has gathered new honours by being associated with his name; and when men aspire to free nations, they must take him for their model. It is, then, not without ample reason that the suffrages of mankind have combined to place Washington at the head of his race. If we estimate him by the examples recorded in history, he stands without a parallel in the virtues he exhibited, and the vast, unprecedented consequences resulting from their exercise. The whole world was the theatre of his actions, and all mankind are destined to partake sooner or later in their results. He is a hero of a new species: he had no model: will he have any imitators? Time, which bears the thousands and thousands of common cutthroats to the ocean of oblivion, only adds new lustre to his fame, new force to his example, and new strength to the reverential affection of all good men. What a glorious fame is his, to be acquired without guilt, and enjoyed without envy; to be cherished by millions living, hundreds of millions yet unborn! Let the children of my country prove themselves worthy of his virtues, his labours, and his sacrifices, by reverencing his name and imitating his piety, integrity, industry, fortitude, patience, forbearance, and patriotism. So shall they become fitted to enjoy the blessings of freedom and the bounties of heaven.

FINIS.

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James Clark, Printer, Aberdeen.